

CIRCULAR LETTER.

TO THE CHURCHES COMPOSING THE NOVA SCOTIA WESTERN
BAPTIST ASSOCIATION.

Dear Brethren,

In our annual epistle we have selected as the subject on which to address you, *the obligations of church members to the churches to which they belong*. And in selecting this theme we have been guided not so much by a consideration of its importance in itself, as by the apprehension that these obligations are not perceived as clearly or felt as forcibly, as the welfare of the churches and the glory of God, as well as the highest individual prosperity of christians themselves require. It is feared that many members in our churches have never recognized at all, and many more, never as they should, the fact that in becoming members of the church of Jesus Christ, they take upon themselves obligations of a grave character, and of more sacred binding force than any other which are, or can be, assumed in life.

These obligations are, 1st. To love the Church. Every person connected with the church of Christ, ought to love it for what it is. As an institution it is divine in its origin and organization, and the worthy object of the intense affection of God the Father, and the purchase, by his blood and life, of Christ the Son. In the language of Dr. Angus, "it combines the advantages of every form of society into which men have been gathered. It is not a *caste*, for it despises none, and rejects none; yet like caste, it preserves, amidst human change, a sacred order; *all*, 'kings and priests unto God.' It is not a *secret society*, for it practices no reserve, and yet its members have a hidden life, and a joy with which a stranger