

if asked the reason, will say, "I can read my Bible at home": others will say, "Our Preacher is not a man of first rate talent; he cannot teach me anything; besides I am well acquainted with all the facts and doctrines of the Bible, I need not go therefore to be instructed on these subjects." To the above it may be replied:—"Persons who purposely absent themselves from the House of God seldom read their Bible much;" and much less do they read it in a spirit of proper devotion. If your minister is not a man of "first rate talent;" yet if God has called him into the ministry, (and that is taken into the account in these remarks) he certainly has talent, and at least in some points can instruct *even you* in the things of God. But if you really understood "all mysteries and all knowledge;" even this would be no reason why you should absent yourself from the House of the Lord, or neglect to join in the public worship of that Being who has created and who preserves you; and of that Saviour who has bought you with his blood. "To the Jews it was commanded; but unto the place which the Lord your God shall choose out of all your tribes to put his name there, *even* unto his habitation shall ye seek, and thither thou shalt come." Deut. xii. 5. In the New Testament, St. Paul cautions the Hebrews; that they "forsake not the assembling of themselves together." It is worthy of remark, that this injunction of the Apostle was to the very people who received the above command, to shew that Jehovah having commanded public worship under the law, designed that that command should be perpetual; and that under the law, men should attend public worship: that in the latter, as well as in former days, unto the house or "habitation" of the Lord they "should seek," and "thither" they should "come."

2. "Take heed therefore how ye hear," teaches that you hear in a proper devotional spirit, and therefore implies an *early attendance upon public worship*. Many persons make practice of coming to the House of God and are seldom seen in their seats until after the service has begun, and thus by the noise they make in getting to their seats, and the gaze they excite in the congregation,—are constant interrupters of public devotion. If asked the reason they will sometimes reply, "O I was there just after they began to sing." Some will say, as though it were right: "I arrived just after the first prayer;" while some go so far as to say: "All I care about is to get in time for sermon." Such persons should know, that the worship of God consists not principally in hearing a sermon; but chiefly in singing his praises, in reading his word and prayer. Those therefore who come late to the House of God, do not come so much to engage in direct acts of divine worship, as to listen to the expositions which fallible man may give of the infallible and divinely inspired word of truth. How inconsistent is such conduct on the part of professedly Christian people! A line of conduct followed by some, and not less reprehensible than the above, is practised in many country places; it is to meet in groups before the House of God on the Sabbath-day; and then converse about their farms, or their vessels; their business or the news of the week; and when the minister arrives (sometimes after) rush in and take their seats in a manner more like entering a theatre, than as shewing that deep solemnity and conscious unworthiness, which should ever characterize guilty fallen man, when he enters more immediately into the presence of his Maker, or dares to take the Sacred Name in his polluted lips.

In attending public worship every one should be present before the service begins; he should enter the sacred edifice in the spirit of devotion; arriving at his place he should fall down upon his knees; invoke the Divine blessing; and then in solemn meditation wait until the moment arrives, when, with the whole congregation, he is invited to engage in offering praise to the Lord God of Hosts. The Psalmist says,— "O come, let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before the Lord our Maker." Again, "Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, and bless his name."

The Rev. Charles Buck in his "Theological Dictionary," Article—"Worship of God,"—says, "We cannot conclude this article without taking notice of the shameful and exceedingly improper practice of coming late to public worship. It evidently manifests a state of lukewarmness; it is a breach of order and decency; it is a disturbance to both ministers and people; it is slighting the ordinances which God has appointed for our good; and an affront to God himself! How such can be in a devotional frame themselves, when they so often spoil the devotions of others, I know not."

3. Not only should the congregation be in time but they should engage in public worship. Singing has always formed a part of Divine worship from the time that Moses and the children of Israel sung their anthem of praise on the other side of the Red Sea. See Exodus xv.

The Redeemer and his disciples sang an hymn, which consisted of six Psalms: from the one hundredth and thirteenth to the one hundredth and eighteenth Psalm, the evening before he was crucified; and St. Paul says, Eph. v. 19,— "Speaking to yourselves in Psalms and Hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in

your hearts to the Lord;" and in his epistle to the Colossians, iii, 16,— "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in Psalms and Hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord." The phrase "speaking to yourselves," in the former passage, is by the Rev. J. Wesley, rendered "speaking to each other,"—which is the exact design of congregational singing where the people really "speak to each other" in words of comfort and exhortation.

Some people seem to think that they have nothing to do with singing in the House of God but to listen to it: and some choirs of singers have got the strange idea, that the singing is under their control; and it is their sole prerogative to sing: and sometimes will go so far, as purposely to pitch tunes which the congregation do not know, that their voices may be heard alone, and that the congregations may eulogize their musical talents. But the House of God should not thus be turned into a Concert Hall; for people do not come there merely to hear singing: they come there to worship God; and it is not only the privilege, but it is the duty of every one in the congregation to unite in singing the praises of God, or to "speak to each other," in "Psalms and Hymns and spiritual songs."

The venerable Dr. Adam Clarke in his note on Col. iii. 16,—says: "The singing which is here recommended, is widely different from what is commonly used in most Christian congregations; a congeries of unmeaning sounds, associated to bundles of nonsensical, and often ridiculous repetitions, which at once both deprave and disgrace the Church of Christ. *Melody*, which is allowed to be most proper for devotional music, is now sacrificed to an exuberant *harmon*y, which requires not only many different kinds of voices, but different musical instruments to support it; and by these preposterous means, the simplicity of christian worship is destroyed: and all edification prevented. And this kind of singing is amply proved to be very injurious to the personal piety of those employed in it: even of those who enter with considerable share of humility and christian meekness, how few continue to "Sing with grace in their hearts unto the Lord."

The views of Mr. Wesley on this subject are embodied in the following Minute of Conference for 1768. "Beware of formality in singing, or it will creep in unawares. Is it not creeping in already, by those complex tunes which it is scarcely possible to sing with devotion? The repeating the same words so often, (but especially while another is repeating different words, the horrid abuse which runs through the modern church music), as it shocks all common sense, so it necessarily brings in formality, and has no more of religion in it than a Lancashire hornpipe. Beside that, it is a flat contradiction to our Lord's command, "Use not vain repetitions."

In the Minutes of 1805, the question is asked— "Are any regulations necessary with regard to singing?"

Ans. 1. "Let no instruments of music be introduced into the singers' seats except a bass viol, should the principal singer require it."

2. "Let no books of hymns be henceforth used in our Chapels except the hymn-books printed for our Book-Room. Let no pieces as they are called, *Recitatives*, by single men, *Solos*, by single women, *Fuguing*, (or different words sung by different voices at the same time,) are introduced, be sung in our Chapels."

4. "Let the original, simple, grave, and devotional style be preserved, which instead of drawing attention to singing and singers, is so admirably calculated to draw off the attention from both, and raise the soul to God. Let no Preacher therefore, suffer his right to conduct every part of the Worship of Almighty God, be infringed on by singers or others, but let him sacredly preserve and calmly maintain his authority, as he who sacrifices this, sacrifices not only Methodism, but the spirit and design of Christianity."

4. "Take heed how ye hear," teaches that his word should be heard with a spirit of prayer. If people wish to profit by their attendance on the house of God, they should join heartily in its devotions. Some people complain the sermon they heard was "dry and uninteresting;" whereas they never asked God's blessing upon what they heard. If this were the case, no wonder the sermon was dry. Preachers can preach when the people pray: but it is hard work to preach to a prayerless and careless people. The Psalmist prayed—"Open thou mine eyes that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law."

But the Redeemer says, Mark iv, 24,— "Take heed what ye hear." This is a very important injunction, and shews that the members of the Church, and hearers of the Gospel should be orthodox, as well as its Preachers; and that they should not consent to hear any thing from the Pulpit as Gospel doctrine, but what is in accordance with the Scriptures, or as the Apostle says, Rom. xii. 6: "According to the proportion of faith." The word here translated "proportion," is "analogy," and "the analogy of faith," has been explained, as, that grand scheme of doctrine which is found in the Scriptures, and which is connected and consistent throughout; as the doctrines of Original Sin, Redemption, Justification by Faith, with present and everlasting salvation. It is very deeply to be regretted that with some persons almost all doctrines and all preaching are alike. They will now sit under

the most evangelical and heart searching sermon; then they will go elsewhere, and calmly sit to hear the insidious and soul-deceiving doctrines of Pelagianism, which teaches that man is not a sinner by nature, but only by practice; and that salvation is by works; or they will listen to the God-dishonouring blasphemies of Socinianism which denies the divinity of Christ; or the *semi-Infidel* dogmas of Universalism which denies future punishment: and all with perfect indifference; and if asked about the matter, they will reply,— "they could not find fault with what they heard;" "they believe the preacher is a good man; we must have charity;" or by some such unwarrantable reasons, they will seek to justify themselves in their breach of the command of Christ—"Take heed what ye hear." St. Paul wrote to the Ephesians, iv. 12: "That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive." Heb. xiii, 9.— "Be not carried about with divers strange doctrines. For it is a good thing that the heart be established with grace." St. John says, 1 Epistle iv, 1.— "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they be of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world." Again, 2 Epistle 10, 11.— "If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds."

Besides public worship and attendance on the ministry of word it is the duty of the members of the Church.

1. To pray for their ministers and for the prosperity of the cause of religion: "Finally, brethren, pray for us, that the Word of the Lord may have free course, and be glorified, even as it is with you: And that we may be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men: for all men have not faith." 2 Thess. iii. 1, 2.

2. To be exemplary in their deportment. Whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things." Phil. iv. 8.

3. To adhere firmly to evangelical truth, and be constant in their religious fellowship. Of the primitive Church, it is said they continued steadfastly in the Apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in breaking of bread, and in prayers."

4. To be united in heart and affection. It is related of ARISTOTLE, that being asked upon one occasion,— "What is a FRIEND?" replied, "ONE soul dwelling in two bodies." Of the first Christians it is said, "And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul." Acts iv. 32.

"With grace abundantly endued,
A pure believing multitude!
They all were of one heart and soul,
And only love inspired the whole."

Finally it is the duty of both ministers and people to resist temptation and be faithful unto the end. Christ addressed the suffering Church in Smyrna, with which the famous Polycarp was connected, in the following encouraging manner. "I know thy works, and tribulation and poverty, (but thou art rich) and I know the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews and are not, but are the synagogue of Satan. Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried: and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." Rev. ii. 9, 10.

PHILOLOGOS.

THE WESLEYAN.

Halifax, Saturday Morning, May 17, 1851.

THE GREAT EXHIBITION.

THE GREAT EXHIBITION, now being held in London, is calculated to lead to some very important results, affecting the temporal interests of England and other countries. Not only will it pleasingly bring together, in a comparatively small compass, specimens of the natural productions of almost all the nations of the world and the artistic skill of their respective inhabitants, and thereby give a mighty and onward impulse to individual and national genius in the cultivation of the practical arts and sciences; but it will also induce an immediate and proximate association of men with one another, who may be considered as representatives of the numerous nations into which the vast family of mankind is divided, and, by this means, accelerate the period when the principles of *universal peace and brotherhood* shall not only be theoretically recognized, but shall have practical manifestation, and exercise benign influence on the future destinies of our entire race. We can but truly rejoice at the delightful fact, that England, world-famed for prowess and victories on the battle-field, has been the first to set to the world an example so full of

peace and concord, so expressive of earnest desire to cultivate universal friendship. This example will be followed by other nations, and while we would not say that future wars are impossible, we may say, that they are less likely to occur. After the Great Exhibition has closed, and the multitudes have quietly dispersed, its influence for good will long continue; the event will remain among the cherished recollections of the past, and, we trust, will prove a guarantee for the world's peace for the future. In this point of view, we regard this social and amicable gathering as vastly important, as destined to exert a friendly influence on the interests of humanity throughout all coming time. Whilst it may have been prompted and promoted by the free volitions and un-coerced actions of human agents, we may consistently believe, that an over-ruling Providence has fostered it with an especial reference to the accomplishment of its own ulterior designs.

This opinion loses none of its force from the consideration, that suitable means have been used, to provide the *strangers* with opportunities of becoming acquainted with the principles and teachings of evangelical truth. Inside the Crystal Palace, the Word of God in about One hundred and fifty dialects will necessarily draw attention and excite no common interest; outside, the Churches of sound Protestantism will doubtless attract the wandering feet of many, who, in their own Countries, had been accustomed only to a religion of error and superstition in some one or another of its varied and pernicious forms.— We may hope that God will over-rule the vast assemblage of human beings in London during the Exhibition, and subsequently, to the promotion of the best interests of their souls. Prejudice against the Truth may receive such a shock from its contact with pure Christianity, as will sooner or later lead to its entire destruction. The seed of the Kingdom may fall into the ground of many hearts, who will transport it to distant localities, where, under the fostering grace of God, it may germinate, ripen, and bring forth fruit to the divine glory. God, only wise, has at his disposal thousands of resources to accomplish his purposes of grace towards men; and we may cherish the hope that spiritual good, as well as temporal, both as it regards individuals and nations, will result from the Great Exhibition of 1851.

CHARLOTTETOWN CIRCUIT.

An interesting communication from the pen of the Rev. F. SMALLWOOD appears on our third page. The intelligence from the Charlottetown Circuit for some time past has been of the most pleasing and encouraging character. Not less so is the present information respecting the operations of the "Youth's Missionary Society."— Delightful is it to witness the young devoting time, talents, and pecuniary means, for the advancement of Christ's Kingdom on earth; especially when their efforts and sacrifices are prompted by christian principle and love to perishing souls. We, ourselves, are more than gratified by the references made to the piety and zeal manifested by the children of Wesleyan Ministers. This is a delightful consideration in itself, and must afford to their honoured parents, and to all those who love the cause of God as embodied in Methodism, more real pleasure, than if the names of the youth in question were inscribed high on the pinnacle of worldly fame, or their path in life were illumined with the unclouded sun-shine of earthly prosperity. We hope the true *succession* of piety will ever be found, through the grace of God, in all Wesleyan families, not as an accompaniment of natural descent, but as a divine gift, bestowed in answer to the prayer of faith, and as a blessing on sanctified and approved effort. From our heart we add the expression of an earnest desire, that the children of others may share a similar possession.

SACKVILLE N. B. CIRCUIT.

The Rev. A. DESBRISAY, under date of May 4th, writes:— "God is greatly blessing us here as a Church—blessed be His name. His word is dropping as the rain, and his speech is distilling as the dew." Brother HENNIGAR commenced a Protracted Meeting on Good Friday, and yet it is continued. The congregations have been very large, evincing deep solemnity and concern for salvation. Many have been forward for prayers, and to-day Brother H. informed us that from fifty to sixty had obtained a sense of pardon.— Many families are visited from on high, especially the junior branches; among these are our dear

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