

CHRISTIAN VISITOR.

SAINT JOHN, FRIDAY, JUNE 29, 1849.

LIBERATION OF MR. SHORE.

The friends of Mr. Shore have from the commencement of his imprisonment been anxious to purchase his liberty by paying the amount demanded by the Bishop's lawyer. This has now been accomplished, and the good man has gone forth to his family and flock. He is not however, as sanguine respecting the continuance of his freedom, as many of his friends would imagine; since the reasons which could justify his diocesan to trouble him before, must still exist, and apply to him, as he still intends to preach the Gospel to his former people who are strongly attached to him for his Christian faithfulness and urbanity. The tractarian party in the Church has not gained much credit by this act of oppression; yet we cannot but believe that this and similar acts, will turn out to the furtherance of the Gospel; in influencing the halting and the fearful among the Ministry to assume a more decided position with respect to their conviction of duty, as well as in emancipating the minds of the English people from the tyranny of those who lord over God's heritage.

Mr. Bouverie's Bill, which was originally intended to open the door of secession from the Church somewhat wider, is assuming quite another form; in its passage through Parliament, so that secession instead of becoming easier and more natural, will be rendered still more tortuous and humiliating.

A. McD.

Rev. J. Shore to Sir C. E. Eardley, Bart.

Bridgeton, Totens, May 31st, 1849.

MY DEAR SIR,—Yesterday the gaoler opened my prison doors, and I now find myself in my own house, surrounded with every blessing.

I feel deeply grateful for the sympathy and kindness manifested towards me by so many Christian friends. I can only express my heartfelt thanks, but I am sure, my dear Sir, that neither you nor they will be forgotten when, in the "Valley of Decision," these thrilling words shall be heard, "In as much as ye did it unto one of the least of these my brethren ye did it unto me." It is true I could not myself have taken the step by which my liberation has been effected. I may err in judgment, but to my mind the principle is the same, whether I am imprisoned for costs incurred by a prosecution against me for simply preaching, or for preaching itself. I know that many whose opinion I highly value, take a different view of the matter; but I have for upwards of the last five years, suffered too much for deferring to the judgment of others, in withdrawing my letters to the Bishop, of 11th Nov. 1843, and signing a declaration to meet his Lordship's requirements, ever again, under any circumstances, to deviate from my own convictions. I have regretted the steps I then took but once, and that has been ever since, and I would have far rather died in prison, had the will of God been so, than I could have been a party to the course of effecting my liberation by the payment of the Bishop's costs. I am not however insensible to the kindness shown me, although my liberty may be of short duration; for certain it is, that if the Bishop had any conscientious feelings at all in commencing this prosecution against me, he is bound, according to his own professing, to carry out the laws of the Church, and I shall very shortly be in prison again for preaching (as I feel in conscience bound to do) contrary to his monition. Indeed, I am already virtually under contempt of court for so doing, and Mr. Barnes is provided with evidence to certify it. How strikingly does such a state of things show the fearful evils resulting from the legalizing of priestcraft. That system must be wrong which gives the power to a professed Bishop of the Church to put a Minister in gaol for simply obeying the express command of the Good Shepherd and Bishop of our souls, in preaching his gospel. If however, it must be so, I would far rather be in prison for preaching the gospel, than I would have my liberty if I must be silent in the Redeemer's cause. Whatever may befall me in this matter, I am happy in the firm conviction that I am in the path of duty. I have hitherto been supported by this consciousness, as well as cheered by the sympathy and kindness of my friends. I feel truly grateful to yourself and to the members of the Committee, and all my many other kind friends to whom I am so greatly indebted; and praying that the Great Head of the Church

may reward you a thousand fold in your own bosoms, with sincere esteem. Believe me my dear Sir, most truly and gratefully yours,

JAMES SHORE.

Sir Culling E. Eardley, Bart.

P. S. I am thankful to say, that I am much better in health; but still I am weak, and my side is troublesome. I trust therefore that you will excuse my employing an amanuensis.—By stooping to write I bind just across my side, which occasions me great inconvenience.—*Christian Times.* J. S.

It will be observed by a notice in this paper that the General Union Board located in St. John, is to meet on Monday next, to adopt some measures for the furtherance of the Union Societies. Any plan that they can mature at this time cannot effect anything for the churches composing the Eastern Association previous to their meeting at Hopewell. We have been informed that some of our brethren in the Ministry on former occasions refused to represent their churches in the Association, because they neglected to contribute to the support of the objects for which the Association was formed. There was surely a good degree of consistence in this decision of our brethren. We hope that the churches in their arrangements for the coming Associations will ask themselves the following questions:—Why are we sending our messengers to the yearly meeting of our churches? Have we exerted ourselves during the last year, to the extent of our means and influence, to promote the interest of our Union Societies? Have we fulfilled our pledges to Brother Burpe, who was influenced to leave his native country, for Heathen lands, on the strength of our promises to him? A. McD.

We feel very grateful to Brother Spurden for his interesting letter on the Nova Scotia Baptist Association, which has been held in Horton during the present week. The zeal and unrelenting perseverance which characterize our brethren in the Sister Province in their efforts to support their Educational Institutions, the confirmation and enlargement of their weak churches, scattered over Cape Breton, and the North Eastern portions of Nova Scotia proper, by their successful Home Missionary visitations, and the systematic and efficient condition of their financial matters are certainly worthy of imitation. A. McD.

MR. BAPTIST NOEL.

A London Correspondent of the New-York Recorder writes, that Mr. Noel has in course of preparation another book, a sequel, we presume, to his former work on the Union of the Church and State, in which his views of Baptism will be fully given to the public. He has recently preached to a very large assemblage in Bloomsbury Baptist Chapel, London. A. McD.

The remarks which we prepared as an answer to Investigator have been reserved for a more convenient season, in order to give place to brother Spurden's letter.

A Meeting of the General Union Board will take place on Monday morning, second day of July, at half-past 6 o'clock, in the German-street Baptist Chapel. A full meeting of the Board is earnestly requested. S. ROBINSON, President.

Correspondence.

[FOR THE CHRISTIAN VISITOR.]

SABBATH SCHOOLS.

No. X.

Objects and Modes of Sabbath School Instruction.

In defining the great and ultimate object of Sabbath School instruction, and attempting, however inadequately, to set it forth in such a light as might serve to show its imperative claims, care has been taken to guard against the too common error of assigning to mere human instrumentality a higher place than it can lawfully occupy. But to avoid the possibility of being misunderstood on this point, it may be thought desirable to limit and describe more exactly the proper sphere of human agency, in respect to the salvation of the soul; and also to bring out in bolder relief the sovereign prerogatives of Divine power and grace. Nothing can be farther from the intention of the writer, or more at variance with his pro-

foundest convictions, than to represent any kind of instruction however clear and weighty, or any exertions of man however strenuous and continued, as the efficient or producing cause of spiritual enlightenment. Talent, genius, learning, eloquence, piety, possess not in themselves power to effect in any measure the renovation of a single heart. When successfully employed in the cause of God, so as to convert a sinner from the error of his way, they are rendered thus efficient by the appointment, the direction and the blessing of God. They are means and instruments which he deigns to sanctify and use in subjugating souls to his sway, and overturning the dominion of sin. The sole and supreme glory of delivering man from moral death, and exalting him to the life of heaven, belongs to the Supreme Being. Those whose labours have been most signally useful through His sovereign and gracious will, are the most deeply conscious of the origin and nature of that power which has rested upon them and made them mighty to the pulling down of strongholds. Theirs will ever be the first voices raised to ascribe the glory of the triumph to God; from their lips will burst most freely forth the graceful acknowledgement—Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us; but unto Thy name give glory, for thy mercy, and for thy truth's sake." It was this spirit of humble, devoted dependence which gave so pure and unselfish a character to the abundant labours of him who "was not a whit behind the very chief of the Apostles." "I have planted; Apollos watered; but God gave the increase." The salvation of the soul, therefore,—that most marvellous of the wonderful works of God—is to be ascribed most entirely and absolutely to Almighty power.—The very nature of the work precludes the idea of its possible accomplishment by any degree of energy short of omnipotence. As the earth and the heavens testify in their greatness that their Author is Divine, so the regeneration of the soul, the restoration of its lost holiness, witnesses of itself to the all-sufficient influence that has produced it.

But while we are constrained, by the direct testimony of the scriptures and by the evidence of fact, to believe that it is God's incommunicable prerogative to transform the corrupt human spirit, we are as fully taught that he works this glorious change through appointed and adapted means. It would be as impious to reject or to speak slightly of these means, as to give to subordinate agents the honours due to His sovereign name. His sovereignty is as manifest in choosing the weak things of the world to confound the mighty, as in subduing a proud and alienated heart in willing obedience to his laws. To refuse, therefore, to employ the instruments chosen by him for promoting his cause, and which he commands us to use for this purpose, would be as high-handed a rebellion against his supremacy, as wicked a resistance to his will, as would be the refusal to acknowledge that he works in the heart of man both to will and to do of his own good pleasure. The doctrine of the divine sovereignty is not only in no wise opposed to the doctrine of human accountability, but gives to it all its solemn and pressing urgency. What are his commandments but the authoritative utterance of his all-governing will? What his precepts but the exercise of that will in prescribing the course of duty? What his summons to the conscience, the judgment, the affections of man but the declaration of his indefeasible right to the empire of mind? What the exhortations, the invitations, the promises addressed to our revolted race but the voice of his celestial majesty speaking forth his gracious pleasure? And what are all those commands which relate to the preaching and promulgation of his word, to the diffusion of religious knowledge, the employment of human agency, for the purpose of reclaiming sinners, but the expression of his sole and imperative right to choose the means and instruments for effecting his designs, and to impose the duties which his servants are required to perform? Through the whole system of measures and agencies by which the redemption of souls is achieved, the high controlling influence of divine sovereignty ceaselessly operates. It operates in fixing the measure of our responsibility, in giving force to our obligations, in determining the province of our labours, and in assigning awards.

The bearing of these remarks on our present subject is obvious. It is easily deducible from them that human effort does not invade the sphere of divine prerogative, or assume to itself functions with which it has not been invested, when in submission to the will of Heaven and in dependence on the divine power,

it labours to win souls to Christ. On the contrary it has been shown, that this object has been proposed to the faith and the benevolence of man by the Creator of souls; that it is to be attained by certain means of divine appointment which have a necessary connection with it and are admirably adapted to its accomplishment; and that it is God's Sovereign pleasure that those who possess these means should use them for the purposes intended. Applying these plain inferences to Sabbath School instruction it becomes evident how far we regard it as connected with the religious interests of the young, and what influence is attributed to it in respect to their salvation. We do not push it beyond its proper bounds when we assert that the conversion of the young to God is its appropriate and legitimate object. Nothing short of this would give fitting scope to its capabilities. Nothing less than this would be commensurate with the obligations of the Sabbath School Teacher. To seek for any thing inferior to this as the ultimate end of his labours, would not be fulfilling the will of God. It is easy, in confirmation of what has been said, to cite the authoritative teachings of Scripture. A few of its most striking announcements will be deemed sufficient. "He that winneth souls is wise."—"And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever."—"Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in Heaven."—"He who converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins."—"Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it."—"And ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord."—"These words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thy heart: and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children."—"Ye shall teach them unto your children, speaking of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, when thou liest down, and when thou risest up."—All these passages and many others of the same class teach the divinely appointed connection between the means and end which we have been considering. They all teach that there is a moral fitness, a special adaptedness of the means, to that end. They all proclaim the moral obligations of society towards the young. And if some of them refer to the relations of domestic life rather than to those subsisting between the Sabbath School Teacher and Scholar, still the principles involved are of general obligation and application.

A view of the modes of instruction applicable to the object contemplated is reserved for the next paper. S. ELDER.

Frederickton, June 19, 1849.

[FOR THE CHRISTIAN VISITOR.]

QUARTERLY MEETING.

The regular Quarterly Meeting of this District was held, pursuant to notice, Mactaquack Church, Parish of Douglas, on Saturday, Sunday and Monday, the 9th, 10th, and 11th instant. The ministers in attendance were Elders W. Harris, of Jacksontown; T. W. Saunders, of Prince William; G. W. Miles, of Grand Lake; T. Todd, of Woodstock; S. Elder of Frederickton;—and brethren R. Emerson and Hughes.

On Saturday, at 3 o'clock, the usual Conference was held. Though not numerously attended, the meeting was one of some interest. In the evening, brother R. Emerson preached to an attentive audience. His subject was—the presence of Christ the comfort of his Church. Text, John xiv. 18. I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you. The promise and its fulfilment formed the two leading divisions of the sermon, and afforded ample room for reflections and remarks suited to excite the affections of Christians towards the Saviour, and to encourage their utmost trust in his power, faithfulness and love.

The services of the Sabbath commenced with a meeting, at 9 o'clock, A. M. for prayer and praise. It was well attended and evidently engaged the warm feelings and solemn thoughts of many of those present. The Rev. W. Harris preached at 10 o'clock, to a large assemblage of hearers, from Numbers xiv. 24; "But my servant Caleb, because he had another spirit with him, and hath followed me fully, him will I bring into the land whereunto