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A. W. CHAMBLISS, Editor and Proprietor.]

"CHARITY REJOICETH NOT IN INIQUITY, BUT REJOICETH IN THE TRUTH."—I Corinthians, xiii, 6.

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Ministers' Department.

CO-OPERATION WITH THE MINISTRY.

The following extract on the influence of co-operation of church members with their ministry is from a published discourse of the Rev. T. G. Keen, Pastor of the St. Francis Street Baptist Church, Mobile. Bro. Keen has but recently settled in Ala. He is a man of fine abilities, and a good spirit; and the suggestions below will be read with interest. Our readers will hereafter be furnished with other productions from his pen.

Let us notice the influence of such co-operation.

It emboldens the minister. What is better adapted to inspire courage, than the assurance that he is sustained and upheld by his congregation; that he shares their sympathies—has an interest in their prayers—his character sacredly cherished—the discipline of the church kindly and promptly enforced—his temporal wants supplied—and a practical and living illustration of the truth defended, and urged from the pulpit. How is his arm nerved for the battle? What obstacles so great, that he is not ready to encounter? What enemy so inveterate, that he is not ready to meet? His whole soul is fired with fresh and heavenly zeal for the diffusion of the gospel. What commander has any apprehensions of defeat if all his troops are faithful to their trust? The minister fears no enemy, however formidable, if he can enjoy the spiritual presence of Christ, and the hearty co-operation of the church. But let him fail to secure this co-operation, and his energies are relaxed; he is conscious of the honesty of his motives, the divinity of his cause, and the certainty of final triumph—yet he hesitates to advance; he feels that on earth he is alone; he looks before him and there stand the opposing forces, skillfully marshaled and ready for the encounter. He looks around him and sees the friends of Christ abandoning their posts, and unwilling to proceed in the engagement. His courage fails, and should he advance, he would be the victim of the enemy.

God, and is the acknowledged belief of every believer. But it is virtually falsified oftentimes in actual practice. We look too often for the increase of joy by reposing in indolence; while pressed hard by innumerable foes, we rest at ease.

It is the order of heaven, that true happiness is connected with real service; that the truly active man, is the truly happy man. And it is with the spiritual as the physical constitution, that health is essential to enjoyment. The weak, the afflicted, cannot in the nature of things, be joyous. The pressure of disease, dries up every channel of worldly delight. Let then, our corporeal frame become disordered; let our animal functions be suspended for a moment; and the world, with all its charms, will be poor indeed. Hence, it is that the worldling studies to preserve his constitution unimpaired, that he may the more greedily drink in this world's pleasure: and he conceives a proper exercise of his physical energies as essential to the preservation of the animal frame. Laziness, inactivity, will bring on disease, and disease will cut off every communication of worldly pleasure. This is true spiritually. Let our moral constitutions become impaired, and we are ill prepared to enjoy moral pleasures. The gate is closed—the avenue shut up—and nothing but clouds hang, with their darkening folds over the horizon of the soul. I apprehend, my brethren, we have become spiritually sickly, and are unprepared to share the joys of religion. We must preserve pure and unweakened our spiritual constitution, or there will be the dullness and gloom of disease. Now it is evident, that spiritual activity is the great preservative of spiritual health. An indolent christian must ever be, from the very laws of his moral nature, a sickly christian, and as an inevitable result, an unhappy christian. I care not how much he may repose on the almightiness and sovereignty of God—in the promise that the universal jubilee will ere long be proclaimed—that victory is the sure result of the encounter; yet if he is not marshaled himself, what enjoyment can he expect from the spoils of triumph? It is the privilege of the soldier to share in the joys of conquest. Look at the history of the church for numerous illustrations of this truth. In what age do you

bound; but the great, holy, and blessed God is incapable of any of these evils, and is perfectly qualified to exercise unlimited sovereignty over the whole universe, whatever worlds and beings it may contain, known and unknown to us.

Our present business shall be to establish and improve this great scriptural doctrine, that the glorious God has a right to exercise dominion over all his creatures, and to do, in all respects, as he pleases.

This right naturally results from his being the Former and the Possessor of heaven and earth. Who can dispute his right? He made all things; he supports all things; and is it not fit that he should govern all things? "For his pleasure they are, and were created;"—may he then not do with them as he pleases! especially when we consider that

He is infinitely wise. He perfectly knows all his creatures, all their actions, and all their tendencies. He is acquainted with the great plan which his own infinite mind projected before the beginning of time, and of which the wisest men know nothing, but "that he hath made all things for himself, to show forth his own glory." As little children, however acute, cannot comprehend the movements of a large machine, or the operations of a manufactory, or the affairs of government, so we short-sighted mortals, whatever be our attainments, are unqualified to judge of the management of the universe; but we know that he is wise, and should rejoice to think that "the Lord reigneth."

He is also infinitely righteous. His sovereign rule is not that of a haughty tyrant; but of a most righteous and holy Governor. "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" Yes; he cannot do wrong. His ways may be, to our apprehension, mysterious; his path may be "in the sea, and his footsteps in the mighty waters," so that we may not be able to trace him: "clouds and darkness may be round about him," so that we may not clearly discern him: but justice and judgment are the habitation of this throne. It is the pride of man that arraigns the divine procedure at the bar of his reason, and concludes that this is right, and that is wrong, according as it agrees or disagrees with human notions and human practices. God's ways and thoughts may

be hid." God is not confined to any place; no, not even to the highest heavens; yet he does condescend to take up his abode in particular places. For after Solomon had ended his prayer, the glory of the Lord filled the house, and resided there in the inmost, or most holy place; which glorious presence, or in-dwelling, the Jews called SCHECHINA. This was a miraculous manifestation; and we look for nothing of the kind now; but there is a presence or in-dwelling, a spiritual Schechina, which is still more glorious and more beneficial; and that is in his church, in all ages. "Wherever two or three are gathered together in my name, says Christ, I am in the midst of them." Certainly then, where a church of true believers meet for his worship, there is He, their Head. The most important society in the world is the Church, and it is a high privilege to have a branch of it established in our midst, to which we and our children can have free access. For wherever there is a church of Christ, there Christ will be present; and he never comes to any place without bringing a blessing with Him—"In all places where I record my name, I will come unto them, and I will bless them." This is a promise of a general nature, not confined to any one time or dispensation. Wherever, then, a church is organized, and a house of prayer erected, there the name of God is recorded, and his promise is sure. He will come and bless the people who assemble there for his word. No greater blessing has God given to men than the glorious GOSPEL of his grace. Wherever it comes, it sheds light on all around. It holds forth CHRIST, who is the Sun of Righteousness, the light of the world. The beams of divine truth, when they shine into any place, disperse the mists of ignorance, error, and prejudice, and if the natural light is sweet, and pleasant to our eyes, how much more the light of divine truth? How happy are they who know the Lord, and are illumined with the rays of spiritual light!

The gospel is, moreover, a healing medicine for the diseased souls of men. It is an effectual remedy for maladies incurable by any other means. It is "the balm of Gilead," and Christ is the great Physician, who has procured the remedy, and knows how to apply it. Suppose your

bles lest these things should take him to this inevitable way of damnation.

Be not deceived; if you are idle you are on the road to ruin; and there are few stopping places upon it. It is rather a precipice than a road.

PRAYER IN EVERYTHING.

In the Christian's view there are, strictly speaking, no small duties. Everything, which he deems worthy of his attention at all, is of sufficient importance to be remembered at a throne of grace. The greatest events among men—those which affect the condition of empires—sometimes depend upon circumstances of the most insignificant nature, as to mortal apprehension. And all events—whether small or great—the Christian regards as under the control and direction of his Heavenly Father—without whose notice, neither an empire nor a sparrow can fall. In every thing, then, that engages the attention of the Christian, it is a proper—nay, it is a duty—to ask counsel of God. And what is proof for the christian, is proper for all men. The same law and the same gospel are for all men to whom they come.

Apply these observations to practical life. What a revolution!—what joy and peace!—what glad tidings there would be unto all people—if all ye who read this paper, would, in all your pursuits, in all your recreations, in all your enjoyments—"in every thing—by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, make your requests known unto God! Nay—if only the people of God would so do, what a different world and what a different church should we have! A blight rests upon the churches, because members do not pray. Many of them habitually engage in business and in pleasures, upon which they cannot ask the blessing of the Father. They adopt the maxims of Mammon, the God of this world, which he sends up from the pit—instead of those proclaimed on the mount of Emmanuel. How can we exemplify the spirit of Christ—how can we pray to God in regard to all our concerns—how make prayer and supplication "in everything," if we be concerned in things contrary to his holy will?

For the A. B. Advocate.

of the Tract Society make large drafts on the depository for books, and demand large contributions for their support, and for the books they give to the poor. The expenditures are on a scale of about \$1,000 a day; and to sustain this expenditure, the Committee have to look to the voluntary contributions of good men—except so far as the receipts for sales shall enable them to produce the books sent forth. It is an enigma we hardly know how to solve, that an institution without permanent funds, and depending on the free contributions of tens of thousands scattered over the land, can pursue so steady a police, and get on with no more of embarrassment. If the streams of benevolence were to cease flowing for a few weeks, we do not see but the Society would be compelled to discharge its workmen, disband its colporteurs, and cease its issues; yet, for a quarter of a century, it has advanced more steadily, perhaps, than any commercial house, and its credit is unquestionable. It ought to be liberally and regularly sustained. It is doing a great work for our country and the world. Scarcely a greater calamity or dishonor could befall us than to have these streams of salvation dried up.

The only painful fact in our visits to the Tract House, was the statement that the treasurer had been compelled that day to borrow \$1,000, to pay the hands in the bindry; and that no means were in the treasury for meeting the notes, amounting to 4,000, coming due on the 27th inst. This ought not to be so; and the attention of the benevolent should be called to these immediate wants of a noble institution. Yours, L. F.

REFORMATION OF WM. WIRT.

The distinguished William Wirt, within six or eight months after his first marriage, became addicted to intemperance, the effect of which operated strongly on the mind and health of his wife, and in ten months more she was numbered with the dead. Her death led him to leave the country where she resided, and he moved to Richmond, where he soon rose to distinction. But his habits hung about him, and occasionally he was found with jolly and rollicksome spirits in Bacchanalian revelry. His true friends expostulated with him of the injury he was doing himself; but he still persisted. His prac-