

whole progress was a series of invention, and painting to him was not the result of a lesson, but an intuitive passion. When only seven years of age, he was left with the charge of an infant niece in the cradle, and had a fan, to slap away the flies from the child. The motion of the fan made the child smile, and its beauty attracted his attention. He looked at it with a pleasure he never before experienced; and observing some paper on the table, together with pens and red and black ink, he seized them with agitation, and endeavoured to delineate a portrait; although at that period he had never seen an engraving or a picture. Hearing the approach of his mother and sister, he endeavoured to conceal what he had been doing, but the old lady observing his confusion, asked what he had been about? and insisted on seeing the paper. He obeyed, entreated her not to be angry. Mrs. West, after looking some time at the drawing with evident pleasure, said to her daughter,—"I declare he has made a likeness of little Sally,"—and kissed him with much fondness and satisfaction. This encouraged him to say, if it would give her any pleasure, he would make drawings of the flowers she held in her hand; for his genius awakened, and he felt that he could imitate anything that pleased his sight. In after life, he used to say,—"my mother's kiss made me a painter." Young West used pen and ink for his drawings until pencils were described to him, when he found a substitute in the tapering fur of a cat's tail. In the following year, a cousin sent him a box of colours, with several pieces of canvass prepared for the easel and six engravings. The box was received with delight, and West now found all his wants supplied. He rose at the dawn of day, and carried the box to the garret, where he spread the canvass, prepared his pallet, and began to imitate the figure in the engraving. Enchanted with his art, he forgot the school hours, and joined the family at dinner, without mentioning the employment in which he had been engaged. In the afternoon he again retired to the garret; and for several days successively, he withdrew in the same manner, and devoted himself to painting. Mrs. West suspecting that the box occasioned his neglect of school, went into the garret and found him employed on a picture. Her anger was soon appeased by the sight of his performance. She kissed him with transports of affection, and promised that she would intercede with his father, to pardon his absence from school. The piece finished in his eighth year was exhibited sixty-seven years afterwards, in the same room with his sublime piece of—"Christ rejected"; and the artists declared, that there were inventive touches in his first juvenile essay, which all his subsequent experience had never enabled him to surpass."

Miscellaneous.

From the Christian Advocate and Journal.

CERTIFICATES FOR MEMBERSHIP.

WHAT are the duties of those men who have charge of circuits? In answer to the above questions in page 421 of the book of Discipline we find the following: "To all (members of our church of course) from time to time, they are not to remove from one circuit to another, without a note of recommendation from the preacher of the circuit, in these words: 'A. B. the bearer, has been an acceptable member of our church in C.,' and to inform them that without such certificate they will not be received in other places." Now as far as I have learned, the above rule is of long standing in the church, is published in every book of discipline, and is, I presume, in the hands of every Methodist minister and preacher, and ought to be in the hand of every member of the Methodist E.

Church. And yet there is a fault somewhere in the Church relative to this plain rule of discipline, a fault which places both preachers and members in a very unpleasant position, and leads to more unpleasant results than is generally supposed, especially in these ends of the earth, to which the emigration is great, and many members of our church are seeking for themselves and posterity a comfortable home, where land is cheap and productive, and the reward of labor is abundant. The fault in this matter may be at the door of the ministry, or the membership, or both. And the object of this communication is to call the attention of the church to the subject, that the proper remedy may be applied, and the evil removed. But a if the fault is in whole or in part in the membership, is it not the duty of the ministers to enlighten them on this subject? Yea, in truth, this is the intent and meaning of the rule of discipline, that each and every member of the church, when preparing to remove from one circuit to another, may furnish himself with a recommendation in due form, from the proper authority. Hence the whole responsibility of all irregularity in the church on this point, is thrown back upon those who have the charge of circuits. But how shall we account for this? Do not the preachers know of this rule? Do they not read their discipline? Or do they set at defiance the authority of the church at whose altars they have taken upon them the vows of ordination, and promised before God and the Church, to observe every point, great and small, in the Methodist discipline, and to keep our rules for conscience' sake? We cannot for a moment believe that either of the above are facts in the case. No. We know their love for the church and their own moral character is such as will bear comparison with any other class of men in the world. How then shall we account for the evil alluded to? May it not be that in the multitude of duties which they have to perform, this one, in some instances, is forgotten? in others, is deferred till a more convenient season, which never arrives? and in others neglected? Or the evils growing out of it are not discovered by many of the brethren in the east and south, from whose fields of labour many of our members emigrate to this western world. By way, then, of illustration, permit me to give you a few examples. The preacher is informed, that in the neighbourhood of a little class which has been struggling through difficulties, there has settled several Methodists. His heart is cheered with the thought that this little band will be strengthened. He goes to his appointment and rejoices with them. He meets the class, when lo! and behold, he is presented with what they call their certificates, signed A. B., class leader; or C. D., steward; or E. F., exhorter. Now I ask what is to be done in this case? If he receives them, the discipline is violated. The Church may be imposed upon by a forgery. Many of the preachers are conscientious on this point. If they are not received on this certificate, a good brother or sister may be offended. But again, it is often the case that when a member is liable to the censure of the church, or is delinquent in any respect, (would you believe it?) they call upon class leaders to give them a letter of dismission from the church. Now, brethren, are these no evils? and if so, can they not be remedied? I think there is an evil and it can be cured. Let every preacher who has charge of a circuit or station, when he reads the rules of society, read the rule on this subject, and enforce its importance; and let all refuse to receive any other than authorized certificates.

Potosi, Mo., April 29, 1839.

DEAR BRETHREN,—Having read a notice in the Christian Advocate and Journal that several spots on the sun's disk have been seen through a telescope, I concluded to communicate the following fact, which