

CHRISTIAN VISITOR.

SAINT JOHN, FRIDAY, AUGUST 10, 1849.

IDLE VISITS.

The idle levy a very heavy tax upon the industrious when, by frivolous visitations, they rob them of their time. Such persons beg their daily happiness from door to door, as beggars their daily bread, and like them sometimes meet with a rebuff. A mere gossip ought not to wonder if we are tired of him, seeing that we are indebted for the honour of his visits solely to the circumstance of his being tired of himself.—*Illustrated Christian Almanac.*

In this short extract a great deal of truth is expressed, and it is at the same time eminently suggestive. Industrious people have but little time to waste, and can always find something about which they may profitably employ themselves, so that every hour is of consequence, and cannot be wasted without loss. But many people otherwise frugal are lavish in their expenditure of time; and setting so little value upon it themselves, they seem unwilling that others should estimate it more highly. It is a most unfortunate circumstance for an individual to allow a habit of gossiping to require an hour or two's time for indulgence an indispensable gratification, as is the case with many. When the habit is once formed, like all other habits, its demands are imperious, and the more it is indulged the more imperious will it become. A person thus makes himself needlessly dependent upon those who may not be able or perhaps not disposed to meet his wishes.

When a person is really tired of himself, so that he cannot be at ease except in company, he has the best possible reason to conclude that his society and conversation will be unprofitable, however many he may find willing to exchange discourse. If our minds were properly furnished, or our thoughts properly occupied, we should never be lonesome with the ordinary relief of social intercourse in our own families; and it is only when yielding to a vulgar curiosity about the persons and business of other people, and devoting our thoughts exclusively to such topics that gossiping and idle visits are indispensable. To acquire such information can do us no good, and to impart it will be of no real service to others. Time thus spent is misspent; and as only those who are themselves idle can afford time for such purposes, it is useless to attribute an indisposition on the part of any one to pride or want of courtesy, for most probably it originates in a much more commendable quality, either good sense or real industry.

Western New-Brunswick Association.

The following Resolution was adopted at the last annual meeting held at St. George:

Resolved. That Rev. S. Robinson, Rev. E. D. Very, and Rev. A. McDonald be a Committee to make arrangements for the next Association to be held at St. John.

The Committee thus appointed propose that the friends who are disposed to exercise hospitalities to the Delegates and Visitors who shall attend from a distance (the number of whom will doubtless be large) that they give in to one or other of the Committee the number they can accommodate, that cards of direction may be handed to our friends on their arrival, to prevent delay on their part, and confusion on ours.

The Committee have made arrangements to have persons in waiting at the Colporteur Depository at Garrison & Marsters' Office, Custom House Building, Prince William Street, where a Book will be kept with the names of those prepared to accommodate, and with cards for the Visitors who will all please call there as they come to town, and they will be immediately shown to places for their entertainment.

The Committee have further provided for the accommodation of the horses of those who come by land, directions for which also will be found at the Depository.

The Committee are not disposed by this arrangement to prevent our friends being entertained where it would be mutually agreeable, each one opening their houses being at liberty, if disposed, to state whom they prefer, and those coming also, so far as possible, exercising the same freedom. The Committee will do all that is possible to accommodate all parties, which may be accomplished with more ease and certainty as they think, by this system.

The Committee would call attention to the 2d Article of the Constitution, viz:

"The Association shall meet annually at 2 o'clock, P. M. on the first Saturday in September, at such place as they shall appoint, notice of which shall be given in the Minutes. The meeting shall be opened with social conference, after which the Officers and Committees shall be appointed."

All Committees, it will be seen, will be appointed from those present on Saturday, P. M. to conform to the Constitution, and also that printed copies of the names of the several committees, together with the arrangements for the religious services of the Sabbath may be placed in the hands of all the delegates on Saturday evening. All therefore desirous of participating in these important objects of the Session will it is hoped be in early attendance.

The Committee are assured that a strong desire prevails for a large delegation from Nova-Scotia, also from the Eastern Association of N. B., and also from Maine. We shall be prepared to extend a cordial welcome and abundant hospitality.

SAMUEL ROBINSON, } Com. of
E. D. VERY, } Arrangements.
A. McDONALD, }

Saint John, August 10th, 1849.

LICENSE TO SOLEMNIZE MARRIAGE.

The Royal Gazette of 1st instant publishes the Act which was passed by the Legislature of this Province in April last upon the petition of the Western New-Brunswick Baptist Association, authorizing a License for Solemnizing Marriage to be extended to the Rev. Edward D. Very, which has received Her Majesty's confirmation, and has now become law. He may therefore now legally perform this rite. The occasion of this special Act was that the General Act restricted this privilege to British born subjects.

An Act passed at the same Session has been confirmed by Her Majesty conferring this privilege upon the Ministers of the Free Baptist Connection, with the usual limitations and regulations.

We congratulate the friends generally, and those of the Salisbury Quarterly Meeting in particular, that a channel has at last been opened for reaching the French population of this Province, we presume help from other quarters is quite hopeless, and shall be glad to learn that contributions are liberally sent to Wm. Stone, Esquire, Treasurer for this object.

COL. FAVOR'S EXPRESS.—We are kept in regular supply of American Papers by the kind attention of Col. Favor. We are glad to see that our business men are discerning and employing his excellent qualities as an EXPRESS MAN.

NEW BOOKS.

OPTICAL, MATHEMATICAL AND PHILOSOPHICAL INSTRUMENTS.—Illustrated and described by BENJ. PIKE, Jr., Optician. 2 vols. 12mo. full cloth, p. 346 and 340. Illustrated by 784 engravings.

"This book will be found a convenient manual of reference for instruction in the necessary manipulations of philosophical apparatus: the requisite information upon which has hitherto been scattered through many volumes."—*Literary World.*

"The work is embellished with over seven hundred and fifty good engravings of all manner of instruments, which are here thoroughly delineated and described, in the various departments of the arts—Electricity, Galvanism, Magnetism, Pneumatics, Hydrostatics, Mechanics, Optics, Astronomy, Meteorology, Navigation, Surveying, Chemistry, &c. The prices of the articles are plainly designated. The work is neatly bound and finished—altogether, being a curious and interesting publication."—*Tribune.*

We sent to New-York for the above valuable work for the purpose of introducing it to the notice of Teachers and scientific men in this Province. It may be seen at the Colporteur Depository. There is contained in it a fund of curious and interesting information and we are persuaded when known will be considered an indispensable aid to those pursuing or teaching natural science. The New York price of the work is \$2.

We will order them immediately for those who wish to procure them.

THE ILLUSTRATED FAMILY CHRISTIAN ALMANAC.—Published by the American Tract Society.

This beautiful Almanac has made its appearance for 1850. The Calendar Tables are calculated for Boston, New-York, Baltimore and Charleston, so that the Almanac is adapted for very extensive use. The amount of astronomical matter prefixed is unusually large; and more than forty pages are appropriated to choice anecdotes, apothegms, selections in prose and verse, historical and scientific items, and valuable statistical tables.—The illustrations are in the very finest style of wood engraving.

How such an elegant work of 60 pages can be furnished for 4d. is only explained by its extensive sale. Last year the edition reached to 192,000; the preceding year 128,000.—To be had at the Colporteur Depository. PRICE 4d.

Correspondence.

[FOR THE CHRISTIAN VISITOR.]

SABBATH SCHOOLS.

No. XVI.

Qualifications and Duties of a Superintendent.

The office of Superintendent is no less necessary to the efficient conduct, the regular government, and general utility of a Sabbath School, than that of the Teacher. Experience has abundantly demonstrated that no society or institution, however small and however simple in its plan, can be properly conducted without a head. Some central power and general controul are always required in order to harmonious action. Without a director in whom is vested sufficient authority for governing and guiding the labours of the individual members of a Society, there can be but little effective organization, but little combination of power. As union is essential to strength so a general superintendence and direction of affairs is essential to union. A Sabbath School, like any other institution, may exist and may accomplish a certain amount of good without a recognized leader, but it cannot possibly be rendered so efficient as it would be under the regulation of a suitable Superintendent. Facts establish this beyond the power of contradiction.

But in order that the office of Superintendent may occupy its rightful position, and exert its legitimate controul, it is requisite that he who is chosen to perform its functions should be really and not merely nominally clothed with the due authority. If the Superintendent is simply to direct the exercises of the School, without exerting an influence on its discipline and conduct, and without personally and actively inspecting and over-ruling all its operations and forces, his office might be just as well vacated. He is not only destitute of dignity, but is also condemned to uselessness unless he is recognized and treated as head of the School, controlling its discipline and instruction and sharing the confidence and co-operation of the Teachers, and the respect and attention of the Scholars.

But if the Superintendent is to be invested with so much authority and to be constituted so responsible an agent, it is indispensable that his qualifications should be of a correspondent character. They must be such as to claim the confidence and respect of Teachers and Scholars,—such as merit the high degree of influence committed to his sway. It may be as well to specify the principal characteristics demanded in a Superintendent.

1. *The most important of these qualifications is TRUE PIETY.*

There may be cases in which, from the impossibility of obtaining a person possessed of this most essential endowment, the government of the Sabbath School must be given to one who is not a Christian. Where this is unavoidable, it is certainly better to accept the services of such a person than to leave the office unfilled, provided always that in the absence of genuine Christian character, the morality of the candidate is unquestionable. But we are now speaking of the general rule, not of exceptional cases. The office in question is a spiritual one, and its duties cannot be adequately fulfilled without a spiritual mind. Its responsibilities are of a very serious and solemn nature, and can be properly borne only by a spirit imbued with true love to God and a sincere desire for the salvation of souls. Who does not perceive that the man who is placed over an institution expressly designed and eminently fitted for rescuing

the young from sin and its dreadful conclusions, should be himself a brand plucked from the burning? What propriety would there be in voluntarily selecting an impenitent man to fulfil the duties of labouring to bring sinners to repentance? What hope could we have of a spiritual and saving result from the efforts of one who does not pray, who feels no concern for the interests of his own soul or those of others, who is living without hope and without God in the World?

2. *The Superintendent should be possessed of good judgment and of ability to rule.*

The most decided piety and benevolence would not qualify a person for the office contemplated, if not under the guidance of a sound, judicious intelligence. There are too many whose sincere devotedness to God, and warmth of generous affections are prevented from being greatly serviceable from the want of those mental attributes which enable men to judge correctly, and to direct with skill the movements of societies and institutions. In respect to the office of Superintendent it may be said that these attributes are so important as to be less easily dispensed with than distinguished piety; for, although the very highest eminence of religious character is desirable, yet in the absence of good judgment and ruling talent it would not prove a sufficient qualification, while even a less degree of piety, although a serious defect, would constitute if united with sound judgement, eligibility for the office. There are numberless occasions when the Superintendent must rely upon a quick and strong mind, upon a ready good sense, in order to avoid embarrassment and failure in the discharge of his duties. In conducting the exercises of the School which belong appropriately to him,—in the selection of hymns, the offering of prayer, the examination of the School, as well as in guiding discipline and instruction, good and active judgment is needed, and, indeed, cannot be wanting without the failure of the attempt to rule.

3. *Self-control, kindness, and firmness united, are required in the Superintendent.*

There are so many circumstances constantly arising in the course of his duty to try the temper and patience of a Superintendent, that powerful and habitual self-subjection is absolutely necessary to the preservation of his dignity and of that calm deportment which it behoves him to exhibit. The irascibility of some minds totally unfits them for this station. When any such have been exalted to it, they have done more injury to the Sabbath School by their excitable temper, ever and anon bursting out in fierce explosions, than they have accomplished of good by their labours. No energy and assiduity displayed at other times can atone for the wounds inflicted by uncontrolled passion, or erase the painful remembrance from the minds of Teachers and Scholars. And if the injury is of repeated occurrence, it will dissolve all ties of cordial affection and confidence between them and the Superintendent.

Yet while self-control and kindness are so important, firmness is not less necessary. In demanding order, decorum, regularity and attention in the School; in requiring a due and constant observance of the rules adopted for its conduct, the Superintendent should be as uncompromising and steadfast as he is bland and forbearing. If he allows himself to yield to obstinacy and perverseness, if he vacillates between indulgence and authoritativeness, he will soon involve himself in inextricable embarrassment, and introduce confusion and lawlessness in the School. Let him meet all insubordination with calm determination and perseverance, suppressing it with a power which conciliates while it humbles, and he will thus make a respectful regard to his rightful authority the habitual characteristic of the School.

4. *The Superintendent should be possessed of a respectable competency as to knowledge.*

It will sometimes happen that he will be called upon to explain a difficult passage of Scripture to the School. It is also necessary that he should preside over the Teachers' Meetings when they assemble for the purpose of studying the prescribed lesson before making it the subject of instruction on the Sabbath. To do creditably what is thus demanded of him, he must have made himself extensively acquainted with the Bible and with those books which are its proper though humble companions. Brilliant talents are not requisite, although, if possessed, capable of great usefulness; but correct and thorough information is absolutely necessary. It is needful in order to the influence of the Super-