

CHRISTIAN VISITOR.

A Family Newspaper: devoted to Religious and General Intelligence.

REV'DS. I. E. BILL & B. THOMSON,

"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth Peace, good will toward Men."

EDITORS.

VOL. 6.

SAINT JOHN, NEW-BRUNSWICK, DECEMBER 30, 1853.

NO. 50.

HYMN.

By faith, (the evidence of things not seen,
The substance of the good for which we hope,)
We view the prize which we have yet to win,
The promise we embrace of joy laid up:
Strangers on earth, we own no other name,
Declaring plainly that we seek a home;
Not mindful of the country whence we came,
But looking for our rest beyond the tomb.

What tho' whilst pressing tow'rd the heav'nly
land,

Our outward man must perish and decay,
We trust in Jesus, whose almighty hand
Renews the inward man from day to day:
The living waters which his love prepares,
At length shall satiate the thirsting soul,
And no more death or sorrow, pain or tears,
Disturb our peace whilst endless ages roll.

PAUSE.

Look up, ye saints, far spent is now the night;
The end of faith and hope is drawing near;
The Lord himself, your everlasting light,
Arising in his glory shall appear;
Hasting unto the coming of that day,
(Long promis'd,) lo! we hail it from afar;
The mists are breaking, darkness flees away,
And Jesus comes, the bright and morning Star.

The word is sounded, "Open ye the gates,
That they who keep the truth may enter in;"
(At ev'ry door a holy angel waits,
Rejoicing to admit the sons of men:)
Receiv'd within the new Jerusalem,
Palms in our hands, and in white robes array'd,
Our song breaks forth, "Salvation to the Lamb,
By whom we kings and priests to God are made."

The children of the resurrection then,
The sons and daughters of the living God,
Joint heirs with Jesus, we with him shall reign,
Who lov'd the church, and wash'd it in his
blood.

O thou, of whom are all things, thou dost know,
(And thou alone) the grace for us laid up;
The weight of glory which thou wilt bestow,
Thought cannot reach,—yet we rejoice in hope.

R. T.

THE APOSTOLIC MINISTRY:

A Discourse delivered in Rochester, N. Y., before
the New York Baptist Union for Ministerial
Education, July 12, 1853.

BY FRANCIS WAYLAND, PRESIDENT OF BROWN
UNIVERSITY.

Mark xvi: 15. Go ye into all the world and
preach the Gospel to every creature.

[CONCLUDED.]

The gospel is to be preached not only publicly, but from house to house. In preparing for this part of his duty a young minister may receive much valuable instruction from an elder brother who has himself been a diligent pastor. The sick are to be visited, the mourner consoled, the thoughtless aroused, the secure alarmed, the convicted urged to decision, the penitent pointed to Christ, the wandering reclaimed, the feeble encouraged; and all this by personal appeal to individuals, and he who has done it successfully, may give much valuable counsel to him who is just entering upon the work. Until a minister has learned not only to perform but to love this part of his labour, he cannot hope to be a workman that needeth not to be ashamed. I do not know of a more common or a more just ground of complaint against the ministry, than that of the neglect of parochial visitation. It seems strange that a man whose sole calling it is to urge men to repentance, should refuse to perform this duty, in this particular form, especially when his people themselves invite

him to perform it. They desire that he should converse with them individually on the subject of their soul's salvation, and shall he consider such conversation a drudgery and leave his people unwarned? If any one desires to see this subject treated of with great force and eloquence, I ask leave to commend him to the perusal of "Baxter's Reformed Pastor."

Such seems to me, after some reflection, to be the points to which the attention of a candidate for the ministry should be directed. To these I know many others are commonly added, and the number of additions is continually increasing. We, however, seem frequently to forget that the time is rapidly approaching every young man, when, if he would be any thing but a retailer of other men's opinions, he must be a teacher unto himself; and that, the sooner he can be induced to put himself under his own instruction, the sooner will he attain to the stature of a full grown man.

It is possible, my brethren, that in the views I have thus frankly suggested, there may seem to you somewhat of strangeness; but let me respectfully request that you will examine them, not in the light of the opinions and practice of men, but in the light of the teachings of Christ and his Apostles. Believe them and put them in practice in just so far as they conform to the revealed will of God, and no farther. This I may reasonably claim of every disciple of Christ, and I have no desire to claim anything more.

At the present moment, a right understanding of the duties of the private disciples of Christ, and of the ministers, and of the relations which they sustain to the Master and to each other, seems to me of incalculable importance. Since the era of the reformation, Protestantism has made no aggressions upon Popery, and the same geographical lines have for centuries separated the parties from each other. But now it is evident that a contest for the mastery of the world between the powers of light and darkness is imminent and inevitable. The nations in which the Bible is freely circulated, and the gospel publicly preached, are ranging themselves on the one side; and the nations from which the Bible is prohibited, and where the preaching of Christ crucified is forbidden, are ranging themselves on the other. Within the lifetime of men who now hear me, the question will probably be decided, whether the kingdom of Christ is now to proceed to universal victory, or ages of intellectual and moral darkness are again to overspread the earth. It is for such a crisis as this that the disciples of Christ are now called upon to prepare.

But more than this. It is obvious that this question is really to be decided in our own country. So long as the light of true Christianity shines brightly here, the rest of the world cannot be enveloped in darkness. Hence it is that the intention is publicly avowed of overturning our systems of universal education, and thus bringing us under the power of a foreign hierarchy. In aid of this design, immigrants by hundreds of thousands are annually arriving on our shores, who are at once admitted to all the privileges of citizenship, while they are conscientiously bound to obedience to a foreign ecclesiastical potentate. At the same time the press is scattering broadcast over our land the seeds of frivolity and licentiousness. Unbounded prosperity is providing for every class of our people the means of sensual gratification. The rise of prices, consequent upon the increase of the precious metals, is stimulating to yet greater excess the desire of acquisition already sufficiently rife amongst us. But critical as is our position, there would be nothing to alarm us, if the disciples of Christ, holy and self-denying, were, with one accord, ranging themselves under the banner of their Master,

and using every means in their power to prepare for the coming onset; and the ministry, in the van of the Lord's hosts, filled with the power of the Holy Ghost, were by precept and example training their brethren for the approaching conflict.

But what is the condition of our churches of all denominations at this critical moment? The disciples of Christ seem to be fast losing the distinctive marks of their profession. Self-denial for the cause of the Redeemer will soon become the exception, rather than the rule. In large districts of our country, the admissions to the churches are not as numerous as the removals by death. In the mean time, the number of candidates for the ministry is diminishing, in all denominations, not only relatively, but absolutely. Nay, it is diminishing more rapidly than the figures indicate, for of the reputed number of candidates a considerable portion never enter the ministry; and of those who enter it, a greater and greater number leave it for other pursuits. And what is the remedy proposed in this unusual crisis? It has been recommended, in order to meet this emergency, to reduce the cost of ministerial education, to extend the term of ministerial study, and to increase the pecuniary emoluments of the ministry. In other words, we are told to address stronger motives to the self-interests of men, that so we may induce them to enter upon a calling essentially self-denying. When the whole power of the adversary is thundering at the gates, and the crisis requires every man to stand to his arms, we content ourselves with offering large bounty to officers, and allow every citizen to retire from the conflict. Was ever a victory gained by strategy such as this?

In our own denomination, it is said that we have 4,000 churches destitute of preachers of the gospel. What is to be done to meet this deficiency? Does all we are doing furnish us with the shadow of a hope that this demand can be supplied? Nay, multiply our present efforts to any practicable extent, and compared with the work to be done, the discrepancy between the means and the end is such as to awaken the feeling of the ludicrous. Is it not time, then, to examine the whole subject from its foundations? May not some light be derived from considering attentively the doctrine and examples of Christ and his apostles?

Is it not evident that if we are attempting to do the work of God, we must do it in obedience to his commandments, and in conformity with the principles which he has established? Ministerial gifts have been bestowed upon the church by Christ ever since he ascended on high, and led captivity captive. He has commanded us to pray the Lord of the harvest to bestow these gifts upon men, and thus send forth laborers into the harvest. These gifts, in whatsoever manner bestowed, we are to receive and cherish and improve. By no rules of our own are we to restrict their number, or diminish their usefulness. We are to accept thankfully all the means which Christ has bestowed upon us for the advancement of his cause. And we are to cultivate a ministry after the example of the apostles, men relying upon prayer and the Holy Ghost, and in self-denial, crucifixion to the world, its maxims, its amusements and its frivolities, setting an example to the flock, while they devote themselves daily to the work of saving souls. To every one whom Christ has thus called let us give every intellectual advantage, which the circumstances of his individual case render suitable. Having done this, we have done all in our power for the improvement of the ministry, and we may reasonably expect on our labors the blessing of God.

But when all this has been done, but little will have been accomplished. If you, brethren, would improve the ministry, you must begin by improving yourselves. Ministerial

gifts are not bestowed upon a slumbering, luke-warm and worldly church. And suppose they were bestowed, of what value would they be either to you or to others, if you are surrendered up to the lusts of the flesh, the lusts of the eye, and the pride of life? The ministry can only labour successfully as you labour with them. If you then really desire to witness the triumph of the cause of the Redeemer, you must begin to live a holy, self-denying life. You men of wealth must cease from accumulation, and devote not only your income but yourselves to the work of the Lord. You men in active business must be content to accumulate less rapidly, that you may have more of your time to consecrate to the salvation of men. Ye who, professing obedience to Christ, are yet living in subjection to the maxims of the world, eagerly chasing its frivolities, and teaching the lesson to your children, must commence a life of godly simplicity and christian self-denial. Every disciple, by his mode of life, must show that he is not of the world, even as Christ was not of the world. When ministers and people thus begin to labour in earnest for Christ, we shall witness results such as the ages have not yet seen.

The nineteenth century since the advent of Christ, is now half completed, and the world still lieth in wickedness. It is high time that the heathen were given to Christ for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession. Never, from the beginning, have the disciples of Christ enjoyed such advantages for the universal dissemination of the gospel as at present. Let us then go up and possess the land, for we are well able to overcome it. Nothing is now wanting to subdue the world unto Christ, but an universal, earnest, self-sacrificing effort of his disciples, in firm reliance upon the Spirit from on high. Thus far we have failed in just so far as we have trusted to our own wisdom instead of the wisdom of the Master. We mourn over the vices of the land—we invoke the majesty of the law, and laws are not executed—we unite in associations, and our associations are rent asunder—we join hands, now with one, and then with another struggling party, and we are sold in the political shambles like brute beasts. Let us then abjure all such vain alliances, and commence the work of reforming the world by obeying the precepts of Jesus. If we can convert men to Christ, the work of reformation will be done. By no other means will the flood of iniquity be stayed.

Do you not believe that if all the disciples of Christ in any of our cities or villages thus laboured for Christ, they would soon arrest the progress of iniquity, and make it a garden of the Lord? Suppose that we in the same spirit undertook, in solemn earnestness, the conversion of the world, would it not soon be given unto Christ for his possession? Brethren, on whom does the responsibility for the present state of our cities, of our country, and of the world rest? Awake, then, shake yourselves from your lethargy? Put ye in the sickle and reap, for the harvest of the earth is ripe.

To-DAY.—It is the golden fruit which hangs within my reach. I may pluck it, and secure its blessings: I may neglect it, and lose those blessings. It has duties which cannot be done to-morrow, and privileges which never will be found in the future. The wise man will not leave until to-morrow what he can do to-day, but will improve the present opportunity. If he has a soul to save, a heaven to gain, a race to run, a crown to win, he will make the most of the present moment. "To-day," will be his motto. "To-day," will his effort be put forth; and if possible, his success will be secured to-day. Yesterday is gone, bearing with it all its joys, and griefs; to-morrow has not come; may never come. To-day I have—to-day I will improve.