THE BIBLICAL RECORDER A ST THE LAW ST THE WAY AND AND THE THE

DEVOTED TO RELIGION, MORALITY, LITERATURE, AND GENERAL INTELLIGENCE. T. Meredith Editor

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THE RECORDER & WATCHMAN IS published every Sat- why it is so, we apprehend, it the secret and real

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CIRCULAR LETTER.

The BETHEL ASSOCIATION to the Bishops, Deacons, and all the Members of the Churches composing that Association: Grace be unto you, and peace from God the Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ. BELOVED BRETHREN .-

interest enough even to read our epis:le.

and whether you hear or forbear, we shall endeavor to discharge our duty. the land the

The subject appointed by our last association IS-WHAT ARE THE QUALIFICATIONS AND OF-FICIAL DUTIES OF DEACONS?

word Diaconos) means a servant, a minister.

vants in the church. As the necessary qualifications of all officers in church or state depend upon the duties to be performed, it will be expedient to invert the order of the subject as given der and without difficulty, than deacons a church to us; so as to determine, first, what are the duties of deacons, preparatory to the inquiry of the essential qualifications for the performance of such duties. To arrive at this object, let us inquire. How and why it was this office in the church was first created? For this, the first intimation we have from apostolical authority is found in the 6th chapter of Acts, when the numtles could not attend to the daily ministrations of terred from the duties required neglecting the higher duties of the ministry. preaching the gospel. Hence it would appear that deacons, in their connexions to ministers, would be in some respects as a deputy or aidupon deacons is clearly inferrible from the fourth verse of this chapter-viz: that the apostles "might give themselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word." Wherefore we see that deacons are to relieve ministers from all the secular concerns of the church ; the collections and appropriations of moneys for the relief of widows and other poor members, for the Ghost, but of wisdom. support of their pastors, the building of houses ding to the practice of the primitive churches, collections and appropriations made were not limited to the support of their own pastors or poor members. They also contributed to the support of Foreign Missions and poor brethren in distant countries. Paul was not the pastor of the church at Philippi: yet while this apostle was engaged in his missionary labors at Thessalonica, far distant from this church, she "sent once and again to his necessities, which he character, but serious men. received as fruit abounding to their account-a sacrifice acceptable, well pleasing to God."-Phil. 4, 16 to 18.

urday, at \$2, 50 per annum, if paid within six months, or \$3 if paid subsequently to that period. Any person who will become responsible for six ble in nine cases out of ten it would be found at the doors of their deacons. Take, for example, a deacon who commences his subscription list himself with a liberal contribution, according to his ability, and who has individually appealed will be allowed until arrearages are paid. his ability, and who has individually appealed. Persons wishing to discontinue will be expected to to every member of his church and congregagive notice to that effect prior to the commencement of a new year; otherwise they will be considered as re-ponsible for the ensuing twelve months. All communications except those of agents who are gratuitously, to secure attention, must be post pain, All remittances regularly made to our address by mate, shall be at our risk. All communications with the objects of proached the whole denomination with the black crime of covetousness. This, however, is but a small part of the evil consequences. Our min-isters are driven to the plough, or to the west, to isters are driven to the plough, or to the west, to obtain a support for their families, instead of giving themselves continually to the ministry of the word : our houses of worship are often unfit the word : our houses of worship are often unfit as a shelter from the storm, or to afford room for half the congregation; besides the various other objects for promoting the Redeemer's kingdom which are neglected, or fail when attempted .-Again we repeat the custom of addressing you However considerable these duties, and fearful it not be better for a church to remain without on some subject of interest; yet we tear, how. the responsibilities resting upon deacons in their a deacon, and for the pastor to supply the place, ever important the topic, the fact of this being an discharge of them, there is still another class of until God would raise up one, rather than fill the ever important the topic, the fact of this being an discharge of them, there is still another class of old custom, will cause many of you not to feel duties of no less magnitude. Be it remembered they were ordained to relieve ministers so On the present occasion we have selected a that their time should be continually employed subject of the highest moment to our churches, in the ministry of the word : but besides the secu lar, there is a variety of spiritual concerns not included in merely preaching the gospel; the visi-ting and praying for the sick, the discipline of the

although many have been the supposed causes

church, aiding in the administrations of ordinan ces, &c. Whatever may be the wisdom and zeal of deacons in the discharge of all their duties, con-The word deacon, (translated from the Greek neeted with the pecuniary affairs of the churchalthough they might clothe their ministers and In the New Testament, it is sometimes used for any minister in the kingdom of Christ; but more particularly and generally understood to mean the secondary order of ministering serpel discipline, the fine gold becomes dim. With out spiritual light, all is darkness. Sooner might we expect the wild asses to draw a chariot in orwithout gospel discipline (spiritually administered.) Time would fail us to enume ate all the train of duties that come under this class; for this we would refer our deacons to the discpline republished in our Minutes of 1829. If such, therefore, are the high duties and great responsibilities devolving upon deacons of churches, it follows that the standard for qualifications must be rated high enough to effect their performber of disciples had so multiplied that the apos- ance. High qualifications are not only to be inthe Grecian and Hebrew christians, without more manifest by a full and clear revelation from the pen of inspiration, and which is summed up in a few words in Acts 6, 3. "Men of hon est report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom." A high character for honesty is necessary to be feared some of our churches have lost valuato give confidence to the church and congregation, de-camp to an officer, or an overseer to his em-ployer. in the securify and appropriation of their funds for the purposes designed. They should be full of the A full summary of all the duties devolving Holy Ghost in order to attend to the spiritual concerns of the church; for spiritual men will not be lost, but worse than a loss to the church. led by the carnally blind, and if the blind be led by them they will all fall into the ditch. Further as like begets like, deacons under a carnal spirit will in all probability infect the whole flock, when attempting to execute even correct discipline ; and will generally defeat the very object intended .--Nay more ; they are not only to be full of the Holy He that undertakes to teach and administer of worship, and all the expenditures necessary discipline to others ought to be well instructed laid down in first or third Timothy. If our layfor their particular churches. Further: accor- himself, or he exposes and renders himself so men will also search the scriptures, and try themcontemptible as to lose the influence necessary to selves by the standard of piety therein established, (commended by Paul for their liberality,) the govern others; or it led by him, they may be led they will also learn they have sunk far below that into error, which will result in strife and confu- holiness of life required in the gospel. We all, sion. Although the apostles in this brief summary seemed to include the chief qualifications of dea cons, yet the apostle Paul, as if he leared a mis construction in so great a matter, gives us a more detailed exposition of all their essential traits of character in the third of first Timothy. 1st. They must be grave, not men of a vain, light-minded 2d. Not double tongued, that is, given to flattery or dissimulation; not speaking one thing before men's faces and another behind their backs; or charging members with crimes before the world. which (if true) should exclude them-and yet too timid or unfaithful to God to present the charges before the church. 3d. Not given to much wine. If the apostle prohibited the use of much wine, and the art of distilling had then been discovered, he would (ao doubt) have made the use of alcohol far more ob jectionable than wine. How lamentable to see not only deacons, but ministers using much alco hol! Deacons who used much wine would prove

5th. "Deacons must hold the myslery of the It contains the choicest matter, gives the best infaith in a pure conscience." That is, they must conscientiously and in sincerity he sound in the faith; for how are they to admonish others and deal against heretics, unless they are orthodox theniselves.

6th. "They must first be proved ;" not young converts, but men whose characters are sufficiently tried by the church to afford evidence of suitable qualifications .- trol and each subaco h art lorsing

they will prove enemies in the camp and ever impede the usefulness of their husbands by opposition, slanders, &c.

Sth. They must be the husbands of one wife. That is, they must not be guilty of the sin of polygamy, which would be no less than the sin of adultery. an a seas & date in ,3d ton anoth bloom

Further: they must rule their own children and

qualifications, such the arduous duties, and great tesponsibilities, of deacons, should not our churches look well to their choice ; and should not our presbyteries take heed whom they set apart, by the laying on of hands, to this office. Would office with one who might ever prove a stumblingblock to the church ? And permit us especially to address you, dear deacons of our churches .---We have in faithfulness, endeavored to mark out your qualifications and duties, as laid down in God's word. You may be ready to conclude the standard is raised so high you never can reach it and cry, "who is able for these things ?" We answer: it is not our standard ; God has fixed it, and He isable to qualify you for it, if He has called you to the office. But herein may be the chief source of all the evils; a neglect in the use of proper means to improve the gifts of the church. If deacons are to be full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, it behoves them to pray for the spirit which God has declared He is more ready to give, than parents are to give good gifts unto their children. God gave Solomon wisdom when he prayed for it. If a knowledge of discipline is needed, it becomes you to study the discipline well which Christ and His apostles taught and practised. In short, the chief qualifications of deacons consist in moral and spiritual gifts, or graces; and these, all christians should have, and God is ready to give to them that ask Him, if they also study to obtain them. It is true some of the gifts are natural: there must be natural strength of mind there must be energy of character, and a constitution to undergo the duties required; and one qualification is circumstantial, the character of the wife. These defects cannot be removed by the individual, and it must not be expected God evidence that God has not designed him for such an office; and by aiming to fill it without such gilts, he will disgrace both himself and the church. when he might he us. ful in a lower sphere. It is ble deacons by making those preachers whom God intended as exhorting deacons, thereby depriving churches of either preachers or deacons; because one who is out of his station, is not only In thus addressing the deacons of our churches, we shall conclude with a few general remarks to bishops, deacons, and laymen. The standard of qualifications for deacons has not only been reduced far below the gospel level; but also of bishops. We, as ministers of the gospel, have need to look to ourselves, and measure ourselves, not by one another, but by the gospel standard : and we shall find a woful degeneracy from the standard therefore may take up the lamentation of Jeremiah, "How is the gold become dim ! how is the most fine gold changed ! The crown is fallen from our head : wo unto us, that we have sinned ! Turn thou us unto thee, O Lord, and we shall be turned; renew our days as of old." May bishops and deacons, and all the saints of Bethel, awake from their slumbers, arise, ascend and occupy the for which no substitute can be found on earth .-high stations God has assigned them in his church militant; and may we all finally be exalted to some humble station in the kingdom of heaven ! THOMAS RAY, Moderator.

It contains the choicest matter, gives the best in-struction, and alfords the greatest pleasure and satisfaction that were ever revealed. It contains the best law and profoundest mysteries that ever were penned, brings the best tidings, and affords the best comfort to the inquiring and disconso-late. It exhibits life, immortality, and shows the everlasting glory. It is a brief recital of all that is past, and a certain prediction of all that is to come. It settles all matters in debate, and re-solves all doubt, and eases the mind and con-science of all their scruples. It reveals the on-ly living and true GOD, and shows the way to him; and sets aside all other gods, and describes the vanity of them, and all that put their trust in 7th. Their wives must be of good character ; or come. It settles all matters in debate, and rethe vanity of them, and all that put their trust in them." sets and avon the to kinot an interest

FALSU PRIDE, there have

Berla' -

It has always been a matter of regret with me, that false pride could not be made like theft, a ignorance, exception and envy, and the world is full of it. So long as it operates upon indi-viduals alone, it is a matter of trifling consideration, but strange as it may appear its influence strikes at the very root of a virtuous and flourishing community.

Does the successful merchant make his sor a mechanic? Very seldom. Does the professional man make his son a mechanic? More still. But does not the more fortunate mechanic make his son the guardian of clothes and calicoes? Why is this ? Is the yardstick more honorable than the jackplane?—the goose quill more dignified than the typt? But unfortunately, or forty years, and behold the barefooted adventurer, at the present time rolling in wealth or spending his annual income of some three thousand dollars per annum in manufacturing ladies of his daughters? Does he teach them the tarnish the fair hands and fingers that bring such sweet sounds from the piano, to dust the glorious instrument itself. How extremely rediculous is this illegitimate pride? Thousands of daughters, whose mothers out a handkerchief!-They would more likely prate about "good society," 'mixed company, and the dignity of their ancestors ! A few years more roll around, and the thrifty and imprudent parents die, and then comes the scramble often to 12 divisions of his hard earned estate. How small does a large fortune appear when apportioned to numerous heirs. The daughters must marry gentlemen, for pride dictates it, and gentlemen of course, must squander their patrimony. And what has the parent bequeathed to society. and his country? Children raised in idleness, without the stimulant to add one iota to the general substantial prosperity of the community.

because thou art unchangeable, that my heart was cannot instruct my fellow creatures; but I can pray that thy Spirit may fest on them, and guide them; and in my supplications unto thee, O God I am ever cherished and supported by thy promi-ses. When my long-attached friend comes to me, Thave pleasure to converse with him ; and I rejoice to pass my eyes over his countenance; but soon I that false pride could not be made fike theft, a criminal offence. It is the partner of about as many crimes as any other vice—for such I hold it to be—at least some description of it. It is nuch to be pitied, and generally leads to impro-priety. How many honest men have been made scoundrels by the false pride of a foolish wife, and extravagant family. It is a compound of ignorance, exception and envy, and the world is full of it. So long as it operates upon indi-viduals alone it is a matter of triffing considera. good water is there, but it is neglected ; it would refresh men, but they do not seek it; and I think about this good well, and I say it is like the rield blessings of my Father's kingdom, and I say, prayer is the means to convey His great mercies to menerate to home under which The see

From Townson's Journey to the Rocky Mountains

WORSHIP OF CHRISTIAN INDIANS.

the absurdity runs farther ! Look back thirty thirteen were soon collected at the call of one whom they had chosen for their chief, and seated with sober, sedate countenances around a large fire. After remaining in perfect silence for perhaps filteen minutes, the chief commenced a harangue in a solemn and impressive tone, reminding them of the object for which they were thus asusual rudiments of housewifery? Very rarely, sembled, that of worshipping the "Great Spirit Is it because the healthful exercises of do restic | who made the light and the darkness, the fire and duties is disgraceful? Oh no; false pride says the water," and assured them that if they offered "it is ungenteel for ladies to work"-as it would up their prayers to him with but "one tongue." they would certainly be accepted. He then rose trom his squatting position to his knees, and his example was followed by all the others. In this situation he commenced a prayer, nonsisting of short sentences uttered rapidly but with great ap-parent fervour, his hands clasped upon his breast in a horse stable, would feel insulted if asked if they had ever made a loaf of bread, or washed accompanied frequently by low moaning. The prayer lasted about twenty minutes. After its onclusion, the chief, still maintaining the same position of his body and hands, but with his head bent to his breast, commenced a kind of psalm of sacred song, in which the whole company presently joined. The song was a simple expression of a few sounds, no intelligible words being uttered. It resembled the words, Ho-ha-ho-ha-ho-ha-ha a, commencing in a low tone, and gradually swelling to a full, round, and beautifully modulated chorus During the song, the clasped hands of the worshippers were moved rapidly across the breast, and their bodies swung with great energy to the time of the music. The chief ended the song that he had commenced, by a kind of swelling groan, which was echoed in chorus. It was then taken up by another, and the same routine was gone through. The whole ceremony occupied perhaps one and a half hours; a short silence then succeeded, after which each Indian rose from the ground, and disappeared in the darkness with a step noiseless as that of a spectre. I think I never was more gratified by any ethic bition in my life. The humble, sab lued, and beseeching upon their heavenly Father to forgive their sins, and continue his metcies to them, and the evident and heart-felt sincerity which characs terized the whole scene, was truly affecting, and very impressive.

The churches in Achaia and Macedonia also sent a contribution to the poor Saints at Jerusalem. Rom. 15, 56.

All these duties therefore devolve upon deacons: yet we fear many of our deacons, instead of relieving their pastors from these duties, even oppose their attempts to perform them. How and in what manner deacons were to make their collections, God seems to have left to the exercise of their own judgements; except on the oc-casion of the collections from the Gallatian and reprove those in danger of falling into excess, for Corinthian churches for the poor saints at Jeru. they would expect the retort-"Physician heal salem, which the apostle directed to be attended thyself." to the first day in every week, previous to his visit to them, "that there be no gathering when he came to them ;"-the object of which seemed to be a timely preparation, and to avoid the confusion attending unexpected or hurried collecchurch, they should keep a book wherein should hand know what the right hand doein ;" making to make reports to the church whenever called upon: and if any member or members should refuse, or neglect duty in such contributions, as approved of by the church, it will become the duty of deacons to report such delinquents to the church, in order to be dealt with according to

4th. Not greedy of filthy lucre: if covetous, like Judas, they might be tempted to embezzle the money in their hands; or be so illiberal in their own contributions, that they could not without shame urge others to liberality. And 10 order to evade giving, themselves, they would likely options. Again: it will follow, as deacons are to pose subscriptions, and all plans of public collec-thave the management of all the treasures of the tion, under the pretension of "not fetting the left the sway of sovereigns, the rule of rulers, and the be entered all their receipts and payments; so as this a pretext to conduct their gifts with such ut- honor, and the servants to obey; and promises the protection of its author to all who walk in its approverbial faunt against the denomination. "And

ELIJAH RAY, Clerk.

The Bible, -We do not know where there is so good a description of the Bible in so small a compass as is to be found in the article be-10W:-

"A nation must be truly blessed if it were gov erned by no other laws than those of this blessed book ; it is so complete a system that nothing can be added or taken from it; it contains every thing needful to be known or done; it affords a copy for a king and a rule for a subject; it gives in struction and counsel to a Senate, authority and direction to a magistrate; it cautions a witness, requires an impartial verdict of a jury, and furnished a judge with his sentences; it sets the husband as lord of the household, and wife as mistress of the table; tells him how to rule, and her to man. age. It entails honor to parents, and enjoins o bedience upon children ; it prescribes and limits authority of masters; commands the subject to

A MOTHER'S INSTRUCTION.

The following quotation from an address of the Principal of the Flushing Institute, Rev. Dr. Muhlenburgh, should be laid to the heart of every mother:

"We are often asked, 'What kind of boys do you want ?! To this question too the theory of our institution furnishes an answer. Give us such boys as have been blessed with the instructions of a pious mother. This is a qualification Never would we despair of the child who has been used in infancy to hear the precepts of heavenly truth inculcated in the accents of maternal love. Truths thus instilled live for ever in the memory. They are interwoven with all the sensibilities of the soul. They are the fortress of conscience; not impregnable, it is true, but intouch of faithful expostulation. They are an inextinguishable spark, which, after being seemingly smothered under a heap of corruption, may be fanned by the breath of friendly and spiritual counsel into the pure and genial flame of piety. The child of a mother's prayers, said St. Augustine, (and may we not believe ?) is never lost,-It is those children who have been dedicated to their Maker under the auspices of a pious and vigilant mother, whose education we should esteen it a happy and useful vocation to continue. While on the other hand we should deem it an act of temerity equally hopeless and presumptuous, to become responsible for the youth in whose mind a mother's voice was connected with no

A SEASONABLE DISCOURSE.

Some years since, a clergyman, who held a repectable rank among his brethren, became convinced that the time for the arrival of the great last day had approached; and, from a careful destructible. They furnish the mind with chords examination of the prophecies, was able to fix which in later life seldom fail to vibrate to the upon the very Sabbath upon which the Judge would make his appearance. So deeply impressed was he with this important truth, that it gave a new impulse to his preaching, and prompted him to the most incredible labors and exertions, He went from congregation to congregation, and announced his message. He exhorted the impenitert with an eloquence which he never could command before; and his language awakened the thoughtless and interested the curious. He preached several times every day; he crowded on his journeys through storms and darkness, and acted himself under the full impression of the truth of his delusion.

One evening, he rode through the rain as it fell in torrents, to meet an appointment in one o other associations than those of apathy to religion the villages of New Jersey, where a congregation

and devotedness to the character and frivolities of the world."- Flushing Journal. rules. It gives directions for weddings and A DEAF AND DUMB BOY'S THOUGHTS ON burials; it promises food and raiment, and limits the use of both; it points out a faithful and eterminibile por b PRAYER. (11) Louis , swamble / nal guardian to the departing husband and father; Written by a pupil in the West of England Insti-

had gathered, with great anxiety, to hear his annunctations. He ascended the desk, and commenced his fervid exhortation. . "Three days hence," said he, "and you will behold the Son of Man coming in the clouds of Heaven. Prepare to meet him !"

The Sabbath came on. The house of God not only in that village, but in the neighboring towns,