

lift up and stretch forth his arm of strength; because the hosts of Zion have weakened themselves by internecine conflict, and wasted themselves by division and carnal strife.—*Christian Times.*

THE CHRISTIAN VISITOR.

SAINT JOHN, NOV. 15, 1848.

CHURCH INDEPENDENCE.

The difference between government and anarchy, between lawful and lawless is extreme, and yet both in civil and ecclesiastical matters many people can count on the two and defend their want of submission to wholesome restraint and of subjection to constituted authority under the plea of liberty, and many seem to have no other idea of liberty than doing as one is disposed to do.

However agreeable such liberty may be to the individual exercising it, nothing could be more intolerable to others, nor can we conceive anything more entirely opposite to that precious boon whose name and guise it would assume. We do not conceive by any means that the privilege of Church independence is conceded to the separate Churches of the great one body of believers for the sake of allowing a greater licence to will or passion or caprice, but rather to secure a more rigorous executive administration—a more speedy and unbiassed application of the wholesome laws of the great Legislator, the Head of the Church.

The harmony of intercourse between separate Churches is preserved in connection with Church independence by the wise provision of Christ in restricting the Legislative power to himself, and publishing, for the use of those who profess subjection, so full and explicit a revelation of his will as to cover all duties and meet all emergencies.

The doctrines of Church independence and of the sufficiency of the Scriptures for the faith and practice of believers are thus inseparably associative in the New Testament economy. Every Church making its final appeal in matters of government and discipline to the Scriptures can preserve the most desirable kind of conformity or even unity in the denomination, whilst having no special reference to this or that other Church or age or person; and it is only necessary for mechanical restraints of Canons and Orders and of oppressive and arrogant interference with the rights of conscience and of separate Churches where the legislation of the church is not restricted to its lawgiver and king, and where the Scriptures are not judged sufficient without the aid of traditions and Church councils. But as a poor and imperfect government carefully administered is to be preferred always to no government, so we have no advantage in rejecting Popes and Prelates and Councils and Synods if under pretence of Church independence we refuse conformity to the laws of Christ as revealed in the Scriptures, and allow a turbulent will to be our only master. We consider this the direction from whence the advocates of Church independence may expect the foe of their peace, and whilst it is so easy to detect, and indeed so natural to expect Puseyism as the result of recognizing other Lords and other laws than Christ and his covenant, we need to exercise constant jealousy over ourselves and our form of Church administration lest we fall into the opposite extreme and making our own personal feelings or wishes the arbiter of our conduct, deny even more emphatically than Puseyites the right of Christ to direct and govern us and our duty at all times to obey and serve Him.

¶ We have had the pleasure of transmitting to the Treasurer for Foreign Missions the sum of 12s. 4d. from the "Portland Twig Society"—a society of little misses of the Baptist Society in Portland, who have held their weekly meetings through the past season. When the tree is fully grown, we judge from such present signs, it will produce abundance of good fruit. The friends of missions will all wish our young friends prosperity. May the Province become full of such Twigs!

¶ Brother Robinson will lecture to-morrow evening, Thursday in the Chapel in Germain street, on Sacred Music and Singing, as a part of public worship. The Committee of Publication of the *Christian Visitor*, consisting of the Deacons of the several Baptist Churches in St. John, Carleton, and Portland, are requested to meet at the close of the Lecture.

UNION SOCIETY.

At a special meeting of the Board of the General Union of New Brunswick, on Thursday evening last, in the Baptist chapel, in Germain street, it was unanimously

Voted, To invite Elder David Crandal to labor two months in behalf of the Union amongst the churches in the eastern section of the Province.

We sincerely hope Bro. Crandal will accept, as the necessity of an agent is very great indeed.

The treasury of the Union is now our whole dependence, and if this is not replenished our home missions must be dropped, and our dear missionaries in the foreign field be left without our sympathies or aid.

A promise has been made, we hope in good faith, on the part of our brethren, that they would defray at least one-third the expense of our foreign operations. This is a vow made to God—a pledge to his cause—let it by no means be neglected. If we plead inability, we have reason to fear the Lord will take away the means which he has committed to us, and give them to those who will honestly employ them in his service.

But the agent is needed not only to make the necessary collections to meet current expenses for the cause, but to correct and prevent the cruel and wicked prejudices which some few of our number seem disposed, if possible, to perpetuate. We alluded to this matter a few weeks ago, and have since been confirmed in impressions we were loth then to admit. We have learned, on good authority, that statements grossly false, and calculated to do the Union and all our interests irreparable damage, have been circulated in many places, which need correction; and, as we then remarked, the money collected by the Union, and expended by the several domestic missionary boards, has been, in some instances, appropriated to support this disorganizing and disaffecting work. And we hope the boards will, in justice to themselves and to the Union, have an eye to this matter, and keep themselves acquainted with the influence exerted by those who look to their bounty for support.

It has been reported even here by such, at our very doors, that whilst they were pursuing their self-denying work at a rate that would hardly clothe them, the agents of the board were employed at 7s. 6d. per day, and consuming all the receipts of the board to meet the expense of the agency.

Of course nothing could be more detrimental to the Union than an impression that it exhausted its receipts by its agency, for such a machinery would be unworthy of confidence, and we would be in duty bound to forsake it. About a year since, Bro. Francis was deputed to visit the eastern part of the Province, in behalf of the Union. He left home for that purpose, but on reaching Sackville his labors, in connection with those of the pastor and other brethren, were greatly blessed, and a crowd were found attending the gate of Zion as inquirers. Under these circumstances, Bro. F. was prevailed on to stop at Sackville. He did so; and the brethren at Sackville honorably compensated him for his service, and the board was at no charge, their loss being in the loss of the agent. The board then, on Bro. Francis relinquishing their service, sought the services of Bro. C. Tupper as a permanent agent. Bro. T. felt bound to decline. Time was all this while wearing away. At last the board called Bro. McDonald to their service, at the suggestion of Bro. Francis, who offered to accompany him and find horse and carriage, without additional expense to the board. This was but eight weeks preceding the meeting of the Eastern Association, and is the amount of agency sustained by the board from Christmas of 1847 to July of 1848. Bro. McDonald labored eight weeks; Bro. Francis labored five weeks—in all, thirteen weeks. Expense of salary to the Board was £16 13 4

Incidental expenses (horse keeping, ferryage, &c.) 2 2 9

£18 16 1

—making the whole expense of the agency to the board 4s. 1½d. per day.

—Towards meeting this, the collections taken up in the several places visited after preaching amounted to £9 18s. 8½d.—more than half the expense. Their receipts besides, in donations and contributions from auxiliaries, amounted to £13 11s. 7d. There was, then, forwarded to the Eastern Association, from the churches visited, and, without any doubt, the largest part of it through the influence of the agency, £33 18s.; besides £5 0s. 3d., collected by the agent for Foreign Missions—in all £62 8s. 6½d.; nor is there included here several firkins of butter collected at different points by the exertions of the agents.

Into the western part of the Province no agent was sent, and no expense incurred. Now, in view of this plain statement, taken from the treasurer's account, what is the cost of the agency of the

board; in the first place, their collections cannot be called the board's cost, for no such collections would have been taken up but for the agent, nor can any one suppose for a moment that the income of the auxiliaries are abridged by them, which leaves but £8 17s. 4½d. as the cost of thirteen weeks' agency to bring £62 8s. 6½d. to the board, which amounts to just 7 per cent. of the amount received. Now, let those who complain of the Union Society and agents, and make the expense their pretext, compare their own missionary labor with this. In the first place, they expect and receive higher rate of cost; that is, singly they receive £1 10s. per week, besides expenses, which is 4s. 3½d. per day, besides expenses. And what is the amount of receipt? How often do they collect half the cost of the mission? Such instances do sometimes occur, but they are the exceptions and not the rule. Again, the board have no need to shrink from a comparison of the direct religious results of their agencies, but might happily call attention to the course of their agents and influence at almost every point of their progress, at Sackville, Joggins, Hillsboro', Hopewell, St. Martins, in all which and other places their preaching was greatly owned of God, as the churches will readily testify.

The small dividends then of the Union for the last year were not on account of the expensiveness of the agency, but simply from the fact that there was so little agency employed; and the chief embarrassments of the Board are now, 1st, The difficulty of procuring the services of a suitable agent who will devote his time to it. The services of our efficient brethren are in such demand as Pastors, they cannot be obtained. Much time has been consumed since the meeting of the Convention in endeavoring to secure the services of a brother, who at last declines on account of his flock; now the Board have applied to another, and all this while time is passing; and unless the ministers and collectors are attending to the work, (which we know in some places they do,) we shall be falling in arrears again next year; and as though this were not a sufficient embarrassment, and sufficiently grieving to those who love the cause of missions and the advancement of the cause of Christ, they must be wounded in the house of their friends, which is by no means a small embarrassment.

We hope our brethren abroad in the Churches will not allow themselves to be deceived. If an agent comes he will doubtless be able to give satisfactory information on all those points where questions may have arisen in their minds. And if any ministering brother has a grievance in his own mind, let him state it in a Christian manner to the Board; we will venture to say he will be most respectfully received, whether he comes personally or by letter; and no honest, Christian man will be left under the necessity of creeping about from house to house, undermining and impugning the motives of the Board or their agents.

Our readers must excuse the space we have occupied in presenting this subject, as it is one of paramount importance to us as a denomination. Brethren must remember the Union Society, and pray for it, and labor for it, and contribute to its resources, as the chosen channel of the body for reaching the destitute, to give to the whole household their meat in due season.

SONS OF TEMPERANCE.—The *P. E. Island Advertiser* of the 25th ultimo, contains an account extending over three columns in that paper, of the proceedings of the Sons in Charlotte Town, on occasion of the late visit of the Hon. Phillip S. White. An address was presented to Mr. White by the Grand Division of the Island, to which he replied in a short and appropriate speech. Mr. W. was accompanied on his visit to the Island by Mr. James McMillan of this City, who has stated to us that the reception they met with, was of a most kind and hospitable character. Mr. White was presented to his Excellency the Lieut. Governor, Sir Donald Campbell, who received him with much urbanity, and expressed his cordial hope for the success of his mission.

COMMON COUNCIL.—It must be a source of great rejoicing to every man who feels an interest in the prosperity of this City, to be apprised of the fact, that eight members of the Common Council are now total abstinent, and seven of this number, *Sons of Temperance.*

MELANCHOLY ACCIDENT AT MONTREAL. On the 27th ult., the New Gas Works building, erecting in Callinie-street, Montreal, fell in, killing and injuring some 12 or 14 persons.

CORRESPONDENCE.

For the Christian Visitor.

HOME MISSIONS.

MR. EDITOR,—

In times of real or imaginary depression, whether in agricultural or commercial affairs, the man who has not learned religion as to view it as a part and parcel of his duty, to share with it a portion of his earthly things, has yet to experience the power, and understand the claims of christianity. To entertain the hope which the Gospel inspires, and profess our allegiance to its author, and yet refuse to contribute to its propagation among ourselves and others under the pretext of "hard times," while every other article of expenditure, whither in fashionable apparel or equipage, undergoes no material change, except such as the growing pride of the day conciliates, can never be reconciled with the description given by the Holy Ghost of those who shall enter into the kingdom of God. The temptation of applying all to our own temporal wants, is strong and inherent in our depraved nature, and can only be overcome by correct views of our position in the world as responsible agents in the kingdom, and patients of the Son of God.

It is a want of apprehension of the accountability of their stewardship, which influences men at the first approach of difficulties, to curtail their subscriptions to the cause of Christ, or discontinue religious papers however instructing or entertaining to their families, while no delicious dish, however injurious to health, or fashionable entertainment, is denied them.—Where in view of such conduct is the fellowship which those professors have with Christ in his sufferings, or conformity with him in his death? The mass of the people called Christians, though apparently anxious to be saved from wrath, through the sufferings and death of the Lord, are nevertheless unwilling to suffer for his sake, although anciently a leading test of discipleship.

The want of a proper recognition of this grand feature of our christianity, is now leaving our Missionary chest empty, and depriving the destitute in remote portions of our Province, of having the Gospel preached to them, though no country can present a more inviting field of labour for a willing church than can be found in this. While we would with gratitude, view the success which has attended the efforts of the Baptist Church of New Brunswick, in the humble part which they have taken in extending the knowledge of the Son of God, among the ignorant and those out of the way, yet we should not close our eyes on the fact, that we have been for the last two years on the retrograde, in the place of the aggressive, as it respects the extension of our Missionary field at home. Not that the people are less attached to our peculiar views of truth, nor that we are without men who are willing to be occupied as missionaries among the destitute, but altogether from the paucity of the means within the reach of the missionary Boards.

The resolution adopted by the members of the Norton Board at their last meeting, and the pledges given by a number of the brethren composing the body to sustain a Missionary for twelve months at the Bay De Chaleur in the event of some of the other Boards uniting with them in his support, is worthy of imitation. We regret that the St. John Board, to whom an appeal has been made, cannot co-operate with them in this good work, being already pledged to the extent of their means, and are now making enquiries respecting another field of commanding interest if the necessary encouragement will be afforded them from the inhabitants.

That a certain amount of good has been accomplished by our missionary efforts, no one can deny. But that we have hitherto resorted to the most effectual method of establishing christianity and confirming feeble churches, is to me doubtful. We are informed, however, that "days should speak and multitudes of years, should teach wisdom," the measures proposed by our brethren already alluded to appears to us to be the most productive means of giving character and permanency to our efforts. According to our present mode of operation; a missionary is appointed to labour for one or two months in a district of thirty or forty miles in extent. The gospel which he proclaims, is received "not as the word of man," a "number becoming obedient to the faith," who subsequent-