

clearly and unequivocally taught, do throw much light upon the testimony of the Evangelists. Those who confound and jumble everything to make a system of their own, can never understand these sacred writings. Some make christianity as old as the creation, and teach that Moses was in reality as much a christian as Paul or John.

There is infancy, childhood, and manhood in religion as well as human life. There is starlight, moonlight, twilight and sunlight in religion, in the moral as well as in the natural world. And he that objects against this economy might as well object that we are infants before we are men, or that Spring must precede Summer, and seed time harvest.

But to the conclusion of the Jewish age. John took the Jews as he found them. He argued with them on and from their own acknowledgements. He pretended to a mission from God which was confirmed by the manner of his birth, and by the peculiarities of his life, and by the descent of the Holy Spirit upon Jesus as soon as John immersed him. He averred that he was "The voice of one crying in the wilderness," as spoke Isaiah. He remonstrated against the defection of the Jews—taught and practiced a more strict righteousness and devotion than that of his contemporaries of the Jews, and commanded an entire reformation of manners.

To his preaching of reformation, an immersion of penitents for the remission of sins committed under the law was added. Multitudes flocked to him, confessed their sins against God under the economy of Moses, and were immersed, confessing their sins and reforming from them. He proclaimed that the Messiah was soon to appear; nay, that he stood among them though they knew him not, and that they should believe in him who was to come after him.

His immersion differed from that instituted by Jesus in the four following respects:

1. He immersed in the name or by the authority of God, and not in the name or by the authority of the Lord. No act in religion, from the beginning of the world until Pentecost, was ever done by any other name or authority than the simple name of God. By the authority of Jesus or the Messiah, no act has ever been performed until in his own person he appeared in Judea, and until he declared that authority was given he commanded no man to perform any act by this authority.

2. He immersed into no name. That he did not immerse into the name of Jesus as the Messiah, as the Lord, is obvious from the following considerations:—

It is manifest from the narrative, that John immersed some persons, if not many, before he immersed Jesus. Now, in whatever manner, and in whatever name John immersed, he uniformly immersed. His immersion was the same during his whole life. But it has been said that he immersed some persons before he immersed Jesus: now those he could not immerse into the name of Jesus because he did not know him when he first began to baptize. His words are, as for me I knew him not; but to the end that he may be manifested to Israel, I am come immersing in water. For my part, I should not have known him, had not He who sent me to immerse in water told me, Upon whomsoever you shall see the Spirit descending and remaining, the same is he who immerses in the Holy Spirit. Having seen therefore, I testify that he is the Son of God." But the Spirit did not descend on Jesus until after his immersion; consequently John immersed others before he knew the Messiah.

Again he did not immerse into the name of the Holy Spirit, because the Spirit was not yet given; for Jesus was not yet glorified, and those who

were immersed by John had not heard anything of the Holy Spirit. (See Acts xix. 1-3.) The Son and the Holy Spirit not being yet revealed, he could not immerse into either the name of the Son or of the Holy Spirit.

The Jews at this time had but the knowledge of God common to the nation, and it was simply by the authority of the God of Abraham the Jews were immersed; and as they had always professed that name, there was neither need for, nor propriety in, their being immersed into that name.

3. But in the third place he did not immerse into the Christian faith. All the Jews believed that a Messiah would come; this was the common expectation of all the commonwealth of Israel. But it is one thing to believe that a Messiah was to come and soon to come, and another thing to believe that any particular person and character was he.

It is one thing to believe that some person killed A. B., and another thing to believe that C. D. killed A. B. The former faith would not now injure any person though a whole jury possessed it; but the latter faith imperils the life of C. D. So a belief that some person was to be the savior and Redeemer of Israel was one thing, and to believe that Jesus the Nazarene was that person, was another, and produced very different feelings and behavior.

To believe that Jesus is the Lord of all, that he died as a sin offering, and that he rose from the dead, was impossible to any of John's contemporaries. For Jesus was not made Lord, as Peter imparted on Pentecost, until he ascended into heaven. He must first be a servant before he could be a king. He must suffer before he could be made perfect as the Captain of Salvation. He must first be humbled before he could be glorified. That he was to die for our sins, and to rise from the dead, neither John nor any of John's disciples knew or believed. For long after John had died, and after Jesus had taught his followers farther than John led them, when he talked of his resurrection they could not understand him; and after he rose from the dead and appeared to the women, this testimony appeared to the wisest of the apostles as idle tales, and they believed them not. It is useless to reason farther to show that the disciples of John had not the faith which Christians after Pentecost had; consequently, could not be baptized into a faith which they did not possess.

In the fourth place, John's immersion brought no man into the kingdom of heaven. The reason is obvious; no person could come into a kingdom which was not set up. I need not be at much pains to illustrate this point. All who have read their New Testaments must know that the institution which Jesus set up on earth is called the Kingdom of Heaven. This kingdom and reign was the burden of John's proclamation, and of the Savior's preaching and teaching. John and the Messiah, during their personal ministry, only said it was approaching or near at hand, and soon to appear. It was impossible that the kingdom could be set up on earth until the King was placed upon his throne. This could not be until Jesus was exalted. It was after his humiliation unto death that his Father highly exalted him. Then he began his reign. Then he sent down the Holy Spirit; for the Spirit was not given until Jesus was glorified. John's preaching and baptism only prepared the people and brought them nigh to the kingdom. It introduced no man into it. John disciples entered not in by virtue of John's immersion. Every man, Jew and Gentile, who came into the kingdom, must be born of water and of the Spirit.

But the fact that Jesus was not exalted until he rose from the dead; that he did not commence to reign until he was prepared by sufferings;

that his kingdom was not begun until he was crowned Lord of all, is sufficient to establish the truth of the proposition that John's immersion brought no man into the kingdom of heaven; for that kingdom had not, in John's time, come.

Christian immersion, then, differs from John's in four great and important particulars: First, in the name, or by the authority, by which it is done. Second, into the name, into which it is done. Third, the faith upon which it is done: and fourth, the kingdom or institution into which it introduces us.

#### California Letter.

DOWNEY CITY, CAL.,

July 13, 1881.

Bro. Campbell:

You have not said you would attend our coming camp-meeting, near this; 5th day of next month, nor have you noticed it, so far as I have seen, and still we are hoping, and the meeting is growing in interest to us, as the time approaches.

I see in a late paper that one of your correspondents suggests the idea that, anciently, all the disciples in one city—even if ten thousand—were but one congregation.

When we quote Phil. i. 1, 2, they reply, how do you know but that there were several congregations there, for this plurality of "bishops and deacons," and yet they say, there was but one congregation! But in the address of Paul to the elders of Ephesus, whom, in their official capacity he styles bishops, or overseers, he refers to one flock for the plurality of overseers. And in Acts xiv. it is said Paul ordained elders in every congregation. These references leave no way of escape from the idea that there were many bishops and deacons for one church—for "every church" in city or country. And as to all—say ten thousand in one city—being but one congregation, I have to say:

1. There is not the slightest Scriptural authority for such a conclusion. Hence, no man can teach it by the authority of Christ. It is wholly a humanism, whatever its origin and purpose may be.

2. It is utterly at variance with propriety and analogy. Why all belong to a church in which, and with which, only a part at a time could meet for worship? And if the first part or company, with their bishops and deacons, were complete as a church and independent, so far as any congregation can be independent of others, why not the second, third, fourth, &c., be equally perfect and independent, whether meeting at the same or several places most convenient for them?

3. Coleman's Christian Antiquities, and other histories, show that it was by occupying this position, to-wit: that all in one city were in one congregation, that the metropolitan bishops and pastors gained power, and the churches lost independence! Please note this. If you do not remember it, read up.

4. And then there must be "the pastor" for the one church. If it is a large church he is a great man, has a great salary, and great power. But what of the Scriptural authority for such a pastor? and what of the Scriptural bishops?

How strange that those who pretend to follow the Bible will cling to an officer, and make him the one thing needful, when the Bible knows nothing of him! The ancient churches had no pastors but their bishops. The modern pastor is no more of divine authority than is the Methodist class leader or steward. Of course these pastors do not like for anyone to say this; and I have already been severely handled for it by a young would-be pastor. Still, no one gives the Scriptural authority for the modern pastor! and yet he pastors, or postures on; and few are willing to call in question his claims and pretensions. They say,

Oh you can't get along without a preacher, whom they call pastor. This is the proof! But I point them to our best churches, which have got along without him, and to the Scriptures. They shake their heads, mutter and go on; but never give us Scripture for the modern pastor!

Affectionately,  
C. KENDRICK.

EUGENE CITY, OR.,

July 20, 1881.

Dear Bro. Campbell:

I see a letter from our venerable Father Weddel in the MESSENGER of the 15th inst., the greater part of which I approve; but in his appeal to the brethren for the old preachers, I see my name, that I do not approve. I am not willing that my name should go to the many readers of the MESSENGER as one dependent. The good Lord has blessed the labor of my hands, and I have plenty.

I pen these lines so that the good brethren may have no uneasiness about me. These leaves us well, for which we are thankful; hoping they may find you and yours enjoying the same great blessing. Christian love and regards to all. I remain as ever your brother in hope and love.

PHILIP MURKEY.

#### Literary Notices.

GOOD COMPANY (\$3.00 a year; Springfield, Mass.) Number Twenty-two opens with a long complete story, filling seventeen pages, by Ellen W. Olney, entitled "A Pair of Silk Stockings." It has another of the Arctic papers by Lieut. Frederick Schwatka under the heading, "In the Land of the Midnight Sun." There is an article by Mrs. Gen. Lew Wallace, "The Land of the Pueblos; the Pimos;" an installment of the serial story now in course of publication, "Mildred's Captivity," a number of poems, and various miscellaneous articles.

The August number of the *North American Review* devotes a liberal share of its space to a polemical duel between Col. Ingersoll, the great exponent of the unbelief of the day and Judge Jeremiah S. Black, the eminent jurist. Other articles in the August number of the Review are: "Obstacles to Annexation," by Frederick G. Mather, "Crime and Punishment in New York," by Rev. Dr. Howard Crosby; "A Militia for the Sea," by John Roach; "Astronomical Observatories," by Prof. Simon Newcomb; and the "Public Lands of the United States," by Thomas Donaldson.

No sermon is complete in which the love of Christ does not hold a prominent place. I do not mean that the whole scheme of redemption should be developed in every discourse; but Christ should be so fully in the sermon that the anxious inquirer should be able to find his way to him. There are few congregations in which there are not unconverted sinners; and I believe there are few in which there are no "seekers after God." Thousands of people who make no sign, who betray no anxiety, are yet secretly feeling after God. For them the exhaustive argument has little charm; they are sick of the perfume of flowers and the music of choice words; but a ray of light on their path is welcome as the day break. Let them ever have that ray of light; give them in every sermon the assurance that the Good Shepherd cares for them, and a glimpse of the way which leads to him. I once listened to a dreary discourse. It was when I was longing for comfort and help. In the track of his sombre and uninviting deliverance the preacher spoke quite casually of the yearning heart of the Redeemer. It was truly a break in the cloud; it seemed as if the heavens were opened, and the radiance of that thought is sunshine to me to-day. Let no consideration tempt you to preach a sermon without Christ.—Rev. R. N. Young.

Have Wistar's Balsam of Wild Cherry always at hand. It cures Coughs, Colds, Bronchitis, Whooping Cough, Influenza, Consumption and all Throat and Lung Complaints, 50 cents and \$1 a bottle.

#### Work that Always Goes On.

God's work in this world is the only thing now living that goes back into antediluvian history. It is the only thing which links the whole of human history together. Other things fall and die by the side of this; this lives on to the world's end.

The vanity of individuals, the ambition of families, the pride of cities, the glory of nations, the conflict of races—all have been short-lived; but it has not been so with this work of God. Fortunes are dissipated in a title of the time which it requires to amass them. Commercial panics prostrate merchant princes in an hour. Treasures are sunk in the sea or in storms of fire. The very highways of commerce are changed by events which no human foresight can provide for. Cities like Venice and the Hanse towns, once the centres of great trades, are left like stranded ships, and the commerce of the world flows elsewhere. Kingdoms, too, perish from the memory of men. Races become extinct. But it is not so with this work of God.

The very sciences of the world fluctuate. The knowledge of one age becomes folly to the next. The universities of to-day laugh at those of yesterday. Culture runs the gauntlet of system after system of philosophy, of political economy, of art which seem to have been created only for the sake of dying. Pursuits once dignified as sciences, such as astrology, alchemy, magic, are exploded. But it is not so with this work of God.

The world's religions, too, have succumbed to the same law of doom. A religious system once rooted in the civilization of a people is the last thing to die. But many such have expired. Others are in the process of dissolution. Even the languages in which men transmit their treasures of learning, civilization, and religion, die. What an appalling thing to the imagination is a dead language! Everything that man originates lives but a brief time in a world's life. But it is not so with this work of God.

Amidst disorganizing forces that shake to pieces everything else, this work lives, with the fixedness of the north star. Other things bend to this; this never yields to them. All force in this world, sooner or later, yields to this unmarred and silent power. In everything else the iron and brass and clay become like the chaff of the summer threshing-floor; while the stone cut out without hands, is growing to a great mountain, and filling the whole earth.—Sel.

The coffee-house movement in New York, with Dr. J. G. Holland at its head seems likely to prove a practical success. A company has been formed with a capital of \$100,000. The object is to furnish a substitute for the grog-shops—the so-called "saloons." It is not wholly an experiment. In Great Britain coffee-houses have become an institution, and in some five or six years have made headway as one of the most effective measures of reform. The New York Company have decided to construct a building for their purposes. Besides refreshments they will supply reading matter, lectures and concerts. In this they are following closely the example of the Young Men's Christian Associations. Cannot the latter profitably join with this company or imitate it, in every city, by starting coffee-houses? There could be no better way to promote temperance and save our young men.—Advance.

#### Mothers! Mothers!! Mothers!!!

Are you disturbed at night and broken of your rest by a sick child suffering and crying with the excruciating pain of cutting teeth? If so, go at once and get a bottle of Mrs. WINSLOW'S SOOTHING SYRUP. It will relieve the poor little sufferer immediately—depend upon it; there is no mistake about it. There is not a mother on earth who has ever used it, who will not tell you at once that it will regulate the bowels and give rest to the mother, and relief and health to the child, operating like a magic. It is perfectly safe to use in all cases, and pleasant to the taste, and is the prescription of one of the oldest and best female physicians and nurses in the United States. Sold everywhere. 25 cents a bottle.

The Peruvian Syrup has cured thousands who were suffering from Dyspepsia, Debility, Liver Complaint, Boils, Humors, Female Complaints, etc. Pamphlets free to any address, Seth W. Fowle & Sons, Boston.

The Pueblos of New Mexico believe that at death they will be carried away in some mysterious manner to a place beneath a vast underground lake, where melons, and peaches, and beautiful maidens, and horses are in never ending supply for the good.