

THE
CHRISTIAN INSTRUCTOR.

MARCH, 1859.

E SOUL BE WITHOUT KNOWLEDGE, IT IS NOT GOOD."—Prov, xix.

THE LATE REV. JOHN KEIR, D. D., S. T. P.

Continued.

VII. MISSIONARY LABORS.

Extensive as were the bounds of Dr. Keir's congregation, his labors were not confined to it. For two years after he commenced his labors at Princetown, he was the only Presbyterian minister on the Island, and the only Protestant ministers there of any denomination were old Mr. Desbrisay of the chapel church, and one or two others, so that there was much of the Island in a state of entire spiritual destitution. In particular, there was the congregation of St. Peters, (embracing not only that settlement, but the neighboring settlements of Covehead, Bay Fortune and East Point), left vacant by the death of Mr. Gordon. The Presbytery being able to afford it but very scanty supply of preaching, he supplied them while they were without a minister, as regularly and as frequently as he could, consistently with his duty to his more immediate charge. About the year 1811 the Rev. Mr. Pidgeon, who had originally been an English Independent, and who had been sent out as a missionary by the London Missionary Society, having applied to the Presbytery, was received as a minister in connexion with the body, and was in the following spring inducted as a minister of St. Peters. But in a few years circumstances rendered it advisable that a dissolution of the pastoral relations should take place, and they were again left vacant. But these were not the only places beyond the bounds of his congregation, to which Dr. Keir directed his missionary labors. He felt deeply for the settlements in almost entire destitution of the word of life, his soul yearned over so many immortals, wandering as sheep wanting a shepherd, and perishing for lack of knowledge, and he spared no labor to visit them. Among the places where he thus preached, may be mentioned Tryon, the West River,* Murray Har-

* Commonly so called, one of the rivers emptying into Charlottetown Harbor, called on maps York River.