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From the Journal and Messenger.

Church Discipline.

BY REV. W. H. STENGER.

How many of our churches are practicing such discipline as the following examples from the history of the early English Baptists would indicate? (Cramp's Baptist History, 381-384 pages.)

"Tidings came to the ears of the church that Sister Watkins walked disorderly and scandalously, in the borrowing of money of many persons, and took no care to pay it again, etc. For which, failing to reform, after being frequently admonished, she was excluded."

From the records of another church: "For not loving Ann, his wife, as he ought, and for speaking hateful and despising words against her, giving her occasion to depart from him by his unkindness."

Other examples are given of discipline for "dissembling with the church," for "marrying irreligious persons," for "betraying trust," etc. Such examples suggest the inquiry: Is there

A GROWING LAXITY

in the discipline of our churches? Some years since, Benedict wrote: "Fifty years ago our people made a broad distinction between the church and the world, and if any of the members went over the line to the world's side, they were at once put under church discipline; members felt bound to watch over one another, and all were held to a strict account in their moral conduct generally, and especially in their business transactions."

Is it not characteristic of our churches to-day that many members neglect the church,

Her hymns of love and praise,

without admonition; that members

live gay, worldly lives, without re-

monstrance from their brethren? Is it

not often true that members who are

guilty of habitual drunkenness, and

even worse crimes, go unrebuked,

and are retained in full membership?

Of discipline in our churches

during the past seventy-five, fifty,

and even twenty-five years, the records

of any of our older churches will

abundantly prove. Does this change

indicate a growing liberty, charity

and culture only, or in part a lower-

ing of the standard of piety?

Laxity in church discipline is

ATTENDED WITH MANY EVILS.

No church can successfully preach

the doctrine of a regenerate church-

membership, without an earnest at-

tempt to practice it. Laxity in dis-

cipline lowers the standard of piety

in the churches. When one member

absents himself from the prayer-meet-

ings or the communion, and no notice

is taken of his absence, another fol-

lows his example, and another, till by

and by, a large part of the members,

"in good and regular standing," are

habitual neglecters of these covenant

obligations. Thus the church is

shorn of its strength.

The world interprets the gospel

we preach by the lives we live. The

influence of a church for good is

measured by the piety of its members.

A church may have a head of gold,

a breast and arms of silver; yet if its

feet are a mixture of clay, it is weak

and must fall.

On the other hand, there is a well-

known relationship between whole-

some discipline and revivals of pure

religion. How often has God set his

seal of approval on a faithful attempt

to purge his houses by swift-sent

showers of grace and mercy.

It is worthy of notice, as indicative

of the mind of the Spirit, that in the

letters to the seven churches of Asia,

brief as they are, two of the churches

are reprimanded for the neglect of a

matter of discipline, and another is

praised because it "could not bear

with them which are evil."

In the eighteenth chapter of

Matthew we find the rule of dis-

cipline for private offences. This

makes it the duty of every one who

feels himself injured by a brother, to

put the offender under discipline by

going to him privately, and seeking to

win him back to right conduct. And

if he often, by frank and timely ex-

planation, or honest confession, that

may be healed in a moment, which,

without it, years could not mend, nor

many tears blot out.

The law for public offences is

found in Rom. xvi. 17, 18; 1 Thes.

iii. 6, 15; 1 Tim. v. 8, 19, 20; Titus

ii. 10, 11; and especially in the fifth

chapter of First Corinthians. These

passages place the church under the

most solemn obligation to withdraw

from the fellowship of heretics, of

the immoral and disorderly.

The words of our Savior, "Let both

grow together till the harvest," are

sometimes quoted in favor of laxity

in discipline, but our best commen-

tators agree that this passage has no

bearing on the question. Christ does

not say, "The field is the church,"

but "The field is the world." In

this world the good and bad are

suffered to grow together, but will

be separated at the great day. Fausset

and Brown say: "To stretch this

parable so as to allow openly scandalous

persons to remain in the church, is to

emasculate the teaching of this parable

and to convert it into a mere

parable of its proper design and to

emasculate it.

Some men are known by the com-

pany they can't get into.

go in the teeth of apostolic injunc-

tions."

When churches profess to be built

wholly of "lively stones," and to ad-

mit to membership only those giving

credible evidence of the new birth,

the world has a right to expect, at

least, that such members as are held

in fellowship shall "be blameless and

harmless, the sons of God, without

reproach, shining as lights in the world."

There is thus a necessity, when men

have become members of a Baptist

church, and afterward their daily

lives make it evident to all that they

are still dead in trespasses and sin,

that they shall be disowned as parts

of the temple of God.

HOW SHALL WE SECURE

a healthful discipline in our churches?

There are two kinds of discipline.

The object of the first is sufficiently indicated

in the name—it is to prevent the dis-

order and difficulties of discipline. To

prevent discipline is a constant work,

a daily drill; and the best preventive

is to keep the church constantly in

the field, home and foreign—constan-

ly on the march, through the "high-

ways and hedges, compelling them to

come in," that his house may be full.

The objects of corrective discipline

are, to bring wanderers back to Christ;

and, sometimes, to vindicate the

wounded honor of the church. In

Baptist churches this work rests not

on the pastors alone, but on each

member—especially on the deacons

and elder members. If we neglect "to

watch over one another in brotherly

love," we become covenant-breakers!

The utmost impartiality, tenderness

and love should characterize every

effort toward corrective discipline.

Let him who seeks to win back an

erring brother, go to him privately;

not in a formal way, as the first step

in the course which is to follow; not

in a scolding humor;—but, keeping in

mind his own weakness and sins

(and remembering that the probability

of saving a brother is greater here

than in any subsequent stage of pro-

ceedings), in a prayerful spirit labor

with him as he would to save his own

soul from ruin.

Having exhausted every device of

love, as a last resort and necessity,

let us not shrink from exclusion.

Exclusion does not shut out from

heaven, implies no imprecations or

anathemas, nor does it hinder us

from the duties of kindness and

charity toward the excluded. It

simply cuts them off from the num-

ber of those we recognize as regen-

erate. It is simply withdrawing the

hand of our Christian fellowship

from one who himself has chosen to

depart from the faith and close to

walk the ways of God no more.

It has been truly said: "The church

which refuses a healthful discipline

is on the high road to apostasy; if it

does not repent, it will soon feel the

curse of God."

Trial by Prosperity.

BY REV. R. W. DALE, D.D.

We may be tried by riches as well

as by poverty; by health and strength

prolonged through many years as well

as by sickness, by public honor as

well as by slander and unmerited

censure; by appointment to an office of

high responsibility, and carrying with

it public distinction, as well as by un-

merited dismissal from it; by the ful-

fillment of our brightest hopes, as well

as by the catastrophes which quench

them; by the ease of our life, as well

as its hardships; by its unbroken

peace and untroubled security, as well

as by the perils which shake the heart

with fear. Many a man who has

boldly stood the test of sorrow and loss,

has failed, when the dark and evil

days have passed by, and his life is

bright with joy. We are not accus-

tomed to describe our successes, our

prosperous fortunes, the sources of

our flowing happiness, as trials; but

by these, too, God may "prove thee,

to know what is in thine heart," and

whether thou wilt keep his command-

ments or no. These, too, may bring

us discoveries of moral weakness and

defect with which we had never

charged ourselves. These, too, may

be necessary to provoke into activity

elements of righteousness which are

wanting in alertness and vigor. They

are among the "manifold" trials which

contribute to Christian perfection.

That we never think of them as trials

may suggest to us the exceptional

danger to which they expose us. They

do not alarm us, and therefore do not

excite us to vigilance and compel us

to invoke that divine defence and

support which, even in times appar-

ently most free from peril, can alone

give us perfect safety. Happy are

those who can see the eternal stars in

the sunlight as well as in the darkness;

to whom all that is fairest in this vis-

ible world is the revelation of the glo-

ry of divine and eternal things; to

whom the common gifts of God's

providence are the symbols and sacra-

ments of the better gifts of his

grace; to whom a life unweaved by

care and illuminated with gladness is

the discipline for an endless life in

God.—Expositor.

Knowledge without grace is worth

little. Grace without knowledge is

shorn of its strength. Grace and

knowledge make a strong and beau-

tiful character, adorned with every

virtue, and enriched with all the el-

ements of spiritual power.—[Rev. J. T.

Crane.

To acknowledge our faults when

we are blamed is modesty; to discov-

er them to one's friends, in ingenu-

ousness, is confidence; but to preach

them to all the world, if one does not

take care, is pride.—[Confucius.

Some men are known by the com-

pany they can't get into.

Correspondence, Journal and Messenger.

The Home Altar.

I have several letters about the de-

cline of family religion. It is said

that in our Christian homes there are

very few altars around which the

household is gathered to offer to God

the daily sacrifice of thanksgiving and

praise. We are a busy, bustling gen-

eration. The men must hasten to

their work in the morning before the

children are up, and there is no time

for family prayers. They come home

in the evening tired; the children are

sleepy; the supper is late; there is a

meeting that they want to go to; all

is hurry and worry, and the evening

worship is crowded out. The result

is that while we believe in family re-

ligion and don't intend to neglect it,

we are tempted to do so again and

again, until the observance is the ex-

ception and the omission is the rule.

I have a great deal of charity for

my brethren. I know by experience

how hard it is to keep up these home

altars when there are so many influ-

ences that tend to break them off. But

just here is the trial of our faith. If

we believe in God's covenant with the

family, we must be willing to make

some sacrifice in order to se-

cure its blessings. If we think that

religion is a personal matter only—

that we are responsible for our indi-

Alabama Baptist.

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The Board of Ministerial Education

- - - OF THE

ALA. BAPTIST STATE CONVENTION.

E. B. TRACER, Pres.; E. J. FORRESTER, Sec.;

W. F. WILCH, Treas.;

E. T. WINKLER, JNO. L. WEST.

Brother desiring aid from this Board will

address Rev. E. J. Forrester, Secretary of

the Board, at Selma.

All applications must appear before the

Board for examination.

REV. E. T. WINKLER, we are sorry

to know, is seriously ill at his home

in Marion.

THE Judson is full. Every room

is occupied. The improvements be-

ing made in the building are just

what is needed. A beautiful, commod-

ious chapel is being arranged that

will be of great service during the

session, and of very great comfort

and convenience during commence-

ment exercises. All the friends of

this noble old institution will rejoice

at its continued prosperity. In

making improvements and repairs

the trustees keep in view the beauty

and security of the building and the

comfort of the occupants. President

Frazier is serene, so cordial and cour-

teous. He makes it a real pleasure

to visit the Judson.

BRO. J. B. FIQUET, an aged, vena-

ble servant of God, died Nov. 1st, at

the residence of his son near Har-

persville. He was buried in Marion

Sunday, Nov. 4th. A large congrega-

tion of friends manifested every

mark of respect and esteem during

the progress of the exercises of the

funeral. He made a good record as a

Christian and a citizen. He enjoyed

the affectionate confidence of all who

knew him. A good man who filled

his life with deeds of goodness and

acts of kindness has gone to his re-

ward. Those who mourn his depart-

ure are comforted by the confident

assurance that he has gone to the

place prepared for all the faithful

in Christ. He lived seventy-five

years in this world preparing for an

eternity of bliss in the world to come.

In October Rev. E. J. Forester

tendered his resignation as pastor

of the church in Selma. Thereupon

the church unanimously and ear-

nestly requested him to withdraw it.

After considering the matter for a

month he felt constrained to say that

his purpose was fixed. The church

at its last conference accepted his

resignation to take effect the 1st of

January next. The churches of his

former charge have been persistent

in their appeals to induce Bro. For-

rester to return. Meanwhile the

church at Liberty, Virginia, has also

extended a call and is urging him to

accept. Liberty is a growing thrifty

town of 3000 inhabitants and is about

20 miles from the city of Lynchburg.

We should greatly regret the removal

of Bro. Forrester from Alabama. He

is one of our truest, best, most sen-

sible men, and deserves the high place

which he holds in the estimation of

all who know him.

In reply to a good brother, not a

preacher, we have to say—When ur-

ging upon churches the duty and the

importance of supporting pastors, we

referred to pastors. Men who devote

their time to farming, teaching, prac-

ticing medicine, merchandising &c., can

not be pastors. Supporting themselves

as their brethren do, and "giving lit-

tle attention to the interests of the

churches," they have no right to

claim anything more than is due for

the service rendered.

A church calling a pastor should

demand that he devote his time to

the work to which he has been called

and which he has agreed to do. This

demand necessitates the providing for

his support.

They which preach the Gospel

shall live of the Gospel. They which

work the farm, shall live of the farm.

They which preach the Gospel and

work the farm, shall live of the Gos-

pel and of the farm.

DEAN Mansel in his Essay on the

History and Tendency of Free

Thinking gives the following summa-

ry of the stages which "Freedom of

Faith" assumed in the eighteenth

century.

"The first step in the rationalism

of that age was an attempt to elimi-

nate from the doctrine of Christianity

all that is above the comprehension of

human reason; the second was an at-

tempt to eliminate from the contents

of Christianity all statements of facts

which cannot be verified by each

man's personal experience; the third

was an attempt to get rid of Chris-

tianity altogether, as having no prop-

er claim to respect or obedience.

"No Dogmatic Christianity" may be

taken as the watchword of the first

stage; "No Historic Christianity" as

that of the second; "No Christianity

at all" as that of the third.

ASSOCIATIONAL MINUTES.

— - -

We have had an unusual amount

of work to do this season in printing

the Minutes of the Associations in

the State. Brethren have been quite

kind in furnishing us their Minutes to

be published, and the amount of work

thus sent us explains the delay of the

appearance of the Minutes.

I sincerely trust that the brethren

who have favored us with the work

will bear with us. We are rushing

off the Minutes just as fast as our

presses will operate.

"First come, first served" is our rule

in work, and we are approaching the

termination as rapidly as possible.

In more associations than one, it

was stated to us that some brethren

were withholding their contributions

because they believed that the officers

and members of the State Mission

Board were receiving "extravagantly

large" salaries. That it required

four fifths of every contribution to

carry the remaining fifth to its desti-

nation. Just where this startling in-

formation came from we could not

learn.

We were advised on several occa-

sions to say that the president of the

Board did not receive six thousand

dollars and that each member of the

Board did not receive one thousand

dollars each year. We said it as se-

riously as we could.

It is thought best, even now, by

some good brethren that we say in

the columns of the ALABAMA BAP-

TIST that the corresponding secretary

is the only individual connected with

the Board who receives anything,

even one cent, for work done.

We do not see the wisdom of an-

nouncing this in the ALABAMA BAP-

TIST, for we are sure that no reader

of the paper can entertain any such

idea for a moment. Yet we make

the announcement in all seriousness

and look for the contributions that

have been withheld on this account.

We cannot say that we expect to find

them. If they come we promise to

report them.

THE associational season in Ala-

bama has past. The churches have

met in council and have devised

plans for future work. It is gratify-

ing to note the progress that is being

made in many directions. Many

more associations than ever before,

are in hearty sympathy with the

convention, and are working more har-

moniously and unitedly than ever

before. The grace of giving is being

developed as never before. The lib-

erality of the churches increases as

the years go by. Ministers are be-

coming more and more aroused and

interested. The great body of the

denomination is uniting in sympathy,

in aim and in effort. Disturbing

questions and differences have dis-

appeared very few of the meetings this

fall. Brethren have met to work in

the spirit of the Master, and have

worked faithfully and effectually.

Ways and means have been devised

looking to further progress, and high-

er attainments. The work of the

State Mission Board is more clearly

understood and more heartily ap-

proved. Some of the obstacles in the

way of its work have been removed.

We shall be disappointed if the year

upon which we are entering does not

take us far in advance of anything

that has ever been done.

Very few of the associations in the

State will be without representatives

in the Convention, next July in Tus-

kaloosa.

The number of churches adopting

some system in the collection and

distribution of funds is constantly in-

creasing. We look hopefully to the

future.

Yet, while much has been done,

and while more is being done, and

while gratifying progress is being

made, much, very much, remains to

be accomplished. Many large sec-

tions are still destitute, many pulpits

are vacant, some associations devot-

ing themselves to themselves, are

isolated and inactive. Some minis-

ters are exercising the only power

they seem to possess, the power of

opposing. We have heard of some

preachers who have pronounced

themselves as opposed to the use of

money in the support of the Gospel

at home and abroad. We have not

heard that they have done much for

the advancement of the Redeemer's

kingdom.

Aggressive, progressive work, in

any department of human en-

deavor, creates difficulties and mul-

tiplies obstacles. Faithful, diligent,

successful work alone can remove

them. Hard pulling, heavy lifting,

and continued jostling are necessary

to prize some men and some church-

es out of the deep, hard rut into

which they have fallen. And often

assiduous attention is needed to pre-

vent them from falling back into the

old paths that lead to nowhere and

to the accomplishment of nothing.

Grateful for the past, aware of the

difficulties and obstacles, and prayer-

fully and confidently expecting the

divine blessing we move forward to

meet the future. May the mighty

host of God's people bestir themselves

and make the coming year memora-

ble in the history of the denomina-

tion in Alabama.

THE SAINT'S EVERLAST-

ING REST.

— - -

Why do we think and talk and

preach and write so little about heav-

en? There has been a great deal

said about heaven. But have we not

come to an age when this is one of

the occasional? Scarcely enough

said about it to keep alive the inspiring

aspiration. Surely the Holy Scrip-

tures do not contemplate that God's

people shall "ever put that subject

among the indifferent and occasional

themes. Seeing that life is so short,

and that we do so certainly pass

away, and that so many of our dearest

friends and kindred who loved God

have already gone to that home of

the blest; since God has said so much

about it in His Word, and the whole

of our religion conspires in the blessed

agency of preparing us for the inheri-

tance of the saints, where we shall have

"a more enduring substance," in "that

house not made with hands, eternal

in the heavens," and knowing that

soon we shall go there, or miss it

forever; and as we are constantly

having lessons that ought to remind

us that all things around us—all things

visible, perish with their using and

estimony of Musicians is Equally Emphatic.

THE NEW WORLD SAYS
"MUCH
THE BEST
ORGANS GENERALLY
REGARD THEM"
ED. THOMAS
AND
HUNDREDS OF OTHERS.

THE OLD WORLD SAYS
"MATCHLESS"
"UNRIVALED"
FRANZ LISZT
AND
HUNDREDS OF OTHERS.

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adapted to all uses. In plain and elegant cases in natural wood, and superbly decorated
and colors. Prices, \$25 for the smallest size, but having as much power as any single
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