

For the Christian Messenger.

"ASK FOR THE OLD PATHS, AND WALK THEREIN."

The Lord's Supper was instituted by Christ, and given to the churches. The central idea in its celebration was the calling into prominence and emphasizing the death of Christ. It was ordained for baptized believers. Nothing was known in Paul's day of any other followers of the Saviour. Baptism was the mark by which each believer was known. For such the Supper was ordained; and by them it was observed and enjoyed. In those days believers congregated. They formed churches; they walked together in fellowship and in breaking of bread and in prayers. The Supper was never taken out of the churches by Christ or his Apostles. Those who disturb it in this primitive relation, are guilty of innovation. It is taking unwarranted liberty with solemn matters. wisely arranged by the Head of the Church. Notwithstanding this, wicked hands have been laid upon it; and, ignoring the bounds of its use, set by Christ himself, it has been carried to the bedside of the sick and dying; and administered to them, as they passed the bounds of time to meet their Judge. It has been given as a saving sacrament to unrenewed, unsaved sinners. To them it is a potion of sacramental laudanum to allay their fears in their spiritual death state. It was designed by its divine Author, to help believers, when assembled, to see and shew forth the death of their divine Lord. It is now often used to blind lost sinners while passing through their last opportunity of being saved from hell.

The Lord's Supper is used and abused with a license that betrays, at once, the perversity and recklessness of the human heart. It is made to do duty in sealing the solemnities of marriage; and in gracing the festivities of birth-day celebrations. The sacramentarianism of the middle ages and of Romanism is fostered and perpetuated in our day by well-meaning men in the use they make of the Lord's Supper. Bible revisors, gather within the walls of a sacred edifice, around the tomb of a saint, and there spread the table of the Lord; thus offering this simple ordinance of the gospel on the shrine of Romish superstition. Young Men's Christian Associations clamour for it; and cry, Bigotry! when the guardians of divine truth do not surrender this rite to the use of these societies. The Evangelical Alliance, in its meetings in Europe, has appropriated this Supper to its use, with assumption and much parade. This all goes on, notwithstanding that the perversion and prostitution of the ordinance are admitted on all hands. No one denies that Romanism and Ritualism teach that this rite has a sacramental and saving efficacy to those who receive it. Surely, in these results, of an unwarranted use of the ordinance, there is sufficient warning to arrest the attention of the pious everywhere; and lead them back, and hold them, henceforward, bound to the primitive, apostolic use of the Supper of the Lord. When will believers learn to rest content with Christ's arrangements?

The last number of the British Quarterly contains an article in which the heresies of the Plymouth Brethren are exposed. In this disclosure of the unscriptural views and practices of this body, there may be seen an illustration of the unwarranted use made of the Lord's Supper. It has not proved, in its results, an exception to the misuse that has been so generally made of this ordinance. Confessedly those who initiated the Plymouth movement, were earnest, devout men. According to the writer in this Review, like the Wesleyans, they did not intend, at first, to organize a new sect. Union, and more devotedness among the Saints was their aim. When gathered in friendly and religious intercourse, they assumed that the Lord's Supper would be very helpful in securing the desired object. The history of the abuse of this rite was lost on them. They in their turn tried the experiment of removing it out of the church, to do service in parlours and at firesides, in scenes of religious intercourse. By-and-by it became elevated, in their practice, above prayer, spiritual communion, exhortation and the preaching of the gospel. It has taken only two scores of years to prove in this instance how dangerous it is to tamper with divine institutions. This abuse may have appeared in the beginning very harmless; and the good intentions of those who initiated Plymouthism, may be undoubted; yet the result shews that it is exceedingly perilous to attempt to improve upon what

God has ordered and fixed. Their "superstitious regard for the Lord's Supper," says the writer referred to, has exhibited Plymouthism "as another form of the High Church Ritualistic movement of the day."

Christians, combining outside of church relationship, are already sufficiently warned in this matter. The history of all attempts to exceed, in the use of the Lord's Supper, the bounds set for it by Christ, entreats believers everywhere, to leave undisturbed the rites ordained by the Master for the churches, and for the churches alone. Had not the views of certain bodies of christians been regarded Young Men's Christian Associations, and also the Alliance in its last Conference would have made the Lord's Supper the chief exercise in their meetings. The piety of the membership of these bodies, and their good intentions are no guarantee that evil results will not follow such an unscriptural departure. Some of the worst abuses of Romanism were introduced by pious, well-meaning men. The Lord's Supper has landed the Plymouth Brethren in ritualism; as their "vain disputing about words," has beguiled them into rationalism; as has also their undue, rapturous, dreamy devotion lifted them into the atmosphere of mysticism.

Where is the necessity of any mere society of christians celebrating the Lord's Supper? Had this been important for such bodies, would not the Master have arranged for it? He who provides for all our wants, would surely have provided for this.

Compare the Lord's Supper, as it is found in the churches, in the New Testament; with the Lord's Supper as it is exhibited in the formal and informal reports of the Alliance Conferences, and the discerning will be struck with the contrast. The attention of the christian world is turned away from this phase of the subject, by the discussions, arising from the objections of those who do not believe in its practice, in common, by the churches of the various denominations. But has not an evil been brought to the surface in the persistency and zeal, displayed by those who have been so desirous to celebrate the Supper in this new society. The device exhibited by Dr. Adams, of trying to do virtually, what could not be done, in good faith, formally; the tramping under foot of courtesy and good taste, in carrying the matter through; the magnifying, in word painting, of the Supper-scene, by delegates, after they had returned to their homes, and the place given to its celebration in the foreground of the entire oral account of the doings of the Conference; all combine to suggest the fear, that, in the hearts of some ardent and impatient friends of union, the Supper has already come to possess, at least a little of the grace and charm of ritualism. These glowing, rapturous spirits who must have the Lord's Supper, in the Alliance, at all hazards, seem not to feel the least compunction of conscience, in breaking a well understood and solemn agreement, expressed and implied in the Constitution of the Alliance. They can go outside of their own convictions of duty to disregard the sacred obligations of others; and this is all right, and very apostolic; for the end is to have the Lord's Supper observed, although under circumstances unwarranted by the word of God.

Two evils show their heads just here in this matter, both of which Baptists have fought all through the centuries. The first is, Ritualism in embryo; and the second is, Spiritual Despotism in embryo. It would be well for some of the over zealous spirits to go back to the New Testament and take a few lessons in the use of church ordinances, and also in what is the right of fellow christians—soul-liberty.

The dead silence about Baptism, one of the two sacred ordinances of the church, lends additional significance to the prominence and laudations given to the Supper. Baptism, perverted and abused in the churches, finds in the Alliance few advocates for its primitive purity. No time was given to those who had a word to say on this important matter. One custom goes abroad unrebutted by the Alliance—the wetting, the pouring, the sprinkling, the dipping of believers and unbelievers, as it may happen. While Methodism exercises itself in this wholesale and unbridled prostitution of the rite of baptism, Episcopacy and Campbellism add the evil of evils to their doings, by professing to translate men, women, children and infants from the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of light, by the regenerating power of this ordinance. All this abuse of the rite goes

unrebuked by the Alliance. The christian world is plagued with these enormities; but to expose and destroy them, not a paper was read, not an address was given. But intercommunion in the Lord's Supper is by some regarded the test and condition of union. "Seek out the old paths and walk therein."

Home Missions.

For the Christian Messenger.

OUR HOME MISSION.

Dear Editor,—Although the references we are about to make are not directly connected with our Home Mission work, it may not be improper to notice the following:

REMOVALS.

Rev. John Williams, of Clements- port, has settled with the Churches at Arcadia and Chebogue. Rev. W. H. Warren, of Prince Edward Island, has undertaken the pastorate of the Temple Church. Rev. P. Gallaher, of Newcastle-on-Tyne, has accepted the invitation of the Milton Church, Yarmouth, to become their pastor. Brother Adoniram Cogswell, of Annapolis Co., is labouring at present with the Churches at Chegoquin and Tasket Lakes. Rev. W. C. Rideout, of N. B., has settled with the Church at Westport.

OUR GENERAL AGENT.

Rev. Mr. Wallace has been for nearly three months in the employ of the Board. During that time he has explored Port Hawkesbury, Sydney, North Sydney, Cow Bay, Glace Bay, Little Glace Bay, Mira, Arichat, St. Ann's, Homeville, Boulardrie Island, and several other places of greater or less importance on Cape Breton. He has made a most thorough and painstaking survey of the Island, and his reports are singularly full and interesting. He has preached or attended meetings almost every night, and generally preached three times on each Sabbath. He remarks in his last report to the Board, "Could you have seen your General Agent crossing the Barrens between Coddle Harbor and New Haven in a thick snow storm, completing a journey of 13 or 14 miles on foot with scarcely a foot path to guide him, I know you would not have withheld your sympathies. You would have surely given your unanimous expression that his position is not "a bed of roses."

After bro. Wallace returned to Nova Scotia proper, he visited Isaac's Harbor, Guysboro and Manchester, Coddle Harbor, Clam Harbor, Crow Harbor, New Harbor, Country Harbor, White Haven, Canso, Antigonishe, St. Mary's and other places. During his stay at Guysboro he had the privilege of baptizing five converts into the fellowship of the Guysboro and Manchester Church. Revival indications he has seen in several other places. He will now canvass Halifax in the interest of the Union. And as the demands upon us are so extensive and so pressing, we hope the friends of Home Missions will contribute liberally when bro. Wallace appeals to them.

OUR FRENCH MISSION.

Brother Normondy is laboring diligently and successfully. He has lately had the privilege of baptizing two converts. Others are enquiring for God's word. They want more light. Our missionary is encouraged to believe that the influence of truth is spreading on his field of labor. The friends of this mission will be kind enough to forward their contributions as the treasury is empty and funds are needed.

RECENT APPOINTMENTS, &c.

Bro. J. R. Skinner, of St. Margaret's Bay, has been introduced to Rev. D. A. Steele who is enquiring for an Assistant. Rev. Wm. McKee, of Lorraine, Ohio, has been recommended to Port Hawkesbury. Rev. E. P. Borden, of Connecticut, has been advised to visit the Church at Clements. Brother G. W. Thomas has been appointed a mission for one quarter of the time to Crow Harbor and Half Island Cove. Rev. John Williams has been elected a member of the Executive Board to fill an existing vacancy. Arrangements are in progress for making other appointments which will be announced in due time. Quite a number of Churches and Mission Stations, where \$600 a year will be guaranteed, are now demanding our attention. They shall be supplied as soon as possible.

OUR COLPORTEUR WORK.

Bro. A. H. Lavers, freighted with most excellent books, pamphlets, and

tracts, has commenced energetically to canvass the Counties of Shelburne and Yarmouth. Other brethren are preparing for the work. We have a large quantity of superior denominational literature on hand. Sabbath schools and families can be cheaply supplied with literature that we can conscientiously recommend.

In view of the great work we are attempting to do without fee or reward, we hope our brethren throughout the province will give us their sympathies, prayers and co-operation.

G. E. DAY, Cor. Sec. of Union. Yarmouth, Nov. 28, 1873.

The Christian Messenger.

Halifax, N. S., Dec. 3rd, 1873.

DAY OF SPECIAL PRAYER.

We have just received a note from the Secretary of the Convention, expressing regret that the resolution respecting the Day of Special Prayer, recommended by the Convention to be observed by the churches, was omitted from the copy of the Minutes, and consequently does not appear in the printed Minutes. (We may remark that we are not greatly surprised at one resolution being overlooked. The wonder is, that with so much to be done, in so short a time, there was not much more omitted.) The report on the State of the Dominion

influence on the labors of the past year, recommended,

"That the churches be requested to set apart a day for Special Prayer to "the Lord of the Harvest."

The Convention then consulted on the most appropriate time for such day, and ultimately agreed upon the Last Day of the year as the most suitable in all respects. We reported this fact at the time. (See Christian Messenger, August 27.)

We need only mention this matter to our brethren and they will make the necessary arrangements for holding meetings, where it can be done, on Wednesday the 31st day of December, as a Day of Special Prayer and Humiliation, that God will visit us with the dew of heavenly grace; so that the coming year shall be marked by much more abundant manifestations of Divine favor and blessing, so that the churches throughout the three Provinces may have to tell of times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord.

"THE RELATION OF PRAYER TO PASTORAL EFFICIENCY."

The direction given by our Lord to his apostles, when he sent them forth into all the world, was "Preach the gospel"; but they soon found that the work needed other power than the mere announcement of truth to make it effectual in bringing men to repentance. Their hearts must be opened and the gospel must be applied to them by the Holy Spirit before they would see the full efficiency of the Word. The determination to which they soon came after finding that care for the temporalities in addition to their true apostolic labors was more than they could endure, shews that they had a high appreciation of the necessity of prayer as well as of preaching. "We will give ourselves continually to prayer and to the ministry of the Word" was the exclamation. Not prayer as an adjunct to the ministry, but as a prime and essential prerequisite to the proclamation of the divine message.

An article in the October Baptist Quarterly presents this subject in a most striking aspect as one that should command the attention of all who, so far as their work is concerned, are the successors of the apostles.

Our attention has been specially directed to this by one of our ministering brethren who has had the opportunity of its perusal. He believed that this part of the pastoral office has not been fully appreciated by himself nor does he think it is generally by his brethren, and a view of the considerations presented by the writer of the article would be very acceptable and profitable, especially to ministers. No summary that we could make would be satisfactory, we shall therefore present as much of the article itself as our space will allow.

The article shews that with the apostles the relation of prayer to pastoral efficiency was primary and vital, (1) because of the faith they cherished in the living presence of Christ with the Church. When asked by whose power all their work was done, they spoke

with confidence of a present, living Saviour. "He hath shed forth this which ye now see and hear." "By him doth this man stand here before you whole." "The Lord added to the church the saved." Such was their conception of the work committed to them—not as of a work projected by one who was now dead, and who had left his plans to be wrought out by his successors, but as of a work to which the personal presence and supervision of the Master was to be given in a grander sense than when he was on earth. To him they expected to carry their burdens, their sorrows, their perplexities, just as before; from him they would seek direction as to when, where, and how to labor; and they looked that before him "every valley should be exalted, and every mountain and hill should be made low." To men with such convictions, prayer must stand first. There can be no test more unerring of the faith we have in Christ's presence in his church than the place we assign to prayer. With the Apostles it was primary and vital. (2) Because of their profound conviction that nothing is done effectually for Christ that is not done under his guidance and by his grace. On this subject our Lord had given them the most explicit instructions in his last interview, under the figure of the vine. He taught them their absolute dependence upon himself for all real fruit; and as he in them, they should bring forth much fruit, but "severed from him" they could do nothing.

With such views of all true labor and efficiency, human reason and policy and wisdom would appear to the apostles as nothing, and they would instinctively feel that their first, holiest, most necessary duty was prayer. A sure test of the degree in which we really depend on the grace of God, is the place we assign to prayer.

But they gave prayer the first place—

(3) Because it was the place assigned to it by Christ himself. It is impossible to overrate the importance which Christ attached to prayer as an instrumentality in building up his kingdom. To mention his instructions in relation to his disciples all through his ministry, he devoted special attention to it in his last interview.

Great had been the triumphs of prayer in past ages. But it was our Saviour's design that these victories of prayer should be far exceeded under the New Dispensation. Were not the character and love of God to be more clearly revealed? Was not the great Intercessor to be on the throne? Was not the Comforter, the great Inspirer of Prayer, to dwell with and in believers? And therefore the achievements of Christ's servants, through prayer, should eclipse all the achievements of patriarchs and prophets. He said, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do, because I go unto my Father; immediately adding the promises about prayer, and giving them to understand that the mightier works of the future should be wrought chiefly through prayer. Shall we wonder, then, that to prayer they assigned the first place? That when they were left alone, they gave themselves at once to earnest prayer, and won a triumph thereby on the day of Pentecost, which eclipsed at once the achievements of all former times?

But with the pastor, prayer should occupy the first place—

(4) Because of the federal system in which man is placed. God has seen fit to place man in a system of federation, as distinguished from the angelic system of independent creation. Adam was not merely an individual creation; but also the head of a race—his acts having a direct influence upon all his descendants. The system operates in the parental relation, making the character and acts of parents affect the character and destiny of the children. It operates in the governmental relation, by which the character and acts of rulers affect the character and destiny of nations; it operates, too, in the pastoral relation, which combines some features of both the parental and governmental.

Because we associate with this system the terrible evils originating with the fall of Adam, and so often see its power in the family and the nation perverted and cursed by sin, we are in danger of overlooking its wonderful adaptation to bless and elevate the world.

Through Christ this power is indefinitely increased. How he exhibited it himself, when in his last prayer by