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Baptists. Vermont. Woodstock Association, 1806.
Minutes ... at Hanover, N.H. September.
Keene [N. H.], Prentiss, 1806. 20 pp.
MWA copy.

MINUTES
OF THE
Woodstock Association,

HOLDEN AT

HANOVER, N. H.

September 24th & 25th, 1806.



WITH THEIR

Circulars & Corresponding Letters.



MEENE, — PRINTED BY JOHN PRENTISS, FOR THE ASSOCIATION.
1806.



AGREEABLE to the Constitution which was accepted at our last Association, for forming a Missionary Society, by the name of *THE WOODSTOCK BAPTIST MISSIONARY SOCIETY*, a number of the Subscribers to said Constitution met and formed into a Society, at Hanover, September 24th, 1806, and made choice of the following officers for the ensuing year, viz.

- ELDER JEREMIAH HIGBEE, *President.*
 - MOSES HALE, Esq. *Secretary.*
 - JOHN TUTHILL, Esq. *Treasurer*
 - ELDERS ARIEL KENDRICK,
 - THOMAS BROWN,
 - WILLIAM ELLIOT,
 - STEPHEN CHOATE,
 - SAMUEL SMITH
 - DEACONS SAMUEL MANNING,
 - EBENEZER HUNTING.
- } *Trustees.*

THE Treasurer received about 90 Dollars from the Society, and the Board have agreed with Elder Ariel Kendrick to make a tour to the Northern parts of Newhampshire and Vermont to commence his travels on the first of January next.

MINUTES

OF THE

Woodstock Association.

WEDNESDAY, Sept. 24, 1806.

AT 1 o'clock, P. M. agreeably to appointment, Eld. Jeremiah Higbee preached the introductory Sermon, from 2 Cor. ii. 17—*For we are not as many who corrupt the word of God, &c.*

After public worship, chose Elder Ariel Kendrick Moderator, and Elder Jeremiah Higbee, Clerk.

Read the letters from the Churches, from which the following list was taken.

N. B. Notes of distinction, the same as last year.

CHURCHES, MINISTERS, & MESSENGERS:

		Adcd.	Dismiss.	Exclud.	Died.	Total.	Money.
Woodstock,	JABEZ COTTLE,	2	0	3	0	79	\$0,20
Newport;	THOMAS BROWN,	7	0	2	2	121	2,16
	Dea. Asaph Stow,						
	Dea. Abel Metcalf.						
†Royalton,	—————					16	
Windsor,	SAMUEL SMITH	0	0	0	0	36	0,50
	John Smith						
Westmoreland,	*E. BAILEY,	0	1	0	1	55	0,29
†Marlow,	—————					91	
Dublin,	*ELIJAH WILLARD,	21	1	1	2	116	1,25
	Daniel Cummings,						
	Josiah Flint.						
Hopkinton,	—————	0	2	0	2	87	0,50
	Samuel Hoyt.						
Chester,	AARON LEALAND,	4	0	0	1	71	0,12
Alstead,	JEREMIAH HIGBEE,	7	0	1	1	86	1,00
	Moses Hale,						
	Dea. Cyrus Kingsbury.						
New-London,	*JOB SEAMANS,	3	0	2	0	107	1,00
	SAML. AMBROSE,						
	Dea. Ebenezer Hunting,						
	Dea. Zebedec Hase.						
Cornish,	ARIAL KENDRICK,	7	0	0	0	63	1,00
	Deacon Bingham,						
	Elisha Reed.						

Churches:	Ministers & Messen.	Added.	Dismiss.	Excluded	Died.	Total.	Money
Mason,	WILLIAM ELLIOT,	0	0	0	0	31	\$ 0,75
Temple,		0	0	0	0	31	0,42
Sharon,	Ebenezer T. Wood *JAMES PARKER, Dea. Amos Parker, Jonathan Rowell.	8	0	0	0	38	0,25
Westminster,		0	0	3	1	18	0,50
Plainfield,	John Tuthill, Samuel Tuthill, *JONATHAN CRAM, Dea. Benj. Kimball, Andrew Blunt,	1	0	2	1	45	0,60
Grafton, N. H.	*JOSEPH WHEAT, Seth Martin, Peter Barber.	4	0	2	0	105	0,15
Wardsborough,	STEPHEN CHOAT,	0	0	0	0	51	0,75
Jamaica,	Dea. Childs Wheaton, John Sprague, Aaron Knapp.	57	0	1	1	135	1,00
Hanover and Lime,	ISAAC BRIDGMAN, Caleb Forbes, David Conant,	2	0	0	3	150	1,00
Reading		7	0	0	1	41	0,60
Canaan	Samuel Lamson, Samuel Buck, William White.	1	0	0	0	41	0,50
† Pomphret Weathersfield	Job Tyler, Richard Whittier, Clark Carrier.	0	0	0	0	23	
		1	4	1	1	48	1,00
Grafton, Vt.	David Boynton, Seth Houghton, Frederick Temple,	0	2	1	0	39	0,44
† Cavendish		0	0	0	0	46	
Andover	JOEL MANNING Dea Samuel Manning	0	0	0	0	26	0,62
Goshen,		8	0	0	0	33	0,50
Washington	Jonathan Sholes Elijah F. Willey	0	0	0	0	25	0,53
Sutton		0	0	0	0	44	0,50
Peterborough*	NATHAN CHAMPLIN	0	0	0	0	21	0,50
	John Colby Benjamin Nichols	120	10	19	17	1779	\$18,54

* This Church was added the present session.

N. B.—The letters from the Churches in Mason, Andover, Wardsborough and Sutton, contained questions which were referred to a select committee, and they were not returned to the Clerk; therefore their numbers are inserted as they stood last year; and their questions with their answers are necessarily omitted.

Adjourned to 8 o'clock to-morrow morning,

Thursday Sept. 25.—Met according to adjournment.—Meeting opened by Prayer.

Received Messengers, and Minutes from Corresponding Associations.

From Warren, no Messenger nor Minutes.

From New-Hampshire, Minutes, by their Messenger, Elder Joshua Roberts.

From Shaftsbury, Elder Nathaniel Kendrick with their Minutes.

From Vermont, Minutes, but no Messengers.

From Leyden, their Minutes by Elder Choat.

From Meridith, Minutes by Elder Sanborn.

From Richmond, Elder Tutill, with their Minutes.

Read and approved the Circular Letter, prepared by Deacon Samuel Manning. Also, the Corresponding Letter, written by Elder Stephen Choat.

Appointed Messengers to Corresponding Associations.

To the Warren, Elders Brown, and Higbee, and brother Elijah F. Willey.

To the New-Hampshire, Elder Joseph Wheet.

To the Shaftsbury, Elders Choat, and Ariel Kendrick.

To Vermont, Elder Nathaniel Kendrick.

To the Leyden, Elder E. Willard, and brother Daniel Cummings.

To the Richmond, Elder James Parker, Deacon Samuel Bartlett, and brother Samuel Lamson.

To the Meridith, Elders Ambrose, and Cottle, and brother John Colby.

The Church in Cavendish, having neglected to send to the Association for two years—Appointed Elders S. Smith, and J. Manning, to labor with them for their neglect.

Appointed Elders Cottle, and Parker, a committee to labour with Pomphret Church for their neglect.

The Church in Woodstock having informed the Association that they have renounced their written Articles of Faith and Practice—Voted that Elders Kendrick and Brown, be a Committee to labour with them for the same.

Voted to insert in the Minutes, the complaint exhibited in the Minutes of the Vermont Association against Elder Aaron Lealand, with the doings of this Association thereon.

“Considering the circumstance of Elder Aaron Lealand’s accepting and holding such a number of offices in the civil department, which we consider very inconsistent with his office as a gospel Minister, and which is a grief to us :—We earnestly recommend it to the Woodstock Association to take the matter into their consideration, and take such measures as their wisdom shall dictate, which may do honor to the cause of the Redeemer, and relieve us from our grief.”

Having taken the above complaint into serious consideration, we are of opinion, that the complainants not having produced any evidence that they have taken the previous labours with Elder Lealand, that the gospel requires, we cannot legally receive the complaint.

It being credibly reported that the Church in Chester have changed their religious doctrinal sentiments :—Voted, That Elders Kendrick, Higbee, Smith and Elliot, be a committee to labour with them and make report at our next.

Voted, That Elder Brown, prepare the Circular Letter ; and Elder Ambrose, the Corresponding Letter for next year.

Voted, That the Association meet at Dublin, on the last Wednesday in Sept. next, at one o'clock, P. M.

Voted, That Elder Brown, preach the introductory Sermon ; In case of the failure of Elder Kendrick.

Voted, That Elder Higbee, superintend the printing and distribution of the Minutes.

A Sermon was preached by Elder Joshua Young, of New-Salisbury, from John 1, 51.

The Warren Association will sit next year at Salem, the Tuesday after the first Wednesday in September.

New-Hampshire. At Cornish, County of York, second Wednesday in June.

Shaftsbury. At Cheshire, the first Wednesday in June, at 10 o'clock, A. M.

Meridith. At Sandborntown, second Wednesday in Sept.



Circular Letter.

THE *Ministers and Messengers* of the *Woodstock Baptist Association* to the *Churches* whom they represent, send greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN,

Permit us to address you on the important and interesting subject of *Baptism* and the *Lord's Supper*.

As these are Sacraments, appointed by our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, to be continued until his second coming, and unto the end of the world ; it is of great importance that we understand what they are, and to whom they are to be administered. And

1st These are *positive institutions* about which we can know nothing, but from what Christ, and those inspired by his Spirit have taught us.

2d Whenever, and wherever, these ordinances are so altered, as to lose the intent of the institutor, then and there the ordinances are lost and become no Chris-

tian ordinances. These things we shall take for granted.

When our Lord commanded his ministers to Baptize in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, he must mean that they should perform some *particular action* in that Sacred name. And what that action was, we may understand by knowing the *meaning* of the word baptize, and the *manner* in which baptism was actually performed by John the Baptist, and Christ's immediate followers. The meaning of the original word, Baptizo, which is translated baptize, is first, to dip or overwhelm; secondly, to wash. For this definition we have the united testimony of a numerous train of learned and pious, *Pedobaptist* Authors.

John the Baptist baptized in Aenon, near to Salem, because there was much water there, and in the river Jordan; and Jesus, being baptized of him, went up straitway out of the water. Christ's disciples were wont to pray by a river side. Philip and the Eunuch went down both into the water, and he baptized him. From the above and other evidence, which we have not room to insert, it appears to us that John the Baptist, and the Apostles baptized by *dipping*. And a multitude of learned and pious *Pedobaptist* authors, fully concede to this.

Thirdly, we conceive, that where sprinkling or pouring is practised for baptism, the ordinance is so far *changed* as to *lose* the *intent* of the institutor, and consequently becomes *no christian ordinance*.

Fourthly, we can find no evidence that any were baptized but such as were apparently *made disciples*; John required, in order for baptism, that his hearers should bring forth fruits meet for repentance, Matth. 3d; 8th, and Luke 3d; 8th.

We have no account that Christ's disciples baptized any, but such as were apparently made disciples, first John. 4th; 1st, 2d.

Christ, in the commission which he gave to his ministers, gives no liberty to baptize any, but such

as are first taught, or disciplined. Matth. 28th 19th. and no one, that we have any account of in the New Testament, ever deviated from the rule, laid down in the commission.

Fifthly, in *strict conformity* to the commission, which Christ gave to his disciples, they *immediately* baptized all those, who gave evidence of faith in Christ.* The case of Saul and that of the Jailor are *remarkably full* to the *point*; for the former had neither ate nor drank for three days, yet he was baptized before he took meat; and the latter, being converted in the dead of night, was baptized before break of day.

Furthermore, *we have not the least intimation that ever one was admitted to the Lord's table prior to his being baptized.* Now the *same* commission which our Lord gave to his primitive disciples, he *still gives* his ministers; and *our practice* ought to be as *theirs was*: Therefore, no unbaptized person is to be admitted to the communion table.

Our next enquiry shall be, who are in duty bound to come to the Lord's table? Or who are thus directed, "this do in remembrance of me." This command was given to Christ's disciples, and doubtless continues to be the duty of all such to this day. Then why have we denied this privilege to many, whom we really esteem as his disciples? This is a question of serious importance to us; for on account of this practice we are stigmatized as self righteous, uncharitable bigots; not only by the world, but by professors of religion: And this is not all, for some whom we really esteem as the Lambs of Christ, of various denominations, including our own, are much grieved with this practice. When this is the case, we ought to examine carefully, and see if we act agreeably to Christ's commands, which inculcate love and union among christians. We ought likewise to render the reasons

* Acts 2d, 38th, 41st and 8th, 12th, 13th, 36th, 37th, 38th, and 9th. 18th chap. 18th, 8th, and 22d, 19th.

of our conduct to our grieved brethren, of all denominations. This we shall endeavor briefly to do.

Although we would by no means say any thing, that can be taken *hard* or *unkind*, against any denomination of christians, did not duty require it; yet as we feel bound to declare plainly, the reason why we cannot commune with all, whom we esteem as christians; we shall be under the *necessity* of mentioning some of those things in other denominations, which *bar* us from this privilege which we *ardently wish* to enjoy. But as it is the *Lord's table* and *not ours*, we must attend to *his directions*, rather than to *our own feelings*.

As our refusing to commune with the Congregationalists and Methodists is the chief, if not all, the occasion of grief in the lambs of Christ, we shall confine ourselves to observations on these two denominations. And First, altho' it is the duty of all christians to commune at the Lord's table, yet this is not always their first duty: For we read 1st Cor. 11th 28th, "let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread and drink of that cup." Again, Matth. 5th, 23d, 24th "therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee, leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way, first be reconciled to thy brother; and then come and offer thy gift." Now, had we evidence that any brother had neglected these plain prerequisites, we could not admit him to communion at the Lord's table, without practically bidding him God speed in disobedience to his commands. And the same rule will apply, with equal force, with respect to every plain prerequisite.

And as we have briefly proved, first, that *dipping*, and that *only* is baptism; secondly, that baptism is the *first*, or *immediate duty* of all such as give evidence of christianity; and so the door of admittance into a gospel Church: And have no kind of evidence that any were ever admitted without it: We cannot consistent-

ly admit any to *communion* whom we esteem *unbaptized*. For if we do, we shall be guilty of *practical falsehood*. For by admitting them we must practically say, either first, that we believe they are baptized (and consequently that many of us have been baptized twice) when we really believe no such thing.

Or secondly, that baptism is not a prerequisite to communion, when our belief is just the reverse. Or third, that their believing themselves to be baptized makes them so, when our settled judgment is, that neither their belief nor ours cannot in the least alter the commands and ordinances of Christ. Or lastly, that his commands and ordinances may be trifled with; and that when they cross our feelings, or those of our brethren we are not bound to obey them! when we really believe no such thing. If we should thus seek to please men, we should not be the servants of Jesus Christ. Secondly, if we admit those to the Lord's table, whom we esteem unbaptized, while we fully believe baptism to be a prerequisite to communion, we go counter to the *law of love*. For if we love the Lord with all our hearts, we shall keep his commands: and if we love our neighbor or brother as ourselves, we shall not suffer sin upon our brother, but shall reprove him in tenderness: And as we could not commune at the Lord's table, *ourselves*, before we were baptized, if we love our brother as ourselves, we cannot admit *him*, before he has attended to the same divine prerequisite.

Thirdly, as many congregational churches receive members, who do not even pretend, that they are born again; yes, receive all civil persons who wish to join them; and ordain ministers over them, without examining the candidates for that sacred office, respecting the work of regenerating grace on their hearts; and pay little or no attention to gospel discipline; we cannot own these as gospel churches, by extending our fellowship to them: Nay, we find no more divine authority for

communing with them than with other civil persons, who never joined any church; and other congregational churches, though they *examine* candidates for the ministry, as well as persons who wish to join them in church fellowship, with respect to christian experience; and pay attention to discipline; yet are so *closely connected* with the *first mentioned churches* by reciprocal communion, and in the ordination of ministers, that should we own these as gospel churches, we virtually, own the *whole denomination*.

Fourthly, should we assent that sprinkling is gospel baptism; and that the members of these churches are, in this respect, properly introduced into the visible church; to be consistent, and as many of their writers allow, we must receive the parents with their numerous offspring, both old and young into our fellowship; for they have all been introduced in the same way; and if sprinkling is baptism for the *parents*, it is for the *children*: By which act we should, not only countenance and assist in building up the practice of infant baptism, but extend our fellowship to all those who were received in infancy, and have not since been excluded; tho' many of them, to all appearance, are irreligious, and profane; and some are even infidels. If these ought to be received into fellowship none ought to be refused.

Although many of the above remarks equally apply to Congregational, and Methodist Churches, yet we shall make a few observations with particular reference to the latter. It probably will be pleaded in favor of some of their members, that they have been baptized in the Apostolic mode, as we understand it. But we humbly conceive, that the practice of these churches, with respect to baptism, is not only *unscriptural*, but *inconsistent with itself*. For,

1st. By their rules of doctrine and discipline, they hold strictly to the baptism of infants; which must be an *important duty*, or a *great error*; as it, very mate-

rially; effects the unbuilding of the visible church.— If it be the latter, by what authority do they maintain and practise it? But if the former, why do they tolerate many of their members in the neglect of it? If it be a *duty*, it is because it is *positively instituted* by Christ: and while they esteem it to be so, how can they hold those in fellowship, who live constantly in disobedience, in the total neglect of it?

Secondly. While they hold infant baptism to be valid, and practise it, they yet (if desired) baptize the same persons after they come to years of understanding:— which is practically disannulling infant baptism, or rebaptizing: for the latter of which we know of no scripture evidence. Thirdly, they practise sprinkling for baptism; and although when they sprinkle a person, they declare in the most solemn manner that they baptize, yet when a person, who has been sprinkled, is convinced that he is not baptized, and desires to be so, they baptize him, by dipping: which is practically disannulling sprinkling or rebaptizing: and yet, at the same time, they sprinkle all those, who prefer this mode, and solemnly declare that they baptize them.

Secondly, they hold doctrines which, to us appear, to tend to subvert the great gospel doctrine of Salvation by grace alone: A few only of which we shall have room to mention. And first, they deny the doctrine of unconditional election; and affirm that no man is elected, until he has performed the previous condition of faith in Christ; and that faith is a cause of election. Secondly, they hold that no man is regenerated, until he has, on his part, actually performed the condition, to which this blessing is positively promised; until he has actually forsaken his wicked ways and thoughts, and seeks the Lord, and that men do thus without any more divine assistance than others have, who never do it.

On which we take the liberty to observe, that to us it evidently appears, that no unregenerate person ever truly seeks the Lord, while he remains so. For which

we offer three reasons. 1st Spiritual blessings are promised to all who seek the Lord: but never promised to the exercises of a carnal unrenewed heart. 2d No seeking can be acceptable but thro' faith in Jesus Christ: for, *without faith it is impossible to please God.* 3d. The man after God's own heart, and other holy men of old, were frequently employed in *seeking God*; and were greatly blessed therein. But "the wicked through the pride of his countenance, will not seek after God." Wherefore, we humbly conceive that if unregenerate men, on their part, do actually perform all this, and that too with no more divine assistance than others have who never are born again, then there is no need of regenerating grace; for it seems the change is actually wrought; but if it be not completed, they have, it seems, the promise of God that it shall be. And if men perform these important conditions, with that divine assistance which is *common* to others; they may with great propriety thus address the unconverted. "Had you done as much in the cause of God, and been as well disposed towards the way of Salvation, as we were, with the same divine help that you had, you would certainly have been converted." Thirdly, they believe that those who are regenerated, have no certain promise of salvation; that their salvation now depends solely on their own exertions, unconnected with any more divine assistance, than what many have, who actually fall from a state of justification into eternal perdition.

If this doctrine be according to Godliness, should these questions be asked the saints in glory, "who maketh thee to differ from another man? What hast thou that thou hast not received?" The answer must be to this effect, "I received no more divine assistance, while I lived, on earth than many did who are now in hell; had they improved that grace as I did, they would have been saved; therefore, although it was grace to promise heaven to either of us, on our exer-

tions, yet, as I performed the condition, with no more divine help than they had, my own exertions are the sole cause of the infinite difference, which exists between us.”

Furthermore, if the above doctrines be according to the scriptures, we conceive, that it depends not on the sovereign will of God, but solely on the will of creatures, whether Christ shall ever “see of the travel of his soul, or have a seed to serve him;” for, it seems, God does no more, in this world, for those who are saved, than he does for many who are lost; therefore the event rests solely with the creature.

If the above be the doctrine of pure grace, we confess, we know not how to distinguish between grace and works, nor how boasting is excluded. But we fear, that all which has been, or can be said on the foregoing subject will be of little avail with many, unless we for a moment, pay attention to plausible objection, or rule, which is very prevalent with both professor and profane.

Rule, “whatever men think to be right, is so for them: Conscience is our guide; altho’ other churches, to us, appear unscriptural, in faith and practice, yet we charitably hope, they are right at heart, and sincere in their faith and practice; and if so, their faith and practice is right in the sight of God; and we ought to receive them into church fellowship.”

Brethren, this is a *short rule*, and if it be *good one*, it is worthy of our attention; for by adopting it we shall save ourselves much labor. It supersedes the necessity of searching the holy scriptures; and however negligent we have been in this respect, yet if we have a system of ideas, which we sincerely believe and practice, tho’ it may be diametrically opposite to plain scripture testimony, our really believing it to be right makes it so in the sight of God! And they, who see it to be utterly unscriptural, ought to fellowship us in it!

2d, It will save us the labor of examining, to see if

in establishing our system, our judgment was not influenced by educational prejudice, other prepossessions, or want of love to the truth : for however much we may have been influenced by any, or all these, yet, if we really think we are right, we are so in the sight of God !

But, if we adopt this rule, we must receive into our fellowship, Shakers, Papists and Mehometans ; for the great body of these professors appear really to believe what they profess.

2d, We must receive a persecuting Saul, and all those who because they love not the truth, are left to strong delusions, to believe a lie, that they might be damned ; for the former “ verily thought that he ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth ; ” and the latter really believe a lie. Now brethren, if it will not do for us to admit the consequences, and extend our fellowship to all those above mentioned, let us reject the rule, which unavoidably leads to it ; and make the holy scriptures our rule in all things ; and not encourage persons, or churches in those things, which we esteem quite wrong ; but withstand them to the face (tho’ we may believe them to be as sincere as Peter) in those things wherein they *ought to be blamed*. For by receiving them to the Lord’s table, we practically declare to the world, that we esteem their doctrine and practice to be in a good degree, according to divine rule. And if they are so, then our doctrine and practice, wherein they so widely differ from theirs, must be wrong. But, if while we believe them to be wrong in matters of so much importance, we by our fellowship, assist in building them up, and bid them God speed, we are partakers of their evil deeds.

Finally, although they should prove to be really wrong, yet being ignorantly so, they will be beaten with *few stripes* ; but if while we are fully convinced of their errors, we assist in building them up, we shall be beaten with *many stripes*. And now brethren,

dearly beloved, think on these things ; consider the importance of them. If ye know them, happy are ye, if ye do them. May the God of peace and love bless you, and enable you patiently to bear his cross here, that you may wear the immortal crown.

A Corresponding Letter.

The WOODSTOCK ASSOCIATION convened at Hanover, Sept. 24th and 25th, 1806, to the Sister Associations with whom they correspond, sendeth Christian Salutation :—

DEAR BRETHREN IN THE LORD,

THROUGH the propitious smiles of Heaven, we are favoured with one Anniversary Meeting more on these shores of Time, by which mean we have opportunity of receiving intelligence respecting the State of Zion, and of renewing, and of confirming our Christian Friendship and Correspondence with you.

Interviews of this kind, as rational Men and as Christians, we ought to rank among our highest privileges ; the common cause of Zion is that in which every Member is particularly interested ; both her prosperity and adversity, as a body, effects each Member as being a part of the whole, for saith the Apostle, " Whether one Member suffer, all the Members suffer with it ; or one Member be honored, all the Members rejoice with it. Professors can have but little claim to the appellation of Christians, while they can hear the depredation of the enemy, or behold the wounds of Zion and their hearts not bleed. The Prophet gave vent to his feelings in the following words—" O that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people !" Nor can we have a scriptural evidence of our union to Christ, while our hearts remain unaffected with the prosperity of Zion ; for those who love God, will love his people ; they will delight in and seek their welfare. — Every one that

loveth him that beget, loveth him also that is begotten of him: The day in which we live is an eventful period, God is not only shaking Earth, but Heaven also, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain.

While Revolutions have wrecked the civil Powers of Europe, Kingdoms have tottered, and usurpation and Monarchy have prevailed among the Nations of the Earth, the professed Church of Christ has in its turn been shaken also ; but though things have sometimes worn a melancholy aspect in the different parts of the Camp of Israel, while the Dragon has been casting out a flood of errors after the Woman, and some professors have been taken in the whirlpool of deception, and have apostatized from the faith once delivered to the Saints, and have gone out from us because they were not of us, yet blessed be God, truth is still victorious ! Jesus still reigns ; and the blaze of Gospel Truth, is daily dispersing those thick clouds of Popish superstition and Idolatry, which have so long bewildered a great share of the Christian World.

The primitive order of the Church appears to be returning, and we behold her coming up out of the Wilderness, leaning on her Beloved. But a few Centuries ago, the number of those who professed our distinguishing sentiments were very few, while the great body of professors were involved in Popery or other superstitions. How often has it been predicted, that our sentiments, which have progressed amidst the wreck of Empires, would soon be lost in oblivion ! Thus it was said of the Jews, "Even that which they build, if a Fox go up, he shall break down their stone wall." But Glory belongs to God, that 'Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings he ordaineth strength.' Our little Band has been preserved, and like Joseph, has been like a fruitful Bough, whose Branches run over the wall." But though persecution has subsided and our ranks have been greatly increased, we still ought to wear the whole Armour of God, and like Israel of old, "Hold the sword in one hand while the other is engaged in the work, for the language still is, "Let us build with you ; for we seek your God as you do ; and we do sacrifice, &c." And though even Christians, should invite us to leave the visible order of Christ's House, and the careful observance of his institutions, yet, we ought to remember the words of our blessed Lord, "If ye love me, keep my commandments." Moreover, though we may be stigmatized as bigots, and destitute of brotherly love, while we refuse to receive to our communion at the Lord's Table unbaptized persons (notwithstanding brotherly love towards Christians is a duty required) yet before we are driven from the Apostolic practice, by sarcasms like these, we shall do well carefully to examine wherein brotherly love

consists, and from what origin it arises. Whether it consists simply in natural affection towards the Saints as Creatures, and flows from such a temper of heart as will, without hesitation, give up the laws of Christ, for the sake of uniting with those who we believe are Christians in all their unscriptural practices ; or, whether it consists in love to Christians, because we discover the Image of Christ in them, and proceeds from the spirit of Christ in the heart, which influences the Soul to regard Christ, and his Laws, above Father and Mother, Brethren and Sisters, &c. And inclines us to love the Saints, and unite with them in proportion as they are like Christ, and walk in his steps. If the latter be agreeable to the Gospel, how can we better express our loyalty to Christ, and that love to the Saints which the Scripture requires, than in a careful observance of the Divine Commands, and giving fellowship to our Brethren in all things wherein they follow the footsteps of Christ, and by withholding it in all things in which we have evidence, they depart. God is doing wonders in the World, and Saints in general, and the Ministers of Christ in particular, who are denominated Labourers together with God, have great encouragement to be faithful ; the promise that the Heathen should be given to the Son for an inheritance, appears to be accomplishing. God has of late in a special manner called the attention of the Children, to make exertions for the spreading the Gospel among the Savages, and many of the Missionaries who have been sent, as appears from our Magazines, have possessed not only Evangelic principles but Apostolic piety and zeal ; men who have been willing to hazard their lives for the cause of our Lord Jesus Christ, so that we may with propriety, adopt the language of the Apostle and say, " We have seen the souls of them who were beheaded for the Witness of Jesus, and for the word of God," engaged in this glorious cause ; nor have their pious labours been altogether unsuccessful, the Lord has hitherto gone before them, and made their way prosperous ; they have been instrumental of bringing some of the poor heathen to the knowlege of the truth, who now begin to breathe the heavenly air, and to lisp forth some of the notes of Moses and the Lamb, saying great and marvellous are thy Works, Lord God Almighty." How important Brethren, is the object of spreading the gospel, if we consider how many millions of precious souls there are, who are perishing for lack of knowledge ! How rich will be the reward, if we may be the happy instruments of winning a Bride to Jesus, and at last the blessing of many ready to perish come upon us.

Our present Meeting has been harmonious, and agreeable.

The intelligence from our Churches is various. Some en-

joy, refreshing showers of divine grace. Some complain of too much coldness in religion ; but are established in the Faith as it was once delivered to the Saints. While others are wrecked with the baneful spirit of Apostacy : or, almost overwhelmed in the vortex of error, and are fast verging towards the brink of dissolution.

DEAR BRETHREN, We wish to continue a correspondence with you and may it contribute much to our mutual joy here, and to our eternal felicity in the coming world—Farewell.

By order of the Association,

ARIAL KENDRICK, Moderator.
JEREMIAH HIGBEE, Clerk.

