

Correspondence.

For the Christian Messenger.

What a Minister may do, and be a Minister.

(No. 3.)

In previous numbers examples under peculiar circumstances of the temporary combination of some secular pursuit with the high and holy work of the gospel ministry have been adduced, not from the class of obscure, or inefficient ministers, nor from those concerning whose piety or call to preach, doubt might perhaps be justly entertained; but from inspired apostles, and their co-adjutors, and also from holy, though un-inspired men, whose piety, call to preach and usefulness are beyond question. This union of secular labour with the work of the ministry is an exceptional case; it is not, according to the principle announced in the New Testament as to ministerial support, (See 1 Cor. ix. 14.) the normal condition, to which ministers should generally be expected, or required to submit; or which a people having ability to give a proper support, but failing to do so should contemplate without some feelings of self-reproach and shame. But while the necessity by which a minister is compelled to such a course exists, let him not be blamed as if he were the cause of that necessity or as having power, is unwilling to remove it. The remedy is very simple and direct. Let the people do their duty in providing for the support of the ministry, and the annoyance, inconvenience, or loss, on which side soever existing, will cease. Justice, piety, christian sympathy, plead for, nay, demand that a proper support be given the ministers of Christ;—ill-treatment, or neglect of them is displeasing to Him who called them to be his servants and ambassadors.

But if it be inexpedient and wrong for a person called of God to preach the gospel,—to be a minister of Christ and his church, to give a portion of his time to secular pursuits, however closely allied to, compatible with, or made subservient to, his sacred calling, let the principle be thoroughly and rigidly carried out. And notwithstanding the Rev. Doctor's explanatory note, it appears to me quite plain that Professors and Presidents of Colleges who profess to be called of God to preach the gospel,—to be ministers of Christ,—to labour with all their might for the salvation of men, and who yet devote by far the greater portion of their time and strength to other work—to another profession—that of imparting secular instruction,—scientific, mathematical, or literary, stand on no better ground as respects the matter in hand than the ministers referred to;—and are not therefore in a position to utter complaint respecting their humble brethren who are compelled to employ a part—often only a small part,—of their time in other than ministerial work. If the course of the former is right, that of the latter is not wrong;—if the course of these last is wrong that of the former is wrong also. Nor is it an answer to this to say, "I have changed my profession, I have not accepted a call from a church,—I am not a pastor." For this would be making our duty to preach the gospel,—to be a minister of Christ, dependent on a particular relation to a portion of our fellow men; while in fact such duty is made ours before we have a right to form such relation, i. e. independently of it. The truth may thus be stated: As far as Christ's minister has ability; means and opportunity, he is under a solemn and sacred obligation to his Master to preach the gospel—to live and labour for the salvation of men to the end of life. This he is bound to do, invited, or not invited by a church, pastor or not pastor, paid or not paid. With all due deference to the learned and Rev. Doctor who presides so worthily and efficiently over Acadia College, I must be permitted to say that, in my humble opinion, his explanatory note, instead of removing any difficulty from the text, makes it more difficult, not to comprehend, but to receive; and besides introduces and lays down a principle, the scriptural propriety of which there is, I think, good reason to doubt. If it is right to speak of the gospel ministry as a profession, it is certainly one essentially different from any other profession in the ordinary use of that term. In choosing some liberal pursuit whether it be that of Law, Medicine, Science, Mechanics, Arms, &c., men are generally influenced by the hope of worldly gain, pleasure, or distinction; considerations of a benevolent or religious character having but little, generally no influence, in determining such choice. Now these persons may change their profession when and as often as pleasure, profit, taste, or convenience may dictate, without perhaps committing sin by such

change. But it is very different with the man who is called of God to preach the gospel. He is impelled to the performance of this duty by no motives of pecuniary gain, mere pleasure, taste, or worldly distinction;—he feels that a solemn obligation rests on him to devote himself to this sacred work,—and that while having ability and opportunity he dares not neglect, or refuse this arduous and holy service, whatever be the trials, privations, difficulties or losses that may press upon him in it. Love to Christ, and the souls of sinners impels him to this course;—he feels that with a good conscience and the approval of his Divine Master, he cannot desist from this work or give himself up to any other,—he feels satisfied that God has called him to spiritual labour,—and that he is required as a steward to be diligent and faithful even to death. Now I submit that such a person has no right to change his calling,—to leave his divine work. And for such a one to judge that "his talents may be more usefully employed in another direction, and to act accordingly yet still retain the right to preach as he has opportunity," or as it may suit his convenience, or taste, is, it seems to me, to throw discredit on his call, or else to cast reflection on the wisdom of the Master in calling him. Now to one who has entered the ministry from mistaken views, or from mercenary, or unworthy motives, the best advice that can perhaps be given is,—leave it—it is neither your work, nor place." But I would not deem this good advice at all if given to the man who apart from all unworthy considerations of a worldly or personal kind, and impelled by an overwhelming sense of duty of Love to Christ, and the souls of men, has entered on the work of the gospel ministry. Such a one feels there is a *voce* if he preach not the gospel;—a holy fire burning within presses him on in this great work,—which is to end only with his life. It would in my humble judgment, accord much better with his duty, the claims of the gospel, the spirit of holy love and self-sacrifice required by the teaching and so powerfully and touchingly illustrated in the example labours, sufferings and death of our atoning and exalted Lord, to say to such a one with all solemnity and earnestness,—*Stick to the ministry,—whatever trials, privations, losses and reproaches you may be required to endure in this holy work,—stick to it, I say, and NEVER leave it, till laid aside by Providence, or till called by the Divine Master to your reward in Heaven.*

Hoping that those observations made simply in the interest of truth, and I trust without offence, may serve in however humble a degree to direct more general attention to the important subject of the *Gospel Ministry—its duties, trials and claims.*

I remain respectfully,
GEORGE ARMSTRONG.

For the Christian Messenger.

Extracts from the Letters read at the Central Baptist Association.

3RD. CORNWALLIS CHURCH.—"Our pastor has laboured with more than common energy during the past winter; having held meetings almost every day or evening in different sections of the church, and God has blessed his labours by reviving religion in the hearts of his people. Backsliders have been reclaimed, and sinners have been converted to God. A number have professed faith in the Saviour and have been baptized. Prayer meetings are maintained weekly in different sections of the Church, and we have three Sabbath Schools in operation. The number baptized twenty-nine."
Pastor Rev. J. PARKER.

FALMOUTH.—"Although we have not the privilege of reporting additions to our numbers by baptism, yet through God's mercy we remain a band unbroken by dismissions or death. Our young brethren have taken a praise-worthy stand in the Church—and exemplify religion at the prayer meetings, and at their work."
Pastor Rev. W. BURTON.

HALIFAX 1ST.—"Though our blessings are countless and undeserved, though we trust we enjoy a goodly share of soul prosperity and heavenly grace, yet we are unable to report such large accessions to our numbers as we could wish. We renew dear brethren the strong entreaty for your earnest prayers that the rich outpouring of God's grace upon many of our sister churches throughout the province may come down upon us as a church and upon all the churches of our land. One baptized."
Pastor Rev. DR. FRYOR.

NEW ROSS.—"We need the reviving influence of the Holy Spirit. We hope the time will soon come when we will be able to secure the services of a minister for a part of his time at least."
WALTON.—"We have had to face many discouragements, yet thanks to Almighty God we have been enabled to uphold the worship of

God and trust our labours have not been in vain. This section of the country appears to be in a state of spiritual darkness. Yet the Lord is all powerful and he can by his spirit quickly dispel darkness from the mind and shine into our hearts to give us to see the glory of God as it shines in the face of Jesus."
Pastor Rev. J. BANCROFT.

NEW GERMANY.—"Brotherly love continues and we have had renewed tokens of divine mercy. Some whom we trust are eternally saved, have been enrolled with the number of God's elect. Twelve candidates have been immersed upon a profession of faith, and admitted to the privileges of this Church."
Pastor Rev. W. E. HALL.

INDIAN HARBOR, ST. MARGARETS BAY.—"While it is not our happiness to report accessions to our church, it is our privilege to report harmony among ourselves and good attendance on the means of grace. We are at present without a settled ministry, yet our prayer-meeting is kept up and very well attended."
Pastor Rev. J. L. REID.

CORNWALLIS 4TH.—"Last spring a series of meetings was held and it soon became apparent that the power of the Lord was present, members who had been remiss in their duty to their Redeemer and the Church were led to remember their solemn vows, some who had entertained hope for years, came forward and offered themselves to the church; others who had been careless, were brought to realize that they had precious souls; and those whose life and conversation had been more consistent in the dark and cloudy day could say 'Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised, beautiful for situation the joy of the whole earth is Mount Zion, the city of the Great King.' Number baptized, eighteen."
Pastor Rev. J. L. REID.

CORNWALLIS 5TH.—"We pray and hope for better days. Knowing that God is willing to give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him. Death too has thinned our ranks. Some of our standard bearers have fallen. But we feel that God can raise up others to fill their vacant places."
Pastor Rev. D. FREEMAN.

KEMPT, HANTS Co.—"We are in a low tried state. Brother Vaughan resigned the pastoral charge of the church last year and only preaches as his health permits."
SACKVILLE.—"The past year with us has not been one of spiritual prosperity. We are united and there is a good attendance on the ministry of the word. We want more power from on high. Brethren pray for us."
Pastor R. R. PHILIP.

For the Christian Messenger.

GOLDENVILLE, August 16th, 1866.

Mr. Editor,—

Will you have the kindness to give the following address and reply a place in your paper, which circulates largely, I believe, among Mr. Rogers' friends. Permit me also to remark that Bro. Rogers deserves well of the friends of Temperance in this province, and is a credit to the denomination of which he is a member. If you have any more Baptists of his stamp in the western part of the province to spare, send them along this way.

And I may also add that in compliance with a request of some friends of Confederation, Mr. Rogers gave us a most able and instructive lecture in that same Court House which you heard was draped in mourning at the passage of the Confederation resolution in our Assembly last winter, and notwithstanding that a large majority of his audience were Anti-Confederate in their feelings, the meeting gave him a unanimous vote of thanks for his able lecture and the unanimous feeling was that he gave us more information on that subject than we had previously received from any source.

He dealt with his subject in no narrow party aspect but in its broad and general features. Mr. Rogers is a public speaker of no ordinary character he has most certainly a happy faculty of interesting his audience upon any subject on which he speaks. We wish him every prosperity and large success wherever God in his providence casts his lot.

Yours with respect,

ONE PRESENT.

P. S.—The friends of Temperance in Sherbrooke, will also present Mr. R. with another address and purse this evening.

ADDRESS.

To W. H. Rogers, Esq., Grand Worthy Councilor, B. A. O. of Good Templars.

ESTEEMED SIR AND BROTHER,—

We the members of *Whin Rock Lodge* in consideration of the lively interest manifested by you, for our welfare when resident amongst us as also in the repetition of the same on your present visit to Goldenville, also the valuable boon conferred upon us by you in accounting us worthy to be received into the B. A. O. of Good Templars, beg leave to present you with this purse, (amounting to \$35.00.) as a small token

of our gratitude, and with it our best wishes for your future welfare and prosperity.

JAMES McDONALD.
JOHN McLEAN.
A. FISHER.
JAMES TUTTLE.
JAMES L. FRASER.
JAMES DUNCAN.

Goldenville, August 16th, 1866.

REPLY.

To James McDonald and the other Members of the Committee in behalf of Whin Rock Lodge.

DEAR SIRS AND BROTHERS,—

It is with feelings of gratitude to the giver of every blessing, and sincere thankfulness to you, that I receive this expression of your good wishes, together with the purse you have just presented me. Having previously received from you tokens of your regard, I did not require this spontaneous and liberal expression of your good feelings to assure me that you love the cause of Temperance and Religion, and your appreciation of those who come among you and are willing to do what they can for the advancement of sobriety and good order in your little community.

Away, as many of you are, from the endearing associations and privileges of home. It is cheering to witness in your deportment, and through this—on my part undeserved—expression of respect that you still love those principles of morality and Temperance taught you in youth. And be assured that my prayer will ever be that you may not only be the lucky discoverers of rich quartz leads here, but that both you and I may be happy discoverers of that richer and better gold that never perishes, and that we may spend eternity at God's right hand.

Hoping that we may be spared to meet again here, where we have so often and I trust profitably met, and that the Whin Rock Lodge may long exist as an efficient Temperance organization among you.

I am yours in F. H. & C.
W. H. ROGERS.

For the Christian Messenger.

Memoir of Rev. Wm. Dobson.

The subject of this Memoir was born at Little River, in the County of Cumberland, N. S., Feb. 19th, 1818. His parents were John and Elizabeth Dobson, his mother survives him.

When 30 years of age, it pleased God to prostrate him by a dangerous illness. A cut on the finger, neglected, brought on erysipelas. He saw himself, as he supposed, on the brink of the grave. The thought of death and judgement filled him with dismay; but in his distress he cried unto the Lord, and vowed that if his life were spared it should be dedicated to his service. As in most instances of a similar kind, those vows were not forgotten with returning health. He left that sick chamber, through the mercy of God, a better man than he had entered it; for the affliction had been sanctified to the good of his soul. He was subsequently baptized by the Rev. Wm. Hobbs, and became connected with the Baptist Church at Little River. He was led to this step, as he himself has assured us, by a careful examination of the word of God. This examination resulted in the firm conviction of the obligation resting upon every believer in the Lord Jesus; and believing that his soul had been cleansed in the "laver of regeneration," he cheerfully gave his body to the sacred rite so emphatically declarative of the remission of sins. In his ministry he boldly combated the dogma of baptismal efficacy in securing pardon for the sinner, but with equal distinctness enforced the necessity of obedience to the command of Christ.

For some time, we do not know how long, Bro. Dobson filled the office of deacon. On Dec. 25th, 1858, he received a License from the church, with the names of J. E. Balcom, E. F. Foshay and Lemuel Thompson, inserted, as sanctioning the measure, and was then recommended to the favorable consideration of the churches. Having given proof, sufficient to satisfy his brethren, with reference to his call to the gospel ministry, he was ordained as an evangelist at Little River, July 15th, 1859.

We cannot forbear quoting from an account of the ordination service in the *Christian Messenger*, by "One of the Council." "It is cheering to know that the Lord has manifestly blessed his labors in the salvation of some in many of the places where he has been laboring. It is said that a prophet is not without honor save in his own country. There are however, we think some exceptions, and the case of our brother is one, for he is truly honored in his own land and among his own people. We are persuaded that there are not many, if any who are acquainted with Bro. Dobson who will think his ordination premature."

Our brother, soon after his ordination visited Tryon, P. E. I., where his labors resulted in good. Nine persons were baptized during his visit there. He was engaged the next summer in special services at Pugwash, where a goodly number were added to the church through his instrumentality. In September of the same year (1860) he received a call to the pastorate of the churches at Bedeque and Tryon, P. E. I. He remained on this field until the summer of 1862, twenty-five were baptized during that time.

In the summer of 1863, the E. B. Association of N. S., held its session at Bedeque, P. E. I. A