

sufficiently tangible to admit of any description.

There is scarcely any thing which so effectually arrests the attention of a man, as to find his own feelings developed by a stranger—by one who has never had acquaintance with the history of his life, much less with the secret reflections of his heart. Unless he understand the important principles contained in the adage of the wise man:—"As in water face answereth to face, so answereth the heart of man to man;" and unless he knows something of the effect which can be produced by moral painting, he will feel whenever a development of his inmost thoughts is made, that the discloser must almost possess the attribute of omniscience. This power of disclosing the latent reasonings and intentions of the heart, carries with it a mighty influence, and in reliance upon the aid of the Holy Spirit, may be employed with signal advantage by the delegated apostle of Christianity. In view of the fair disguises with which unregenerate men clothe themselves,—the endless windings and mazes of the human heart,—and the innumerable varieties of feeling in the believer, nothing is of more vital consequence to the preacher of the gospel, than a thorough and minute acquaintance with the subterfuges of the sinner, and the complex emotions of the saint. And it regards his success in the ministry, the next thing, under God, in the scale of importance, is the talent of nicely delineating the operations of the heart—of spreading out the most secret feelings in such strong relief, and in such true and proper colours, as will insulate every hearer—carry convictions to his conscience—and make him feel that he himself sat for the picture.

ANTI-INTEMPERANCE SOCIETY.

At the last meeting of the Charleston Baptist Association, the attention of the Delegates was called to the consideration of the awful prevalence of intemperance, and the duty of devising some means by which, if possible, this vice may be eradicated. After the consultation of a number of individuals it was judged expedient to form a society, when the following articles were adopted and subscribed to by a number of persons.

RULES.

- Article 1.—The society shall be styled "A Society to prevent the use of Ardent Spirits."
- Art. 2.—The officers of the society shall be a President, Secretary, and Treasurer, if necessary, who shall continue in office till some others shall be chosen.
- Art. 3.—This society shall have an annual meeting at the time and place of the Charleston Baptist Association.
- Art. 4.—We agree to relinquish the use of ardent spirits entirely, unless prescribed as medicine to the sick.
- Art. 5.—We agree to refrain from the practice of inviting others to drink ardent spirits.
- Art. 6.—We agree to mark particularly, as far as we are able, the effect which the disuse of ardent spirits has on our constitution, health, and general feelings.
- Art. 7.—We agree to use our influence to carry into effect the object of this Society.
- Art. 8.—As this engagement is voluntarily on our part, we subject ourselves to the penalty of being disowned and discountenanced by the Society, if we violate the obligations which we thus impose on ourselves.
- Art. 9.—Should societies auxiliary be formed they may be represented by delegates.
- Art. 10.—The rules of this Society may be altered or amended, as experience may dictate, by the concurrence of two thirds of the members present at the annual meeting.

Reading makes a learned man, writing a correct man, and conversation a ready man.—Lord Byron.

From the Christian Watch man.

ANECDOTE OF MR. JEFFERSON.

The following circumstances, which occurred in the State of Virginia, relative to Mr. Jefferson, were detailed to me by Elder Andrew Tribble, about six years ago, who since died when ninety-two or three years old. The facts may interest some of your readers—

Andrew Tribble was the Pastor of a small Baptist Church, which held its monthly meetings at a short distance from Mr. Jefferson's house, eight or ten years before the American Revolution. Mr. Jefferson attended the meetings of the church for several months in succession, and after one of them, asked Elder Tribble to go home and dine with him, with which he complied.

Mr. Tribble asked Mr. Jefferson how he was pleased with their Church Government? Mr. Jefferson replied that it had struck him with great force, and had interested him much—that he considered it the only form of pure democracy that then existed in the world, and had concluded that it would be the best plan of

Government for the American Colonies.— This was several years before the Declaration of Independence. To what extent this practical exhibition of Religious Liberty and Equality operated on Mr. Jefferson's mind, in forming his views and principles of religious and civil freedom, which were afterwards so ably exhibited, I will not say.

At the time alluded to, Virginia groaned under the Ecclesiastical establishment of Great Britain, by the operations of which, the Baptists suffered the most shameful and cruel persecutions for preaching, believing and practising the doctrines and precepts of the Gospel. This system of outrage and violence seems to have originated, or to have been fully developed, in the egregious error of identifying the Church of Christ with the Jewish theocracy. It commenced at an early period after the age of the apostles, and has been continued by the civil authorities, for the most part, throughout Christendom. Its first abrogation was in these United States. Many of the Christian sects in them, still foster and practise upon the notion of their identity, by which the Church and the world are assimilated.

A FRIEND.

FOR THE CHRISTIAN SECRETARY.

Be perfectly joined together in the same mind and the same judgment, 1 Cor. i. 10: He that is joined to the Lord is one Spirit, vi. 17.

This is the language of an inspired Apostle, to the Church of Jesus Christ at Corinth. It is imperative—and applies with all its force to the whole Christian Church in every age. This language strongly and pointedly disapproves of the sectarian divisions, and the denominational jealousies, and unchristian tempers, which it is to be lamented prevail to an alarming extent, among the professed subjects of the Prince of Peace: And while it disapproves of these wrong feelings, and wrong doings, it admonishes Christians of the fact, that "he that is joined to the Lord is one Spirit;" by which we are instructed that Christians are one in spirit, so far as they have the spirit of Christ. If then there are divisions, and contentions among them, they are carnal, and walk not as Christians, but as men.

The truth of the above statement it is believed, will be generally admitted, and all will unite in deploring the chilling and desolating effects of those strifes, debates and divisions, which mar, and sometimes almost deface, the image and superscription of Jesus.

But if this evil of dissention is so great, so offensive to God, and so injurious to the Church, and the world, why is there not a remedy afforded, as a physician were, why then is not the hurt of the daughter of (God's) people recovered?

Has the divine head of the Church given a command to his followers, which they are unable to obey? Certainly not. He has given his people a perfect pattern, and has clearly pointed out to them the right way, to arrive at this union of sentiment and practice.

He has informed us that the foundation of this union, is laid in the heart by the Spirit of Truth; and of necessity, if it is produced by the Spirit of Truth, it must be a union in the Truth. Truth must be its basis, and truth must be its object. The bible is the standard—this holy volume exhibits a system of truth in its doctrines, its ordinances its precepts and its practices. And it comes to us in language plain and simple, and easy to be understood, and infidelity or unbelief, in whole, or in part, is the only reason why some deviate altogether, and others in part, from this perfect standard.

It is in consequence of the blinding, hardening and perverting influence of sin in the human soul, that the whole Christian Church, and the whole race of men on the earth, do not manifest unity of faith and practice, and yield unreserved obedience to the one only lawgiver, Jesus Christ.

This is the fatal barrier which separates impenitent sinners, from the affectionate embrace of the adorable Redeemer; and this is the barrier which separates Christians into various denominations, and deprives them of mutual fellowship with each other, and of the entire approbation of their common Lord.

To attain this union, the soul must be brought under the full influence, and make an entire surrender of itself to the guidance of the word and spirit of God. In proportion as this is the case, there is a holy, joyful union in the truth. And souls thus made free by the Son, are free indeed.

But there have been many attempts made by men, to bring about a union of professing Christians, and they have all failed, for one and the same reason; it is because they have overlooked this vital principle of union; love to the truth.

The Roman Church was determined to preserve union at all events, and when argument and persuasion, failed of accomplishing the object, she resorted to the sword, determined to exterminate every incorrigible heretic; and the page of history details the dreadful havoc, which the "scarlet coloured beast" has made of the disciples of the Lamb.

The English Church has attempted the same, by similar means, and with similar results.

The Puritanical Church of N. England, followed in the same train, and with similar success.

It may with truth be said of error, "her ways are moveable" Her course is now changed, & we are gravely told by some, that union is not desirable. That it is for the glory of Christ, that "the Church which is his body," should be torn and rent by divisions. That Christians must be careful to cultivate a union of Spirit, but that they should be equally careful, as they would advance the glory of God among men, not to become united in object and action, except on some general subjects. That we must keep up the denominational divisions in the Church, because thereby a spirit of emulation is excited, which is much more conducive to the welfare of Zion, and that her prosperity is promoted in a much greater degree, than would be the case, if like the primitive disciples, Christians were "perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment." We think however, that "this wisdom cometh not from above," and is at variance with the precepts and example of Christ and his Apostles.

But others tell us that union is desirable,—that it is the one essential thing, and that in order to produce it, each denomination of Christians must throw aside the distinctive name by which they are called, and assume the name and attitude of the Christian Church, as tho' these names formed the principal barrier to union.

These too are in danger of overlooking the main difficulty: "This leprosy lies deep within." Unreserved submission to Jesus Christ in the heart, and in the conduct, will produce this union, and nothing else will. A union formed on any other basis, will not be permanent, and would be worthless.

To illustrate this matter; should an insurance company throw off their style, and assume the name of a Banking company, and yet continue to take risks as an Insurance company, the mere altering of their name, would not change the character of the Association. They would remain an Insurance company still.

A mere dispensing with sectarian names, and assuming a common name, would fall far short of producing that union, which was the glory of the primitive Christian Church, and which she rejoices in the hope of again realizing in the latter days, when the spirit of her Lord shall control, and fully subjugate every heart.

Again, we are of opinion that the wisdom of God is discoverable in permitting the present divisions among professed Christians, and in the truth is most desirable, and which she rejoices in the hope of again realizing in the latter days, when the spirit of her Lord shall control, and fully subjugate every heart.

Men need to be taught, that Christ's kingdom is not of this world,—that it "is not meat and drink, but righteousness and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." That Christianity does not consist in assuming the Christian name, nor in attention to external ordinances merely, but that in order to be Christians, they must possess the spirit of Christ. This work is now accomplishing, by the preaching of Christ crucified by all the Evangelical denominations; and a people are in this manner preparing to come forward on the broad and firm foundation of the truth of God. This work is in rapid progress, and in God's own time, when the materials are suitably prepared, we expect the Church to come up out of the wilderness, leaning on her beloved, and perfectly subjected to his government, "having one Lord, one faith, and one baptism." One God and Father of all, who is over all, and in all his people.

Here then is a field sufficiently extensive to occupy the labours of all the friends of Christ, and the motives to activity and zeal in this cause, are the greatest which were ever addressed to the human mind, to prepare materials for the spiritual edifice which God is rearing in the world, to become workers together with him, in rescuing immortal souls from the power of sin and its curse, and raising them to a moral elevation suitable to become fellow citizens with the saints, and the household of God; and thus preparing them to reign in light by Jesus Christ.

CHRISTIAN SECRETARY.

HARTFORD, MONDAY, JULY 24, 1826.

ERRATUM.

The New-Haven Baptist Association will be holden at Meriden, on the second WEDNESDAY in August next, commencing at 10 o'clock A. M. and not on Monday, as published in our last paper. The notice of the meeting of this Association was handed us at so late a period in the week, that we had not time to examine the proof sheet, with that care that was necessary.

BURMAIL.

By an article on the subject of the Burmese war, in this paper, it will be seen that our brethren in that country, if still alive, have yet further perils to suffer. May they still continue to have an interest in the prayers of the Church. The events of God's providence relative to this mission, are truly mysterious; but we know that all his ways are right, and that what we know not now, we shall know hereafter. While it becomes the Church to be humbled under the mighty hand of God, it is their privilege, to pray him to shorten the days of tribulation.

The Rev. Henry Stanwood, travelling agent and missionary for the Convention, will, in compliance with the direction of the Board, attend the meeting of the several Associations in this state, that shall be holden during the summer and fall. This will afford a convenient opportunity for those who desire it, to subscribe for this paper, & for such agents for the Secretary and single subscribers, as have not remitted the amount due for their papers, to forward it to this office.

We have received the 2d number of the National Preacher, a work edited by Mr. Austin Dickinson, of New-York.

This number contains a sermon preached by the Rev. Thomas H. Skinner, A. M. of Philadelphia. The subject, is the utility of prayer.—Text, Job xxi. 15. "What profit should we have, if we pray unto him?"

The discourse contemplates the utility of prayer, under the four following particulars:

- 1st. In its direct tendency to improve the human character.
- 2. In its counteracting influence on whatever tends to injure that character.
- 3. In its efficacious influence on whatever is favourable to it.
- 4. In its influence on the great

We have only room, (if it were proper,) to insert the following remarks under the several propositions:

1. "Prayer, more than any other means, is adapted, in its own nature, to improve all the powers and properties of the human soul.

Without a countervailing influence, the soul of man will always acquire the character of the objects, with which it has intercourse. If these objects be great, they will leave the stamp of greatness; if good, the stamp of goodness on the soul:—the stamp of littleness, on the other hand, if the objects be little, and of baseness, if they be base.

Again, the soul is more or less strongly impressed with the image of objects, accordingly as it contemplates them more or less directly and intensely. He who regards a thing through the medium of historical information, will be less affected by it, than he who with his own eye sees it: and he who looks at an object closely and minutely, will have a deeper and more exact impression of it, than he who casts towards it one or two glances."

II. "Its utility is further manifest, let me next remark, in its counteracting influence on whatever tends to injure that character.

If a thing proves its excellence, by its own good tendency on what it directly exerts itself upon, it proves it still more, by resisting and overcoming what has a contrary tendency—a tendency to counteract and neutralize the good it aims to accomplish. If a man show me friendship by coming to me with favours and benefits, he shows it further by defeating the designs of certain enemies, who intend to rob me of them, as soon as I get them into my possession.

Now there are many things in this world always acting upon the soul, with a most debasing and ruinous tendency; and there are no means of overcoming this tendency so efficacious as prayer."

III. "Thus have I considered the influence of prayer, in counteracting the debasing and soul-destroying tendencies of the world. There are other tendencies favourable to the soul's welfare, and I now wish to show briefly the efficacious influence of prayer upon these.

I begin with the word of God. That word is, in its unresisted applications to the heart, quick and powerful, and as the fire and the hammer which breaketh the rock in pieces. It is perfect, converting the soul; sure, making wise the simple; right, rejoicing the heart; pure, enlight-

ening the eyes—but the time would be, to repeat a small part of what inspiration hath spoken in its praise. It is the etherless powerless independently prayer; for, however great its excellence, prayerlessness will either keep them of view, or turn them into deformities and stumbling-blocks. What are the beauties of the rainbow, or the beams of the sun to the blind man? And who more blind, though voluntarily so, than the prayerless soul? What was the glory of the Only Begotten of the Father to the earthly minded Jews, when He dwelt among them, full of grace and truth? And what, also, are the wonders of Truth and Wisdom in the sacred scripture, to those who are so swayed by an obstinate will, that they cast off fear, and restrain prayer to God. Depravity can see no beauty in holiness; and who are depraved, if not the prayerless? When such persons have read the Bible, till they have it all in their memories, what are they the better? Which hath the greatest charms in their eye, God's truth or their riches? Salvation, or the pleasure of sin? I have known of such great readers, who seemed to have learned by their researches, how to cavil and blaspheme, or to play the bigot or the fanatic—such miserable fruit of their labour came of their not mixing prayer with it. Even the renewed, sincere prayer still indispensable to a profitable meditation on scripture. Remaining pollution will blind their eyes, if the anointing of the Holy One be not constantly sought; and therefore, though the sacred page lie open before them, and though they have been once truly enlightened to understand them, they shall not, without unremitting prayer, continue to behold the wonders of God's law."

The 4th proposition is ably illustrated by scriptural examples.

IV. "But all the truth on this subject has not yet been told. Prayer has another bearing—another kind of influence, than any which hath been yet considered. It has an influence, not only upon ourselves, and upon all the means and second causes, which tend either to our injury or advantage, but upon Him likewise, to whom it is addressed—upon the mind and conduct of God himself.

So, most obviously, are we taught in Holy Scripture, especially in those winning words of Christ—"What man is there of you, whom if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone? or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent? If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, much more shall your father which is in heaven give good things unto them that ask him." For what are we to gather from this and many parallel texts, if the only influence of prayer, which it exerts either directly or indirectly upon ourselves? Is it consistent with any just rule of interpreting language, to give this, or any thing compatible with this, as the meaning of passages which represent God as bestowing benefits in answer to earnest supplication for them? How in answer, if the supplication hath no influence to procure them? It is not clear, that any rendering of these passages, which admits not that prayer has in some way a persuasive influence on God, is a wresting,—not an explaining—of scripture,—adapted to make men heartless and cold in an exercise, which should never be otherwise than fervent.

Look at scriptural examples of prayer. When Jacob, after wrestling in this exercise till break of day, still refused to cease without a blessing, how far was he from supposing, that the only influence of prayer was that which it had on his own mind? Did those effectual prayers of Moses, which turned away wrath from rebellious Israel, even after God had threatened to destroy them, exert no influence except on Moses himself? Were those prayers of Elijah, which availed to shut, and afterwards to open heaven, without all influence, except on Elijah's own heart? and what shall we say of Abraham's prayer for Sodom? Or Daniel's for Jerusalem? or that of the first Christians, which brought an angel down from heaven, for St. Peter's enlargement? or, indeed, of any prayer in behalf of others, if the influence of prayer is confined to those who offer it?

And why should it be thought inconsistent with the infinite perfection of God, that he should be influenced by prayer? It is surely agreeable to God's perfection to love righteousness and hate iniquity, and give due expression of that love and hatred, by distributing equal rewards and punishments. As well deny the being of God, as make him indifferent to holiness and sin. But true prayer is holiness, and prayerlessness is sin. In him then who prays, God discerns something excellent, something which, consistently with his perfection, he may approve and reward. In him who does not pray, God discerns something evil and hateful; and which therefore must draw forth his abhorrence and indignation. Just as a prodigal son, who asks forgiveness of his father, presents, in his penitent and submissive spirit, a reason, why his father should receive him to his arms;—a reason, it may be, that prevails; while another unreformed prodigal, who implores no forgiveness, presents no such reason, and receives no such favour.