

Some of these churches contain two or three hundred members. Almost all of them sustain stations, some of them as many as twenty or thirty; and, though it may seem incredible to some of us, all this glorious work has been accomplished, in classical Germany, without the aid of a single classically laborer. Would it not be possible for us to learn a lesson from our brethren in Germany?

But it will perhaps be said, this is an example from a foreign country; would the same means for extending the reign of Christ avail us equally here at home? Cast your eyes backward then, and look upon our own condition some fifty or sixty years since. The men are now living, who remember the Baptist denomination when it was the least of the thousands of Israel. We are now among the most numerous, perhaps the most numerous communion in the United States. By what means has our increase been so astonishing? How has it come to pass, that believers in such multitudes have, through our instrumentality, been added to the Lord. I think the answer at once suggests itself, if we call to mind the character of the Baptists of the preceding generation. Though plain men, generally of ordinary education, they were men of prayer, full of the Holy Ghost, each one holding himself in a special manner responsible for making known to those that were around him the truth as it is in Jesus. They were men of conference and prayer meetings, and revivals of religion; who, in barns, in school-rooms, and in private houses, wherever they could collect an audience, preached repentance towards God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. Every talent which a church discovered among its members, was called into the service of Christ. There was scarcely a church among us which had not its lay preachers, or, as they were termed, licentiates. Of these, many from time to time entered the regular ministry, and thus pastors were supplied in proportion to our need. Our settled ministers labored not only in their own churches, but made frequent missionary tours in the more destitute regions in their vicinity, thus doing the work of evangelists. While we were thus, with singular earnestness, devoting all the means in our power to the service of Christ, the Lord added to us daily of such as should be saved. And nowhere could I appeal to the result of these labors with greater pleasure, than in the very spot on which I stand. The numerous and flourishing churches that fill the whole of Western New York, this University, with all its strength in the present, and its boundless hopes for the future, all owe their existence to the self-denials, the preaching, the prayers of these plain, pious, venerable and never to be forgotten men. "They have labored, and you have entered into their labors." Of late years our progress has been much less rapid. Our views in many of these respects have changed. May not this change in our views be connected with the change in our prosperity?

These instances seem to me to throw some light upon the teachings of the New Testament on this subject. I fear that we are in danger in this matter of forsaking the instructions of Christ and his apostles, and following the traditions of men, not observing the tendencies to which they lead. The Reformers brought with them many of the errors of the church of Rome. May we not have derived, through them, some erroneous notions respecting the church and the Christian ministry? Can any one fail to perceive, that the views of our Hamburgh brethren on this subject are more in accordance with the New Testament, than those of Luther, or Calvin, or Melancthon, or John Knox?

The doctrines here presented seem to me to have an important bearing on the subject of Christian and ministerial education.

The principals which should govern us in this matter, seem to be something like the following:—

I have said that every disciple of Christ is under imperative obligations to become a herald of salvation to his fellow men, and to beseech them, in Christ's stead, to be reconciled to God. This can only be done by the action of mind upon mind. It is a case in which the mind of one man seeks to exert an influence over the mind of another. To accomplish this, disciplined mind is best adapted. We are taught by Christ, that we are under obligations not only to *use*, but to *improve* every talent committed to us, that we may have the more to consecrate to his service. The slothful servant was condemned because he returned his talent just in the condition in which he had received it. This is the universal condition on which we are allowed to hold every gift entrusted to us. But, if this be the universal rule, how emphatic is its application to intellectual gifts, the most valuable of all the talents with which we are entrusted. Hence, every disciple of Christ is under the most imperative obligations to enlarge his knowledge, to cultivate his faculties, to discipline his mental energies; that he may have the more to devote to the service of the Master. A willfully ignorant Christian is a contradiction. He is a barren fig tree. He is the indolent servant who returned his talent, which he had kept wrapt up in a napkin. When the Master shall ask what he has gained by trading, what will he reply? Brethren, the law of the Lord is exceeding broad, and it would be well for us if we more frequently contemplated the universality of its application.

Moral and Religious Miscellany.

STRIKING CONVERSION.

The first sermon we ever wrote was upon the text "Christ came not to be ministered unto, but to minister." Here was room for a great deal of talk. It was a comfortable sermon to saints, and there was nothing in it particularly calculated to offend the carnal heart. It gained us more or less applause.

But our next sermon was upon a different subject. The text was one of those thunderbolts of divine writ that strike the carnal heart, as it were dead. "Submit yourself therefore to God." We sat down composedly to write this discourse, meaning to speak directly to the impenitent sinner with a calm urgency not to be evaded. But the sermon was not fairly begun before the writer began to question his authority to preach such doctrine as a matter of his own personal experience. The question grew more and more weighty; have I ever known the meaning of that naked truth, "Submit yourself to God?" Every written sentence added to the awful apprehension that I knew not the command, and my pen was but recording my own condemnation. The sermon was thrown aside unfinished. The Bible became our study, and agonizing prayer was offered at every breath. The gospel was examined verse by verse from beginning to end. Every word was anxiously scrutinized to see if there was but one ray of hope for a guilty sinner. No hope was there. Every promise was to the believer, condemnation to the unbeliever.

That was the day in which we studied theology; not to preach the gospel, but to ascertain God's truth in relation to the salvation of our own souls. Besides the Bible, Luther, Edwards, Bellamy and kindred writers were searched with an agony of soul, the remembrance of which can never pass away, to ascertain the meaning of that word, the key of heaven's gate, Faith. But all was in vain. Despair was riveting its heavy chains on the soul; existence was becoming unendurable. The crises was reached. There was no help but in God. Prostrate before him, soul and body were yielded into the hands of a sovereign God for weal or woe. The load was gone. We