

Correspondence.

For the Christian Messenger.

Letters to a Young Preacher.

LETTER XXX. PUBLIC PRAYER.

My Dear Brother,—

Prayer is evidently a very important part of public worship. By it we acknowledge our dependence on God for the success of our labors.—By the fervent prayer of faith we may hope to obtain this inestimable blessing. Our Lord immediately followed His last discourse with prayer. John xiv.—xvii.

The first Christians, like their divine Master, were very frequently engaged publicly, as well as privately and in secret, in this exercise. They do not appear to have made "long prayers," as did the Pharisees, nor to have expected, like the heathen, to "be heard for their much speaking;" but they often assembled in prayer meetings, and in these many seem to have taken active part. Acts i. 14. xii. 5, 12.

The Apostles, whose example in this is undoubtedly to be followed by all the ministers of Christ, said, "We will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word." (Acts vi. 4.) It is observable that prayer here takes precedence of preaching, as without it the latter would doubtless be unavailing.

As it is obviously desirable that a minister of the gospel should discharge the duty of leading in public prayer in a becoming manner, it may be useful to notice a few points that demand attention:—

1. *Seriousness.* Levity is highly unbecoming in all parts of religious worship. It is very painful to witness any thing of the kind while people are professedly singing the praises of God. But when a preacher is approaching the Divine Majesty in the humble attitude of supplication, it is peculiarly necessary that deep solemnity should pervade his spirit. All flashes of wit, and expressions adapted to excite lightness in the minds of any of the audience, should be invariably avoided. A solemn tone of voice is suitable; but this must not be substituted for heart-felt solemnity in the awful presence of JEHOVAH.

2. *Reverence.* We may, indeed, through the mediation of our compassionate High Priest, "come boldly to the throne of grace." It is to be borne in mind, however, that in order to "serve God acceptably," we must do it "with reverence and godly fear." (Heb. xii. 28, 29.) Men sometimes unconsciously use great irreverence by speaking to the Almighty with as much apparent familiarity as if they were talking to an equal. Care should be exercised to avoid this irreverent course.

3. *Directness of address.* One who is engaged in prayer should never forget, that he is addressing his Maker. When persons lose sight of this, and commence teaching or admonishing their fellow men, they err exceedingly. Instances of this have often reminded me of a circumstance that occurred in the course of my labors. I was visiting a family where, as in too many cases, the children were not accustomed to hear prayer.—While engaged in this exercise I heard one of the little boys whisper to his sister, "Now he's preaching." In some instances this might be truthfully said. It is not necessary that every sentence should contain a petition. Adoration of Deity, acknowledgment of His manifold favors, with thanksgiving for them, confession of sins, and expressions of faith and confidence in the Redeemer, are very proper. (Dan. ix. 3—19.) All, however, should be expressed in a direct address to the Most High.

4. *Appropriateness.* Many pious men, who ordinarily appear gifted in this exercise, find it difficult to accommodate their prayers to occasions and circumstances. Whether the special object of supplication be Colleges, Home Missions, Foreign Missions, a Revival of religion, Humiliation, or Thanksgiving, &c., no material difference will be observable. Ministers, however, who are called to offer prayer on a great variety of occasions, should take special pains to let it be appropriate in all cases. The appropriateness of many prayers recorded in Scripture is manifest. (1 Kings viii. 23—53. Ps. lxxvii. 1—20. Jon. ii. 1—9. Acts i. 24, 25. iv. 24—30.)

5. *Brevity.* As the prayers of God's ancient servants were appropriate, so likewise were they brief. Numerous specimens on record evince this. When the mind is unusually drawn forth in ardent desires for spiritual blessings, it may be proper to continue in public prayer for a considerable length of time; but a cold tedious prayer is a very poor preparation for a sermon, or appendage to it. Instead of enkindling devotion, it tends to produce or increase deadness.

For a minister, or any person, to think that in every prayer he must pray for every body and every thing specifically, is a great error. He should guard against those "vain repetitions," and that prolixity, against which the Saviour has cautioned us. (Matth. vi. 7, 8.)

6. *Simplicity of language.* He who leads in this public devotional exercise, should be careful to employ no words which are not generally understood by the people present. "Else," says the Apostle, "how shall he that occupieth the room of the unlearned, say Amen?" (1 Cor. xiv. 14—16.) All attempts at elegance of diction, or making a display of talent, when one is professedly imploring mercy from God, are exceedingly objectionable.

7. *Earnestness.* A preacher must never assume the appearance of earnestness, when it is not felt; but his mind ought to be impressed with a lively sense of the infinite importance of those things which relate to eternity. The worth of undying souls should lie with weight upon his heart. An ardent desire that God may be glorified, Zion prospered, and sinners saved, should draw forth natural and fervent aspirations to the Father of mercies. Elijah, who prayed efficaciously, "prayed earnestly." (Jas. v. 17, 18. 1 Kings xviii. 42—44.)

In order that a minister may discharge this duty aright in public, it is obviously necessary for him to be constant and fervent in his secret devotions. Neglect of this is undoubtedly one great reason why some persons appear deficient in the gift of prayer; and so attempt to excuse themselves from engaging in it either in public, or in their own families. This gift, like all others, is improved and increased by exercise.

May you, my dear young Brother, be ever earnest, persevering, and prevalent in prayer!

Yours in gospel bonds,

CHARLES TUPPER, Sec'y.

Tremont, Aylesford, March 10th, 1862.

For the Christian Messenger.

Exposition of Scripture.

"Wherefore should I fear in the days of evil, when the iniquity of my heels shall compass me about." Ps. xlix. 5.

In what sense can iniquity be predicted of the heels? The iniquity of my heels would be my iniquity. And then I certainly ought to fear when it "compasses me about." This is a mis-translation. The original is, "when the iniquity of my supplanters or circumventors, shall encompass me about."

Let the reader turn to the history of Jacob, and he will learn that this name has reference both to a heel and to a supplanter. He took his brother by the heel, and was therefore called Jacob a heel-catcher. He supplanted his brother in his birthright and in his blessing and was therefore rightly called Jacob. See Gen. xxv. 26, and xxvii. 36. The term as here rendered, makes good sense. The case of Daniel may be cited as an illustration of the thought. Those who were eager to "supplant" him in his office, had laid their iniquitous plans deep and broad. They had completely "surrounded" him and taken him in their pit. But why should he fear?—His Redeemer was mighty. His God whom he served continually could and did deliver him.

But how can a word have two meanings apparently so different? Here the Micmac may afford light. This has a word which means to "supplant" as a secondary signification, the primary signification of which, is, to get a head of, to get round, to outrun, to outstrip. To accomplish this, the heels are used, and every thing depends upon them. This idea is contained in the word, *edokteskum*. Our word *circumvent*, is of similar import, and literally means to come round one. The two meanings may therefore have been very closely connected originally.

S. T. RAND.

For the Christian Messenger.

Our Benevolent Institutions.

How are these to be sustained? We may reckon four prominent ones. Domestic missions, Foreign Missions, Education, and ministerial Education.

The following proposal is with all deference to the judgment of others respectfully presented. To meet the annual expense of the College

say	\$3200
Domestic Mission, - - - - -	2400
Foreign Mission, - - - - -	1200
Ministerial Education, - - - - -	600

Total. - - - - - \$7400

I am not so particular in the proportion above specified, as to accept of no other. I am just looking at the small amount which however ex-

ceeds by considerable the amount now raised for these objects.

How can this amount be raised? According to the Minutes of last Convention the aggregate number of church members is 14,838. Fifty cents a year from each, would more than meet the required sum!

Take the round sum 14,800—deduct one half who could not afford this amount, and to make up the deficiency, take the Baptist population connected therewith, and who can doubt the ability to double the sum?

How can this be obtained?

The payments should be made regularly each quarter. The quarters as nearly as possible be simultaneous through the province. Twelve and a half cents each three months, from each of these 14,800 members of Christ's body!

HOW SHALL THIS BE OBTAINED? Members, Deacons, Pastors, now?

Let this be done for three successive years—meanwhile let the Endowment measures be prosecuted with energy, or until a sufficient sum has been raised. Let also, to help on this, all sums from invested monies and notes, together with any excess in the collections, above the annual expense of the College, be invested as original property for endowing.

A three year's course is the shortest that ought to be attempted. This would prove the success or failure of the plan, less time could hardly be expected to accomplish any thing.

With proper zeal this can be done. The benefit to the churches would be great, it would engage a very extensive agency in the churches, of their own members—not a mere spasmodic effort, but a three year's campaign, or drill rather, to prepare for further, and more extensive operations.

But how is it to be brought about? How accomplished? Let some member in each Church move and some member second, and the church adopt, and carry out the following Resolution, and it will be done,—

Resolved, That we pledge ourselves to each other and to the cause of God, to endeavour to raise such a sum of money quarterly as shall average at least twelve and a half cents for the number of members we return to the Association, in behalf of the Domestic and Foreign Mission, College expenses, and Ministerial Education.

Let your year date from first of last June.—Some churches do more than this, of course they will not retrograde, if they can double, or more, this sum by all means do it—but let us at least average this. Who will move it in his church? Pastors, where your churches are not doing this, will you present the subject to your people?—Church member, will you without waiting for any one else, or if you see no one else does, will you, rising in your place, move the resolution, and if adopted use all the influence and assistance you can, to carry it out? Will some good Sister get a little book, if the church in her place does not move in the matter and canvass with energy for these objects. Let the churches show at least this amount at our next general gathering.

"O Lord revive thy work."

CALCULUS.

For the Christian Messenger.

Twilight Musings.

In those still twilight moments when we exclude the outer world, and live for a little while within ourselves, how much we learn of our own hearts and their workings. There in the stillness of the hour when alone with God, every thought, every motive, and every act of our lives recalled and pass before us like a living panorama upon which we gaze with varied emotions. Thoughts and doings of long ago that we supposed buried by the tide of intervening events are revived; even the faint shadowings of hope that lie deep down in the heart's hidden corners are now viewed in the light of living realities.

Earnest desires,—upward—Heaven-ward longings, holy resolves breathed not to mortal ear, shown not to human eye are faithfully scanned. Every evil thought, unkind word, or selfish act, aught that has ever occasioned regret or clouded the heart's bright sunshine has been vividly recalled. Conscience is faithful, an impartial judgment is passed on all—and the verdict is rendered. Although there are many things we would fain hide from the scrutiny of the Great Judge, yet we rejoice to know He is our Judge.

From these silent communings,—these self-examinations which teach us our real—our inner-selves we go forth encouraged and hopeful to fight life's battles. Trusting and happy as we are in the conscious forgiveness for past misdoings and ingratitude, the future looks all glad and joyous. But the atmosphere without is not congenial, the pleasant flow of our spirits is checked; and we soon feel that we are misun-

derstood—misjudged. How little do we really know of each other;—of the anxious care that weighs down the spirits;—of the motives that regulate the actions;—of the heart struggles with self;—of the desires to be what we are not,—to be more than we are; and the earnest longings after something higher, nobler than self. It were well if we could always "see ourselves as others see us," but, O it were well, too, oftentimes of others could see us as we see ourselves.—Then, so little may be known of the inner workings of our own real natures; let us not judge others too rashly, but rejoice in knowing that the Searcher of hearts cannot misunderstand and will not misjudge.

A PUPIL.

Wolfeville Female Seminary, Feb. 21, 1862.

For the Christian Messenger.

The Slave question.

My last letter had to do with the ostensible and at the same time with the real grounds on which the Northern States have obeyed the call of their Government at this crisis for 600,000 men into the battle-field.

But are the present safety and the permanence of the American Union,—its Government, its Constitution, its laws, its social order,—the only, or indeed the most important, objects for which that call to arms has been made and promptly responded to? Now while I contend that these reasons adequately justify our Northern American brethren in waging war (not against the South as a people, or against its "peculiar institution," but against the present Southern Rebellion, I also take but common ground with a large majority in the Northern States, when I say on their behalf that other and vastly worthier objects are involved in this contest, and are longed and prayed for, as issues of it. While "the purpose of the war, on the part of the loyal States, is not a crusade for the overthrow of slavery," it has, on the part of the Southern conspirators, been boldly declared a crusade for the extension of slavery. That object constitutes the main-spring of the Southern Rebellion. And as far back as April last, the Editor of the Boston *Watchman and Reflector* wrote thus: "Christian men at the North are beginning to feel that in the deadly conflict to which they have been driven, against their will, by the madness of slavery, they see the handwriting of God on the wall, announcing the end of slavery. They have prayed long and earnestly that this national sin might be removed, and the answer has come in an unlooked-for way. 'By terrible things in righteousness wilt Thou answer us, a God of our salvation.' If this be true, no less important issues than civil and religious liberty in the Southern States, are to be among the results of success to the arms of the North. I say advisedly, civil and religious,—both civil and religious liberty to the African slave, and religious liberty to the white man. Why only a few months ago a Christian minister, who had spent the last few years in Alabama, remarked to me: 'I have come North, and with the desire not to return to the South to attempt to preach the gospel of Christ there; for a Southern resident is not allowed, with impunity, to promulgate more than one set of truths contained in the New Testament. If he touches moral questions involving the rights of the slave and the whole duty of the master, as taught in that inspired Book, he may look out for persecution, at least so much of it as to compel him to retire either from his conscience, or his pulpit and pastorate.' Religious liberty, then, to the Southern white man, and both religious and civil freedom to their African slaves—there are now in reality being fought for by the North, and are as surely worth the sacrifice—if any thing is—of blood and treasure.—But it is just here, on this very question of slave-emancipation, that many in the neighboring Union, and the entire British Nation, so far as they have spoken out on this subject, have blown from their trumpets an uncertain sound, if not indeed an unchristian sound. Now, England, since the Rebellion broke out, has been saying repeatedly to the Northern States; 'Proclaim emancipation, immediate and universal, to the slaves within your Republic, and that position is no sooner taken than your cause has our heartiest God-speed.' I reply that this is an 'uncertain' sound. If complied with, what would such a proclamation avail?—what towards the liberation of the slave? Have not proclamations of this purport been already issued, at Ship Island, Mississippi; at Port Royal, South Carolina,—how many slaves have been, or can be, set free by such method? It has been well said; 'If the slaves were in front of the rebel lines instead of behind them, the case would be different. But as it is, until we have beat down the military obstacle by routing the rebel forces, there is no getting at the slaves, and this proposed mode of ending the war is, meanwhile the dream of an enthusiast. It is only by hard fighting, only by putting our 600,000 soldiers into the work for which troops are mustered into service, and routing the rebel army, that the question of emancipation can be taken out of the limbs of impracticable abstractions, and rendered worthy of serious discussion by sane men.'

Again, could the adoption of such means procure the immediate liberation from bondage of 4,000,000 slaves, and were arms to be put into their hands by the Federal Government, what would such a proceeding say for the cause of the North, rather, what would the Northern States thus say to themselves and to the world? "We have called in the aid of the slaves as a 'military necessity.' Our army needs them; we cannot, without them, put down the Rebellion." Rather