

ders, blazoning out numerous transgressions of God's holy law—the practical wickedness of his life, shuddering at the neglect of the great salvation—his own sick-bed, or the deaths of loved ones—these may have alarmed him, aroused him to serious thoughts for his soul.

But he has fled to false refuges. Perhaps he has rested in outward reformation, or external duties. He has left off profanity—has abandoned Sabbath breaking habits—has come to be a church-going man; yet is only an almost Christian. No grace reigns in his heart. He has not entered upon a truly pious life.

Almost a Christian! the grand difficulty is that he has not come to Christ by the faith that takes away sin. Some false theory, or the wicked world, or an unhumiliated heart, has kept him back from coming to the world's only Saviour. And however near he may come to being a Christian, he is only 'almost' but not altogether one.

The fearful soul that tires and faints,
And walks the ways of God no more,
Is but esteemed—almost a saint,
And makes his own distraction sure.

And yet, what numbers there have been and are, in just this state. Again and again, have they been almost persuaded to give up all for Christ, yet these critical times have come and passed, and yet they are not Christians. Revivals—sickness—conviction, have all come and gone, still they are not Christians;—near the kingdom, but do not enter it. O let the reader pause and settle the point whether he is better than an almost Christian.—*M. Star.*

AN ALTOGETHER CHRISTIAN.

There are several characteristics that distinguish him. He has felt himself lost by reason of his sins. God's truth and the Holy Spirit have shown him a sinful heart. Lost, he sees no hope in himself—on every hand of human help he is cut off. Every false refuge has failed him.

Under pungent conviction for sin, and relinquishing every other help, he flees to Christ Jesus by faith. Christ is found to be the only door into the narrow path of life. Faith lays its hand on Christ, as the sinner's only Saviour. Repentance of sin, and faith in the Lord Jesus, mark the altogether Christian.

Giving up all for the cross, he is converted, born again. Regeneration bears him through the little wicket gate, of which Christ, and after him Bunyan, speaks, as standing at the head of the narrowed way of a renewed life.

"Behold, he prayeth!"—the altogether Christian lives now a life of faith and prayer. The old man is put off, and all things become new. His heart being changed, his life shows it to the world. The candle is set upon the table.

His heart and affections are set on Divine things, and out of its abundance his mouth speaketh. He loves—God—Christ—the Bible—Christians. "Being let go, he goes to his own company"—is attracted to the brotherhood of the faithful. He rises to new works and new enjoyments.

The altogether Christian thirsts to confess before men. The language of his full, warm heart is, Draw near all ye who fear God, and I will declare what he has done for my soul. He will wish others to share with him in the surprising grace of God.

He will obey Christ's commands, and walk in the gospel ordinances. His inquiry will be, Is it duty? and when this is clear to his mind, he will go forward. He will not tread under foot a single command, he will not run round an ordinance. He has given all to Christ, and will not confer with flesh and blood.

An altogether Christian is a consecrated disciple. For him to live is "gain" to Christ and the gospel. Some may do more, some less; but whatever his circumstances, he does something. An altogether Christian is not an idler, and in whatever lot of the great vineyard he is stationed, the world and the church will hear from him.

And how blessed the end of every such one! The crown of life is before and above him.—*Id.*

THE RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCER.

SAINT JOHN, N. B., APRIL 1, 1853.

RELIGIOUS DECLENSION AND REVIVAL.

(Continued.)

3rd. A third cause, in the Church, of Declension, which we shall notice, is the neglect of the Bible. No Christian, whatever may have been his manifestations, or however spiritual his religious exercises and devotions, can long maintain the believer's true spirituality without a close application to God's word. In it is unfolded his rule of life; there is not a social relation for which there is not some precept, and it is the great law book of the church of God. It is God's revelation; in it is revealed the divine mind concerning us, and a neglect of it is a contempt of God; and the Holy Spirit will not illumine and open the understanding, only as we recognise the divine law, and seek divine guidance through the means which God has appointed. The diligent study of the Bible is as essential to a growth in grace as the study of any science is to a knowledge of that science; or, as the use of daily food is to physical strength.

4th. The fourth cause,—the impression that the Bible requires more than God does—that many of its precepts and commands are not essential to our well-being—that we cannot fulfil them—that the religion of Christ is something without inherent principles of grace. While the Bible makes HOLINESS the standard of Christian character, too many deny its attainment, and hide their sin under per-

verted truth. We ask our readers—and let one among them all answer us if he can—where, in the Bible, is there a precept or command that cannot be kept; where is the divine statute to the performance of which the grace of God, in us, is not sufficient? The slightest idea entertained by us, that the Bible presents a standard of Christian character not attainable, will be an obstacle in the way of spiritual growth, and hence produce declension.

5th. The last cause of Declension in churches, which we shall notice, is the want of proper Discipline. This is a subject, we think, but little understood. It is a necessary part of the Gospel. But the opinion of some, that it only belongs to transgressors, associates with it the idea, that it is something offensive; a kind of rod to awe the unruly, and drive those who will not be persuaded. But discipline is not the mere punishment of transgressors. It is not something that is only needed to regulate trespassers, and expel hardened offenders. The Church of God is a FAMILY—the household of faith; and the idea of a family without any government has associated with it confusion and disorder. And the proper government of a family does not merely infer the expulsion of an obdurate member, but rather the prevention of offences by the judicious application of proper rules. The church is also compared to an ARMY—a good soldier of Jesus Christ—fight the good fight of faith. A well disciplined army is one in which every officer and man knows his place, and in which harmony of action is a prominent feature. And that army would certainly lack discipline where insubordination prevailed—where the knowledge of duty was lacking, and where the only government was the transporting of delinquents, and the shooting of deserters. Again the church is compared to a PERFECT HUMAN BODY—ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular. The body being composed of a variety of members; the setting of them in their respective places by the great Creator, combining their energies, and rendering them necessarily dependant on each other render them perfect in their union, give them sympathy for each other, and constitute the loss of the least member a misfortune to the whole body. So also in the body (or church) of Christ. We are members one of another, and the health of the church can no more be preserved without the exercise of each member in his or her place than the human body can be preserved in health without each member and part performing their proper function and office. Hence, we understand scriptural discipline to be two-fold. It is, first, the proper and judicious exercise of all the gifts and graces in the church. In other words, the exercise of every member in the place where God (and not man) has set them. Second—It is to correct offences, first by saving the offender if possible; and if not by putting away the wicked one from the church.

With this view of Discipline, it will be observed, that the exercise of any one member in the office of another, or the neglect of the exercise of any one member in his own office, is improper discipline, and will derange the necessary working of the body, and hinder the performance of the labour assigned to it. This, doubtless, is one cause why so many churches are inefficient in their labour, and others are altogether useless. The minister cannot do the work of the church, the deacons the work of the minister, nor the church the work of either. Discipline, as already remarked, is designed to hinder these things, and to preserve the Church of Christ from improper faith and practice; not only immoral practice, but such practice in her worship, gifts, and graces, as are unwholesome, and prevents the necessary flow of the Divine life throughout the whole body.

It is impossible to carry out judicious discipline in the Church of God without due regard to the situation of each member in the body. There are diversities of gifts; there are differences of administrations, and there are diversities of operations, but it is the same spirit—the same Lord—the same God, which worketh all in all; and some manifestation of the spirit is given to every man, to profit withal. BUT THE SAME GIFT IS NOT GIVEN TO EVERY ONE—the same ministry does not belong to every member, neither are the operations the same in every one. But this is no argument that every member is not necessary. The teacher does not constitute the church, neither has every man a gift for teaching or for exhortation; every member is not capable of ruling; neither is every Christian eyes to the flock; every one has not the same care, the same means of Christian benevolence is not bestowed upon every one. The spirit divides to every man severally as he will. One may have the gift of teaching; another the gift of exhortation; another the gift of discernment; another's duty may relate particularly to the wants of the poor, and the temporalities of the church; another more peculiarly the visiting of the sick; some ministering to the necessities of the Saints; and others some other department of Christian labour; each in his or her respective place, but all co-operating together. This gives harmony of action, and consti-

tutes strength; and hence renders the church efficient in her labour and office.

The neglect of this kind of discipline, from any cause, must necessarily produce declension. It is stagnating the life blood of the church of God. And if its evil does not break forth in gross immorality, it will at least be seen in cold formality and lifeless exercises.

[To be concluded.]

DEATH OF ELDER ABNER MEESEREAU.

This beloved brother, and labourer in the Vineyard of the Lord, fell asleep in Christ on the 15th ult., after several months of extreme suffering, produced by cancer in the mouth. We have not heard any particulars of the state of his mind during his last days; but up to the period in which our information on this point closes he had manifested great patience and resignation to the Divine will. His remains were interred on the 18th. Ministering brethren present, Elders S. Hart and J. Gunter. We deeply sympathise with the bereaved widow and family, and would remind them of God's word,—“Leave thy fatherless children, I will preserve them alive; and let thy widows trust in me.” The church has lost a faithful watchman, and a large circuit of care a devoted labourer. We hope the mantle of our departed brother may rest upon some survivor. We are not sufficiently acquainted with the experience and labours of our late brother to present our readers with an obituary. We hope some friend having knowledge of these will do so, or furnish us with the materials for it. We believe he was about eighteen years in the ministry.

REVIVALS.

The church at Middleland, Springfield, has latterly enjoyed a season of some Revival. Elders Wallace, Perry, and Wayman have visited them; and a protracted meeting was held. About fourteen, or more, were baptized and added to the church. On our return from Sussex, last week, we passed through the place, and held one meeting. We are quite confident a great work of God was begun there; and we deeply regret that labour has not been continued in order to its being carried forward.

A letter received from brother J. Wallace, informs us that a work of God is now going forward in Canaan, head of Washadamoak Lake. Four had been baptized by him at the date of his letter. Thomas Keirstead, a young brother just commencing to labour, was well engaged in the work, and rendered good service. We earnestly pray the Lord to raise up many young men for the labour of the vineyard.

The work of revival is still going forward in this City. Large numbers are professing religion and uniting with different churches. Several were baptized last Sabbath in Carleton and St. John, and others are coming forward. We baptized two.

CATHOLIC CATHEDRAL.—The Roman Catholic community have purchased the field (on Vinegar-Hill,) fronting on Waterloo street, and have commenced excavating for the foundation of their intended cathedral. Since Monday last crowds of workmen have been engaged in digging, &c. Great enthusiasm seems to prevail among them; and we suppose we shall soon be in the neighbourhood of a splendid edifice.

THE LATE REV. E. D. VERY.—The remains of the late Mr. Very were brought to St. John last week, for the purpose of being deposited in the place prepared for them in the Rural Cemetery. We learn through the Visitor that the obsequies were solemn and mournful. While the departed rests from his labours, and his works follow him, may the living be made wiser and better by God's unsearchable providence.

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY. The business of the Legislature is progressing as usual. We think very little of a generally interesting nature is doing, and our space is so small that but little can be published by us.

On Monday last, the House was in Committee of Supply, when several grants were passed, among them one for £250 for the relief of indigent Indians, and two for Roman Catholic Schools in this City.

The House went into Committee of Supply, and numerous grants were moved to be put on the Supply Book. An Academy in Charlotte County, Infant School at Fredericton and widows of old Soldiers in the revolutionary war, came in for a share of the “loaves and fishes.” Mr. Lewis moved for £100 to be placed on supply, in aid of the “Albert Social Library Society.”

Hon. Mr. Parleau moved a resolution that all petitions for and against the repeal of the Liquor Law be referred to a Committee, in order that a calm, fair and impartial report may be laid before the House. Mr. Hatheway objected to referring the subject to a select Committee, whereas that Committee would report, the same discussion would have to go over again.—The Question being taken on the resolution, it was sustained, and Messrs. Parleau, Montgomery, Porter, Scoullar, Bosford, Macpherson, and Ryan were appointed the Committee.