

THE BIBLICAL RECORDER.

"RIGHTEOUSNESS, TEMPERANCE, AND JUDGEMENT TO COME."

EDITED BY T. MEREDITH,

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TERMS.

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From the Cross and Journal.
NEW YORK—KENTUCKY.
A BAPTIST LESSON.

Brother Stevens.—I have been examining lately the report of the New-York Baptist Convention, its statistics, table of associations, and other documents, and have thereby been led to sketch out the following comparison between the progress of the Baptists in that state and Kentucky. I select Kentucky because it is one of the oldest western states—because the Baptists had the pre-eminence, and for many years were more numerous than all other denominations, and because the progress of Baptists in that state furnishes a kind of sample of their progress in the west generally.—For this purpose, I have selected two periods, 1812, and 1834, including the term of twenty three years.

In 1812, the Baptists in Kentucky numbered 13 associations, 313 churches, 205 preachers, and 19,897 members or communicants.

In New York, in 1812, there were 15 associations, 245 churches, 220 preachers and 18,500 members.

How do they count at the close of 1834? In Allen's Register, for the close of 1832, are given for Kentucky, 33 associations, 484 churches, 358 preachers, and 33,724 members. The numbers in three associations, the Redbird, Eagle creek and South Kentucky, are not given. Allowing the same ratio for numbers in these as in the others, will give 48 churches, 25 preachers, and 3,372 members. Add for increase during the two last years, 26 churches, 13 preachers, and 1,721 members, which is the ratio of increase for the preceding 20 years. The aggregate is 558 churches, 296 preachers, and 38,817 members.

In New York, at the close of 1834, are found 55 associations, besides three others contemplated 719 churches, 659 ministers including licentiates, an 60,000 communicants,—showing an increase of a proportion greater than two to one over that of Kentucky.

In New York the Baptists have more than trebled in 23 years.—In Kentucky they have not quite doubled in that time.

WHY THIS DIFFERENCE?

I have not instituted these comparisons for invidious designs, nor to provoke unpleasant sectional jealousies. They are for important practical purposes. They are not intended to bear exclusively upon Kentucky—but are applicable in a greater or less extent, to every western state. They have been induced by the cogitations of a western man—and, as he subscribes himself "A Western Baptist,"—who feels a deep and thrilling interest in the prosperity of genuine Baptist principles, and Baptist churches through Kentucky,—through the whole west. To answer the purpose, further comparisons must be instituted, I have not given an account of two or three little antinomian and anti-mission establishments, which are known by monthly "Signs of the Times,"—but have selected the great body of effort Baptists of that state. But in reference to Kentucky I have taken all—"United"—"Regular"—"Separate"—"Particular"—whether effort or anti-effort—whether known by "Signs," or without.

Again, I inquire, WHY THIS DIFFERENCE IN FRUIT? Will it be said that New York is an older and more populous state than Kentucky? This is decidedly against the proportionate increase of Baptists in New York; for in all the older states, the Baptists have had to compete with other denominations, far in advance, by having possession of towns and other favorable locations,—and in learning and general influence. Besides those counties where Baptists have flourished most, have been changed from a wilderness into a populous region coeval with Kentucky, and yet Presbyterians and Methodists have had equal, and in some respects superior advantages to Baptists, in occupying them. At the period mentioned, other denominations were at least four times more numerous in the whole state of New-York, than the Baptists, and yet the latter in numbers and influence are gaining upon the others. Whereas the Baptists in Kentucky once had the advantage ground most decidedly. They were the first religious people to enter its territory, and organize churches. In 1810, the Presbyterians, Methodists, and Cumberland Presbyterians in the whole state did not exceed 60 preachers, and 10,000 communicants;—not a third as many preachers, and only a small fraction over half as many members as the Baptists.

Does one suggest that a multitude of Baptists, and especially Baptist preachers, have emigrated from Kentucky to other new states, and that this has kept down their numbers? He is reminded that Baptist emigration from New York to Michigan, Ohio, and other new countries has been proportionate;—and as to the greater emigration of preachers from Kentucky, that is involved in my question. Why have so many preachers left the state for new countries? Is it because God has not called them wholly to the ministry. Or have the churches neglected to call and sustain them?

But another fact developed in these investigations, is, that the increase of Baptist ministers in New York, in 23 years, has been 439.—while

in Kentucky the increase has been only 91!—Here is an astounding fact that ought to be looked directly in the face. WHY IS THIS?

I admit and hold as precious, the doctrine usually held by Baptists, that God calls men to consecrate themselves to the ministry, by a spiritual influence,—that to such as he induces to the work, he affords gracious qualifications to understand, explain, unfold and enforce the gospel method of salvation. But there is a congruity and consistency in the Divine proceedings. He never raises up men amongst the heathen to preach the gospel till some evangelist or missionary carries there the "word of salvation." Nor does he call men to preach where churches exist, unless the churches show they want them, and will receive and treat them, as HIS ministers. I apprehend God has raised up as many Baptist preachers in Kentucky as the churches have asked for, and take care of. It is only resolving the question into another shape by asking why Baptist ministers have increased so much faster in New York than Kentucky.

Here a remark may be subjoined before I proceed to further comparisons. In Kentucky Baptist principles, and especially their mode of church government, which is assumed to be after the scriptural model, have been decidedly popular, and the denomination have had a great preponderance in general influence. The cause must be searched for among themselves. For in New York the Baptists have had to compete with popular influence and powerful talent.

In Kentucky, first from necessity, and then from the force of habit, the churches have kept up meetings on the Lord's-day regularly only once each month. But in New York, except in occasional instances the habit has been to meet every Lord's-day; and even when destitute of a minister, the brethren would meet for prayer, reading and exhortation. Baptist churches in the West cannot prosper, and grow into efficient churches, while this monthly arrangement continues in Kentucky. Until recently, little has been done my mutual co-operation, and pecuniary contributions, to enter important towns and destitute fields, and plant and water churches.

Through an extensive district of country in New York, where the Baptists flourish most, and have increased rapidly along the lakes and the great canals, the gospel was first preached, and churches planted by missionaries, from the Baptist Missionary Society of Massachusetts, and this has been followed up by extensive and multiplied efforts of themselves, soon as they had gotten strength,—and the very churches that were first planted by trembling missionaries, and while feeble, were watered by their tears and prayers, have long since contributed liberally to send the word of the Lord to "regions beyond them."

In Kentucky, though, Baptists profess that God calls men to labor in his vineyard, Baptist ministers have generally supported themselves, by attending to worldly business, and often grow rich by it.

In New York, the churches generally support the gospel, by contributing to the necessities of their ministers, that they may "give themselves wholly to the work." They do this openly, regularly, fearlessly, and systematically, by subscription, or otherwise, (not by slipping a dollar or two in a preacher's hand privately, as though they were ashamed to obey the divine command.) Their preachers never become rich, but they preserve a clear conscience in view of doing their duty.

In New York, Baptists generally call things by their right names. They talk about supporting the gospel ministry, as they would about supporting their own families,—of paying the preacher "wages" for his services as Paul called a gospel support; (2 Cor. xi. 8.) They hire a preacher to officiate with the church, and use the word "hire just as Jesus Christ did. (Luke 10: 7.) Their ministers never "beg for money" in an indirect form, by telling the people affecting tales about themselves and families, but they explain and enforce the christian duty of supporting the gospel just as they enforce any other duty.

In Kentucky—but I will not name it; let it pass: it has been the common error of the west. Let what has been left behind. The churches will learn the scriptural lesson on this and other subjects if appropriate means are used to instruct them.

In reference to sustaining the gospel ministry by those conversant with the churches in New York, the average proportion that each church bestows upon its pastor is from 250 to 300 per annum. Deducting 120 licentiates, most of whom are students at Theological and Literary Institutions, of which there remain 539 ordained preachers, of which 475 may be considered as sustaining the pastoral office. Allowing the average of 275 dollars annually for each pastor, which is a low estimate, and it shows that the Baptists in that State contribute to the support of the Gospel in their own churches, not less than \$130,625 annually.

Let us now contemplate their voluntary contributions for other purposes. They give not less than \$5000 for Foreign missions,—\$6000 to the American Baptist Home Mission Society for the Mississippi Valley,—\$8000 for missionaries and to aid feeble churches within their own state, Pennsylvania and Michigan. \$3000 for the Tract cause,—\$8000 for Sunday school purposes, \$6000 to the Bible cause. The three last items are estimated on imperfect data,—the others are derived from examination of public documents. To all these subjoin the "Hamilton Literary and Theological Institution, a noble and truly a Baptist Institution for the education of the rising ministry;—annual expenses about \$6000, besides providing extensive buildings, a farm, workshops, furniture, library &c. to an amount of not less than thirty or forty thousand dollars.

To recapitulate these expenditures.

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| Supporting pastors in the churches | \$130,625 |
| Foreign Missions | 6,000 |
| A. B. H. Mission Society for the Mississippi Valley | 8,000 |
| For domestic missions, and to aid feeble churches in their own state | 8,000 |

Hamilton Institution for the education of the rising ministry per annum. 6,000
Other societies and objects 12,000

Amount \$168,625

And yet this is a free will offering;—no compulsion, and every year its increase shows that the Baptists in that state understand their true interests, and do not become "weary in well-doing." Under such a state of things they have extensive revivals, and are prosperous, united and on the increase.

Again, in Kentucky,—and I hate to name it, but every body knows it;—and we may correct our faults by looking steadily at them in the reflection of divine truth; in Kentucky there has been rivalry and jealousy, & ambition amongst the preachers. They have not pulled in an even yoke. They have not always prostrated self at the foot of the cross of Christ. Hence parties have been formed, divisions produced in associations, declarations of non-fellowship made, and frequent mutinies in the camp. This will always be the case where the ministry is independent of the churches, and the true pastoral relation is not sustained.

In New York; let any Baptist preacher "set up for himself," and attempt to make his party, and he will have the whole ministerial corps against him, backed by the churches. He will be "used up in less than no time." Not even could the strange and "uncertain sound" of a Campbell break the Baptist ranks in that state. They move together in love and harmony.

These facts, thus contrasted, help to solve the question with which I started, and also point out the true principles of Reform for Kentucky—yea, for WESTERN BAPTISTS. For I again apprise the reader, and our Kentucky brethren in particular, that my calculations, like those of an almanac, though made for the meridian of Kentucky, "will serve for all the adjacent states."

The causes of the inequality in the prosperity of Western Baptists, and those of New York, are found.

1. In the almost entire destitution of the pastoral office in the churches,—and the casual monthly meetings, instead of weekly meetings as God appointed, and the apostolical churches invariably practiced.

2. In declining mutual co-operation and combination, and liberal pecuniary contributions for taking possession of large towns, and supplying destitute fields with gospel laborers.

3. In the opinions and practices of Baptists relative to the ministry being at variance. Their "opinion" is that all true preachers of the gospel are "called of God" to the work,—that God does not work by halves,—and that they should be devoted wholly to the ministry,—else why do they ordain—"set apart men to the ministry." Their "practice" has been to place the ministry in such circumstances as to annul this call, for the greater portion of their time. They have neglected the divine command, and "muzzled the mouth of the ox" while "treading out the corn." Prosperity and proportionate increase will not attend them without a return to New Testament order.

Finally the ministry instead of being independent of the churches, must become the servants of the churches. A mutual relationship must be formed. The churches must feel their need of a constant and stated ministry, and the servants must feel their dependence on the churches for a support. Then with unity of design, and harmony of effort, the cause will proceed.

Many other deficiencies, might be alluded to, as neglect of prayer, in the closet and family,—of habitually reading the scriptures,—of the religious education of children,—of the want of habitual training to evangelical effort in every mode of doing good; I have chosen however to follow up the subject to one of its principal sources.

But, brethren, we are persuaded better things though we thus write. There is a redeeming spirit among us. Many are getting their eyes open, and find the path of duty is the high road to prosperity, and that the cheapest and most economical method is to get a good minister to labor constantly, and to support him comfortably. These, and many other indications of returning prosperity, are exhilarating to one who has long been and expects to live and die

A WESTERN BAPTIST.

From the N. Y. Baptist Register.

Our Nation is liable to be led away with the error of the wicked.

It was said to the Jews, "The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof." These flourishing United States appear to occupy a most interesting situation—a situation, however, so far from the summit of perfection, that they may rise in very many respects; yet their present exalted situation subjects them to danger, lest they fall. We do not depreciate the rank of nations, societies, or even individuals, by applying to them this caution of inspiration: "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall."

It is manifest to every observer, that a nation's character is a fair criterion of its prosperity. This is self-evident, from the fact that an indolent, vicious people cannot be a prosperous people. It is further manifest, that, as nations have obeyed the commands of God, they have enjoyed "peace in their borders and prosperity in their palaces." The long continued prosperity of our country, hitherto enjoyed, is not certain to be perpetuated, nor even likely to be preserved, far beyond the period of our properly improving the blessings we now possess. Whilst to ancient Israel it was said, "You only have I known of all the families of the earth, therefore will I punish you," may we not from similar reasons conclude, that, as our "American Israel" is distinguished for civil and religious privileges above all the nations of the earth, if we do not bring forth fruit unto God, these privileges will be taken from us, and given to nations bringing forth the fruits thereof? The supposition appears the more important not to say probable, when we consider the present state of ancient Judea. How strikingly is that scripture fulfilled: "Thou whole Palestine art destroyed!" That delightful, favored country, where Israel went up from year to year to offer sacrifice—where the blessed Saviour preached and bled and manifested forth his glory:

and where the holy apostles preached the gospel, with the Holy Spirit sent down from Heaven, that "fruitful land turned into barrenness for the wickedness of them that dwelt therein." Once it witnessed the footsteps of the holy Jesus and his disciples—now overrun by Turks and Arabs, who disregard the voice that proclaimed of the Jews, "Hear ye him."

Let the American patriot, and also every Christian, learn, by the providence of God as well as his word, that change attends the onward march of nations as well as individuals; and this is the more sensibly felt when we remember, that, but a little while ago, and this happy land, where cities and villages now rise, and where the profusion of heavenly blessings calls to distant climes, with inviting voice, to view this as the asylum of the oppressed—that this land, I say, was a land of savage barbarity and pagan night! Perhaps the very spot of ground on which our peaceful dwelling stands, or the ground on which our house of holy worship is built, was once illumined with the midnight fires of the Indians, whilst they moved forward in the war-song and dance. What mighty changes this world is subject to! Now, shall it never be with us as with ancient Israel. They rebelled, became unthankful, and were scattered. In viewing their land at three different periods, we find striking evidence of mighty changes; first, when occupied by the Canaanites, who gave to it its name; secondly, when those, for their iniquities were driven out, and their land given to the children of Israel as it is written, "Thou didst drive out the heathen and plantedst them;" and lastly, when these disposed of the possessions, to give place to the "owl and to the comorant," the Turk and the Arab.

Having noticed some reasons for fearing an unhappy change in our country, in consequence of our sins, I shall omit to name in this paper the particular evils with which we are threatened, which, however, may be obvious to every one; but would say, concerning the appearance around us, as the reluctant cardinal said, concerning the "triangular cap"—"IT LOOKS TOWARDS ROME!" Repentance towards God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, is the only safe and truly pleasant path.

ADVICE TO MINISTERS.

"Abide in me," are words eminently written to ministers, and must be realized in their habitual experience, if men would 'bring forth much fruit.' Never lose your first love; never rest, if you are conscious of any diminution in its ardor, until, by constant prayer, you take hold again on the Divine strength, and make that strength your own; so that it may be felt in the vigor of your affections and in the constancy of your zeal. Remember that religious declension in a minister is instantly followed by a train of the greatest evils, by pride, self confidence, sloth, and the loss of meekness and humility; and then he lies open to various temptations, and lives but to show, in his sapsless and savorless ministry, how awfully he is dead to God. Brethren, let us watch and pray, lest we enter into temptation; and be always animated, not only with the hope of escape from those evils which might destroy our spirituality and usefulness, but with the anticipation of daily conquest and daily acquisition. Let us 'follow hard after God,' and then his right hand will not only sustain us, but make our cup run over with blessings. The only effectual preparation for the exercises of the pulpit are the habit of enriching the mind and heart with the word of God, so that it may live and dwell in us, and actuate all we speak and do. To the daily, prayerful, hallowing study of the Divine Scriptures, we affectionately commend you. Here is the mine out of which you must dig the gold by which thousands are to be made rich 'toward God,' and here is the fountain of the water of life, the seal which you are to break, and of which you are to be the channels of communication to the people. Be always afraid of trusting to any thing in your ministry, but the truth as it is revealed in the Scriptures, in which God's own wisdom is embodied, and that in words taught, not by man's wisdom, but the Spirit of God. In explaining, enforcing, applying, and amplifying this truth, your true power as preachers will consist, and you will then be faithful 'stewards of the mysteries of God.'

Two other observations on the subject of preaching, we may be permitted to make. The first is, that it ought always to be, strongly and firmly regarded by us, not as an end, but as a means. If it be rested in under the former view, then this sad result will follow, that a mere professional duty will be performed without any respect to its utility; or the personal credit of the preacher will be rested in, as his great concern, and so he will truly be guilty of preaching 'himself' and not 'Christ Jesus the Lord.' How necessary is it, brethren, to guard against this, lest the natural sloth and vanity of the heart prevail against us, and we become useless to others, and offenders in the sight of Him who sent us, not only to preach to them, but to persuade them; not to boast of the brightness of the weapons of our warfare, and of our supposed dexterity in using them; but to subdue a rebel world to the obedience of faith and love. He preaches best, says an old divine, who saves the most souls.

Rev. Richard Watson.

"BE NOT WEARY IN WELL DOING."

"There are few difficulties that hold out against real attacks, they fly, like the visible horizon, before those who advance. A passionate desire and an unwearied will can perform impossibilities, or what seem to be such, to the cold and the feeble. If we do but go on, some unseen path will open among the hills. We must not allow ourselves to be discouraged by the apparent disproportion between the result of single efforts and the magnitude of the obstacles to be encountered. Nothing good nor great is to be obtained without courage and industry; but courage and industry must have sunk in despair, and the world must have remained unimproved and unimproved, if men had nicely compared the effect of a single stroke of the chisel with the pyramid to be raised, or of a single impression of the spade with the mountain to be levelled. All exertion, too, is in itself delightful, and active amusements seldom tire us. Helvetius owns that he could hardly listen to a concert for two hours, though he could play on an instrument all day long. The chase,

we know, has always been the favorite pursuit of kings and nobles. Not only fame and fortune, but pleasure is to be earned. Efforts, it must not be forgotten, are as indispensable as desires. The globe is not to be circumnavigated by one wind. We should never do nothing. 'It is better to wear out than rust out,' says Bishop Cumberland. 'There will be time enough to repose in the grave,' said Nicole to Pascal.

"As a young man, you should be mindful of the unspeakable importance of early industry, since in youth habits are easily formed, and there is time to recover from defects. An Italian sonnet justly, as well as elegantly, compares procrastination to the folly of a traveller who pursues a brook till it winds into a river and is lost in the sea. The toils as well as risks of an active life are commonly overrated, so much may be done by the diligent use of ordinary opportunities; but they must not always be waited for. 'We must not only strike the iron while it is hot, but strike it till it is made hot.' Herschel, the great astronomer, declares that ninety or one hundred hours, clear enough for observations, cannot be called an unproductive year.

"The lazy, the dissipated, and the fearful, should patiently see the active and the bold pass them in the course. They must bring down their pretensions to the level of their talents. 'Those who have not energy to work must learn to be humble, and should not vainly hope to unite the incompatible enjoyments of indolence and enterprise, of ambition and self-indulgence. I trust that my young friend will never attempt to reconcile them.'—[Essays by Richard Sharp.

THE SABBATH MAGAZINE.

Designed to promote the Religious observance of the Christian Sabbath.

EXTRACT FROM THE EDITOR'S ADDRESS.

To the Christian Public.—

The Sabbath is an institution which is designed to promote the best interests of man. It serves as a guardian to protect and preserve every thing valuable in human attainments. Its origin—the authority commanding its observance—together with the universality and permanency of its obligations, clearly attest its importance.

It emanates from the highest and purest source. It has the appointment and consecration of the Most High.—"And God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it; because that in it he had rested from all his works which God had created and made."

Its observance is demanded with all the sanctions of that law which was written with the finger of God, and delivered amid the thunderings and lightnings of Sinai.—"Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy." Its obligations are upon all men in all ages. Although a change has been made in the day to be observed; and altho' it is divested of its ancient ceremonial; the holy spiritual rest of one day in seven is an unchanging requisite throughout all the generations of men. "The Sabbath was made for man;"—for the whole human family. This is the unequivocal declaration of the great "Lord of the Sabbath."

Its adaptation to promote the dearest interests of man is attested by reason, by divine revelation, and by the experience of ages. The Sabbath, and its correlatives have done a thousand times more to remove ignorance than all the inventions and institutions of human wisdom. Its adaptation to promote civilization and intellectual improvement is wonderful. Although man is endowed with an intellectual capacity which gives him his pre-eminence, and fits him for his dominion; he is also formed for a state of animal existence. Our connexion with carnal things is close and unavoidable. And so constant and clamorous are the demands of our carnal appetites, in our fallen estate, that, unless counteracted by some external and powerful influence, our minds would soon be abandoned to their control, and become wholly engrossed by the grovelling cares of earth. But the Christian Sabbath, in consequence of its frequent breaks and interruptions of worldly concerns, is most wisely calculated to counteract this grovelling influence.

The Sabbath has, also, a powerful influence in promoting sound morality. Without suitable apprehensions of our relations to the Supreme Being, and of our subjection to his moral government there can be no due sense of moral obligations; and consequently, no sufficient check to the degrading influence of carnal principles. But one day in seven consecrated to the remembrance of God's works of creation and redemption, with the devout exercises of the heart which this returning season of spiritual rest demands, must have a peculiar influence in strengthening the principles of moral virtue. Accordingly we find that wherever the Sabbath exerts its benign influence, the principles of virtue are strengthened, and all that is beautiful in morals, and desirable in social life is promoted. Thus the sabbatical institution "opposes itself to the progress of human degeneracy, and throws an impeneetrable shield around the interests of moral virtue in our troubled world."

Its influence to promote man's eternal interests is undeniably evident. If any institution may be considered fundamental to all true religion, it is evidently the Christian Sabbath. The Sabbath and the sanctuary are indissolubly united. Without the Sabbath, the sanctuary would be a desolation; and without the sanctuary, religion would soon languish and die.

From all these considerations it is manifest, that the Sabbath is of the greatest importance in promoting civil liberty. Without that intellectual, moral, and religious improvement in which the Sabbath has such an instrumental, our civil and political institutions could not be preserved. But the Sabbath has a more immediate and direct influence in favor of civil liberty. Invidious distinctions of rank and fortune are dangerous to the rights of man. And in what school is the doctrine of mutual rights? What principles throw and effectually taught? What principles throw and effectually taught in the faces of the would be merited contempt in the faces of the would be great, and thwart the schemes of despots? The sanctuary is that school; and the doctrines of divine revelation, taught in the sanctuary on the Sabbath, are those holy principles.

To the holy observance of this day, which involves such important interests, the gracious promises of the God of heaven are annexed. "If thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath, from doing thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words; thou shalt then delight in the Lord, and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the