

the church. An extraordinary declension had existed in that church, but they have generally been revived and reclaimed, and now stand in good union.

In the eastern portion of our Conference but little revival interest has been felt, and but few additions have been made to our numbers. In Coverdale during the visit of brother Hartley to that place in March, a good work of grace was enjoyed and twenty-seven were added to the church. In two or three other localities some interest has been awakened, but as a general thing the cause is low.

The whole number added to our churches by baptism during the year is 216. This is a much less number than during any preceding year since I have acted as your Corresponding Secretary.

The general condition of our churches is not satisfactory; the most are without regular Ministerial care, while also many of our preachers have no stated fields of labour. Elements of anarchy and insubordination exist in some places which threaten the saddest consequences, and which require the prayerful consideration of this Conference. That our churches at the present period in their history do require the faithful and efficient oversight of judicious and well qualified overseers, no discriminating person can doubt.

Upon the deliberations and measures adopted by this Conference much depends. While we all are ready to acknowledge that unless God build the city the workmen labour in vain; yet it is equally true, that God will not build without the use and exercise of those means which He himself has ordained. Much depends upon the unity of those engaged in the work. But great care is required lest we mistake uniformity for unity, and in our zeal for the former, lose the latter and pull down rather than build up the cause we profess to love. The history of the past is full of lessons. Christ must be held as the head—in both faith and practice. He must be first, highest, greatest. Without this we must fall.—When our zeal for any thing consumes within us the Spirit of Christ, and forbearance becomes displaced by impatience, meekness by passion, love by envy, no matter then what our uniformity is, our unity is lost, and we shall be more apt to bite and devour each other, than to lay down our lives one for another.—The spirit of Christ must be cultivated, it is a tender plant, the weeds of selfishness are deadly poison to it, and it can only grow on soil moistened by the Holy Spirit.

It is of the highest importance that the scriptural relation between ministers and churches should be fully comprehended and understood. A defect in this may be attended with the saddest consequences. The ministerial office is of divine appointment, and attached to it are weighty and eternal responsibilities.—Its great end is "the perfecting of the saints," that "every man may be presented perfect in Christ Jesus." Without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, will the church be found in the day of God.

Who can contemplate the magnitude of this work, and not exclaim in relation to the instrumentalities employed in it; "Who is sufficient for these things?" He is really a minister of Jesus Christ who is called thereto as was Aaron. To preach the gospel is his office; to labour in word and doctrine; to watch for souls as one that must give an account. Ministers should be responsible men, invigorated with power from another life; in the midst of the world's gloom they are set to be its light; they are commissioned to reclaim a revolted world, and they bear from Jehovah himself the seal of their commission; hastening on to eternity to render their solemn account, there should be nothing eccentric or trifling in their movements. If moral dignity, consistent action, and inflexible fidelity belong to any class of men on earth, it is the ministers of Jesus Christ. The church is God's embattled host against his foes, and ministers under the great leader, are set to teach, to warn, to correct, to lead the sacramental army forward in her mighty struggle; always themselves being in the front of the battle, and receiving the first shock of the enemy.

With this view of the office and work of those who are set apart to preach the gospel, it is easy to conceive their necessity in the church, and the importance of