

## Circular Letter.

---

### PASTORAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES.

THE CIRCULAR LETTER OF THE WESTERN BAPTIST ASSOCIATION, CONVENED AT LONG ISLAND, JUNE 20TH, 1868, TO THE CHURCHES OF WHICH IT IS COMPOSED.

*Dear Brethren,—*

It is beyond the limit of human ability to calculate the greatness of a Christian Pastor's work. It is more important than the painter's, because it aims to place the most inimitable and impressive picture, on imperishable canvass. It is more important than the sculptor's, because it aims to carve from the most precious and enduring material, images to the universal and eternal fame of the most worthy Being. It is more important than the inventor's, because it brings to the possession of the most lowly, instruments by which, in the utmost poverty and weakness, he can "do all things." It is more important than the explorer's, because it discovers to the soul new regions of unbounded extent, of invariable fertility, of exhaustless wealth, and of the "fulness of God." That we may be incited to make fuller "proof of our ministry," and to lead forward to their high and wondrous destiny, the souls entrusted to our care and guidance, is the design of the remarks that will follow.

That the Christian Pastor is divinely called, and "made overseer" of a particular flock, either by means of special indications of Providence, or of both, we assume as admitted facts. Passing from these, let us notice that as the first duty of an Officer is to obey, so the first duty of a