

CHRISTIAN VISITOR.

SAINT JOHN, FRIDAY, JUNE 1, 1849.

CHURCH COVENANT.

(Concluded.)

"We promise to hold communion together in the worship of God, and in the ordinances and discipline of his church, according as we are or shall be guided by the Spirit of God in his word."

Many who have taken this vow, when their love has waxed cold, from a variety of causes absent themselves frequently from the house of God, and from the place of social prayer; and a larger number still decline to approach the Lord's table; and, when remonstrated with for their neglect, seem to be entirely unaware that they ever thus obligated themselves.—They say they never engaged to observe regularly the Lord's Supper; and when such cases of disorderly walk are presented for admonition or discipline to the notice of the Church, many can see no grounds of procedure, and object to discipline on such grounds. There are probably in every Baptist church those whose attention needs to be directed particularly to this clause of the Covenant.—Here is communion in three things solemnly promised: 1. In the worship of God: 2. In the ordinances of the Church: 3. In the discipline of the Church. The rule by which this communion is to be regulated and defined is specified; not our convenience, our like or dislike, our brethren's consistency or inconsistency; not by the teaching of the Spirit without the word, which is but a plausible name for our whims or fancies, but by the Spirit of God in his word; that is, according to the teaching of the holy scriptures, which were given by the Holy Spirit, and by which he now guides all the willing disciples of Christ. This word in all such matters is a light to our feet, and a lamp to our path; its instructions are complete; by it we may be thoroughly furnished unto all good works.—It teaches every day alike, and all enquirers the same doctrine. Under such guidance there may be unity of sentiment and harmony of action, which is the communion to be sought. Set us loose from the scripture and communion is impossible. Impressions and desires must vary with varying dispositions, temperaments, physical conditions, and a variety of other causes, and we are at once cast upon a sea of uncertainty; and the idea of Church communion must be relinquished as an utter impossibility. We may retain the name in common parlance, but the thing itself, to which pertains all the advantages, we must abandon. Are not the examples illustrating this fact lamentably numerous? A Church in perfect communion is like a body in perfect soundness; and a body deformed, or maimed, or diseased is like a Church without communion and fellowship in its members; some may be walking orderly, and exerting themselves to adorn the doctrines of Christ; others are as limbs out of joint; and the efficiency and symmetry of the body is impaired in proportion to the number and extent of disaffected cases.

The scriptures presenting us in Acts ii. one most interesting example of Church communion, shews its practicability, and must convince all of the desirableness and duty of keeping the Covenant in this particular.

"Then they that gladly received his word were baptized, and the same day there were added to them about three thousand souls. And they continued steadfastly in the Apostle's doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers. And they continued daily with one accord in the temple and in breaking bread, and from house to house did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, praising God and having favor with all the people."

Is there any thing here that should not be grateful to a Christian, from which he can with any show of consistency dissent? Let this then be the model, and remember the solemn form and sacred nature of the Covenant, thus shall we secure peace and abundant prosperity.

Extract from a Letter of the Rev. A. D. Thompson.

Our Quarterly Meeting held with us about a fortnight past was very interesting; four were baptized on Lord's-day (13th inst.) There were no Ministers present except bro. Hall and myself. St. Andrews, May 28.

Brother Thompson informs us of his intention to be present at the Nova-Scotia Association as a Delegate from the Western New-Brunswick.

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Upon taking the chair Deacon N. S. DeMill gave an interesting statement of the origin of the Society, and very ably and justly set forth its importance and its honest claims upon the community of Saint John.—The Report was then read by Mr. William Everett which had been drawn up by Mrs. Lucy A. S. Ansley, the Secretary of the Society. This document was one of sterling value and well worthy the occasion, indeed, as was remarked by the Rev. Mr. Mackay in his speech it would have done honour to the parent Institution—The British and Foreign Sailor's Society. We hope to see it in pamphlet form for circulation, for though we would be glad to present an abstract of it, as we hope to do for our distant subscribers, yet no abstract suited to a paper could do it justice.

The adoption of the Report was moved by the Rev. E. D. Very and seconded by the Rev. A. McDonald.

A second Resolution, referring particularly to the City Mission department, was advocated in a very happy manner by the Rev. Mr. Mackay and seconded by Mr. E. H. Duval.

A third Resolution, referring to the work among Seamen, was offered by the Rev. S. Robinson.

The interest of the exercises was much enhanced by the performance of the choir which under the superintendence of Mr. Joseph Mercer is becoming one of the best choirs of the city.

After a liberal collection for the object of the Society amounting to £3 17s. 3d; the Meeting was adjourned to meet in the Vestry of the Brussels Street Chapel on Tuesday evening next, at half-past seven o'clock for the transaction of its business, and the choice of its officers for the ensuing year; in which all the subscribers who contribute a penny a week to its funds, have an equal voice.

We know not in what direction to look for a more interesting and promising field for christian exertion than the one embraced by this Society; and we believe no other object of philanthropy could be so successfully prosecuted in Saint John, or command so readily the sympathy and support of all christians.

A Meeting in behalf of Colportage was held in the Baptist Chapel in Portland on Saturday afternoon, May 19th; a similar meeting was held in Carleton on Wednesday evening, May 23; a third meeting was held in Germain Street Chapel last evening. At these meetings the Colporteur's Report, given in this paper, was presented, and addresses commending the object were made by the several Pastors, and by other brethren present. We hope the Report may excite our brethren abroad to aid us in this good work, the advantages of which none can fail to acknowledge.

The Committee would acknowledge in behalf of their object receipts as follows:—

From the Female Mite Society, Portland,	£1 15 0
Collection at the Meeting in Carleton,	4 1
German Street Chapel,	10 4
Total	£15 9 6

Also a donation to brother Tabor as extra compensation by a sister of the 1st Church in town, of £1 1s.

Will not the friends of the enterprize come forward and support the Colporteur that all the profits of his sales may be as they need to be devoted to gratuitous supplies of Bibles, Testaments, and good books to such as are too poor to purchase.

The Portland Mite Society engage to give at least £10, for the ensuing year. A brother of that church offers £5 more; and one or two others together £5 more. Who will make up the other £30, which will cover not only the salary of the Colporteur, but his incidental expenses of ferriage, fare, &c. Will brethren volunteer their aid?

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vourable indications of increasing energy and strength.

DOMESTIC MANUFACTURES.

We noticed on Mr. N. S. Demill's counter this week several rolls of Cloth manufactured in this Province, by Mr. W. C. Snow, of Hampton, and were much gratified to learn from Mr. Demill that he could retail this cloth cheaper than he could purchase the same description of cloth by quantity in England. This is certainly an interesting fact for the good people of New-Brunswick, and ought to stimulate the enterprize of Artizans and Mechanics; for if this species of manufacture can be produced at such rates, why not a multitude of others, and why be so dependent on the policy or caprice of others to supply our wants?

We understand that Mr. Snow has his factory completed and his machinery in operation, and is ready now to answer all orders for his work; and the gentleman who has prosecuted his experiment so successfully is certainly entitled to the most liberal patronage of our citizens. A man who will purchase goods manufactured out of the Province in preference to those of equal quality manufactured here, and at the same time pay more or even the same price, ought not to complain of hard times, for he does not deserve else. Every well-wisher to the Province and its interests will say heartily, "Success to Mr. Snow."—We will at any time be glad to publish and help to circulate information of this kind relating to any man or any Domestic Interest of New-Brunswick.

HON. AND REV. B. W. NOEL.

This eminent clergyman has directed a letter to the Bishop of London, May 7th, commencing as follows:—

"My Lord,—As a dissenter from the doctrine and discipline of the Establishment, I have taken before a magistrate the oaths prescribed by 52 George III.; yesterday I preached for Mr. Binney, at the Weigh-house Chapel, and received the Lord's Supper with the members of that church; and I am ready to do any other proper and lawful act which your lordship may suggest by which I may publicly declare my dissent. I had intended to be silent for some time, but the progress of Mr. Bouverie's Bill has changed my intention, because as that bill will doubtless pass through the House of Lords without material alteration, and I am unable to avail myself of it, I wish to ascertain, as soon as possible, whether its effect will be to sentence me to imprisonment for preaching the Gospel."

Mr. Noel then proceeds to give his reasons why he would not avail himself of any such relief as would be afforded by the said bill which is that "he becomes thereby a party to his own deposition from the ministry. In his own language: it is to avow, not that I have ceased to be a Minister of the Establishment, but that I have ceased to be a Minister of Christ."

He refers to risk the consequences of the old canon law which has incarcerated the Rev. Mr. Shore. Matters are thus brought to a summary crisis, and the friends of religious liberty are waiting the issue.

Correspondence.

[FOR THE CHRISTIAN VISITOR.]

SABBATH SCHOOLS.

No. VII.

Objects and Modes of Sabbath School Instruction.

The practice of distributing rewards among the scholars, as a recompense of diligence and good conduct, and as an incentive to further effort, has no existence at the present time in the better class of Sabbath Schools; at least so far as my information extends. In the earlier history, however, of these institutions, it was the almost universal custom, the prizes being generally books, though in some instances, as we are told, even money was employed as the glittering enticement to study.

No long experience was required to show the evil operation of the practice, and to lead to its general abandonment. It was found to impose needless expense, to create dissatisfaction among those scholars who were unsuccessful candidates for prizes, to promote a spirit of rivalry and selfish competition, and thus warm into ardent life the passions which Sabbath School instruction seeks to control. The moral influence exerted by such a motive—power was soon seen to be of a very questionable character, and the judicious

teacher could not but ask himself if it were right to bribe the young heart to give its attachment to the Bible, and to purchase its respect for the laws of God. It was evident that if the pupil was taught to put forth his mental powers in strong and earnest endeavours to acquire knowledge, in consideration of a remuneration, and not from convictions of duty, he would be most unlikely to form any correct conceptions of his moral objection as an accountable being; and that virtue and religion would be in danger of being viewed as possessing no higher claim on his attention than as means of promoting his self-interests.—And further, even if so serious an obligation could be removed, it was manifest that the principle on which rewards were distributed was not just. The prize would often be borne away by some boy of brilliant endowments and quick memory, which enabled him to become the victor with very little application; while others, of less rapid and precocious intellects, but of far higher desert for their diligence and patience, were left without any token of approval.

These and other reasons which may be omitted have rightfully banished prizes and rewards—such as have been alluded to—from most Sabbath schools. If in some cases they still are used to draw scholars to the scene of instruction, and to awaken their ambition, it must be because the evils necessarily resulting from so unwholesome a kind of stimulus are overlooked. It is to be hoped, however, that the time is not distant when a wider diffusion of knowledge in relation to the laws of mind and the influences which act upon it for good or ill, will purify every system of instruction, and lead to the rejection of every element not sanctioned by true philosophy.

The objections urged against the distribution of prize books and similar rewards, do not bear upon the practice now generally adopted of providing the Sabbath School with a library of interesting books. These books are lent, not conferred as gifts or prizes. They are lent to all the scholars, so that no invidious distinctions are made, and no opportunity is allowed for competition and strife. They form a part of the ordinary and necessary means of instruction, as much so as the Bible; and the pupils do not feel that in receiving them they are receiving a reward of merit.—It is true, indeed, that the interesting volumes which are every Sabbath put into their hands are no feeble attraction, and by no means the weakest ties that bind them to the school. This is what they should be. What we wish for in the system of instruction is a power to arrest and fix the attention of the pupil, to kindle his imagination, to seize and bear his mind along the path of knowledge, to throw around the subjects of study a fascinating light, a halo of beauty which shall shed upon his mind influences like those of spring upon the earth, making it bud and blossom into intellectual loveliness. But we wish this power to be genial, healthy, and pure. It is the warmth, and the light of nature that is desired, not artificial heat and splendour. In other words the essential excellence of motives is that they shall act on the mind with potent effect in calling into exercise its energies, while they impel them in a right direction.—Whatever means combine the qualities of strongly engaging the attention of the pupil in his studies, and of arousing only the nobler aspirations of his nature, must be good.—Now, it is found that the books lent weekly to the Sabbath School are highly interesting and pleasing to the scholars, presenting truth in the most winning garb, and giving a captivating aspect to knowledge; while they are not chargeable with exciting contention, jealousy, and selfishness.

But excellent and efficient as the Sabbath School library is in its uses, it will fall short of compassing its widest amount of good, unless its power is as far as possible subject to the direction of the teacher. The volumes composed with so much thought and anxiety, bearing the striking impressions of minds solicitous for the salvation of the young and inspired with the illumination granted in answer to prayer, are designed for worthier ends than to please the youthful reader. Their mission is, by the blessing of God, to convert souls. They are sent forth as the vehicles of sacred divine, saving truth. They bear a treasure of pious sentiments, fervent wishes, heart-uttered prayers, and teachings eloquent with christian knowledge and piety. As such the teacher should regard them. He should use all his influence to induce the scholar to read them with attention; and should aid him to understand them. Without this control exercised