

THE  
HOME AND FOREIGN RECORD

OF

THE CANADA PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.

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No. 5.

MARCH, 1862.

VOL. I.

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THE PASTORAL RELATION—ITS SOLEMN RESPONSIBILITIES.

1. *For what purpose—for what grand, final end was the Pastoral relation formed between Minister and people?*

2. *What is to be the grand, final issue of it, when the Pastor and his flock must meet one another before Christ's tribunal at the day of Judgment?*

There is a depth of meaning involved in these two questions which none but God's own all-perfect, unerring measuring line, which He is to use at the day of judgment, can fathom. In the Minister's part of this mutual transaction, how amazingly are the promised reward and awful responsibility all combined.

The Minister's instrumentality and subordinate part of the work under God's supreme, efficient agency, is described by God himself as a "converting of sinners from the errors of their ways;" "a turning many to righteousness." Yea, such is the importance which God connects with the instrumentality, that they are spoken of in His word as "Spiritual Fathers," that sinners are said to be "begotten by them in Christ, through the Gospel."—I Cor., iv., 15,—Epistle to Philemon, x. Then if by simple faith in Christ their Lord, Master, Guide, Fountain of all their strength—by drawing all their supplies from Him and His Spirit—by prayer—by self-denying devotedness and fidelity in their work, God gives it success, their present peace, their final joy and reward, no heart can fully conceive, no pen describe. The shining "as the brightness of the firmament, and as the stars, for ever and ever," is God's description of the reward of the successful laborer. But if they should *fail*—that is by assuming the office uncalled, unbidden, unprepared by God's preparation of the heart—if by misleading—by false doctrine—by false courses—by negligence—in one word, by *unfaithfulness, they should fail*, who can rightly speak of a Minister's wicked failure? We might search, ransack the whole universe for ideas to picture the horrors of the doom of an unfaithful Minister rejected by God, but how feeble all to set forth the reality—Oh! to be an eternally hopeless castaway minister, wandering through all eternity's trackless ages with God's brand upon him, accursed of God—cursed by the souls in whose