

great need of having the word of comfort spoken to them, and the consolations of the gospel pressed on their acceptance. Jerusalem is in bondage, and sitteth solitary; her children are dispersed; their souls are faint within them, and they are conscious at times of an oppressive gloom. Bowed down as they are by a sense of degradation; wearied with expecting a Messiah that has long since come—how needful it is to point their attention to the "Lamb of God"—to "let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God hath made that same Jesus whom (they) crucified, both Lord and Christ;" and thus direct them to the way of truth and peace! Let the tokens, then, of the Divine blessing upon such endeavours which are from time to time afforded, be regarded at once as an encouragement to zeal, perseverance, enlarged activity, and as a call for more earnest pleading with God on their behalf.

Oh glorious day! when that ancient promise shall be realized (Zech. xii. 10.) Then what ministers, what missionaries of the cross will Israel furnish—what zeal and devotion will they display—what converts from all nations, numerous as morning dew-drops, will be added to the church of the living God!—*Baptist Reporter.*

### CHRISTIAN VISITOR.

SAINT JOHN, FRIDAY, MAY 4, 1849.

#### CHURCH COVENANT.

The Covenant adopted by the Baptist Churches in this Province, involves according to the design of the authors of it, the most solemn duties and obligations of the creature to the Creator, and of the christian to Christ, and to his fellow men. And the fact of its being assumed voluntarily and understandingly by the members of the churches invests it with the greatest sacredness. Its opening paragraph expresses in the fullest and most solemn manner the unreserved consecration of the individual to God.

"We do now in the presence of the great, all-seeing, and most glorious God, and before angels and men, give up ourselves to the Lord Jehovah, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and avouch Him this day to be our God, our Father, our Saviour, and our Leader, and to receive Him as our portion forever. We give up ourselves to the Lord Jesus Christ, and engage adhere to Him as the Head of his people in the covenant of grace, and rely on Him as our Prophet, Priest and King, to bring us to eternal blessedness."

Our members are often, at a loss to know why their haltings are so narrowly watched, and why so much more is made of their delinquencies than of the delinquencies of those who stand in church connection with other denominations.

We have often heard the remark made, and we believe it is true, that more seems expected of a member of the Baptist Church than of a member of any other Church; and that a greater reproach falls upon the cause of religion, when such fall into immorality, than when others commit the same offences.—Some perhaps would be inclined to protest against this as an injustice to the denomination. We do not thus regard it. We think any fair and just interpretation of the above extract from the covenant, challenging as it does the most rigid scrutiny of men, of angels, and even of omniscience, justifies the expectation of the community, that those who enter into the covenant should be holy men; and their verdict also when those who have made such solemn vows, and are then heedless of them, or under their cloak pursue their covetousness or yield to their lusts, are held up to public scandal. The community, though many of its members may not be actuated by proper motives in their taunts are only holding men to their voluntary profession, and measuring them by an authorized rule.

The truth is no denomination could furnish a higher standard, and few of them make any such profession; and when we are only held to our voluntary engagements, and measured by the rule of our own choice, we cannot accuse men of injustice.

Rigid as is the rule, and hard as the judgment of the community bears upon those who dishonor their profession of it, we see not how it could be lowered without detracting to an equal extent the glory which should ever be associated with the religion of Jesus Christ. Who can allow for a moment that more is accorded to the God of all grace and consolation, or to the Saviour who has redeemed us

by his precious blood, than reason and scripture both require? And, truly, if God has revealed his glory to us in the face of his Son, if the Holy Ghost has, through the truth, discovered to us the preciousness of Christ as the soul's surety; and if, as the children of God, we hope for the glorious inheritance of heaven, no carefulness, no self-denial, no sacrifice of the conveniences and emoluments of a passing, perishable world can be allowed consistently to interfere with the making of our solemn profession, and from preserving inviolate our covenant engagements. If this vow of consecration is but frequently considered, reviewed and renewed, the several departments of duty arising therefrom might be more heartily, and easily, and successfully prosecuted. Let the reader, who has taken this vow upon him, read it slowly—read it aloud to himself—ponder upon the meaning of each word, the comprehensiveness of the whole, and awake to his high and holy calling, and thus make part of a *royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people.*

The subject presented in the article of a Friend to Zion is one of great practical importance, and we think should be very seriously considered. The correspondence of our Provincial Papers is to a great degree maintained by Ministers, and they, being so personally interested in the matter are obnoxious to most unjust imputations when arguing for the liberal support of the Ministry, so that this subject is not placed so prominently before the churches as is desirable. We cordially welcome therefore, the article, and coming from a layman who has been moved of his own mind to represent an evil which is lamentably prevalent, we hope it may be carefully read. Though we regret the necessity of such a confession, we do not consider the picture overdrawn by any means. A person will not have to go far in any direction to find the delinquency alluded to, and many of the Ministers of Christ, exerting themselves to the utmost for the cause of Christ and the welfare of his people, are left to mourn in uncomplaining silence over sore perplexities which originate in a want of adequate support.

We desire also to call special attention to the excellent series of brother Elder on the Sabbath School. Parents as well as Sabbath School Teachers should read these articles with care. Though many parents neglect heedlessly the great work of training their children for usefulness and for heaven; many others are solicitous to know and to adopt the most promising means for enlisting the earliest attention of their children to the great truths of religion and to the vast concerns of the soul. To such brother Elder's articles will be of essential service.

We deeply regret the intelligence from Montreal which we publish to-day. As to all the merits of the Indemnity Bill, the signing of which by the Governor General was the immediate occasion of the outbreak, we confess ourselves ignorant. So far however as we have information, from the various reports which have been circulated for a month past, a most singular act of injustice has been perpetrated under the forms of constitutional law. To indemnify rioters and rebels for the loss of property destroyed in the suppression of their own treasonable acts, and that at the expense in a great part of those who backed their professions of loyalty by the greatest risks of person and property, seems most repugnant to every principle of justice, and to the last degree calculated to alienate citizens from their attachment to the Government. But there may be, indeed we cannot think otherwise, there must be mitigating circumstances.—We cannot believe that Lord Elgin, who has shown in all other cases a sincere desire for the prosperity of Canada, and for the welfare of the Colonies generally, could sanction so flagrant an outrage upon the sacred name of liberty as might be inferred from the reports now so extensively circulated and so anxiously read.

But, be this as it may, the Colonists have no good reason, as we conceive, to consider their grievances incapable of redress by peaceful and constitutional means; and when their rights are thus obtained, there is a security guaranteed by the process of accomplishment that can never result from the temporary success of a mob, or any compromise with an unmanageable faction. The destruction of property in Montreal is less than the dust of the balance compared with other enormous evils which may grow out of this outbreak of popu-

lar passion. The alienations of friendship, the interruptions of business, of educational and religious influences, the loss of confidence and credit at home and abroad, may secure a train of evils to be visited upon Canada and the Provinces of British North America from which a whole generation may not recover. True indeed God may avert these calamities, and overrule the wrath of man; but no good man for religion's sake, no philanthropist for humanity sake, no loyal citizen for his country's sake, will exult over such means to accomplish their noble aims. Confidence in God, in right, and in truth, will forbid. The news will doubtless create great excitement in Great Britain, and may perhaps create a greater disturbance of civil and social relations there at this critical period than has been witnessed in Canada. We hope however better things.

Will our agents and subscribers, where it is any way possible, do us the kindness to forward immediately their payments. We have a large amount to pay within two weeks. The bills for subscribers in this city and vicinity will be presented within a few days; we hope we may not be disappointed in them.—*Editor.*

### Correspondence.

[FOR THE CHRISTIAN VISITOR.]

#### SABBATH SCHOOLS.

No. IV.

Objects and Modes of Sabbath School Instruction.

[CONTINUED.]

Shewing in my last what is understood in the idea of mental cultivation we may readily infer the principal means and modes of operation to be employed by the teacher in training the minds committed to his care. As a general rule it is clear that whatever methods of instruction are successful in awakening the desire of knowledge in the youthful spirit, in calling into activity its powers, or in rendering the truth taught intelligible and impressive, are to be preferred. But it may be desirable to indicate more particularly some of the means that have been found most successful.

In regard then to the youngest minds, it should be remembered that they are capable of thinking and of reasoning to a greater extent than is generally believed. It is highly important that they should be taught to exercise these faculties as soon as possible. This they will do if once their interest and curiosity are aroused. Now, experience has abundantly showed that long and formal addresses on the dignity of knowledge are not the means suited to inspire a child with the ambition to become a scholar. He does not, in the first place, understand what is said, and, in the next place, the length of the dissertation wearies him. Plain simple language (not that which is properly called *childish*) ought always to be used in our communications with children. The sentences should be short and contain one simple thought. It is requisite also to make the young scholar think for himself, and that we should avoid the bad habit of always thinking for him. Let brief, pointed, easy questions be asked him, such as he can answer. The first questions should be so easy as to admit of ready reply; and then they may gradually be followed by those more difficult in proportion as the power of thought becomes strong. In employing this chatecaudal mode of instruction two objects are likely to be gained, the young pupil will be interested in his lessons because he understands them, and this interest will induce him to exert his mental powers. Another remark here suggests itself: the teacher should not be impatient to receive an immediate answer to the question he may have proposed to a child; he should recollect that what may require no effort of mind on his part may be puzzling to the unpractised intellect, and demand a moment's consideration to be comprehended. If, after a fitting pause, the answer is not furnished, let him vary the mode of expression, as the same question may be more intelligible in other words, and it is worth the time and pains taken to afford the young mind a triumph over difficulty. Some teachers are either so impatient of waiting, or so fond of talking themselves, as often to ask a scholar a question and then forthwith give the response. The consequence is that the scholar becomes discouraged and careless.

It would provoke a smile, were it not a pernicious practice, to see a teacher seizing every opportunity of dole out a long exhortation or exposition to his class, in language singularly ill adapted to be understood, while the very young children for whose edification all this pompous address is uttered, display by their yawning and restless attitudes or by looking away to some other objects, how weary, flat, stale and unprofitable it has proved.

Besides the mode of questioning, which, if properly conducted, is fruitful of the best results, it may serve to attract the attention of the young to some important truth, and to develop their intellectual faculties, to invest that truth in the drapery of figurative illustration, or set it forth in the impressive light of a living example; scripture history supplies abundant means for the purpose by exhibiting the exercise of faith in the history of Abraham, of brotherly love and piety in that of Joseph, of faithful devotion to God in that of Daniel; while the parables of our Saviour open a wide field of varied illustration.

Thus in a variety of ways the most elementary instructions may, with a little skill and assiduity, be made conducive both to intellectual excitement and the inculcation of religious knowledge. Even the *spelling lessons* which are necessarily comprised in the system of Sabbath school teaching, may admit of being so conducted as to please and engage the attention of children, and to communicate important ideas of truth. This fact is too seldom realized by teachers; many of whom confine their efforts, when teaching their classes to spell, to the bare object of enabling them to combine letters and syllables into words, not perceiving that it is quite possible to render the exercise far more comprehensive and useful in result. Other instruction attempt, indeed, to effect more by adding to the exercise in spelling a distinct process of questioning on religious subjects, or a short and simple address, explaining and enforcing them. This does very well, especially if the questions and addresses are suited to the capacity of the class. But something further may be done, and it seems to me with greater advantage, by constituting the *spelling exercise itself a means of imparting scriptural truth and of calling into action different faculties of the mind.* In order to effect this let a *sentence of scripture* containing some easy truth, doctrine or precept, and composed of words not too difficult for the scholars, be chosen instead of the usual column of words which have no relation to each other, selected from the spelling book. In such a sentence there will be words of varied length suited to more or less advanced minds, and the teacher is able, if it be requisite, to distribute them with reference to this difference of capacity. As an example of what is meant, suppose the selected sentence to be this: "come, ye children, hearken unto me: I will teach you the fear of the Lord." When the class has mastered the spelling and pronunciation of the words, then let the teacher proceed to ascertain how far they understand their meaning. He should not offer to explain any word till he finds whether all or any of the children correctly apprehend the meaning. After this is understood, the words should be combined and read as they stand in the sentence; and if none of the class can do this it should be done by the teacher, in such a manner that each child may comprehend the entire sense. To know whether this comprehension is possessed by them, questions like the following may be proposed, the teacher previously explaining who is the speaker in the passage; to whom is he speaking? To *any* children in particular, or to *all* children? What does he first tell them to do? What does he propose to teach them? Who is the Lord? What is it to fear the Lord? Does a child who fears the Lord use wicked words? Would the fear of the Lord lead him to tell an untruth? To disobey his parents? Why should we fear the Lord? &c. &c.

This method combines with an exercise in spelling the means of enlisting the inquisitiveness and thinking powers of the mind, and of rendering what would otherwise be in a great measure a dull and dry employment, pleasant and profitable. It is not necessary, perhaps not desirable, to use this method always to the exclusion of the spelling-book, but it seems certainly to demand application frequently. Having been tried and found eminently successful in judicious hands, I would earnestly recommend its adoption.

Something has already been said, in my previous number, as to the necessity of addressing children in simple language; but it