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Baptists. South Carolina, Charleston Association.  
Minutes . . . Convened at the High Hills of  
Santee, on Saturday the 31st of October, 1818.

[ Charleston, 1818 ]. 16 pp.

( p. 15 mutilated, slight loss of text. )

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# MINUTES

OF THE

## Charleston Baptist Association,

*Convened at the High Hills of Santee, on Saturday the 31st of October, 1818.*

1st. The Saturday and Sabbath were employed in acts of public devotion; two sermons being preached on each day: on the Sabbath, the solemnities closed with the administration of the Lord's Supper. The congregation was large, attentive, and apparently devout.

2d. On Monday, at 11 o'clock A. M. the Association Sermon was delivered by the Rev. Dr. Furman, from 1 Cor. ix. 26, 27. *I therefore so run, not as uncertainly, as fight I, not as one that beateth the air; but I keep under my body and bring it into subjection; lest that, by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.*

3d. Rev. Mr. Dossey prayed at the opening of business. Letters from thirty-two churches were read, the names of their delegates enrolled, and the accounts transmitted of their present state minuted.

4th. Elected Dr. Furman Moderator, and Major G. Bruce, Clerk. Rev. Dr. Roberts prayed and the Association adjourned to Tuesday, 10 o'clock.

Met pursuant to adjournment. Rev. Mr. Cook prayed.

5th. Read Letters, which were accompanied with Minutes, from corresponding Associations; from the Philadelphia, Boston, Bethel, Savannah River, Hephzibah, Edgfield, Neuse, Sandy Creek, Cape Fear, and Moriah. Rev. Messrs. John Rooker and Samuel M'Creary, appeared as Messengers from the Bethel; Rev. Henry Hand from the Hephzibah; and Rev. Robert T. Daniel from the Sandy Creek, who were cordially received.

Rev. Messrs. Brantly, Johnson, Compere, and Denson; and the licenced Preachers, Manly and Fiveash being present, were invited to sit with the Association.

6th. The Circular Letter prepared by the Moderator was read, and committed for revision to our Brethren Roberts, Cook, and Brantly.

7th. Took under consideration the rules, prepared in pursuance of a resolve of the last year, for conducting the concerns of the Board, appointed to superintend the business of itinerant preaching, or, home missions; which being considered paragraph by paragraph, were unanimously adopted, and are as here exhibited:—"Rules for establishing a scheme of itinerant preaching, or home missions, agreed on by the Charleston Baptist Association."

1st. "This business shall be conducted by a Board of Directors, consisting of five Members, three of whom shall form a Quorum, to be chosen annually, at the meetings of the Association, out of the most enlightened and public spirited members of the Churches in this connexion, and situated as contiguously as may be to each other, with a view to facilitate the transaction of business.

2d. "The Board shall have a Chairman, Treasurer, and Secretary, to be chosen by themselves, out of their number; and shall keep a regular account of their transactions; of which, and the state of the fund, they shall make report at the regular meetings of Association.

3d. "When a sufficient Fund has been obtained, the Board shall be authorized to appoint a person or persons, to itinerate, and preach among destitute Churches and settlements in this State. The Board shall be particularly careful that in making these appointments they select only Preachers of approved character, distinguished for their prudence, piety and zeal, and of respectable talents; whom they shall furnish with certificates of their appointment, and with written instructions for the regulation of their conduct.

4th. "Of the Ministers appointed to this service, it will be expected that they carefully avoid entering into contentions with christians of other denominations, and giving offence; that they insist in their preaching, among the people at large, chiefly, on the most plain, important and experimental truths of the gospel, with a view to the conversion of sinners, and the regular formation of Churches, on the gospel plan of truth and holiness; and to the ex-

itement of professors, both as individuals and Churches, to the exercise of vital practical godliness: that they carefully inquire into the state of destitute churches, and afford them aid, in removing difficulties and rectifying disorders: and that they be particularly careful, in the performance of this sacred service, to enter fully into the gospel spirit, to be diligent and active in their work, to make their whole deportment exemplary, and to leave no just ground of suspicion respecting their motives or conduct.

5th. "In regard of the regular support of such a scheme of pious and benevolent exertion, and of the reasonableness that those who are benefitted by it should contribute to its support: the itinerant preachers, or missionaries sent out by the Board, shall be authorized to institute plans for obtaining contributions among the congregations, or people, among whom they may minister, either by public collections, or otherwise, as to the respective congregations may seem most eligible: some respectable person or persons being appointed in each congregation to receive the money so contributed. And to remove all occasion of abuse, and ground of suspicion, no collection, or contribution to any Minister employed in this service, shall be considered as regularly made, without a certificate of its amount, under the hand of such person or persons being transmitted to the Treasurer of the Board. It shall, however, not be considered as irregular for a Minister employed in this service, to receive what any individual may think proper to bestow on him for his own use, from personal regard."

8th. Proceeded to the appointment of the Board, and the brethren Fürman, Roberts, J. B. Cook, Dossey, and Ellis were appointed.

9th. Appointed the following brethren to write to corresponding Associations.—Roberts to the Philadelphia, Warren, New-Jersey, Hudson's River, Neuse, and Savannah River; Cook to the Boston, Good to the Hephzibah, Waldo to the Georgia, Brantly to the Bethel, Johnson to the Sandy Creek, Dossey to the Edgefield, Wilson to the Cape-Fear, Compere to the Pedee, and Edwards to the Bigbee.

The following brethren were also appointed Messengers.—Cook to the Bethel, Roberts to the Edgefield, Todd to the Georgia, Walke to the Savannah River, Scott to the Hephzibah, Dossey to the Moriah, Copeland to the Sandy Creek; Good, Hill and Reaves to the Cape Fear, and Pope to the Pedee.

10th. Appointed the brethren, Roberts, Brantly, and Waldo to examine the Minutes of corresponding Associations respecting subjects of general concern, in which the concurrence of this Body might be requisite or useful. Rev. Mr. Brantly prayed—adjourned till to-morrow 10 o'clock.

Met pursuant to adjournment—Rev. Mr. Hand prayed.

11th. Agreeable to the request of the Wateree Creek Church, they were dismissed to join the Bethel Association.

12th. Took into consideration the query from the Church at Three Creeks. "If the wife of a slave desert him without just cause of offence, and take another man for her husband, refusing to return to the injured person, notwithstanding his earnest endeavours to reclaim her, and willingness to forgive her offence, can he be justified by the word of God in taking another wife?"

*Answer.* We think in such a case the injured person has a right to take another wife. The reasons for which opinion are—1st, The law of Christ, according to our view of it, admits of a divorce, in the fullest sense, in cases of adultery and obstinate desertion. 2d. The civil government, among us, has made no laws to regulate the marriage of slaves: so that they are left, in this respect, in a state of nature, to be governed by the laws of God directly and alone.

Yet, considering the sacredness of the marriage relation, the strength of those temptations to violate the marriage contract, to which persons placed in these circumstances are exposed, and the numerous arts and misrepresentations which are too often employed by persons professing innocence, to justify their forming new connexions of this nature—We think that Churches ought to be very cautious how they sanction such second marriages, and never admit them but on clear evidence that the alledged criminality exists, and that the complainant has acted his or her part well. See Matt. v. 32, xix. 9, and 1st Cor. vi. 15.

13th. An address, purporting to be from a Baptist Missionary Society in Kentucky, was read, the design of which was to engage Societies and Churches in the United States, in support of a petition to Congress; the proposed prayer of which is, that the American Government will take measures to prevent the intercourse which individuals, in the capacity of Traders, have with the Indian Tribes, in regard to the abuses and corruptions, said to be thereby introduced among them, which prove obstacles to the Missionary measures which are taken by the benevolent for the civilization and conversion of the Indians; and that Congress will take the trade into their own hands, and carry it on by authorized Agents. An anonymous letter, said to be written by a person of high respectability, recommending these measures, and the form of a petition to Congress, accompanied this address.

The same being taken into consideration, it was agreed that the design of this address appeared to be benevolent; but as the form of the petition to Congress contains assertions respecting abuses, which the members of this Association do not feel themselves authorized to make, having no personal acquaintance with the subject; as they do not feel competent to judge of the superior eligibility of having the trade with the Indians placed in the hands of public Agents, rather than private adventurers; and as this communication has not come through the channel which the Baptist General Convention has established, as the medium of intercourse and concert among our churches, we therefore think it most proper to decline, for the present, taking any part in the proposed measure.

14th. The Committee appointed to revise the Circular Letter, reported by their Chairman, that they had made some verbal alterations in the letter, and recommended its adoption: In this Report the Association concurred.

15th. The Committee on the business of examining the minutes of Corresponding Associations, also reported, in like manner—that they found nothing in those Minutes which appeared to require particular attention.

16th. Agreed to observe the Thursday before the second Lord's day in May next, as a day of humiliation, fasting and prayer, for the same purposes, which were specified in our Minutes of the last year.

17th. The Association consider it incumbent on them to notice, with tender sympathy to a bereaved family and Church, and with high respect to the memory of the deceased, the death of Rev. James M'Kellar. He was in their esteem an Israelite indeed, in whom was no guile; a man of sound judgment, and good understanding in the doctrine of Christ; and a faithful preacher of the gospel. For the loss of such a one, cut off in the prime of life, Zion may justly mourn.

In connexion with the notice taken of this bereavement, a contribution was made in favor of the deceased's Widow and three orphan children, who were understood to be in straitened circumstances.

18th. Read, and signed, the letters of correspondence to sister Associations.

19th. Two motions having been made in succession, to have the next Circular Letter written on subjects which have been discussed in former letters, and which have been republished in the history of this Association, by Wood Furman, A. M. viz. "On the obligations of Churches to contribute toward the education of young men called by them to the ministry," and on "christian communion."—It was agreed, in consequence, that the Churches be informed that many copies of the History are on hand, and may be obtained of its author; in which these and other letters on interesting and important subjects are recorded.

20th. Agreed, that the next Circular letter be on the excellent nature of Brotherly Love: and appointed Dr. Roberts to write it.

21st. Agreed, that the next session of this Association be at Mechanicville, to commence on the Saturday before the 1st Sabbath in Nov. 1819; that Rev. Mr. Ellis preach the Association Sermon; in case of failure, Rev. Dr. Roberts.

22d. Appointed our brethren Rev. Messrs. Good and Harris, or either of them (to be settled between themselves) to begin the service on Saturday, and Rev. Mr. Cook to preach the missionary sermon on the Sabbath.

23d. Resolved, that this Association have a high and grateful sense of the hospitality and kindness which have been exercised toward its members and

friends coming from a distance, by the inhabitants of this vicinity during the present session.

24th. Collected money for publishing the Minutes, and committed to the superintendance of the Moderator their printing and distribution.

A short exhortation, and prayer, by the Moderator, concluded the session.

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**MINUTES OF THE GENERAL COMMITTEE, Oct. 31st 1818.**

1st. The following delegates appeared, Richard Furman, president, John M. Roberts, recording secretary, Wood Furman, corresponding secretary.— Members, Cook, Dossey, Ellis, Scott, Rooker, Waldo, Good, Rhame, Timmons, Edwards, Wilson, Inglesby, Burbridge, Carlile, Terril, Knighten, and Smith.

2d. Elected officers — Richard Furman, president, David Adams, Treasurer, John M. Roberts, recording secretary, Josiah B. Furman, corresponding secretary. James Harper, William Fuller, Joseph Whilden, and Robert Brodie, jr. Assistants.

3d. Agreed to afford liberal pecuniary aid to the Theological Institution, proposed by the General Convention of the Baptist Churches, when it shall be brought regularly into operation.

4th. Agreed to furnish Mr. John Morrow with some useful books for his improvement; and to defray such incidental expenses as may arise from his occasionally attending on Ministers who have promised him friendly assistance. Also, agreed to furnish Mr. William Harris with books, to the amount of fifty dollars, to assist him in his studies.

5th. Took into consideration the case of two young men recommended by Rev. Messrs. Brantly and Daniel; Mr. Creath, the son of a worthy Minister in Virginia; and Mr. Brooks, a student in the North-Carolina College; the first wishing to enter on a course of classical learning, the second of Theological Studies. Agreed, that if approved by the following committee, Roberts, Dossey, Cook, Ellis, and Good, the first shall be taken under our care as a student in common; and that the case of the other shall be left to the discretion of the special committee; as is the business of this body, in general, during its recess.

6th. Took an account of the Collections, and state of the Fund and found them as follows.

| <i>Education Fund.</i>      |             | <i>Missionary Fund.</i>        |             |
|-----------------------------|-------------|--------------------------------|-------------|
| Charleston,                 | \$245 00    | { A. M. S.                     | 159 56      |
|                             |             | { W. & E. M. S.                | 109         |
|                             |             | { Mrs. S. C. Bailey            | 97          |
| Walsh Neck,                 | 30          | { A. M. S.                     | 50          |
| Bbenezer,                   | 6           | { A. M. S.                     | 55 50       |
| Do. Female Mite Society,    | 6           | { A. M. S.                     | 13 57½      |
| { High Hills Santee,        | 22          | { A. M. S.                     | 13 62½      |
| { Sumterville Congregation, | 26 50       | Stateburg F. M. S.             | 22          |
| { Shiloh do.                | 4 50        |                                | 120         |
| Mount Pisgah,               | 11 18 3-4   | A. M. S.                       | 25          |
| Georgetown,                 | 61          |                                | 21          |
| Muddy Creek,                | 2           |                                | 2           |
| Amelia Township,            | 10          |                                | 20          |
| Four Holes,                 | 9 62½       |                                | 10          |
| Mechanicville,              | 51 62½      |                                | 104         |
| Three Creeks,               | 13          | Congaree and Beulah,           | 27          |
| Rev. Mr. Todd,              | 10          | Columbia,                      | 8 50        |
|                             | <hr/>       | Camden,                        | 10          |
|                             | 488 43 3-4  | Wassamsaw: Mrs. Stewart,       | 10          |
| Oct. Charleston collection  | 245         | Waterree Ceeek,                | 14          |
|                             | <hr/>       | Elim Lynch's Creek,            | 13 50       |
|                             | 243 43 3-4  | Piedmont,                      | 5           |
| Specialties and cash in     |             | Calvary,                       | 3 58        |
| hands of Treasurer, in-     |             | Lower F. Lynch's Creek,        | 5           |
| cluding the Charleston      | 7460 30     | Goose Creek,                   | 5           |
| collection, as per his      |             | Colonel's Creek,               | 8 31½       |
| account, rendered, of       | 7703.78 3-4 | Sugar Creek, A. M. S. }        | 40 87½      |
| the 26th of Oct. 1818.      |             | Bethel Association, }          |             |
| Actual disbursements        |             | Collection on Sabbath of the } | 138 50      |
| since the last meeting      |             | Association,                   |             |
| of the general commit-      |             |                                | <hr/>       |
| tee, have amounted to       |             |                                | 1111 44 3-4 |
| \$112 38.                   |             | Paid Mr. Rooker's salary,      | 150         |
|                             |             |                                | <hr/>       |
|                             |             |                                | 961 44 3-4  |

The contributions made to the Fund for the support of itinerant preaching amounted to near \$500, which with the thirty dollars contributed last year, were committed to the Board appointed to superintend this business.

RICHARD FURMAN, President;  
JOHN M. ROBERTS, Secretary.

N. B. In the above account, A. M. S. denotes Auxiliary Missionary Society; W. & E. M. S. Wadmalaw and Edisto Mite Society; and F. M. S. Female Mite Society.

## STATE OF THE CHURCHES.

The Ordained Ministers' Names are in Capitals; Licensed Preachers in Italics. From Churches distinguished by an asterisk (\*) we had no accounts, and their numbers stand as they did last year. Pastors and Messengers to whose names an obelisk (†) is affixed, did not attend; a dash (—) denotes a vacancy.

| CHURCHES.                          | MINISTERS AND MESSENGERS.  | Baptized. | Rec'd by Let. | Dismissed. | Excommunic. | Restored. | Dead. | Number of Members. |      |
|------------------------------------|--|-----------|---------------|------------|-------------|-----------|-------|--------------------|------|
| Charleston,                        | RICHARD FURMAN, W. Inglesby,   | 44        | 7             | 0          | 0           | 0         | 11    | 680                |      |
| Welsh Neck,                        | { WILLIAM DOSSEY, P. Edwards,<br>{ J. F. Wilson, G. Bruce,<br>{ JOHN GOOD, Timothy | 30        | 8             | 14         | 6           | 1         | 8     | 192                |      |
| Ebenezer,                          | { Dargatzis.   | 1         | 0             | 1          | 1           | 1         | 1     | 89                 |      |
| High Hills,                        | J. M. ROBERTS, W. Potts, J. Monk,  | 19        | 0             | 5          | 1           | 0         | 3     | 311                |      |
| Cheraw Hill,                       | — I. WALKER, S. Pegues, J. Terrilt   | 11        | 2             | 2          | 4           | 4         | 2     | 175                |      |
| Beauty Spot,                       | DANIEL M'KAY,  | 0         | 0             | 3          | 0           | 0         | 1     | 27                 |      |
| Mount Pisgah,                      | J. B. COOK, Jesse Peebles,   | 0         | 0             | 11         | 0           | 0         | 1     | 54                 |      |
| L. F. L. Creek,                    | HILMON HILL, R: P. Wingate,  | 16        | 5             | 2          | 0           | 2         | 0     | 59                 |      |
| Little Pedee,                      | S: REVES, † J. Williams, D: Herring  | 16        | 1             | 2          | 3           | 0         | 1     | 69                 |      |
| Georgetown,                        | { EDMUND BOTSFORD, † John<br>{ — Waldo,  | 46        | 0             | 1          | 0           | 0         | 3     | 166                |      |
| Gapway,*                           | —,   |           |               |            |             |           |       | 26                 |      |
| Congaree,                          | —, David Powel,  | 1         | 2             | 6          | 0           | 0         | 3     | 99                 |      |
| Black Creek,                       | { — J. COPPLAND, J. Saunders,<br>{ D. Goodwin, David Langes,                       | 26        | 9             | 3          | 1           | 0         | 0     | 87                 |      |
| Three Creeks,                      | — John Jones, † J. Bolton †  | 2         | 0             | 0          | 0           | 0         | 0     | 44                 |      |
| Wassamsaw,                         | —, Thomas Durbridge,   |           |               |            |             |           |       | 44                 |      |
| Watteree Creek,                    | —, Moses Knighten, S: Stark,   | 5         | 0             | 2          | 2           | 1         | 1     | 47                 |      |
| Muddy Creek,                       | —, Richard Carlisle,   | 0         | 1             | 1          | 0           | 0         | 1     | 11                 |      |
| Catfish,                           | —, Henry Berry,  | 0         | 5             | 1          | 1           | 0         | 1     | 27                 |      |
| Beulah,                            | GEORGE SCOTT, W: Tucker, †   | 1         | 0             | 0          | 2           | 0         | 2     | 149                |      |
| Terrill's Bay,*                    | —,   |           |               |            |             |           |       | 47                 |      |
| 25 Mile Creek,                     | A: BELL, †   |           |               |            |             |           |       | 95                 |      |
| Amelia Township,                   | — J. Millinder, John Morrow,   | 0         | 0             | 3          | 4           | 0         | 4     | 166                |      |
| Elim Lynchies<br>Creek,            | { SAMUEL TIMMONS, John<br>{ — Timmons,   | 7         | 1             | 7          | 1           | 0         | 2     | 99                 |      |
| Columbia,                          | — RICHARD TODD, J. W. Wilkins,   | 4         | 3             | 59         | 1           | 0         | 2     | 90                 |      |
| Camden,                            | J. POPE, † William Cook,   | 0         | 1             | 0          | 0           | 0         | 0     | 33                 |      |
| Calvary,                           | BRADLEY RHAME, J. Tindal, †  | 1         | 0             | 0          | 2           | 0         | 2     | 74                 |      |
| Piedmont,                          | — Thomas Woodward, E: Kelly,   | 1         | 1             | 5          | 0           | 0         | 0     | 49                 |      |
| Bethel,                            | — Joseph Pack, W. Holmes,  | 0         | 0             | 0          | 2           | 0         | 1     | 80                 |      |
| Goose Creek,                       | —,   | 0         | 0             | 1          | 0           | 0         | 0     | 94                 |      |
| Mount Olivet,*                     | —,   |           |               |            |             |           |       | 34                 |      |
| New Providence,                    | C. WILLIAMS, † J. Rogers, T Dean   | 4         | 3             | 4          | 1           | 1         | 0     | 50                 |      |
| Colonel's Creek,                   | W: HARRIS, J: Oquin,   | 7         | 2             | 3          | 0           | 1         | 0     | 70                 |      |
| Four Holes,                        | J. BAIR, † G. Smith, J Pringle,  | 3         | 6             | 7          | 1           | 2         | 1     | 130                |      |
| Mechanicville,                     | { J. ELLIS, Alexander Fountain,<br>{ M W: Chrestman,                               | 32        | 3             | 5          | 3           | 2         | 1     | 186                |      |
| High Hill Creek,                   | —, W. Smith, A: Hill †   | 19        | 0             | 2          | 3           | 0         | 2     | 25                 |      |
| Friendship,                        | —, Jacob Norton,   | 0         | 0             | 2          | 1           | 0         | 0     | 18                 |      |
| Clear Increase of the whole        |  | 122       |               |            |             |           |       |                    |      |
| The Church at Deep Creek dismissed |  | 47        |               |            |             |           |       |                    |      |
|                                    |  | 75        | 296           | 55         | 152         | 40        | 15    | 49                 | 3693 |

## THE CIRCULAR LETTER.

*The CHARLESTON BAPTIST ASSOCIATION, to the several Churches  
which they represent, send Christian salutation.*

*DEAR BRETHREN,*

WE are now to address you on a subject which mutually concerns us before God. It comprehends the duties which the Great Head of the Church has enjoined on his Ministers and people, with respect to the relation in which they stand to him and to each other, as officers and members of his militant Church. We begin with the duty of Ministers.

This consists, in general, in declaring faithfully the counsels of God to men ; in maintaining his ordinances before them as witnesses to his truth, and messengers of his grace ; in feeding his sheep ; and in taking care of the Church of God, which he has purchased with his own blood.

The two former particulars, here stated, relate to the general character, office, and service of a christian Minister, as the world at large is concerned ; the latter, include those duties which are more especially connected with his pastoral office, but not to the exclusion of the former, which though specially designed for propagating the gospel among the unenlightened, and for forming Churches, are also of excellent use in building up and perfecting the saints.

In preaching the gospel, great care must be taken to deliver nothing as the word of God but what is so in truth ; and that nothing be kept back which is profitable to the children of God. Here the Minister of Christ must exercise a conscientious, deep concern, and should earnestly pray for divine direction. To reprove, rebuke, and exhort, as one that must give an account to God, and is employed not to amuse and please men, but to save them, is his undoubted duty. Feeding the sheep of Christ, requires that special regard be had to their spiritual condition, and capacity for receiving instruction. The difference between the various classes among them, including persons in the state of grace who are likened to old men, young men, and babes in natural life, must be ever kept in view, that the word may be rightly divided to them, so that each may receive his portion in due season ; that strong men be fed with meat, and babes with the sincere milk of the word.

The essential doctrines of revelation including law and gospel, are to be insisted on with all plainness and force as truths in which the honor of God, and the salvation of men are essentially concerned. The nature and excellency of the gospel will never be rightly understood, nor prized, without a just knowledge of the law ; it is therefore to be insisted on as holy, just, and good ; as teaching us our duty to God and man ; as condemning the guilty, but as a broken covenant of works, utterly unable to afford them life ; yet as becoming a peaceful rule of life to believers in Christ ; even in him, who is the end of the law for righteousness to every



one that believeth. The difference between law and gospel, therefore, should be pointed out, together with the harmonious agreement they have in Christ Jesus, according to that glorious scheme of redemption which divine wisdom and grace have formed. It is by the gospel, more especially, that the saints are fed : for it not only opens an extended field of knowledge to the understanding, in which truths the most momentous, sublime, and holy are exhibited to the believer's view ; truths which excite admiration, gratitude and love to the great Author of all grace and benignity, while the wonders of redemption and grace are contemplated ; but here the invitations, promises, and declarations of grace speak encouragement, peace, and consolation to every penitent believing soul.— Here the believer finds his character, feelings, and experience described, and learns his interest in the covenant of saving mercy. Here he is supported under trials, consoled in the midst of sorrows, fortified against the assaults of enemies, and animated in the face of all opposition to pursue his christian course with fidelity and zeal. These considerations manifest and prove, that the faithful, experimental preaching of the gospel, is of vast importance, and of indispensable obligation in the discharge of that trust, of feeding his sheep, which Christ has committed to his ministers.

The administration of special ordinances to the proper subjects, in due season, and with becoming solemnity, is also of excellent use to promote the comfort and best interests of the Redeemer's flock.

But besides these public ministrations, much of a personal and private nature is to be done in taking care of the Church of God. Paul taught not only publicly, but from house to house. Inquiries into the spiritual state of persons who live under the pastor's charge, are often necessary for their good ; so are exhortations to duty for such as are either negligent or depressed ; and equally so are consolations for the distressed and tempted. And however these purposes may be answered in a good degree in the wise and faithful public preaching of the gospel ; yet it will be found, that there are purposes to be answered, and benefits to be received, that cannot be well, if at all, attained, without a tender, faithful discharge of these private and personal duties. Visiting the afflicted either in body or soul, who cannot attend on public ordinances, is necessarily of a private nature : and while every member of the christian church should be emulous of that honor which the blessed Redeemer will confer on his faithful servants in the last day, when he shall say to them " I was sick and in prison and ye visited me ;" surely it cannot be thought that the Minister of Christ can be indifferent to it ; or that he can neglect it without incurring guilt.

Another important concern of the pastor, lies with the children and youth of his congregation. If it is the duty of parents as members of the christian church, to bring up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord ; and if inspired Apostles considered it as their duty to address instructions and exhortations to children, as such, in the epistles sent to Churches, surely it must be the duty of pastors, now, to attend to the religious instruction of the children belonging to their congregations. Not only should

they enforce the duty of parents to bring up their children as the word of God directs, by instructing them in the things of God and religion, by praying with and for them, and by carrying them regularly to the house of God, that they may be in the way of receiving public instruction ; but the pastor himself should attend to them at proper seasons, by catechising and conversing with them, with the intention of conveying light to their understandings, and of impressing their hearts with the all-important concerns of religion and eternity. It is high time that the too justly founded censure on many Baptist Churches should be removed from them all, " That they bestow no serious and proper attention on the religious education of their children ;" and that the senseless impious maxims by which it is attempted, by some, to justify this neglect, should be forever discarded. The maxims alluded to are, " that to give them instructions by means of catechisms, &c. is to give them head knowledge only, which may settle them down in a state of formality, without the religion of the heart, or true conversion to God ;" and that " for parents to teach them the particular sentiments of their own belief, and to get their attachment firmly fixed to the Church to which they themselves belong, is to invade the rational liberty of their children, and must prove a measure calculated to make them carnal bigots." The first of these objections supposes ignorance to be better than knowledge, and more favorable to vital religion : and therefore in principle, makes against reading the scriptures and preaching the gospel, as well as against instructing children by any just and rational means. If it should be objected that preaching the gospel and reading the scriptures are means God has appointed for the conversion of sinners, and therefore must be used, it is readily replied, so is the bringing up of children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, an appointment of God ; and a means which he has blessed in thousands of instances to the conversion of souls, and sometimes of children when very young. If there is certainly a revelation from God ; if the gospel is that revelation ; and if its doctrines, ordinances, and worship, are clearly revealed ; then surely these are to be taught as certainties ; and as the Church which best supports them, according to our most conscientious sense of truth and duty, should be the object of our particular choice and attachment ; so, certainly, should we endeavour to make it that of our children's. Not, indeed forgetting the rights of private judgment, nor liberality, but enjoining with respect to these, the duty incumbent on them when they come to maturity, of examining and judging for themselves, on the points in which good men have different views ; but engaging them if possible in the way of repentance, faith, and love, to come into the closest union to the Church without delay. Surely a christian would not hesitate to declare to his child as a certain truth, that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, and the only Saviour of sinners, because it is possible that he may in some future day with jews, turks and infidels, deny these blessed truths. And if pious parents would not and should not hesitate here, neither should they, to inculcate all the correspondent truths and duties which are revealed in the gospel ; and if parents should attend to the duty of teaching these truths and duties to children, ought it not to be done by Ministers ?

In the care of the church much is to be done. The Pastor is a watchman, a shepherd, and a ruler, as well as a teacher. It is his duty to guard against approaching danger, from temptation, error and corruption; to see that the other officers and members of the church keep their proper stations, and perform the duties annexed to them; to reclaim the wandering, reconcile the contending, support the weak and console the distressed: He should enforce the laws of Christ in his church on transgressors, with a holy impartiality and wisdom, in concurrence with the church; and while with the same concurrence he admits to membership, and inducts into office, those who are duly qualified, he should exclude such as transgress, and are incorrigible. In conversation, in spirit, and in faith, he should be an example, according to the nature and design of the Gospel.

The duties enjoined on members of the church toward their ministers are correspondent to those which the ministers have to perform toward them, as the flock of Christ. If the minister is to preach the Word and administer the Ordinances of God in the church, the members are to attend on these ministrations; with a view to obtain, for their own souls, those spiritual benefits which God has designed for his people. But this is not all; the soul of the minister is thus to be encouraged in his work; and attendance on his ministry is thus to be recommended to others. An indifferent, irregular, or remiss attendance on the ordinances of God, in members and stated worshippers in a church, tends to chill and disarm the soul of that minister, who feels for the spiritual interests of his people. It also tends to make religion, or its professors, appear in a very unfavourable, or questionable light in the eyes of men; nor can the souls of those who pursue such a line of conduct be in a lively comfortable state of religion.

Indeed it is a state of disobedience to the divine command; which enjoins that we "neglect not the assembling ourselves together as the manner of some is," and that we "be fervent in spirit in serving the Lord." It is in fact a breach of their solemn covenant engagements to the Lord and to each other: for where is the regular gospel church which has so far failed to recognize the genius and design of the gospel as not to discover this duty, and to make it an important article of their covenant engagements?—Such indifferent neglectful members and hearers, instead of being the helpers of their ministers in the cause of God, and the crown of their rejoicing; become sources of grief to them; while they have to weep over their neglects, and over their empty places in the house of God. Nearly allied to this duty of attending regularly on the ministrations of their Pastors, is that of showing to them the respect and kindness which belong to their station as ministers of Christ: "Esteem them highly for their worksake," says the Apostle. Nay he goes further—"Let the Elders who rule well, be counted worthy of double honor: such as are really ministers of Christ, are entitled to respect in their persons and characters; not a cold distant respect; nor an idolizing regard and slavish submission: for faithful ministers know that they are not, and therefore will never pretend to be, Lords over God's heritage. But they are to receive that respect and kindness which flow from just, delicate, and pious sentiments, from candour, christian confidence and real affection. "If Timothy come" said Paul, "See that he be among you

without fear; for he worketh the word of the Lord as I also do." This direction applies to every church which enjoys the presence and labours of a truly faithful minister: he should while among them be free from ungenerous remarks; from the influence of a backbiting tongue; from a factious and undermining policy; from the opposition of ignorant stubborn bigotry; from the fair speeches of flattery, or improper commendation; from the officiousness of that self conceit, which leads men, like Diotrefes of old, to seek preeminence; and from that suspicious, ungenerous, and carping spirit, by which its possessors are induced to put an unfavourable construction on every word and action that does not accord with their preconceived sentiments, however unreasonable, and with their humours however extravagant.

Ministers indeed, even the best, have their imperfections, and they may fall also into sin and error. What is here said, is not intended, nay it is *far* from being intended to be understood, that their real faults should not be noticed, and reprov'd too, by the Churches of Christ, and even by pious individuals who know that these faults exist, and who therefore are grieved by them. Indeed, to notice and reprove them in the spirit and manner which the gospel prescribes becomes their sacred duty, and the faithful minister, as well as every other real disciple of the Redeemer, will say in this case, with David: "Let the righteous smite me, it shall be a kindness: and let him reprove me, it shall be an excellent oil, that shall not break my head."

Another duty, of magnitude, which churches owe to their ministers, is that of providing for their comfortable support, and for their encouragement in laudable enterprises for the furtherance of the gospel, that they may be induced to devote their time and talents the more cheerfully to their great work, by the readiness which the churches manifest to supply their temporal wants. This subject we brought before you at our last year's meeting: there is therefore less occasion for enlarging upon it now. But we are authorised to say by the word of God; and duty requires we should say, that "So has the Lord ordained, that they who preach the gospel should live of the gospel." Churches therefore, who are inattentive to this important concern, are living in a state of disobedience to the divine command; and it may be naturally expected that in such a state their spiritual life and interest will languish. This is not an accidental or occasional concern of churches, and merely connected with the poverty and distress of a minister, as though the aid afforded him were of the nature of alms giving. If the circumstances of a church, or congregation, will admit of his proper support, their minister should never be brought into distress as the consequence of his devoting himself to the service of the sanctuary. Regular effective measures therefore should be adopted by every church, to provide a sufficient support; at least as far as their temporal abilities extend. And if a tenth of their increase were devoted to this purpose, as it was by divine appointment under the Jewish economy (besides the priests part from the free will offerings, vows, &c.) it would be found ordinarily to be sufficient, and in many cases more than sufficient: and that too in congregations where now, pastors of churches are held in a state of real want, or great embarrassment.

It will readily appear from considering the duties of a minister towards his people, as briefly stated above, that he has enough to do to employ all his time and talents, in performing the direct duties of his office, and that too where the best interests of the church are deeply concerned: and if we also take into view, what is enjoined on him respecting reading and study, for the improvement of his own mind, that he may be approved, perform the part of a workman who need not be ashamed, and bring out of his treasures things new and old, for the edification of his hearers; it will fully appear, that he can have but little time to appropriate to mere temporal concerns. The church therefore which withholds the necessary supplies from their minister, consents to his omitting important duties among them, which ought to be performed; yea, consents that the interests of religion should be suffered to languish among them, and that both themselves and their minister shall appear before the world in a light which is degrading to the christian character. Toward their minister, if he is disposed to perform his duty, they act an unjust, mean and cruel part. But if he is willing to have things placed in this situation, to furnish him with excuses for omitting important parts of his duty, and with arguments in favor of his engaging in secular employments which he wishes to pursue, or with ostentatious pretensions to greater measures of self-denial, spirituality and disinterestedness than others exercise, they do to him a great injury, by countenancing his error in its principles and bad effects; & to themselves, by becoming partakers of those evils.

A very spiritual and serious duty remains to be considered, and that is, the duty of praying for the ministers of Christ; and of each church, for its own minister in particular. This may be done with propriety in social exercises of prayer, in which expressions, either complimentary or censorious (which have sometimes taken place in such exercises) should be avoided. But especially, this duty should be performed in private, with tender affection to the minister, with pious concern for the success of his ministry to the glory of God, and the consequent benefit of immortal souls. Each member of the church, and hearer of the gospel, who desires spiritual benefits to his or her own soul, and the souls of others, and wishes to see the cause of the Redeemer flourish, should enter deeply and feelingly into this concern and exercise. They should bear up their minister before God in fervent, solemn prayer, on special occasions; and taking an affectionate view of his weakness, dangers and difficulties, and of his labours in connexion with their great object, they should carry with them through the ordinary course of duty, and various walks of life, a prayerful spirit, ready at all proper seasons to ascend in devout ejaculations, as well as in more set and deliberate addresses, to the throne of grace, on his behalf. The hearer who would be profited by the ministrations of a christian minister, should not neglect to pray that they may be blessed to him in particular. The reasons why many are not specially benefitted, may be ordinarily traced to this neglect, as to their proper source.

When it is considered how great and sacred the minister's work is; how intimately it is connected with the glory of the Redeemer, and with the conversion and salvation of immortal souls; how insufficient human ability is to accomplish its great designs, without the energy of omnipotent grace; how the men who are called to this work are

compassed with infirmity; are of like passions with other men, and assailed by dangers on every hand, from earth and hell; what honour is done to the cause of God, and benefits secured to the souls of men, by a faithful and successful perseverance in their holy course to the end; and what injury, sorrow and disgrace, are consequent on their unfaithfulness, transgression, or departure from the right ways of the Lord—surely, all pious hearts, in the contemplation of these, will be engaged to pray for their ministers; that the evils so greatly to be feared, may be avoided or overcome, and that the benefits so to be obtained may be effectually secured and promoted.

Having thus considered the relative duties of churches and ministers, apart; we shall now turn your attention to one great duty, which is common to them both; which is essential to the right performance of all other duties, and indeed to the well-being, if not to the very existence of the church: for where that does not exist there is very little to be found of what is truly valuable in religion—this is Love. Ministers must love their people; the people must love their ministers. They should not be content without feeling a warm, tender and mutual affection. To gain it they must do works of love, they must pray for the spirit of love, they must avoid every action and expression which is inconsistent with love; and they must resist every temptation which tends to promote a contrary spirit. “Ye are taught of God” said the Apostle. “to love one another.” And our divine Redeemer has left this in charge, as his new commandment; at the same time saying, “By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.” Ministers will not exert themselves in a becoming manner to perform their duties in the church, nor will a church be greatly benefitted by a minister’s services, without mutual love.

Another article of high importance to religion, in which ministers and churches are mutually concerned, and which has intimate connexion with the subjects we have been considering, claims a few observations—it would require volumes to discuss it fully: It is the care that should be used, both by ministers and churches, to have the gospel ministry respectable; by the improvement of those who are introduced as ministers in it, in their knowledge and manners, as well as in their morals and piety. Churches should be careful how they call persons into the ministry; and particularly so in making their choice of a pastor. Men should not, ordinarily, be sent out to preach, without going through such a course of studies, as will fit them to stand as intelligent witnesses to God’s Truth, and to communicate real instruction to both saints and sinners; for which improvement churches should provide. In the choice of a pastor, a church should be careful to select the man, whom they sincerely respect and venerate for his knowledge, prudence and amiableness, as well as for his pious intentions and zeal: and who they have just reason to believe, will command respect and carry weight, in the community at large among whom he will ordinarily minister. A minister possessing such qualifications and settled in such a manner among a people, is not only much more likely to afford them benefit than one of a different character and introduction: but it also would be much easier to provide for his support: and there is reason to believe that the general adoption of

this rule by the churches would, with the divine blessing, operate as a useful stimulus to ministers to seek that improvement which is so important to their respectability and usefulness. Three passages of scripture have a strong bearing on this subject: the bishop, or pastor, must be "Apt to teach;" he must "not be a novice;" and "he must have a good report of them that are without."—If he uses language full of improprieties, and words which have really a different meaning from the sense he designs to convey in the use of them; if his observations on moral, spiritual and intellectual subjects, on history, the state of the world and the manners of the age of which he treats, and with respect to which he undertakes to explain the scriptures, are not founded in justice and propriety, or with correctness; however he may speak with fluency and zeal, and, as is usual in such cases, with confidence, his aptness to teach must be very limited; and many would not hesitate to pronounce him a novice. And though indeed it is most important that a preacher's moral character be fair, because his conduct is upright: yet, if it is said in truth, and especially, when by those in the congregation who know the fact, that though the minister appears to be a pious, well meaning man, yet he is chargeable with the defects above enumerated, or with those which are of a similar nature, and that he does not take proper measures to inform and improve his mind: the report is not such a good one as might be wished, or expected, nor favorable to his usefulness; especially among a people to whom these defects are apparent.

This subject concerns ministers, not only for themselves, but as they may be employed in introducing others into the ministry. There is an union of grace and talents in the true gospel minister, which should never be overlooked: And there is a solemn charge given, in the word of God, to ministers, on this subject.—"Lay hands suddenly on no man." This charge we have reason to fear has not been sufficiently regarded. Let it be remembered for the time to come.

But the minister's more immediate concern is with himself, that he may not only maintain uprightness of heart, sanctity of affection, and unblameableness of life; but that he may possess those qualifications which will enable him to serve God acceptably in the gospel of his Son. This cannot be hoped for in consistency, without close study and devout, persevering attention and application of mind, united to prayer and dependance on divine grace. And if his course is pursued on this plan, though he may not have originally enjoyed a liberal education, great things may be hoped for: see to what a Carey and a Fuller have attained!

There are but few, who have not advanced to old age, but with some well chosen books, and the occasional aid of their brethren, who have enjoyed greater advantages, might attain a correct acquaintance with the English language, and with the most useful branches of general science, as well as of divinity; such as would enable them to appear to advantage in their public character. The younger might hope for more, even for an acquaintance with the languages in which the oracles of God have been delivered.

But defects are not chargeable on those alone who have not enjoyed the advantages of education; too many who have obtained these advantages demonstrate by their radical deficiencies, that they do not

apply themselves, as they ought to do, to those studies, to which they have been introduced. Their performances do not smell of the lamp, nor bring with them, as they ought, the savour of devout retirement and holy meditation. Speculative inquiries, unprofitable controversies, tinsel ornaments, pompous language, or loose declamation, and even disgracefully incorrect expressions and sentiments, too often occupy the place in their ministrations where solid knowledge, well digested truth, heavenly doctrines, counsels and warnings, invitations and promises, solemn as the eternity, and engaging as the Heaven to which they lead, should be found. Brethren, beloved, these things ought not so to be !

Suffer therefore the word of exhortation : O ! let it be the concern both of Ministers and Churches, to know their respective duties; to feel their obligations ; and then to practice what they know.

God is now speaking to us in the mixed language of Judgment and mercy. He has stayed the bottles of Heaven ; the pastures of the wilderness, as well as the fruitful fields have languished under the scorching rays of the sun ; in many places the flocks and herds perish for lack of water ; the trees almost famished on the road. Scarcity, if not extreme want of bread, will be felt through a great part of our country—yet the blessing of health has been granted us, throughout the year, and that to an uncommon degree, and peace dwells in our land. Let us acknowledge the righteousness of the Lord, as the God of judgment, and humble our souls before him ; and as he is the God of all mercy and grace, let us adore him and trust in his name.

We have renewed occasion to render him our thanksgivings for the favorable opportunity we have enjoyed of meeting and continuing together in a friendly and peaceable manner on the present occasion. Brotherly affection and harmony have pervaded our deliberations, and we trust a spirit of Godly seriousness and devotion has possessed the minds of the numerous audience which attended on the public ministrations of the solemn season. We pray and trust, that a blessing will follow.

By the preceding representation of the state of the churches, you will be assisted in forming a judgment on the general state of religion among them. The numerous vacancies, or want of pastors, call for earnest supplications to the Father of mercies, “ The Lord of the harvest,” that he may send forth labourers into his harvest.” In too many places it appears that vital, practical religion, is in a low and languishing state; but we have reason to bless God for what his grace has wrought in others. We are greatly pleased to see the general exertions which have been made by our Churches in the present year, for the promotion of Missionary purposes, both at home and abroad. We think it is an indication that God has a blessing in reserve for these Churches; for “ He that watereth, shall be watered also himself.” May your liberality and zeal continue, and increase ; and while they embrace that important object, the sending forth of missionaries to preach the gospel to the heathen and the destitute, let them not overlook that equally important, and first concern, of aiding the pious youth, whose soul is engaged for the work, in obtaining assistance to qualify him for extensive usefulness as a messenger of grace, to bear the glad tidings of salvation abroad,



or to fill a useful station in the Church of God at home. The call for aid on this subject is loud and urgent, especially at this time, when we trust the united liberality and zeal of our Churches, throughout the Continent, are, under God, about to erect a Theological Institution, where candidates for the gospel ministry may obtain the most suitable and ample aid, in preparing for their great and sacred service. To the scheme of religious education, we think, at least, one half of the contributions made in the Churches for public uses, should be directed.

In our minutes you will see what has been the result of our deliberations. We trust we shall have your concurrence in the measures which have been adopted for the promotion of our Redeemer's cause, and your prayers for the Divine blessing upon them.

With cordial affection and regard, we remain,  
 Beloved Brethren,  
 Your Friends, and Servants, in the Gospel of Jesus Christ.  
 RICHARD FURMAN, Moderator,  
 GEORGE BRUCE, Clerk.