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MORNING STAR

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 13, 1858.

LITTLE QUARTERLY AND YEARLY MEETINGS.

Everything commences with small beginnings. Giants do not come into the world full grown and full armed. So Quarterly and Yearly Meetings must needs at the outset be small and weak. Being inevitable, it is neither to be complained of nor regretted.

But there is often a disposition to keep Quarterly and Yearly Meetings small, by dividing, or by organizing new ones in contiguous territory. Instead of having forty churches, like the Bowdoin Q. M., in Maine, or thirty, like the Sandwich, in New Hampshire, or twenty-six, like the Rhode Island, somebody begins to agitate a division by the time there are twelve or fifteen churches in a Q. M. And then the thought and energy of both preachers and members are employed in discussing the propriety of division, and determining when, and how and where to divide, until the spirit of revival is lost, the churches become cold, and the cause ceases to prosper—if indeed actual alienation and bitterness be not thereby engendered.

The causes tending to such divisions, or new organizations, are generally one or the other, or more than one, of these three: 1. Personal Ambition—somebody gets jealous of somebody else, and wants to have more sway, to be more prominent and perhaps preach more at Q. M.'s, and to have his judgment more implicitly followed, and hence he pushes for a new Quarterly or Yearly Meeting. 2. Personal Differences—some one gets offended at some one else, and can't stay in the Yearly or Quarterly Meeting with the one he is offended at, and forthwith flies off in a pet, to get up a new organization. 3. Distance.

The propriety of the first two of these is so manifest, that if there is ground even to suspect that either of them is working to produce a new organization, that is in itself the most ample reason why such new organization should not be entered into. Every—organization should be the fruit of a true revival, and not a mere indication of such a spirit ought to be met by the firmest and most explicit disapproval of every lover of the Humanity, the Charity, and the Fraternity of Christianity. If any get ambitious to have the pre-eminence, (3 John, 9.) to lord it over God's heritage, and if they cannot control the whole to lead off a part whom they can influence to their liking, then they thereby evince themselves to be unworthy of being followed. And if any shoot off in a tangent on account of personal differences or difficulties, they thus tacitly confess themselves to be in the wrong. Of both, Paul's exhortation is significant, Rom. 16: 17, "Mark them which cause divisions, &c., and avoid them." (See Barnes' notes on the same.)

Distance, including geographical and civil boundaries, is when sufficiently extended or marked, a sufficient ground for forming new Yearly or Quarterly Meeting organizations. But the mole-hills of distance are sometimes magnified into mountains. That often seems a distance sufficient to justify another organization that really is not. If politicians can meet every year in a State Convention, for merely political purposes, then it would seem that Christians from all parts of a state might also meet once a year in a Yearly Meeting, to promote the precious cause of Christ. In doing this, even in the great Empire State, in the large states of the West, the worldling might still say of their sacrifice in this doing, "What do ye more than we?"

There is a power in both aggregation and association. Three or four sticks lying around separately will do little towards a fire, but pile them up closely together, and then mark the result when the torch is applied. Two or three little Yearly Meetings will be but comparatively dull, unenthusiastic affairs, but bring all their elements of Christian love, and sympathy, and work, together into one meeting, and then see how the fires of devotion and faith glow and burn. Three sticks taken separately may easily be broken, one by one, and so, by a force that could not even bend them if they were all three grown into one stick. It is not too much therefore to say, not contrary to the analogies of nature, that one large Yearly Meeting can accomplish what could not be accomplished by the same churches, or Q. M.'s, organized in two or three Yearly Meetings—and nearly the same is true of Q. M.'s. The larger the gatherings, and the greater the concentration, it is possible to get them, the larger and better are the results.

Moreover, we usually prize a thing largely in proportion to what it costs us. Let some one make calculations some time beforehand, and bend other things to them, and then put forth a good deal of effort, and spend considerable time to attend a Quarterly or Yearly Meeting, and—other things being equal—he will enjoy it far better than the very same meeting, where it cost him little or nothing to attend it. If any one doubts, let him try the experiment. We are confident of the result.

Large Quarterly and Yearly Meetings, then, are productive of these two advantages: 1. *Better meetings in themselves, and, 2. A larger enjoyment of the meetings, on the part of those sacrificing more to attend them.* Will not these more than compensate the little extra time and expense of attending the sessions of large Quarterly and Yearly Meetings? We doubt if the Bowdoin Q. M. with its forty churches is any too large; and we doubt if any state ought to have more than one Yearly Meeting in it. Without dogmatizing on the matter, we confidently appeal to the results of large and small Quarterly and Yearly Meetings among us. Are not the sessions of the larger ones the most interesting? Is the session of any one of the small Yearly Meetings in New York, Ohio, or Illinois, equal in interest to the session of the New Hampshire Y. M.? Does as much enthusiasm and confidence, and courage, and devotion, and strength result from all the annual sessions of the N. Y. Yearly Meetings, as from the single one of the N. H. Yearly Meeting? And, in the aggregate, do not the several sessions cost more than the N. H. Yearly Meeting session costs? Is it not significant, too, that in most cases where there are several Yearly Meetings in a state, they are being largely superseded by some sort of state gatherings?—so strong is the desire for larger and wider association, and greater concentration. In the States of New York and Ohio, if we mistake not, State Conventions already have been, and are to be, held, would it not be better to hold on to our old policy, but attain the same result by having a State Yearly Meeting instead?

Instead of having a few brethren who meet, and only meet, each other again and again in Q. M.'s, and who then hear only the same two or three, or half dozen, preachers over and over again, would it not be ever so much better to meet more brethren, and from

a wider range of country, to hear a greater variety of preaching talent, to form more extended acquaintance, to hear the testimonies and receive the encouragement of a larger number of Christ's children, and thus mingle our sympathies in a larger sea, refresh our spirits at a larger feast, and enlarge our knowledge by some talk with more and more varied thought and attainment? Can there be more than one answer to the question?

WHO SHALL DELIVER?

The outcry of the soul for deliverance from the bondage of passion and sensuality is often terrific. Those faculties of man which are correlated to the Divine, the heavenly, and the true, will occasionally, in the basest natures, become disassociated with sensual service, shake under the yoke of sin, and protest against the chains that bind them to the train of animalism. Sometimes, after long and crushing bondage, the reaction is fearful; the reason and conscience gather themselves up with tremendous force, and struggle like a strong man, dealing blows on the right hand and the left, and making the whole nature tremble with the violence of the contest; while the voice of protest and accusation is loud and violent; reason and conscience assert their right to rule and possession, the animal nature is commanded into obedience. At such times the soul feels its degradation; its bondage to the sensual, mortal, animal, is felt to be unnatural, ruinous, mean, discreditable, unsatisfying, a blight and disgrace to the Divine faculties, destructive to the highest good of being, unworthy of one created in the image of God. With such feelings Paul personifies the human family in the 7th chapter of Romans, and cries out, "O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Can this cry of agony be answered? Is there a deliverer? If there is not, the experience of the world proves that the soul will sink back again and again into bondage, like a discouraged patriot, crushed under the iron heel of tyranny. Man must have help or perish. His condition is desperate. The rule of the animal man is powerful. The flesh has gathered strength by use, the mortal nature lost it by misuse or disuse. Passion has become violent; the channels of thought, desire, hope, purpose, have all taken a worldly, mortal, material direction, the spiritual serving the material, the Divine in bondage to the animal, the immortal the tool of the mortal, the soul the slave of the body. The object, purpose, hope, pleasure, prospect of life, are all confined to this world of mortal and animal being and interests, while the eternal, spiritual, Divine interests and relations are forgotten, or wholly excluded from control. Now how shall man be lifted from this bondage? How can the earthly and animal be made to give way to the spiritual and eternal? How can the body be put into servitude to the soul? How can the old man be crucified?

"Blessed be God, through Jesus Christ our Lord," it can be done. He brings us back upon the mind an array of motives, promises, commands and expressions of love and sympathy that are wonderfully inspiring to the mortal man, and beget new affections stronger than the love of the world. Through him the spiritual man is quickened to vigorous life, risen with Christ, blessed with new views of life, of bliss, of God, heaven, and the true nobility of our nature, and the supremacy of the flesh is thrown off, crucified, brought down to the servitude for which it was made, and the conscience, reason, and moral affections take the reins of truth and rule.

But this is not the only burden which crushes the soul. Man is guilty. He must find pardon, or die. His sins will forever curse him. "Who shall deliver him?" This load of guilt is also removed through Christ. He tasted death for the sins of every man; he took away the sin of the world, is a propitiation for our sins; he is exalted a Prince and Savior to give repentance and remission of sins. All who accept of Christ as Priest and King, Redeemer and Ruler, have a free pardon of all their sins.

But there is lack of love to God. The affections are paralyzed by sin and disuse. When the will and reason and conscience say, serve God, live for the soul and not for the body, do right, live worthy of your nature and destiny, the affections will not respond, but still cling to the world, to sin. And it is certain that no man will continue to pursue the right, unless by some means he is brought to love it. He will go back into the channels where his love dwells, will do what he loves to do, when all of his higher nature condemns him. And how are the sordid, sensual, sin-loving affections to be regenerated? Is there any power that can move them? Again we turn to Christ, and find a remedy. What can hope love better than love itself? And where do we find love like Christ's? Whoever seeks him, comes in contact with his warm heart of love; his spirit, his purposes, hopes, aspirations, affections are pressed upon the obedient soul, and life and energy are imparted to the affections, they are warmed into vigor, they kindle into a flame, become ardent, controlling, blissful. So this body of death is removed, and man is created anew in Christ Jesus unto good works, and is free. Here is a sure refuge and Deliverer. In Christ the soul finds truth, light, motives; it also finds power to renew the affections, and to pardon all sin. Blessed be the name of Christ.

NEW RECRUITS.

The new register reports an increase in our membership of nearly six thousand communicants. Such a report is peculiarly refreshing after so many years of discouragement. We rejoice over the baptism of 5020 during the year; we rejoice because in that act, every one of these converts has sworn fidelity to Christ, and pledged himself to do all he can to build up the cause of truth, and to save men. Six thousand more soldiers in the army now there was one year since; six thousand more friends of Christ and heirs of glory. We are rejoiced that these brethren are now in the kingdom where there is life. It is a great thing to secure their salvation. But our hearts are looking and longing for larger conquests, and we welcome these fresh volunteers to the field of battle to fight. Beloved, you must consider that the Master not only called you to be a saint, but a soldier, and you are expected to fight, not with carnal weapons, but spiritual, (truth) which are mighty to destroy the strong holds of sin. The church has tolled for you, now will you toll with them to bring in others? Will you bring real, active, available strength to the church, add to her power, her vitality, her harmony, her influence? This is for you to decide. You can become a treasure to the cause, if you will watch against all pride, self-love, selfishness, and malevolence, and really give yourselves up to a life of self-denial and benevolence. Can you grasp the idea, and feel its value, of living a life of usefulness, living to do good? Can you rise above the common custom of man, abandon the old hard-earned path

of living for your self, and really settle down to a life of good doing? We do not doubt but you can get up a spasmodic zeal, and outstrip all of the old brethren for a time, as that requires but a little strength of purpose, and but little intelligence for the cause of righteousness; you can do that from love of excitement, love of praise, love of leading, emulation. But can you give your soul up to this work with a devotion that will not grow weary nor turn aside, even though you gain no distinction by it, get no praise, but rather meet scorn, coldness, and have selfish and base motives attributed to you? Any one can fight when all fight the best in the darkest hour, when the enemy presses the most savagely upon us. How shall it be with you, beloved? Have you come into its ranks with a true hero's courage, or with a faint heart? Is your soul full of love to your fellow men, or are you stupid, scarcely getting beyond your own heart in your thoughts, feelings, anxieties and trials? Six thousand new soldiers! How many of them will be a dead weight upon the church! How many will disgrace the cause they have espoused! How many have no intelligent idea of the Christian system, but being brought in by a flood of excitement, will go out when the excitement subsides! O, how the hearts of true disciples will bleed over these developments! Would to God, that something might be done for them! That they might be saved! Young soldiers, be strong in the Lord. But how can you grow strong? There is no better way than to study your "dull book," learn how inspired lips teach the way of life. Study the gospel. You ought not to allow a single day to pass without its 7th chapter of Romans, and cries out, "O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Can this cry of agony be answered? Is there a deliverer? If there is not, the experience of the world proves that the soul will sink back again and again into bondage, like a discouraged patriot, crushed under the iron heel of tyranny. Man must have help or perish. His condition is desperate. The rule of the animal man is powerful. The flesh has gathered strength by use, the mortal nature lost it by misuse or disuse. Passion has become violent; the channels of thought, desire, hope, purpose, have all taken a worldly, mortal, material direction, the spiritual serving the material, the Divine in bondage to the animal, the immortal the tool of the mortal, the soul the slave of the body. The object, purpose, hope, pleasure, prospect of life, are all confined to this world of mortal and animal being and interests, while the eternal, spiritual, Divine interests and relations are forgotten, or wholly excluded from control. Now how shall man be lifted from this bondage? How can the earthly and animal be made to give way to the spiritual and eternal? How can the body be put into servitude to the soul? How can the old man be crucified?

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less that taketh His name in vain." We will repeat what a good writer once wrote, "Vain boy! when the word of mockery and blasphemy is about to leap from your lips, think of God, and instead of that wicked oath, cry out in reverent prayer, 'Hallowed be thy name.' Yes, children, be careful to use good words always."

THE ILL-FATED AUSTRIA.

Scarcely anything shows more impressively the uncertainty of earthly hopes than the great steamboat and railroad disasters which have become so sadly common. A number of people sufficient to form a small town or village, gathered from many a cheerful home, with hearts beating strong with hope, anticipating a long and successful life, enter, as in this instance, a first class iron steamer, with every convenience, provision and safeguard. They encounter no storm, though prepared for the fiercest; there is no bursting of boiler, or any such catastrophe. Only a slight accident, a blunder, or act of carelessness, and in a moment, as it were, the whole ship is enveloped in flames. No time for deliberation or consistent action. All is confusion and consternation. Lifeboats are rendered useless, death presents itself with the single alternative of the flames or the waves. A few moments, and hundreds of valuable lives are sacrificed. The stately ship and its rich freight are no more, the ocean roars and surges as before, while scarce a vestige of the wreck remains.

We are all liable to some such fate. By sea, or by land, at home or abroad, by some sweeping calamity, or in some quiet way, in any place, at any time, we are exposed to be called from time to time to eternity. Who then would, who can, live without preparation? Naught will suffice but a well grounded, present, lively faith. This we need in any event, and we may have it now. Let there then be no delay, but let at once to the Savior.

BAPTISM IMMEDIATELY AFTER CONVERSION.

In Star No. 26, Bro. F. has a very reasonable and good spirited article on the above topic. We reiterate his truly Christian statement, "It is important that the subject be investigated and rightly understood. What has been written has not been for mastery, but for the truth." We will discuss of Christian doctrine conducted with a single devotion to such a result, there would be great reason for gratitude and joy.

Bro. F. says, "If baptism should be attended to immediately after conversion, the Christian world at large is much in fault, as but very few in any denomination thus do." True, too true! Not only in this respect, but in many others, the Christian world has departed from the model set for us by inspired authority. Indeed, there is a vast amount of infidelity in the church, and that infidelity increases. The churches do not believe that God's way is the best way. They want to amend and improve the Christian system, and evidently have more faith in their own prudence, wisdom and philosophy, than they have in the inspired teaching of the apostles. The great truth, so well stated in Bro. F.'s exposition, No. 304, "DUTY IS TO BE DONE FAITHFULLY; GOD WILL TAKE CARE OF THE CONSEQUENCES," is very far from being the practical faith of the church. There is a fearful amount of infidelity on this point. The man who dares to teach and do, just as Christ and his inspired apostles did, is a heretic in the esteem of modern Christianity. He that baptizes those who believe, as the apostles did, is looked upon as a fanatic. In this way the fathers of our denomination were regarded because they strove to walk perfectly in the oracles of God. Would to God we were as justly exposed to that censure now, as in the days of those noble men, whose voices were so often heard on the banks of Jordan, crying, "I have done as thou hast hidden, and yet there is room." We feel mortified that we are not worthy to be persecuted for strict conformity to inspired teachings, and example.

Let us look again at the example of the apostles. Is there any good reason why baptism should be delayed now longer than it first was? Are people more likely to be deceived now than then? Are they less instructed in the gospel now than then? Are persons who have been educated under Christian influence from childhood on as well qualified for immediate baptism, as those who had never heard a gospel sermon until the day they believed and were baptized? Are we in more danger of error in the church now than then? Were not the difficulties and dangers clustering around "immediate baptism," as great then as now?

So far as qualification for "immediate baptism" is concerned, the modern believer in a Christian land has decidedly the advantage over those who believed under the preaching of the apostles. How could those who had heard but a single sermon, gain as intelligent a view of the Christian scheme, as those who have been trained from childhood under its light?

Then again, it is certainly quite as safe to follow the example of inspired men, as to follow those not inspired. Are we not more likely to be right, when we walk in their footsteps, than when we follow the stream of modern sects? The church has always been too much inclined to apostasy, to inspire very great confidence in her example. The practice of the "whole Christian world" cannot be as safely followed as that of men divinely directed. We do not hesitate in saying that every departure from the teaching and example of the apostles is for the worse; error and not truth is the result. Bro. F. asks, "If baptism is to be immediate on the authority of the example of the apostles, is not that example to be strictly followed, and converts to be baptized the 'same day' of conversion?" We reply, "Follow their example strictly. Baptize the very first opportunity that offers; just as soon as it can be done after genuine faith. If circumstances favor night baptism, as in the case of the Philippian jailer, baptize in the night. In no case allow any unnecessary delay."

As it regards the authority of this example, are we not bound just as firmly by the example of inspired men as by their teachings? How is it in respect to Christ? Are we not commanded to follow his example, as well as obey his words? The same is true of the apostles. Read 2 Thess. 3:6, "Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the traditions which we received from you. For ye yourselves know how ye ought to follow us." And 1 Cor. 11:1, "Be ye followers of me, even as I am of Christ." Paul commands the Thessalonians for following apostolic example, 1 Thess. 5:6, "For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance, as ye know what manner of men we were among you for your sakes. And ye became followers of us, and of the Lord, having received the word," &c. "And then

ye were examples to all that believe in Macedonia and Achaia." What more can we require to convince us that we are bound to follow the apostles in planting and training the Christian church? They are our example. The Holy Spirit has taken special pains to put a survey of their actions on record, that we may have a model before us, and know how we ought to conduct the affairs of the church. From that record we learn how the apostles preached the gospel; how they instructed sinners; how and when they baptized believers; how they planted the church; and the epistles inform us how they trained the churches. Now what they did under the direction of the Holy Spirit, is just as authoritative and binding upon us, as what they wrote. They were just as infallible in planting the church, as described in the Acts of the apostles, as they were in training it, as developed in their letters; and we are bound by one as much as the other. If the Christian world has departed from this apostolic record, and adopted customs of their own invention, are they not "teaching for doctrine the commandments of men," and is not their religion just so far human? Shall F. Baptists follow the other religious bodies in this apostasy, or shall we walk strictly in the example of the apostles? Can we do better than to follow the inspired plan? Shall we not follow Christ and believe that "God will take care of the consequences?"

As important as we deem the speedy baptism of the convert to Christ to be, we consider the practice of a strict conformity to the Divine oracles in all matters of religion, of infinitely more importance. The strong tendency of the church is to infidelity, &c., to follow human custom, prudence and philosophy, rather than God. What security have we that this tendency will not result in general rationalism? There is even now more philosophy preached, and custom and fashionable tradition practiced, than there is Bible. The church is certainly floating away from the oracles of God to rationalism. We are jealous of these improvements upon apostolic practice. We are alarmed for the result. Teachers who become wiser than the inspired apostles, are dangerous leaders. We are not sticklers for immediate baptism any more than strict conformity to the gospel in all doctrine and practice. We contend for the Christian religion, and reject all sects; whether born in Papal or Protestant sects; whether suggested by wise men or fools; by all the Christian world or a part of it only; by good men or bad men. We know of no true light in religion but the word of God. We are resolved to teach and practice no other gospel in whole or in part than that given by the Holy Spirit. We want no other hope than the gospel affords. To the gospel and nothing but the gospel, are given the services of our soul, spirit and body.—G. M. B.

THE FIRST DEATH.

It has been now some fifteen months since the opening of the Maine State Seminary, and during that time four hundred different students have been in attendance. There has been but little sickness, and the health and lives of students have been remarkably preserved.

We have often put the inquiry in our social gatherings for prayer, "Who shall be the first to die?" How little it is that we think of now as to strike where, and in the manner, it has struck! God only can see the future. We cannot say what the morrow shall be.

It is our painful duty to record the death of CHARLES WELLS, of Wells, aged 15, son of Hon. Theodorus Wells, Jr., Senator elect from the district of York. Young Wells fell from a swing at five o'clock in the afternoon on Tuesday, the 28th inst., and lay in an unconscious state till the next Sabbath morning, when he expired at four and a half o'clock.

Funeral services were held in the Seminary Chapel on the Sabbath, in the presence of attending hundreds who crowded the pews and entrance ways. On Monday morning before sunrise, the teachers and students followed the body to the depot, leaving ten of the students and ourselves behind to proceed with the father and sister to Wells. Funeral services were held in Wells, on the 5th inst., conducted by Rev. John Stevens.

The true estimate of Wells' character, how he was loved, and how his memory will be cherished, may be seen from the resolutions published in another column. The God who caused this sad event to work for the good of the afflicted family and friends, as well as for the institution of which our dear and departed pupil was a member, is the prayer of many hearts.—O. B. C.

OUR BOOKS.—CHANGE IN THE TERMS OF SALE. At the late meeting of the Board of Corporators of our Printing Establishment, it was voted not to send out any more books on commission, except the REGISTER—that all orders for books for a less amount than ten dollars be required to be accompanied by the cash—and that credit (if approved) be given for larger amounts, but that it should be limited to six months.

The plan adopted for selling our books has been wrong, radically wrong, from the beginning. No other publishers within our knowledge dispose of their books on commission. It is not done by the American Tract Society, the Sunday School Union, the Baptist Publication Society, nor by any private publishing house in the country. All publishers who have ever attempted it, have found it unprofitable, and have been obliged to abandon the practice or the business. It has well nigh ruined the last thousands of dollars, and now have thousands of dollars' worth of books scattered through the country, from which we shall never realize a cent, owing to the unavailability of the books, or the want of ability or inclination to pay on the part of those who hold them. Our Board, therefore, came to the conclusion to abandon the practice at once, and also (agreeably to the recommendation of the last General Conference to adopt the cash system of publishing books as soon as the interests of the Establishment would permit) to require cash to be paid for bills amounting to less than ten dollars.

Hence our friends will understand that their orders which do not amount to ten dollars must be accompanied by the cash (except for the REGISTER), and that orders amounting to ten dollars or more are to be paid within six months. All books ordered and forwarded, are to be considered as actually sold, with no privilege of returning them as heretofore. This rule to be observed by the General Agent at Dover, and by all our depositaries and sub-agents.

YOUTH. Burder wrote to his son, "Your seventeenth year is at hand; you are entering upon a period when you walk, as it were, on ice, and have need to look to your feet, that you do not slip. Stand at a distance even from the appearance of danger."

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