

moment of final triumph. Up to Christ's second advent we expect nothing but persecutions and heresies and trials for the church. Satan's opposition loses nothing of its virulence, because he knoweth that his time is short. We look for nothing else but conflict and the bruising of the heel, till Satan be bound and cast into the bottomless pit. But the victory is even now on the church's side. Satan has every thing to lose. Every sinner converted unto God—every stand made for the truth,—every gospel missionary bearing testimony to Christ as the Saviour of the lost—every altar of superstition cast to the ground—every idol cast to the moles and to the bats,—every revival from a state of mere nominal Christianity to one of pure and undefiled religion is a new blow struck at the very centre of Satan's throne.

The fierce conflict is soon to be brought to a close; the enemy is to be driven from the field; the victims rescued for ever from his grasp. The Conqueror shall appear, bind the enemy, cast him out, destroy his works, and rescue the residue of the prey. Then when Christ shall reign over all the provinces and tribes of earth, when the groaning creation shall be delivered, and Eden shall reblossom—then shall his first prophecy be fulfilled—the sufferer a conqueror, Satan's head bruised under his wounded heel. Christ and his people shall reign gloriously. Satan and his seed shall eat the very dust.

[FOR THE CHRISTIAN OBSERVER.]

THE PASTOR'S RESPONSIBILITIES.

We cannot conceive of a station more interesting and responsible than that of the pastor, who is called by the providence of God, to take the oversight of a congregation of dying, yet immortal beings. If the individual be at all aware of his responsibility, his heart will sometimes be ready to fail him because of fear. Surrounded by men of various rank, talent, and occupation; the rich and poor; the learned and illiterate; the polished and rude; the devout and the giddy; but all possessed of immortal souls, and all standing in need of instruction, and all dependent upon him, more or less, for that instruction; looking upon such a congregation, he may well sigh, and exclaim, "Who is sufficient for these things?"

When he goes to the sanctuary what must be his feelings. He goes to meet God, to engage in his worship, to preach his word, that word by which both himself and his hearers must be finally judged. He is surrounded by a number of beings, whose existence is never to terminate; but who, after millions of years, will be still immortal. Either the Bible is untrue, or every man, woman, and child among them will dwell in everlasting misery or joy. As soon as

they have passed the bounds of this life, they must either rise to the companionship of the highest order of beings, or sink to the doom of the lowest. Providence has placed the Pastor as a watchman on the walls of Zion. He must declare to them the misery of their condition as sinners, and direct their attention to the Lamb of God, who is the way, the truth, and the life, the way which infinite mercy has opened for their complete restoration and happiness. It devolves on him to represent to them the character of a Saviour, who is waiting to be gracious, and also to show them the utter impossibility of their being saved by any other means. He is appointed to watch for their souls, that he may be instrumental in their everlasting salvation.

He must appear before the tribunal of his Creator, and give an account of his stewardship; he must give an account how he improved his talents; what exertion he made in the office he sustained; and what effects resulted from them. What responsibility attaches itself to his situation! If he is not faithful to the cause entrusted to him, how shall he appear at the solemn day? Will the blood of souls be required at his hands? If he is ashamed of the faces of men, if he neglects to declare the whole council of God, he may rest assured that he shall be confounded before the great tribunal, and be rewarded with the divine displeasure.

The faithful pastor will strive to administer a portion of meat in due season, to all his hearers. Some will need comfort and encouragement, others may have backslidden, and will require admonition to return; some may be questioning the evidences of Christianity; others may be discouraged by a thousand doubts and fears; some may be much exposed to the artifice of Satan; and others may have their hearts and affections in heaven, and be waiting for fresh discoveries of the love of Christ to their souls. Hence the necessity of his being always ready to bring out of his treasure things new and old.

Some may be wishing for doctrinal discourses, others for practical and experimental. If he is very practical, many will be ready to conclude that he preaches salvation by works; if he is pretty general in his invitation, some may be weak enough to imagine that he sets aside the necessity of the influence of the Spirit in conversion. Many will differ from him in the shades of their views of the gospel. But if their opinion move him, or make any alteration in his public addresses, he is not a faithful servant of Christ; for he is then guided more by the opinions of men, than by the word of God.

Whatever the result may be, he ought to strive to be faithful to his own views and to truth, and leave the event with God. He ought to exert himself to the utmost of

his power to turn sinners from darkness to light, at the same time bearing in mind that the influence of the Spirit is necessary to make his exertions effectual to any good end, all means must be employed, while the effect rests upon the sanction of heaven.

Perhaps, before the year is ended, some who are his constant hearers may have removed to their long homes; they may have given in their account. What if it should be said by any that the undershepherd is accessory to their ruin; that he had not reprimanded, admonished, and instructed them! What if they should be heaping curses upon his head, for ever, for lukewarmness and inattention! What if he himself before another Sabbath may have finished his course on earth. The opportunities which he now enjoys of winning souls to Christ may be the last he shall have for ever. O, how ought the servants of Christ to keep their own responsibility, and the immortality of their hearers in view. These thoughts ought to annihilate all fear of the creature, and make them solicitous to please God.

Chatham, 12th Jan., 1853.

A. C.

[FOR THE CHRISTIAN OBSERVER.]

A PASTORAL REMINISCENCE.

I had just returned from the Wednesday night prayer meeting, and thrown off my great coat, thinking the public labours of the day were past. A nervous rap at the door disturbed the evening calm in which I was about to indulge. When the door was opened there rushed into the room a man (in working dress, and, to appearance, a Blacksmith to business) in a state of great excitement, and exclaimed, "O! come sir, my wife is dying, and she cries for you to come and see her." I threw on my coat and followed.

The night was dark, and somewhat stormy. We descended the bank of the Denburn, (this happened in the City of Aberdeen, Scotland,) crossed the rivulet and passed into a dark and dirty alley—having often before visited these sinks of human wretchedness, felt no way alarmed, I entered the house; the feeble light was just sufficient to show the desolation of the drear abode. I passed into a closet six feet by six, and found the poor woman lying, not on a palette of straw, but on straw itself, with a dirty coverlid thrown over the body of the wretched sufferer. The whole body seemed to quiver with pain. I took the taper and held it to the face of the patient, to see whether I knew her, the sight threw a wave of despair over my heart which with difficulty I could breast. I uttered a few expressions of sympathy about her bodily sufferings, when she replied, "These, sir, are easily borne, but a wounded conscience who can bear?" I may here state the cause of my despair.