

and his face downwards, eagerly digging gold from that precious and exhaustless mine.—While thus absorbed, and with dimmed natural vision, he would not at first notice that any one had entered; but at length, raising his eyes a little, and describing me, he would reach out both hands, clasp one of mine, press it, hold it fast, and look up to heaven, while the tears flowed down his aged cheeks, and remain silent for some time. At length his struggling feelings would find vent in such words as follow: "Bless the Lord! I rejoice to meet you. My heart is full. O, the word of God! Deep, high, broad, rich, wonderful! I relish it; I eat it; it is delicious food. It is sweeter than honey to my taste. I want to see him. I long to be with him. I long to go. But I will wait. He is good. He knows best. He will come by and by. But to be with him! This only will satisfy my soul. This only will fill my heart."

Expressions of a similar character fell from his lips during almost every one of our later interviews. At length we were summoned to the general meeting; and on our return it was announced that the Master had come and called for Joshua. My soul followed him in his ecclesiastical chariot, and I voluntarily exclaimed, "My father! my father! the chariot of Israel and the horsemen thereof." He was a good man, and no one denies it. Both friends and foes say of Joshua, "He was a good man."—Give me his simple faith and his sure hope, and I ask no other inheritance. O, that my title to eternal life might appear as clear, as authentic as his!

CHRISTIAN VISITOR.

SAINT JOHN, FRIDAY, JUNE 7, 1850.

THE WORK AND QUALIFICATIONS OF THE CHRISTIAN MINISTRY.

No. II.

Having in our previous number alluded to the vast responsibilities of the Ministerial office and to the prime element of a Minister's qualification—personal piety, I would direct attention without further preliminaries to two further sources, of influence and success as follows:

A Minister of Christ in this age should be a man of strong convictions. If his trials are always peculiar, they vary with the condition of society, and the circumstances of the age. One of the strong features of this age is a recklessness of opinion and practice under a cloak of liberty, as though freedom—the freedom of Christ was inconsistent with the precepts and statutes of Christ; and with submission of mind and will to his teaching and controul. Of course, this lays a faithful Minister under special disadvantage. Those disposed may divert and amuse such minds; to such influence they are peculiarly susceptible: but to make them captives to the truth, to cast down their high thoughts and imaginations, which are exalted against the knowledge of God, requires a degree of confidence and boldness which no Christian man can exercise who has not strong convictions—convictions which shall comport in some good degree with the justness of God's claims, the immutability of His law, the infinite obligations of sinful men to Christ, who died for them, and the inevitable and final ruin of all who do not obey the gospel of the Son of God. Who would commit his cause before a tribunal of justice to an undecided hesitating timid advocate? Who will trust his life to the prescriptions of a physician who has no confidence in his own skill, no definite idea of disease and remedy; who trifles with our life to gratify our caprice; and who studies our tastes and whims rather than the malady that is bringing us to the grave? Who cares to be thus placidly betrayed, and sold to death? And shall a ship or a farm in equity or even mortal life be of greater moment to us than the soul's eternal condition? The care of souls is the superlative care. Every preparation therefore within reach in the gift or grace of God by constitution or by culture should be brought to this work, that we may know the truth; that we may feel its power; that we may be positive and earnest in our declaration of it. This is the advice of Paul the aged to his son in the gospel:—"Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine. Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery.—Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy profiting may appear to all. Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in

doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee."

Again: Risking all the prejudice that clutters about the word in hundreds of stagnant minds, we must assert our conviction, that a Minister of Christ should be a *Student*—not a mere book-worm, not a pedant, but a man ever on the alert to strengthen and store his mind with useful knowledge, for teaching, for argument, and for illustration; to influence other minds in strict conformity with the laws of our being, which are God's laws; to become by the blessing of God in his house a vessel of gold meet for the Master's use, and prepared unto every good work; a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth, approved unto God by study. These are men after God's heart, the men who are needed, the men who are promised: "Turn, O backsliding children, saith the Lord; for I am married unto you: * * * And I will give you pastors according to my heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding." Our hope of stability in the Church or world, as observation and scripture both teach us, is in wisdom and knowledge. Conversion, as every Church and Pastor learns in many lamentable lessons, is not of itself a sufficient guarantee for a stable and consistent walk in any convert. To be made available for usefulness in the Church the convert must become a disciple, must be teachable, must learn; and no man can or will encourage this who is not himself a studious man. He may possess this desirable habit and command a vast amount of valuable knowledge and be able to minister with all success without attention to this or that particular department of science, without ever seeing a college or a Theological school; but no man can be faithful to Christ and his cause, and do them justice, who is too wayward or too indolent to use and strengthen and furnish the highest and noblest natural endowment with which it has pleased God to invest his creatures, a rational intelligent mind, whose use and province it is in the economy of God to study and learn, as much as it is that of the lungs to breathe or of the eye to see. This idea is essentially involved in the title of the office which it has pleased the Holy Spirit to employ a Pastor. He feeds and guides the flock, he instructs them, imparting the information he has acquired, and directs their investigations of religious truth by his advice.—A flock thus conducted will soon be relieved from the fickleness which characterises those who know nothing but what they have felt, and whose hopes are raised or depressed and who perform religious duties or neglect them just as this uncertain thermometer of feeling is swayed, and which must ever be influenced by health or sickness, by care or quiet, by temperament, by other people's feelings, indeed by a hundred things which could hardly be named. The truth of God never changes, as a ground of faith it is always the same, always stable, not a jot nor tittle of it can ever fail. As a motive to constrain, it is steady, and presses with the same force day after day, and whether we be few or many. As a guide, it is certain, giving the same direction to all; as a source of consolation, it is ample, and never fails. A studious Minister of Christ makes all these treasures available to his people, and though the process may be gradual, they will become steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord. LEVI.

Correspondence.

[FOR THE CHRISTIAN VISITOR.]

MARRYING ONLY IN THE LORD.

In giving a revelation to man, care has been manifested not only in communicating to us a knowledge of the doctrines which we are to believe, and the ordinances which we are to observe, but also of the duties of rulers and subjects, masters and servants; of parents and children, and of husbands and wives. And it moreover treats of the characters which believers are to choose as their companions for life. Every well instructed disciple of Christ pays as much respect to the instructions of his Lord on this point as on any other part of the divine will. It has been often a matter of surprise to us, that individuals professing loyalty to Christ in attending to the order of things which he has authorized respecting ordinances and forms of worship, should show such unpardonable laxity in forming an alliance for life with the enemies of the Lord.—Neither the pulpit nor the press has given sufficient prominence to this subject. People

thought it too sacred a subject for either God or man to dictate or advise concerning; though every thinking being might perceive as with a glance the deliterious effects of such a union. Both reason and revelation unite in testifying against the connection of beings so opposite to each other in their feelings, desires, and aims, as are the children of light and the children of darkness.

In the government of every department of the universe, classification and adaptation are carefully studied by the Creator—they were observed when the heavens and the earth were settled. Every living creature had his own climate, element, and associations appointed for him. There was no admixture of different species, no joining of heterogenous elements, but every creature finding in the sphere marked out for him according to his nature, combinations suited to its constitution. Now, when believers and unbelievers enter into a matrimonial alliance, there is direct violation of this law—light and darkness are no longer distinct and apart—the sons of God and the daughters of men have formed an unnatural confederacy—the sworn subjects of the King of Zion have formed a common cause with the servants of sin, and the enemies of Christ.

The union is opposed by scripture facts and direct prohibitions. The fear lest young Isaac should take unto him a wife from amongst the ungodly daughters of Canaan influenced the Patriarch Abraham to send to Mesopotamia, to obtain for his son a God-fearing woman. Genesis xxiv. An abhorrence to the admixture, caused Rebecca to exclaim in the hearing of her husband, "I am weary of my life because of the daughters of Heth; if Jacob take a wife of the daughters of Heth, such as these that are of the daughters of the land, what good shall my life do me?" Genesis xxvii. 46. Shewing that this feeling did not arise from family prejudices we find the same views enforced by Moses with great emphasis; "Neither shalt thou make marriages with them, thy daughter thou shalt not give unto his son, nor his daughter shalt thou take unto thy son, for they will turn away thy son from following me, that they may serve other Gods, so will the anger of the Lord be kindled against thee." Deut. vii. 3, 4. (See also Joshua xxiii. 12, 13. 1 Kings xi. 1—9. Nehemiah xii. 23—27.) The New Testament is generally explicit on the marriage of believers being "only in the Lord." 1 Cor. vii. 39. And again, "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? &c. 2 Cor. vi. 14. All these passages are to the point; no sophistry can explain them away; the voice of all is, in choosing a companion for life, let it "be only in the Lord." Some might demur at the application of 2 Cor. vi. 14, to the marriage question. If this passage prohibits all unnecessary and close alliance with the ungodly, it must apply with a hundred fold more force to the connexion which is of all others, the most intimate, the closest, and the most lasting. In view of the scriptures to which we have referred above, no Christian can marry an unbeliever without disobeying Christ. He is not at liberty to act as he chooses in this matter, the expression "only in the Lord" limits the choice of every lover of the Lord. They are as much forbidden to unite in marriage with an individual uncircumcised in heart, as they are to commit fornication, idolatry, or theft. All are interdicted by the same authority. The sin is of equal magnitude.

The effects attending such a relation should warn every lover of usefulness and peace against the union here condemned. In changing one's situation in life, every common sense person feels, that it is to obtain a help-mate, one that can freely sympathise in our sorrows and joys and that can impart every possible aid, not in the things of this world only, but in the truth of the gospel. When, however, the believer gives his heart and hand to an enemy of the Lord, in place of finding support and sympathy, as his trials will often require, hindrances accumulate. To preserve domestic peace religious duties must often be omitted, he has to mingle in associations where the conversation and practice are foreign to his heart, and often in an evil hour is overcome by the temptation. "Evil communication corrupts good manners." "God will destroy the companions of fools." Let no one flatter himself by thinking that he can withstand the influence of such companionship, "it will eat as doth a canker." Few christians can afford by the support of their superfluous strength, to invite temptations. Every man has sufficient weakness and corruptions in his own na-

ture, to test his firmness and faith, without imparting additional dangers. These temptations, gentle reader, are constantly flowing from the heart and conduct of one whom you love, day by day, and year after year. If they do not succeed in influencing you to yield to them altogether, they may affect you as did those of Delilah terminate on Samson.—Judges xvi. 15—21.

But if any one whose eye may glance at these lines should still be determined upon such a connexion, even in the face of the direct prohibitions of Heaven, easing his conscience with the idea, "I hope that I may be made the instrument of her (or his) conversion," you are as likely to lose your steadfastness, as the other is to be converted; yea more so. We can call to mind some twenty cases of this nature, and with one or two exceptions their history has been most sad, in having their usefulness impaired, their children exposed to destructive influences, and their piety awfully stunted. You may still reply, "Does not the Apostle say, that, 'the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the believing wife.'"—And again, "For what knowest thou, O wife, whether thou shalt save thy husband?" Now these passages refer exclusively to those who were already married and one of whom had afterwards believed the gospel. It would further appear from the Apostle's reasoning, (see 1 Cor. iii. 10.) that it was a matter of doubt on the part of those who became obedient to the faith, whether they should continue with their unconverted companions, therefore Paul says "the woman who has an husband that believeth not, if he be pleased to dwell with her, let her not leave him." There is far more hope respecting the success of such, than of those who marry contrary to the Word of God. The young members of our churches should give this subject a consideration worthy of its importance to themselves, and to the prosperity of the churches. ADELPHOS.

[FOR THE CHRISTIAN VISITOR.]

DEAR BROTHER.—I have been requested to give you some statement of the prosperity of Zion in the South Branch (so called) in this Parish.

In the above named place there was a Baptist Church organised a number of years ago, and so well did it flourish for a season that it was truly believed to be a vine "which the Lord's right hand had planted."

Through various causes the enemy soon made inroads and the Church ere long became scattered, and instead of being as "a city that is set on a hill" or as "the light of the world," the language of Solomon might justly have been applied to it, "Lo it was all grown over with thorns, and nettles had covered the face thereof, and the stone wall thereof was broken down."

However there were some that fervently prayed as did the Psalmist, "Return we beseech thee, O God of hosts, look down from heaven and behold and visit this vine." The Lord had answered prayer and the aspect of things is favourably changed.

Brother James Thorn, a very zealous and devoted young man from Queen's County, has labored for the last three or four weeks in that place, and the Lord has made his labours instrumental in arousing old professors to a sense of their duty and in calling up the minds of the youth to seek the salvation of their souls.

Elder Merit Keith has also recently preached several times to very good acceptance on the Branch. On Sabbath morning last he preached to a crowded assembly from these words, "Be ye reconciled to God." This was truly a heart-searching discourse. The deepest solemnity pervaded the meeting while the speaker pointed out the great necessity of being reconciled to God; the manner in which we may be reconciled; and lastly the evidences of this reconciliation. At the close of the meeting the audience retired to the side of a stream of water not far distant, where they witnessed with much interest the solemn ordinance of baptism administered to four believers. Elder Keith had also baptised one at the same place on the 13th instant, making in all five, and we hope ere long to be able to communicate still more gratifying intelligence.—Yours in the bonds of christian Union. W. SUSSEX, May 29th, 1850.

P. S. Elder Keith has lately baptised two willing converts on Butternut Ridge, and he tells me there is a good prospect of a gracious work there.

Her Majesty's Sch'r Bermuda recently captured a Brazilian slaver, near the West Indies, with 200 slaves on board, and sent her into Port Royal, Jamaica.