

Circular Letter.

OUR CHILDREN FOR CHRIST AND HIS CHURCH.

THE CIRCULAR LETTER OF THE NOVA SCOTIA EASTERN BAPTIST ASSOCIATION TO THE MEMBERS OF THE CHURCHES OF WHICH IT IS COMPOSED.

Dear Brethren,—

It is with feelings of devout gratitude to our Heavenly Father that we address you on the present occasion. Notwithstanding the imperfections of our services, we have been spared another year to assemble at our Associational Meeting.

Relying upon your candour and good will, we offer a word of exhortation touching the training of the rising generation, in the anticipation that, by the blessing of God, they may become members of our churches. With some of us it seems but a short time since, with child-like curiosity, we heard our parents and their friends discussing the affairs of the church with which they were connected. Now, by the grace of God, we ourselves have been called to enjoy the privilege of church membership; but time will soon transfer us to the church triumphant, and our places here on earth will be occupied by the children of the present day. It is the devout wish of every christian parent to remain this side the river of death until he has welcomed every member of his family to the fellowship of the church; and we all most earnestly pray that when we rest from our labours we may leave behind us those who will walk more closely to Jesus, and bring more honour to his name than we have done.

It has often been said that "the Sabbath School is a nursery to the church," and teachers cannot too earnestly ponder the truth contained in the illustration. Many zealous christians owe much of their power of usefulness to the training of the Sunday School; but the advantages of the christian parent far transcend those of the Sabbath School teacher. This will appear if we consider the adaptation of domestic discipline to serve the interests of the Church of God.

As Baptists we cannot believe that the circumstance of a child's birth into a christian family at all entitles him to church membership; but we may hope that, by a proper use of the means of instruction which God has placed in our hands, in dependence upon the work of the Holy Spirit, our children, even in early life, may become in the true sense of the words members of Christ, children of God, and inheritors of the Kingdom of Heaven. It will, therefore, be our wisdom to train them so that they may become honourable and useful christians, as well as valuable members of society.