

bring it before this venerable assembly. My reasons for presenting the subject before you are its immediate connexion with the peace, the harmony, and the prosperity of our churches, and that in a multitude of counsellors there is safety.

Every close observer of our common mode of employing and dismissing our pastors, with the method of raising their salaries, must have observed that, in many cases, feelings arise which never should exist between a pastor and his people. May this not be in a great measure owing to a defect in our system, or to the want of a proper system? In former times, among Baptists, freewill offerings from the people to the pastor, by way of salary, were more in practice,—these were succeeded in part by subscriptions, a kind of secondary freewill offering, or rather to ascertain the amount of offering or salary, in order that a pastor might know, on taking the charge of a Church, what he had to depend upon. When these methods, jointly and severally, fell short of the salary required, in some places committees were chosen to apportion, according to circumstances, what each should pay, that one might not be burdened and another eased: this created heartburnings, being looked upon as a kind of assessment or tax, by those who tenaciously adhered to the former system, of freewill offering to the pastor himself.* This difficulty is greatly increased of late years, by donations and freewill offerings, however great or numerous, to the pastor, being considered, by perhaps a majority of the Church, as no part of the salary, to be paid into the hands of collectors or treasurers, appointed for the purpose. For some years past, with deep anxiety, I have been taking notice of these movements, earnestly wishing that in this body wise and discreet men, sages in counsel, would devise some way, or mature some system, that would work harmoniously throughout our denomination, and be hailed with joy by both pastors and people. Might not something analogous to our Domestic Missionary system be an improvement?—Delegates chosen by the churches to meet and fix the salaries of pastors with a sliding scale upwards for those who had families.—Every one, professing christianity, to lay by him in store, as God had prospered him, and weekly or monthly cast it into the treasury, so that each Church would know at any time and at all times what could be done for the support of the gospel ministry. This I believe was the Apostolic mode; all which I would humbly and respectfully submit for your consideration. Believing you all to be deeply interested in this matter, I am, Dear Brethren,

Yours, in Christian fellowship,

THOMAS SOLEY.

* See Donation Visit at New Minas, (Christian Messenger, June 30, page 205.) £25, considered as a substantial proof of the belief that "the labourer is worthy of his hire." Should he get all his hire this way, or only a part?

Circular Letter

To the Churches composing the Central Nova Scotia Baptist Association.

DEAR BRETHREN—

As the present gathering reminds us that another year is just now closing, it is well for us to reflect on the past and call to mind that, notwithstanding all our ill deservings, God has been very merciful to us in the dispensations of his Divine Providence. This is seen with our natural eyes in the march of improvement generally in temporal things, as well as in houses erected for the worship of God, for the comfort and convenience of his people, and of those also that stand in need of the saving grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. Surely these things call for much gratitude to God from whom all blessings flow. But more especially the past year has been one signally marked by the copious outpouring of the Holy Spirit in the United States, perhaps in some respects without a parallel. It appears evident that God was pleased to sanctify their season of financial pressure, and marvellously display his Almighty power in the conversion of vast multitudes, and hereby greatly increase the members, wealth and means of usefulness of his visible Church on earth. While God has been pleased to smile in his providence and grace there, we have not experienced such extensive manifestation here, yet we have cause of much thankfulness in this Province that some mercy-drops have fallen, and some of our churches have been much revived and gladdened with additions of willing converts. Yet on the other hand we have much cause of humiliation on account of our coldness in affection and remissness in duty. Had the principles, admonitions and exhortations afforded in the last Circular Letter published in our Minutes been faithfully regarded and fully practised, we might have reasonably expected a much better state of things than now exists.

But, dear Brethren, we need not longer delay in dwelling on the past, but will confine ourselves to some topics of remark having a bearing on the future. And here, reflecting on the great variety of subjects which have been dwelt upon in former Circulars, it would seem difficult to hit upon one varying from them that would be best adapted to promote the interest of our Zion here. But a thought or two has suggested itself in reference to the special importance at the present time of the inculcation of pure Baptist's principles, and unity of sentiment in our denomination. These are essential to our spiritual prosperity and progress, the one lays the foundation, the other as it were erects the building, for where there is soundness of principle it will lead to constancy of scriptural practice.

As Baptists we profess to adhere more closely than any other sect in Christendom, to the Apostolic doctrine and practice. We should never fear to avow our sentiments on all suitable occasions, and should so live as to be the Epistles of Christ's love, read and known of all men; whenever this is the

case they as it were enforce their sentiments by their practice, and thereby prove the genuineness of their principles, should this be more universal in our denomination there would be no cause of fear in reference to the dissemination of Baptist sentiments, and the ultimate triumph of the cause of God.—But where there exists an unsoundness of sentiment and looseness of practice, and consequently a giving countenance to error in principle and practice, we may be assured in proportion as such exist there will be a probability of apostasy from their professed faith, and the cause of God will be reproached, and an influence exerted in consequence by our opponents that will tend much to our disadvantage; but on the contrary let all Associated Baptists be in reality what their principles inculcate, and as a united host stand firm under the influence of true piety, led and guided by the Spirit of God in his Holy Word, then there is no fear but that God by them will bring about his great purposes of mercy in building up his own cause in the world. O may God hasten it in his own good time!

Another thought suggests itself, that is, while the minds of men are so much absorbed in the things of the present life, there is too much neglect in reference to the future. We know that "to live is Christ," and to a certain extent this is of vital importance in reference to individual happiness, and in the promotion of God's sacred cause here. But this is not all. We are hastening to our long home, and such should be our anxious desire and aim to bring everything to bear upon our meetness for Heaven; this thought should be the all-absorbing one. If so, it would greatly influence us while here to labor and act for God, and with a single eye aim at his glory, and then with the Apostle we should feel to say, and that with great earnestness—"But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ, yea doubtless and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I suffer the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ and be found in him, not having mine own righteousness which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith; that I may know him and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable to his death," &c. Such was Paul's view, and he also thought it better "to depart and be with Christ;" hence he felt it would be gain to die.

And why should it not be so considered when the souls of the truly pious immediately after death enter into that glorious and happy place, where sin and sorrow are never known, and where bliss will be forever complete? The Apostle John presents a beautiful description of the happiness of those who are so highly favored as to enter there, when he says "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when he shall appear we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is." Being like Christ and dwelling in his blissful presence will constitute our eternal happiness.

The Psalmist also remarks—"Thou wilt show me the path of life, in thy presence is fullness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures forevermore." If this in connection with the preceding verse prophetically referred to Christ, yet it also refers to his true followers, for they shall be like him in the enjoyment of joy unspeakable and full of glory.

Again the Psalmist declares—"As for me I will behold thy face in righteousness. I shall be satisfied when I awake with thy likeness." Now as no true christian will ever be satisfied till he enters those blessed mansions prepared by his divine Lord, and in his likeness dwells forever in the enjoyment of his blissful presence. There and there only are fullness of joy and pleasures forevermore.

Here in this life sin is mixed with all we do, and there is no perfect place here. We participate through the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ in some foretastes, sometimes rich foretastes, and a sufficiency to make us long and wish for the society of the just made perfect. There are, it is true, some who are so divinely favored while here, that for the moment they can

"My willing soul would stay
In such a frame as this
Till called to rise and soar away
To everlasting bliss."

But such seasons are even with them short, and with many comparatively rare, and none can be fully satisfied to drink always from the lesser streams, but will be longing to drink from the fountain head of divine influence. It is, however, a blessed state to be in to have cause to say with holy Job, "I know that my Redeemer liveth," and like Paul "I know whom I have believed." Again, "I am now ready and the time of my departure is at hand, I have fought the good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith, henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord the righteous judge shall give me at that day, and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing." Now in the foregoing there is a blessed assurance to the several individuals named, viz., David, Job, and Paul, but Paul spoke of the same assurance in reference to all who love Christ's appearing. And Christ also supports the doctrine of assurance, "I give unto them eternal life and they shall never perish, and no man shall pluck them out of my hand, nor out

of my Father's hand," &c. And Paul says that "this life is hid with Christ in God, when Christ who is our life shall appear, then shall we also appear with him in glory." Then why may not Christians who are born from above draw divine comfort here, while possessing such a hope both sure and steadfast, &c., and contemplate the blessed fulfillment of all God's sacred promises, and dwell more and more upon that moment when death shall afford them a happy and blissful passport into everlasting and increasing joy. To such when death comes, victory over their last enemy is sure, and they can strike that blessed note, "Thanks be unto God who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." Oh how lamentable it is that so many indulge in fear and trembling, yield to their natural propensities and the temptations of Satan, when all is done that is necessary on the part of God to make them happy forever. And now we would say to all in the language of the Apostle, "And this I pray you that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment. That ye may approve things that are excellent, that ye may be sincere and without offence till the day of Christ, being filled with the fruits of righteousness which are by Jesus Christ unto the glory and praise of God."

Religious Intelligence.

Rev. D. McKeen writes, on the 9th inst., from Sackville, N.B., and informs us that previous to leaving Macaan he had baptized believers almost every Lord's-day since the last of February up to the last of June. Twenty-five had been added to the Church during that time from the six preaching stations connected with the Church.

United States.

A correspondent of the *Evangelist* describes a remarkable work of grace in Troy, Missouri, a place long noted for its abounding wickedness. Drunkenness, gambling, fighting, Sabbath-breaking and Universalism, held almost undisputed sway. The Universalists possessed the only house of worship in the place, save one belonging to a feeble Presbyterian church.

A new prayer-meeting was lately opened in San Francisco, at the request of men who were not professors of religion, that some Christians would come and pray with them.

Prayer-meetings are now held, many of them daily, in seventeen of the engine-houses of the Philadelphia firemen. It is stated that there was not a single attendant upon church in an entire company, there have been numerous conversions. No less than seven members of a single company were lately added to the church.

A correspondent writes from Baltimore: We have suspended our afternoon prayer-meetings, as the warm season has come on; but in place of them, we have most delightful early morning meetings from 6 to 7 o'clock, under the charge of the Young Men's Christian Association, at four of the churches, Presbyterian, Episcopal and Baptist. The Sabbath afternoon union prayer-meetings, in the Hall of the Maryland Institute, and at China Hall, are to be continued. The meetings yesterday (June 20th) were full—from 1,000 to 2,000 persons at each.

Among the good things of the Revival, may be mentioned the *Concert of Family Prayer*, engaged in by the families of the Congregational church, in Warsaw, N.Y., between the hours of eight and nine in the evening. To these exercises, the members of prayerless families and inmates of hotels, etc., were personally invited, with instances of blessed result.

In Philadelphia, the manifestations of religious interest have at no time been greater than at present. The noonday union prayer-meetings are sustained beyond all expectation; but the energy of the work is diffusing itself widely, out of the public view, meetings in great numbers being held daily in private houses, engine houses, stores, hotels, &c.

LARGE METHODIST IMMERSION.—The *Mississippi Baptist* learns that among the fruits of the work of grace in Natchez, the Methodists baptized about thirty persons in the river.

Under the head of "More Testimony," the *Zion's Advocate* says: Three persons were baptized last Friday afternoon by Rev. Dr. Harris, of the Central Congregational church, Bangor, in the baptistry of brother Porter's (Second Baptist) church.

The large African church at Richmond, the *Religious Herald* informs us, has been constrained to divide and form a new society, in consequence of the insufficiency of its accommodations for the multitudes attending. A new edifice has been erected and opened, costing \$8,000, and already half paid for by the members of the First African church.

COST OF STATE PRAYERS.—Having seen a statement that a day of thanksgiving for our success in India is likely to be appointed, we deem it pertinent to call attention to the fact, that the estimates now before the House of Commons contain the sum of 567l. 12s. 2d. for the postage of the proclamation and forms of prayer on the occasion of the "Day of Humiliation." Why, we should like to know, should Nonconformists be called upon to pay the expense of commanding the Established clergy to pray, or of supplying them with language in which they are to do it?—*The Liberator*.

A committee, consisting of the Lord Mayor, the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Bishop of London, and other gentlemen, has been formed for the purpose of making arrangements for services under the dome of St. Paul's Cathedral on Sunday evenings. It is proposed forthwith to provide accommodation for 2,500 persons, and an appeal has been made to the public to raise the necessary funds. Curiously enough, Mr. Alderman Salomons, a member of the Jewish persuasion, has subscribed twenty guineas to the fund. It is expected that the arrangements will be completed in time to allow the services to commence on the first Sunday in August.

Pope Pius IX. entered on the thirteenth year of his Pontificate on the 17th. Cardinal Mattei, on the occasion of this anniversary, went to congratulate his Holiness in the name of the Sacred College. The Pope, in a most gracious reply, after expressing his gratitude to Providence for having sent happy days to succeed those trying ones of the first years of his reign, congratulated himself on the prosperous situation of the church. It is announced that at the consistory which is to be shortly held, it is the Patriarch of Lisbon who is to be created a cardinal.

SWEDEN.—Still the work of God in connection with our brethren in this country is advancing. Persecution everywhere, more or less, waits them. Fines have been inflicted in some cases, and in others imprisonment has been endured.—Mr. Wiberg has translated a number of Mr. Spurgeon's sermons into Swedish. They are read by hundreds in this country, and there is reason to believe that some souls have been brought to the knowledge of the truth through them. They are exerting a powerful influence on many.

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