

LAW AND LIBERTY.

Christianity proceeds upon the hypothesis that human nature is built upon a plan; or rather, that each man is a collection of building materials, which put together and arranged after a true model, form a temple of God. Religion is the law of the spirit of life. There is a law of human well-being, and christianity enunciates it. Man is a creature of noble capacities, but of feeble judgment; of high and holy powers, but also of low and dangerous tendencies. As the parent takes the child in his arms or within his control judiciously circumscribes his liberty, selects his food, directs his education, restrains his appetites, and disciplines his intelligence and his affections, so the Gospel takes up the soul of man and makes its first principle the parental principle of obedience. The child is under parental law, and woe to the youth that never knows the strictness, the saving restraints, the decisive will, the instructive authority of a wise father!—The soul is (or should be) under Gospel law, and woe to the spirit that feels not its commanding, guiding, forbidding, inspiring, warning and saving authority!

The wise parent seeks to emancipate his child from the dominion of puerile ignorance. He will teach him that all is not good which invites his curd appetite, all not safe which seems so to his inexperienced eye. He will free him from the bondage of an unruly temper,—deliver him from the painful vacillations and caprices of his undisciplined will. He will give him painful tasks, and train him to self-control, to powers of attention, to habits of industry. In like manner, Christianity seeks to free the soul from the narrowing prejudices of the senses, from the slavery of low tastes, from the bondage of habit. She will reinforce the languid conscience, decide the wavering will; choose for us, among many contending aims, the right one; and introduce into the soul a fixed standard, an unerring guide, an established authority. Thus she will bring order out of chaos, peace from discord, self-satisfaction from inward discontent, and a feeling of having found the true way of life, in place of that disappointed, halting, and ever-confused frame of mind which attends all those yet in a condition of moral insubordination.

Brethren, I have said that Christianity is a law; and that it acts as a restraint, a guide, a commander. And you ask, is this feeling of law compatible with the enjoyment of liberty? It is the peculiarity and beauty of all true and just laws to tend to convert obedience into joyful acquiescence. The law of the Gospel corresponds with the constitution of humanity; and when the soul is under its full dominion, it feels the law as little as we feel the law of gravitation when we are moving with ease and safety under its sustaining influence. The ship does not move less swiftly or easily on account of the ballast it carries. The stars, that implicitly obey the law which binds them to their spheres, find no obstacles in their pathway; and the christian who is wholly submissive to the laws of God, finds himself, unexpectedly, it may be, under the conditions of perfect happiness and perfect freedom. Then for the first time all his nature acts harmoniously, because it acts under the unimpeded direction of its Maker. God is the author of the soul, and of the soul's law; and in bringing our souls under the dominion of the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus, he "makes us free from the law of sin and death."—*Rev. H. W. Bellows' Sermon, occasioned by the late Riot.*

ANSWERING OUR OWN PRAYER.

In the vicinity of B ———, lived a poor, but industrious man, depending for support upon his daily labour. His wife fell sick, and not being able to hire a nurse, he was obliged to confine himself to the sick bed and the family. His means of support being thus cut off, he soon found himself in need. Having a wealthy neighbour near, he determined to go and ask him for two bushels of wheat, with a promise to pay as soon as his wife became so much better that he could leave her and return to his work. Accordingly he took his bag, went to his neighbour's and arrived while the family were at morning prayers. As he sat on the door-stone, he heard the man pray very earnestly that God would clothe the naked, feed the hungry, relieve the distressed, and comfort all that mourn. The prayer concluded, the poor man stepped in and made known his business, promising to pay with the avails of his first labour. The farmer was very sorry he could not accommodate him, but he had promised to loan a large sum of

money, and had depended upon his wheat to make it out; but he presumed neighbour ——— would let him have it.

With a tearful eye and a sad heart, the poor man turned away. As soon as he left the house, the farmer's little son stepped up and said, "Father, did you not pray that God would clothe the naked, feed the hungry, relieve the distressed and comfort mourners?" "Yes; why?" "Because, father, if I had your wheat, I would answer that prayer." It is needless to add, that the Christian father called back his suffering neighbour and gave him as much as he needed.

Now, Christian readers, do you thus answer your own prayers?

My brother, when you fear your parish will be left destitute of a pastor, for lack of competent support, do you pray God that the church may not be left as a flock without a shepherd; and then rising from your knees, use every means both through your purse and through your influence to answer that prayer?

My sister, when you hear of or see the wretchedness to which sin, in one form or another, has reduced multitudes of your own sex, and from the fulness of your heart beseech a merciful God to pity and relieve, do you see to it that your prayers go not wholly unanswered?

Christian friends, when you see a world perishing in sin, and hear the actual death groan of hundreds of millions, who are making their last fearful leap into hell, and your agonizing soul cries, "Lord, save, ere they all perish," do your self-denying efforts to do and to give, show to all that what you can do in answering your own prayers, shall not go undone?

Is not our willingness or unwillingness to come up to the work of answering our prayers, as far as it is within our power, a true but fearful test of our sincerity?—*N. Y. Evangelist.*

The Natural History of the Sabbath.

The Creator has given us a natural restorative—sleep; and a moral restorative—Sabbath-keeping; and it is ruin to dispense with either. Under the pressure of high excitement, individuals have passed weeks together with little sleep or none; but when the process is long continued, the over-driven powers rebel, and fever, delirium and death come on; nor can the natural amount be systematically curtailed without corresponding mischief.—The Sabbath does not arrive like sleep. The day of rest does not steal over us like the hour of slumber. It does not entrance us almost whether we will or not; but addressing us as intelligent beings, our Creator assures us that we need it, and bids us notice its return, and court its renovation. And if, going in the face of the Creator's kindness, we force ourselves to work all days alike, it is not long till we pay the forfeit. The mental-worker—the man of business, or the man of letters—finds his ideas becoming turbid and slow; the equipose of his faculties is upset; grows moody, fitful and capricious; and with his mental elasticity broken, should any disaster occur, he subsides into habitual melancholy, or in self-destruction speeds his guilty exit from a gloomy world. And the manual worker—the artizan, the engineer—toiling on from day to day, and week to week, the bright intuition of his eye gets blunted, and forgetful of their cunning, his fingers no longer perform their feats of twinkling agility, nor by a plastic or tuneful couch, mould dead matter, or wield mechanic power; but mingling his life's blood in his daily drudgery, his locks are prematurely gray, his genial humour sours, and slaving it till he has become a morose or reckless man, for any extra effort, or any blink of balmy feeling, he must stand indebted to opium or alcohol.—*North British Review.*

A Happy Expedient.

A Minister in the country had been pleading with his congregation the claims of the poor heathen on Christian benevolence; and strongly urged on them the duty of contributing to the support of missionary exertions.—His friends readily contributed according to their several abilities. The next year when the missionary collection was about to be made, the minister received a one-pound note from a poor labouring man, with a statement to the following effect:—"Sir, when you preached the missionary sermon last year I was grieved that I had it not in my power to give what I wished. I thought and thought, and consulted my wife whether there was any thing in which we could spare without stinting the poor children; but it

seemed that we lived as near as possible in every respect, and had nothing but what was absolutely necessary. At last it came into my mind, 'Is that fourpence which goes every week for an ounce of Tobacco absolutely necessary?' I had been used to it so long that I scarcely thought it possible to do without it; however I resolved to try: so, instead of spending the fourpence, I dropped it into a box. The first week I felt it sorely, but the second week it was easier; and in the course of a few weeks it was little or no sacrifice at all; at least, I can say, that the pleasure far outweighed the sacrifice. When my children found what was doing, they wished to contribute also; and if ever they got a penny or a halfpenny given them for their own pleasure, it was sure to find its way into the box instead of the cake-shop. On opening the box, I have the pleasure to find that our collected pence amount to one pound, which I now enclose, and pray that the Lord may give his blessing with it. I am thankful for having thus broken a nasty and expensive habit, and I have enjoyed more health and cheerfulness since I left off that which I once thought it was impossible for me to do without."

MARLBORO' HOTEL.—One of the wonders of Boston is the existence there of a hotel of the first class, in which the Creator and Governor of the universe is publicly and systematically acknowledged and honored. That such a house should be not only supported, but well supported, is highly creditable to the people of New England, and shows the extent to which the old Puritan leaven still pervades that remarkable land. That such a house should, so far as we know, be found only in Boston, is a glaring and incontrovertible proof, if proof were needed, that this whole world has apostatized from God. The house to which we refer, and to the excellence of whose management, accommodation, table, &c., we can testify, from a recent personal residence of nearly a week in it, is the Marlboro' Hotel, which has regulations to the following effect displayed up in its various apartments:—

- 1st. No intoxicating drinks or smoking permitted in or about the premises.
- 2d. Worship morning and evening, to which all guests are invited.
- 3d. The meals for Sabbath will, as far as possible, be prepared on the day previous, in order that all connected with the establishment may have an opportunity to attend public worship.

May we soon see the time when there shall be at least, one such public house in every city.—*Montreal Witness.*

CHRISTIAN VISITOR.

SAINT JOHN, FRIDAY, JULY 6, 1849.

WHAT CONSTITUTES A SCRIPTURAL CALL TO THE MINISTRY?

From our confidence in the sincerity of the Querist's motives, and at his request, we submit the following thoughts for his consideration, and that of our readers generally.

It will be unnecessary for us here to say any thing respecting the position which the Christian Ministry occupies according to divine arrangements among the means which were to be used in the conversion of sinners and the purification of the saints—nor need we state that the number of men consecrated to the work of the Ministry is unequal to the extent of the field now white and ready for harvest—and that this deficiency is, in some degree caused through incorrect ideas of what constitutes a call from God for the work.

That eminent piety is indispensable to the Christian Ministry, is a truth which will not admit of a moment's question; that even persons who differ respecting other qualifications, will fully agree that those who bear the vessels of the Lord should be holy. To seek for membership in the Church of Christ or arrogate to ourselves the name of Christians without having the heart sprinkled from an evil conscience is, to say the least, presumptuous, and at variance with the character of the kingdom of God; but for the man who professes to teach the doctrines of Christ to be himself destitute of the life of faith and joy of the Spirit, is still more alarming.

The character of the work to which they are called requires a large share of the mind that was in Christ. Unless he has himself believed the terrors of the Lord, how could he persuade men? If he has been unfaithful to his own soul, is it expected that he will be faithful to that which is another man's. The word of God is to be preached, not deceitfully nor un-

intelligibly, but in sincerity and in truth, which will commend itself to every man's conscience in the sight of God. But is it at all reasonable, that one who is an ally of Satan and a member of the kingdom of darkness, will either possess a correct apprehension of the Gospel, or apply it in honesty to the understanding and hearts of others? He who rejects the gospel, and thereby barter his own soul, will not hesitate to make merchandize of the flock. What prince would choose from among the voluntary subjects of his enemy, the man to whom the generalship of his soldiers would be committed during the time of war against him? But Christ has ordained that his word should be committed to faithful men, who should, as well from their piety and spiritual perception, as from their intelligence and aptness to communicate, "be able to teach others."

An ardent love for the work, is necessary, in order to be a good Minister of Jesus Christ. He must have a sincere desire to be thus employed in the vineyard. The love which he bears to his Lord, will influence him to make the knowledge of the true God and of his Son, known to others, that he might thereby extend the kingdom of heaven among men. He must be willing to endure hardships, and self-denial, for his love to the truth, and for his compassion to the souls of men. Being thus endowed with a measure of the mind that was in Christ, he will be prepared to forego all prospects of worldly emoluments and distinctions, to maintain the honour of God, that if by any means he should save souls.

The varied character of the ministerial work, will draw largely on his meekness, gentleness, patience, candour, and zeal, besides that which cometh upon him daily, the care of the Church, of which he has been made Overseer. In his pastoral visitations, a diversity of disposition and character will throng him, each drawing not only on his resources of intelligence, but upon his time and christian virtues. The ignorant must be instructed, the transgressor reproved, the wavering confirmed, the weak strengthened, the sick and the afflicted sympathized with and consoled. The doctrines and ordinances of the Gospel are to be maintained, in strict accordance with the ancient model given by the Head of the Church, irrespective of the caprice or predilections of friends or enemies. The gifts of the Church are to be exercised, and its discipline promptly observed—the young, and inquirers after salvation must be instructed in the knowledge of the Lord. How arduous the work, and how zealous and spiritual should the man be, who is called to such an office! Who is sufficient for these things? To enter then on a work, which is in every respect holy and unearthly, presenting no prospects of gain, except those that are unseen and eternal; requires no ordinary share of the spirit that was in Him, who in view of usefulness and heaven, "endured the cross and despised the shame."

To discharge the office of a Bishop, or that of a Missionary, with any degree of consistency and efficiency, a thorough acquaintance with the law of the Lord is indispensable.—Teaching, preaching, and exhortation carry on their face the idea of a correctness of knowledge on the part of him that instructs others. "Thou that teacheth another, teachest thou not thyself," must forever doom to annihilation, the thought of having the inexperienced and untaught, to occupy the position of those who should feed the church of God with knowledge and understanding. It is impossible to give to each a portion in due season, or preach the whole counsel of God, unless the man himself is thoroughly furnished in all the words of the law. This intimacy with the word of God, and soundness of views of the first principles of the gospel of Christ, are as necessary to the Evangelist as to the Pastor; and for this reason Paul enjoined on Timothy the Evangelist to "meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them, that thy profiting may appear to all. Take heed unto thyself, and unto the teaching; continue in them, for in doing this thou shalt save thyself, and them that hear thee." 1 Tim iv. 15, 16.

Further remarks are reserved until next week.

A. McD.

We are deeply indebted to Brother Coy, of Fredericton, for forwarding to us Brother Burpe's letter, for insertion in this day's paper. Our Churches throughout the Provinces, will be gratified to learn, that the health of our beloved Missionary is improving, by the change from Mergui to Akyab; and that encouraging