

tery to those who have found, by experience, how difficult to climb up by the rugged path, as I have done.

By the orders of the Governor, Sir Robert Wilson, whom I had the honour of seeing several times and from whom I received much kindness, I was allowed to see everything that I desired, even to the galleries of which I have just spoken, which are not always opened to strangers. Strong as Gibraltar now is, with between 800 and 900 guns already mounted, and with a garrison of 5000 men to man them, and otherwise defend the place, the government of England is continually making new works, so as to render the post still more impregnable. When Ibrahim Pacha, of Egypt, was lately shown some of the new works which are now in process of construction, high up on the southern portion of the rock, he said that he supposed they must be erecting to defend the place against the birds, for he could not conceive what other use could ever be made of them. But enough of the fortifications of Gibraltar.

CHRISTIAN VISITOR.

SAINT JOHN, FRIDAY, DECEMBER 27, 1850.

CHURCH FELLOWSHIP.

Having considered so fully in the several preceding papers the nature and objects of the church relation, and the difference between church fellowship and christian fellowship, we may decide more satisfactorily under what circumstances it would be proper to withdraw Church Fellowship.

As it is presumed there would be no controversy in cases of outbreaching sin or immorality of life we may not need to enlarge upon such cases. The command is too plain to be misunderstood.

"For I verily am absent in the body, but present in the spirit, have judged already as though I were present, concerning him that hath so done this deed. In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, to deliver such a one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus." "Now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolator, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner: with such a one not to eat. For what have I to do to judge them also that are without? do not ye judge them that are within? But them that are without God judgeth.—Therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person."

A few great points are presented here with great distinctness, however, which it may not be inappropriate to notice. *The power of the Church is restricted to those within its limits.* God is to judge and discipline them that are without. *The power of the Church, however, is to be exercised independently of all other human authority over all its members.* "Do not ye judge them that are within? Therefore put away," &c. It is not presiding officers, Elders or Bishops, Synods or Conferences or Councils, but the Church, the congregation of believers,

The exercise of this disciplinary power is to be formal and solemn. "When ye are gathered together and my spirit with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ." It is in the united and assembled church capacity that this disciplinary power is vested. All may not under these circumstances see alike clearly to act; and if not satisfied, so as to act conscientiously and in the fear of God, of course should not act; but for those who do act, it should be only then and there; where there could be prayerful deliberation and an open and honest decision. Not only the welfare of the offending members require that the church should withdraw its countenance and fellowship but also *The soundness and safety of the Church requires it.* Thus under two important reasons, neither of which a consistent follower of Christ can resist, the saving of the spirit of the offender in the day of the Lord Jesus, and the health and efficiency of the Church, which is as the apple of the eye to Jehovah, the Saviour makes his appeal to uphold and sustain a faithful discipline in his church. In connection with the quotations already made from I Corinthians v., we read, "Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump."—One sinner destroyeth much good, and a little leaven in discipline or the indulgence of one member will inevitably lead to a contempt of authority, or to obstinacy in sin when others offend.

Before proceeding to consider Church discipline as applicable to offences of a less aggravated character than those already noticed we may take occasion to remark upon the difference between making laws for the government of the church, and interpreting the laws which we find propounded in the code given to the church by its Head, who is its only proper law-giver.

To interpret law is simply to express its import and application, and the exercise of this power is of course requisite in every case of discipline, the first question in every such case being: Is there transgression? that is, violation of law? if so, what law? There are general laws and special laws; but in every case they must be capable of definition or no infraction could be stated. Reference must now be had to the New Testament. The Pastor may give his opinion, and contribute what light and information he can upon the subject; but this is by no means a final and peremptory decision, though it may be correct. Nor is the offender's interpretation of the law the final one; but that of the Church. To say that this may be wrong is only to affirm what may be true of the decision of any person, body or institution whatever that is human; infallibility being an attribute of none of them. We must rest here, that all things considered, the opinion of the *company of believers* bound together by solemn vows to Christ, and by the fellowship of the spirit, and a common interest for the cause of religion, with the New Testament in their hands are most likely to be correct; they are its safest expounders, and the most disinterested administrators of its laws; and no man with a sufficient degree of affection and confidence to warrant his voluntary fellowship with the body will hesitate to prefer this submission to any other, and such a disposal of his controversy to any other.

Articles of Faith and Practice, and Rules and Bye-Laws for a church, so far as they are meant to be and are understood to be simple expressions and definitions of what the Scripture reveals, involve no more exercise of power or authority than any one case of discipline requires; and it is only when they include professed improvement, an amendment or an addition that they are made to supersede scripture or conflict with the prerogative of Christ as the law-giver to his Church. That a careful perusal of such articles and an intelligent consent to them before associating with the church will conduce to a more orderly walk and to a greater unanimity in discipline on the part of the members cannot be reasonably questioned. General principles and general laws are not usually clearly and readily apprehended by the mass of people; and when not understood are of course more liable to be transgressed or when transgressed, are more open to controversy. As a guard and guide therefore in time of temptation, a response to honest inquiry in time of investigation, and to obviate prevarication and subterfuge on the part of an offender when the church resorts to discipline, such Articles and Bye-Laws are evidently advantageous. Imagine, for sake of illustration, that some member of a Church is exciting jealousy and dissension by an attempt to propagate Socinian views with reference to Christ. The Church jealous for the prerogative of Christ has no Articles. The offender stands before the Church on a charge of his offence. The Scriptures are adduced. Can errors of opinion be made the subject of discipline? The reproof to the Angel of the Church in Pergamos is read: "So hast thou also them that hold the doctrines of the Nicolaitans, which thing I hate. Repent; or else I will come unto thee quickly; and I will fight against them with the sword of my mouth." The words of John are read, "Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. If there came any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed." So far the Scriptures seem quite sufficient in explicitness; but now the question arises, what is his error of sentiment? He does not believe the Scriptural doctrine that Christ and the Father are one. But says the offender I believe the Scripture and endeavor to propagate the sentiment as expressed by Christ himself when he said, "The Father is greater than I." Now if this case is pursued and discipline is enforced, just that expression must be given to the sentiment of the Church which others choose to embody and record in their Articles of belief; and surely the simple record of what is true cannot make it false, nor can prudence nor reason protest against a

full exposition preceding an offence of what will be considered offensive and of the consequence of such an offence if committed.

(To be Continued.)

The New Year is the time for our friends to subscribe who wish for the American Messenger; and for Superintendents and Teachers who wish for the Sunday School Journal or Youth's Penny Gazette. A very little effort would place the latter within the reach of every scholar. Children gladly bring their penny on the first Sabbath of the month which refunds the cost at 1s. per annum. It is very difficult and often impossible to supply the back numbers of these papers after the lapse of a few weeks, the number of subscribers multiply so rapidly. They can easily be sent to any part of the Province of New Brunswick or Nova Scotia in parcels of 10 or upwards. Orders can be sent to the Depository.

We have been subjected lately to the payment of a great amount of Postage unjustly. It is strange men should make such a difference, as they probably do, between taking money from our pocket directly and indirectly. Many of these favors have no reference to the Visitor, some of them have. One wishes us to look him out a place in the city; another to send him information on his own business; another to pass an enclosed letter to his friend; another to mail a letter for the States, &c.

The friend who wished us to be so kind as to advertise his Notice, and left us to pay the postage on his letter, will see that we have done so; but we beg our friends at a distance to understand and to be assured that we are not half so kind as they think for, and we think they would admit it if they stood by when we are paying for their complimentary letters.

We have this week selected an amount of interesting Missionary Intelligence which will reach our friends previous to the first of January. We intend continuing this plan that those Pastors and Churches who wish to observe the monthly concert of prayer for Missions, may have such tidings as will encourage them in the observance of it, and thus make way for the better success of our Union affairs.

NEW BOOKS RECEIVED.—Professor Johnston's Lectures delivered before the New York State Agricultural Society, at Albany, a year since. These valuable lectures are particularly practical for the farmer, and intelligible. The general subject of the course is *The Relation of Science to Agriculture.* Price 4s.

A Treatise on Domestic Economy for Young Ladies at Home and at School, by Miss Catherine E. Beecher. This book is full of information on matters pertaining to household economy. Price 3s. 9d.

The Mechanics' Text Book, 5s. Johnston's Lectures on Agricultural Chemistry, 7s. 6d.

A good assortment of Agricultural Works and School Books, together with the usual variety of Historical and Religious reading, at the Colporteur Depository. Cash orders immediately attended to.

We simply altered one name for another according to Mr. Crandal's direction some weeks since, and Mr. L's paper has been sent to Dorchester. We shall now direct to Moncton.

Those ordering papers need to be particular in giving directions.

LETTERS RECEIVED.—Rev. W. Jackson, with remittance; Mr. J. W. Smith, do.; Mr. J. E. Potter, do.; Rev. P. Duffy; Rev. D. Crandal.

Correspondence.

[FOR THE CHRISTIAN VISITOR.]

MINISTRY OF ANGELS.

Hebrews i. 14. "Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?"

"Millions of spiritual creatures walk the earth Unseen, both when we walk, and when we sleep." The truth of this is confirmed by every part of Scripture. In the simple, unvarnished narrative of Lot and Abraham they are brought under our notice; and in their benevolent ministrations, and miraculous interpositions, they are interwoven with the whole texture of the inspired volume. Some have thought that they are not only soft and uncompounded in

their essence, unencumbered with bone and flesh, and joint and limb, but have also the power of visibility, and in this way can assume the sexual distinction. It might be said, this is only conjecture; true, but it involves nothing inconsistent with goodness; and if by this mode of manifestation, they could better execute their works of love, and fulfil their lofty mission, why should there be credulity. Doubtless they may robe themselves in feminine form and loveliness, or assume that of man; may shine forth in the brightness of the sun, or draw around them the most dense obscurity. They have a range of power and privilege unknown to mortals. This applies, not simply to the forms or manner in which they reveal themselves, but also the swiftness with which they can wing themselves through space. It is plain from what the Apostle here states, that they are beings of a very superior order. The simple circumstance of their being mentioned in so close a relationship with our Lord, is proof of this. He, the Apostle, states, "is the brightness of his Father's glory and the express image of his person," the mention of this; the evolution of this one glorious attribute, the outbeaming of this one dignified resemblance, by which Jesus is placed at an infinite distance from all other beings is proof that these ethereal essences are of an order very superior. In this way the Apostle states it:—

"And of the angels he saith, Who maketh his angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire. But unto the Son he saith, thy throne O God, is for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom." There can be no doubt that they are of a very lofty rank, distinguished by unstained purity, vast benevolence, and great strength.

We are indebted to Divine Revelation for all we know about them. It is our wisdom therefore, to turn to it, and be governed by its decisions. They are divine in their origin, for they are of the creation of God. This is ascribed equally to the Father and the Son. Neh. ix. 6. Col. i. 16. They are also ministering spirits. This is stated in the text. The practical proof comes to us in the life of Elijah.—And as he lay and slept under a juniper tree, behold, then an angel touched him, and said unto him, Arise and eat. 1 Kings xix. 5.—They are employed also in making known the will of God. And it came to pass, when I, even I Daniel, had seen the vision, and sought for the meaning, then, behold, there stood before me as the appearance of a man. And I heard a man's voice between the banks of Ulia, which called and said, Gabriel, make this man to understand the vision. So he came near where I stood; and when he came, I was afraid, and fell upon my face; but he said unto me, understand, O son of man; for at the time of the end shall be the vision. Dan. viii. 15. See *Ibid* x. 11: xii. 6 7. Luke i. 19. 28. Acts x. 5: xxvii. 23. And if you will turn to Psalms ciii. 20: cxlviii. 2. Job xviii. 7: you will find that they delight to obey God, whether it be in the communication of his mercy, or the communication of his judgments. 2 Kings xix. 35. Acts xii. 23.—Rev. xvi. 1. They are intimately connected with the bright, original career of the Saviour of Sinners. The secret of his conception was announced to Joseph, in the season of his perplexity and distress, and also the Grand object of his birth. "And thou shalt call his name Jesus; for he shall save his people from their sins." Matt. i. 21. Luke ii. 10, 12. This was more fully unfolded in what the angel said unto the Shepherds. And is it not probable that he received their ministrations, not only after his temptation, when in personal conflict with the wicked one, in the garden, when he was pressed down with a mighty sorrow, and sweat as it were great drops of blood, falling to the ground; but when he hung upon the cross? Mean and yet majestic spectacle! The spotless perfect Saviour, the pathway of whose life was more beautiful than the milky way, when a soft and tender radiance from numberless worlds is gleaming over it; yea, these Heavens arch of coloured loveliness, and like this, it was the pledge of safety; not the sign, but the reality of reconciliation; and the most wondrous expression of the most wondrous love. Yet now he is uplifted betwixt heaven and earth, as if unworthy to tread the latter or to be sheltered by the former; rude soldiers wound him; others malign and spit upon him; the heavens lose their brightness, the earth its stability, for it trembles, convulsed; the majesty of insulted Deity and dishonored law call for vengeance; and from the altar of his mysterious humanity, the sacrifice ascends that meets the claims of the