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DEVOTED TO RELIGION, MORALITY, LITERATURE, AND GENERAL INTELLIGENCE.—T. MEREDITH, EDITOR.

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WHOLE NO. 133

TERMS.

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From the Baptist.

TO DR. JOHN M. WATSON.
NASHVILLE, 1st June, 1837.

Dear Brother Watson:—An objection against the Baptist State Convention very commonly urged, and in many instances, with much success, by you, and your associates in the opposition, is, that it is "a money institution." In this particular, it seems, you consult human nature and bring to your aid, not the Bible, but the various dispositions to which our race, even in its best estate, is so prone. Many men love money. Such are more susceptible of feeling in the pocket than in the heart. "Covetousness," Paul says, (Col. iii. 5) "is idolatry" but under another name you often appeal to its dictates, and it serves your purpose most effectually. The class of men, which is but too numerous, subject to this strong impulse, are all attention when you declaim against the Convention as "a money machine"; and they "believe in you" when you tell them that money corrupts and destroys everything in religion—that it is not to be named in connection with the spread of the Gospel. It would be thought hardly worth while to say any thing upon this point, because those who love their money, more than they do the souls of men, can never, by any possible effort, be made effort Baptists. I do not feel anxious that they should be among us unless their principles are changed. But I wish to show a little of your consistency in this respect, and therefore claim a moment's indulgence.

That the Convention is "a money institution" in some sense, I readily admit—by the bye, however, it is pretty bare of the article just now. I also grant you that money is extremely corrupting. The love of it, whether in church or state, (don't forget this, I entreat you,) is the root of all evil. But you will please to remember that your own churches, Associations, &c., are, in the same sense, "money institutions," and some of them to a greater extent, because they use more of it than the Convention. This truth you are obliged to acknowledge. Every one, I presume, of your churches, &c., has its treasurer, and its funds. If on this account you condemn the Convention, you are obliged, in common consistency, for the same reasons to condemn your own churches, Associations and all. Who among you ever think of denouncing a church, or an Association, or refusing to join, or co-operate with either, because it employs money to accomplish some of its purposes? None, sir. But the principle is precisely the same in each. Thus out of your own mouth do you condemn you.

The point of your sarcasm, however, is mainly directed against our alleged hiring of preachers—Yes, say you, you hire preachers, and make them rich; and your preachers preach for money, without which they would be dumb. Here you become warm with indignation, and in your exuberant declamations find matter to found many a glowing period, and sharpen many a cutting re- luke.

Very well. We shrink not. If we have offended, we bear our bosoms to the weapon. Let not the guilty be shielded. But let us consider this imputation briefly. The charge contains three specifications, in relation to which I will say a few words.

1. It is alleged that we hire preachers. To this charge we plead guilty. Yes, sir, we do hire preachers to preach! Is this, however, an offence? I answer, no. We are justified and sustained in this, by the authority of divine revelation. Does not the word of God say of his true ministers;—"The laborer is worthy of his hire," (Luke 10, 7) When Paul preached for the Corinthians he took "wages;" (2 Cor. 11, 8) and we suppose, as he had equal necessity, he did the same at other times. Christ condemns no hirelings but the false Messiahs. On the contrary he protects, and defends them, declaring the withholding of their wages one among the most revolting crimes. Might I hope that your associates would remember this? Yes, my brother, Christ speaks (Luke 10, 7, for example) of his true ministers as "hirelings." Call us all hirelings then if you please; we shall glory in it.—What you intend as a reproach, points us out, in the very language of the New Testament, as the true ministers of Christ. In this we see illustrated the truth of the inspired maxim—"The wrath of man shall praise him."

2. The second specification is that we make ministers rich in this way. The reply to this is brief. I have yet to learn that ministers have not a right, by honest means, to acquire the good things of this life, and to as great an extent as any other class of Christians. As to making this a motive for preaching, I shall have a word to say presently. But I should like to be pointed to some instance in which our Convention, or any other Association for benevolent effort has made its missionaries rich. Show me a case, my brother. Sir, you cannot do it; nor can any other man do it; and for the best of reasons;—the thing never was done, nor never will be done. No; our plans, unfortunately, never so result.

There is a way, however, to make preachers rich. Let them go to work in their farms, their stores, and their shops, or like some eminent clergyman, Elder Watson, for example, let them practice medicine, and preach only on Lord's

days, and at other convenient opportunities when their business concerns will not suffer detriment by their absence; and even then, as they have no inclination to study, and indeed, no time to devote to it; and besides as study is not orthodox, let them preach by inspiration, and they will thrive in the world. Many in Tennessee, and other parts of the Mississippi Valley, take this course, and become rich. This is the way to make money.

These conscientious ministers who give themselves, as Christ has commanded wholly to the work of preaching, will find the paltry sums they receive, from whatever source, scarcely enough to purchase daily bread sufficient for their wives and children, and to shelter them from the snows of winter, and the summer's burning heats.—They may, indeed, lay up treasures in heaven, but they never will lay up treasures upon earth. No, sir, no minister of our church, who did his duty, ever became rich, unless he obtained his wealth by some other means than preaching.—The history of the Church affords no instance of the kind.

The third specification is, that missionaries preach for money—but for this, some of you assert, they would be dumb.

No, my brother, admit the worst—that they do preach for money; it is no part of my business or design to defend them in that. If they are influenced by such motives, which you well know they all positively deny, the fact is known only to God, and to him they must account. I said above, I should have a word more to say on this head. It is due to the friends of benevolent effort to assure you, and the world, that they feel as much abhorrence of such motives as the purest, and most disinterested of the opposers of missions. Point out the guilty minister to us, the man who preaches for money, and who but for the pay, would not open his mouth—and prove to us that he is governed by such motives, and I pledge myself, confidently, in behalf of all concerned, that that man never shall be employed. I do not pretend to say, that we cannot be deceived in this matter. We set up no such claim as to infallibility. The heart of those in whom we confide may be different from any thing that appears; but if a man professes to be honest in his motives and views, and acts as such, are we not bound to receive and treat him as an honest man, and to continue to do so, until he gives us reason to suspect him? Are you not governed by this rule? If not I should like to know by what rule you are governed. You will, if you please, enlighten us on this point.

We may, I again remark, be deceived as to the character of those in whom we confide, but we are, I presume, not more exposed to such an evil than you, and the brethren who join you in the opposition. Occasionally passes through our neighborhoods a preacher, such as the notorious Eiddle, who flourished whilom in Teay's Valley Virginia, who was lately in Kentucky, and who, I learn, is now figuring in Mississippi; for whose apprehension, by the way, I perceive, several hundred dollars reward has been lately offered, by some one on the other side of the mountains; occasionally, I say, such a preacher passes through our neighborhoods, and finds himself a special favorite of the anti-missionaries. You know, my brother, without my suggesting it, that nearly all that is required to gain confidence, and indeed as to many individuals of your party, to secure unbounded popularity if he is half way decent in other respects, is for a minister to denounce, as immeasurably wicked, all benevolent institutions, &c. &c.; and your Churches and Pastors, embrace him, at once, and that too, with a warmth proportioned to his violence against us. He vapours in your pulpits, sacred places to which our wicked feet may not ascend, denouncing us all as corrupt, selfish, money-hunters; and anathematizes all such men, living and dead, as Carey, Boardman, Judson, and others, pronouncing them all hypocrites; and unworthy of respect or sympathy! For his pains the good brethren pour out their purses into his pockets. What, brother Watson, pray tell me, what did that man preach for? In regard to motives, we are no more liable to be imposed on than you are. Indeed, our liability, as I can easily prove, is not so great as yours.

Where is the drivelling hypocritical impostor, who pretends to pass himself off, in Tennessee, as a missionary? Such, notwithstanding all you say about the Convention being calculated to encourage hypocrites or impostors, by holding out to them the prospect of gain, are always our bitterest enemies. They are so because they all know that pretensions of connection with us would be almost immediately detected, their shame exposed, and their craft destroyed. But among your anti-missionary associates, they can conceal themselves, villify, and slander us in security, and be well paid for their trouble. Do you not confess, now, that you may be, as you certainly are, the facts prove it, much more easily deceived than the friends of missions?

The only remaining objection, of any consequence, that I have heard against the Convention and similar bodies, is, that they will ultimately become large and strong, and overthrow our ecclesiastical and civil liberty.

In reply, as to ecclesiastical liberty, I remark, that if these Associations have corrupt designs, they have acted very strangely; for they have precluded the possibility of their accomplishment, by embodying, changelessly, in all their constitutions and rules of government, perpetual prohibitions from any power, whatever, in ecclesiastical polity. Are not the friends of the Convention as strenuous advocates, to say the least, for church rights, as the opposers of missions? You well know, brother Watson, the facts prove it to every body, that they are much more so.—Yes, sir, we hold that each church possesses within itself all the powers necessary to its own government. A church is a voluntary association, and, guided by the Bible, all its decisions in relation to its own members, and over others it has no control, are final. From them there is no appeal. Love is the bond of union between the people and churches of Christ, and it is a wise provision of grace that all "ecclesiastical courts"

are removed, that the motives to love and good works may be as strong as possible. On this part of the subject, I am sure I need not say another word.

As respects the overthrow of our national liberties, I remark, that our brethren of the Presbyterian Church have their General Assembly; our Methodist brethren have their General Conference; and our Episcopal brethren have their General Convention, each of which includes the whole United States of North America. These are all governing bodies, accustomed, and authorized by their systems of polity, to rule; are large; strong; and of tremendous influence; yet none of these patriotic Baptists who unhesitatingly charge us with a foul conspiracy against the liberties of our country, have the slightest apprehensions that, from any of these organized assemblies our national freedom is in danger! But the moment that Baptists begin to unite their energies, not to govern a single church, but solely to promote the further preaching of the Gospel, by ministers of our denomination, we hear the cry of alarm? our national liberties are in danger!

Now, either there is reason for alarm, or there is not. If there is, it must be because Baptist principles are radically opposed to political freedom. The Papists did not long ago assert this to be a fact. The old English Bishops, in the days of Gothic ignorance, took up the charge, and, by their fiat, many a Baptist expiated the crime of holding our doctrines, in dungeons, on the rack and gibbet, and in the flames. Who now believes this imputation to be true? No man on earth but Antimissionary Baptists! Do you believe it, brother Watson? No, I think not.—If Baptist principles be thus dangerous to human liberty, away with them. Down with the Church at once. Let even its remembrance be sunk in perpetual oblivion. But, sir, who that has one spark of intelligence does not see—I know you do, that this objection is a mere device to subvert party purposes, concealed beneath the imposing garb of religious and political patriotism. The whole is a "coup de main" to excite the prejudices of the ignorant, and to drive us from obedience to the commandments of our Lord Jesus Christ.

I have done for the present with the regular discussion of this subject. In the next paper, I shall, Providence permitting, ask your attention to a summary of my arguments and conclusions, and close our public correspondence.

I am, sincerely, and, as ever, affectionately, your brother in Christ

R. B. C. HOWELL.

From the Boston Recorder.

"BOAST NOT THYSELF OF TO-MORROW."

Mankind are prone to indulge in pleasing anticipations respecting futurity. Instead of carefully reviewing the events of past life, in order to learn wisdom from experience, or diligently attending to the performance of present duty, they are perpetually dwelling in their contemplations upon the imagined circumstances of their future condition. They spend most of their time in an ideal world, the creation of their own imagination, and glided with the visions of their own fancy. They are looking forward to the period, when what is evil in their present circumstances shall have passed away; and they shall be permitted to realize in their actual, existing condition, the bright anticipations in which they have fondly indulged.

This propensity is not peculiar to one age or nation. It is the infirmity, the sin of human nature, at all times and in all places. It is common in every period of human life. Infancy has scarcely passed away before the soul, just entering upon being, is bewildered amid the needless workings of an infantile imagination. In childhood the same propensity is more fully developed. If youth similar illusions are cherished on a more extensive scale. And even in age, when disappointment and affliction have dispelled the dream which fancy had thrown over the visions of earlier days, and discovered the transitory & unsatisfying nature of earthly good, man is not cured of his tendency to indulge an unrestrained imagination.

The nature of such anticipations varies with the various tastes, habits, and circumstances, of different individuals. One man is fascinated with the idea of wealth. And from that moment it constitutes a prime ingredient in all his contemplations respecting his future history. He meditates on the advantage of such a condition; and upon the probabilities of its being realized in his own person, until in imagination he is surrounded with all the conveniences, is clothed with all the attractions, and is possessed with all the enjoyments, which riches can procure. Another has entered upon some profession. In anticipation, he quickly surmounts the obstacles which lie in the way of his attaining distinction. In every scheme of ambition he proves successful. Every turn of the wheel of fortune is favorable to his own advancement. And in this manner he passes through life, indulging in idle reveries and splendid visions, instead of attending to the sober realities of actual existence.

This habit of mind is manifested by many persons with reference to their religious interests. They are awakened by the mercy of God to a sense of their guilt and danger, and urged to give immediate and earnest attention to the welfare of their souls. But how seldom can they be prevailed upon to comply with such an exhortation. How prone they are to delay the matter for the present time, deluded by the anticipation of finding "a more convenient season." When the pleasures of youth have ceased to charm them—when the business of manhood is successfully accomplished—when they are favored with a little more leisure—then they imagine that they shall surmount every obstacle, and "lay hold on eternal life." Thus they pass along, at one time aroused by the calls of God, and then quieted by the workings of a deceitful heart, till at length death interposes, and they pass from the illusions of time to the realities of eternity.

INTERESTING EXTRACTS. From an address of Olinthus Gregory, professor of the Royal Military Academy in Woolwich, England, before the Blackheath Bible Society.

More than twelve months ago, I went pursuant to the request of a poor but benevolent hearted woman in my neighborhood, to visit an indigent man, deeply afflicted. On entering the cottage, I found him alone, his wife having gone to procure him milk from a kind neighbor. I was startled by the sight of a pale emaciated man, a living image of death, fastened upright in his chair by a rude mechanism of cords and belts hanging from the ceiling. He was totally unable to use either hand or foot, having more than four years been totally deprived of the use of his limbs, yet the whole time suffering extreme anguish from swellings at all his joints. As soon as I had recovered a little from my surprise at seeing so pitiable an object, I asked—Are you left alone my friend, in this deplorable situation? "No, sir," replied he, in a touchingly feeble tone of mild resignation, (nothing but his lips and his eyes moving while he spoke.) "I am not alone, for God is with me." On advancing I soon discovered the secret of his striking declaration; for his wife had left on his knees, propped with a cushion formed for the purpose, a Bible lying open at a favorite portion of the Psalms of David. I sat down by him and conversed with him. On ascertaining that he had but a small weekly allowance certain, I inquired how the remainder of his wants were supplied. "Why, sir," said he, "is true, as you say, seven shillings a day would never support us. But when it is gone I rely upon the promise I found in this book, 'Bread shall be given him, and his water shall be sure,' and I have never been disappointed yet; and so long as God is faithful to his word, I never shall." I asked him if he ever felt tempted to repine under the pressure of so long continued and heavy calamity? "Not for the last three years," said he, "blessed be God for it." The eye of faith sparkling and giving light to his pallid countenance while he made the declaration, "for I have learned from this book in whom to believe! and though I am aware of my weakness and unworthiness, I am persuaded he will not leave me nor forsake me. And so it is, that often when my lips are closed with lock-jaw, and I cannot speak to the glory of God, he enables me to sing his praise in my heart."

This and much more did I hear during my visit. This in my subsequent visits (for I am not ashamed to say, that often, for my own benefit, have I been to the cottage of this afflicted man) I have generally found him with his Bible on his knees, and uniformly witnessed lively resignation flowing from the blessing of God, upon the constant perusal of his holy word. He died with a "hope full of immortality," and is now gone to the rest which remaineth for the people of God. And gladly would I sink into the obscurity of the same cottage; and gladly even would I languish in the same chair! could I but enjoy the same uninterrupted communing with God, be always filled with the same "strong consolation," and always behold, with equally vivid perception sparkling before me, the same celestial crown.

What, I would ask, what but the heartfelt influence of the truths of religion, what but the most decided faith in the promises of the gospel, could enable a man to sustain such a continuity of affliction, not merely with tranquillity, but with thankfulness. And what can convince an individual of the utility, the duty of distributing the Bible among the indigent, who does not become persuaded by such an example as this, for all this poor man's knowledge, and all his internal comforts were derived from the word of God. It was a sublime thought of the most exquisite of heaven's poets, that "the highest link of nature's chain is attached to the foot of Jupiter's chair."—But how does this sink in point of sublimity and grandeur, when compared with the simple declaration of our Lord, "And I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me." He has been lifted up; he is drawing all men unto him; and he calls upon those who have experienced his spiritual attraction, to exert their individual and collective instrumentality in bringing others within the sphere of the same holy influence, that when he come "whose right it is to reign," he may find that his word and his spirit have prepared all hearts for his reception.

I entreat your indulgence while I make one general observation, and will then sit down. Let us as Christians, devote ourselves to the fortunes of the Christian Church, and sedulously enter upon the duties to which her present exaltation calls us. Age after age she exhibited a spectacle like that of the celebrated bush which fixed the attention of Moses; ever burning but never consumed. For centuries she flourished, though under the severest persecutions. Then she languished; and during the long night of the dark ages, true religion was a mere spark tossed about in an ocean of corruption, and humanly speaking, liable every moment to be buried and extinguished in the next wave. Till lately the attitude of the church has been always that of defence; and even within the memory of many of us, she was exposed to the rude attack of a host of assailants who exultingly anticipated her utter overthrow. "I have gone," said one of her antagonists, "through the Bible, like a man with an axe through the forest felling the trees in his course, which will never grow again." Vain and presumptuous boasts! plants which "the right hand of the Lord hath planted," are not to be cut down with an axe of human tempering. Thou has perished, but they shall endure till time shall be no longer.

In the happy era in which we live, the church has assumed the posture of attack. Every where our holy religion is gaining fresh triumphs, every where she is making new incursions into the regions where Satan reigns, and bringing off his votaries subdued and rendered willing to prostrate themselves at the foot of the cross. In such a crisis let us gird on our armor for the onset, and go forth with "the sword of the Spirit," to join that noble phalanx which may be justly characterized

"This was fully realized. The contributions of different persons and societies, not only kept him from want, but furnished him with many little comforts during the remainder of his life. And as his death his wife and different friends had money in hand, which went far towards defraying the expenses of a decent funeral."

"as fair as the moon, bright as the sun," and to the enemy of souls, "terrible as an army with banners."

AN IMPORTANT QUESTION.

The following facts were sent us by a worthy and highly respectable minister of the Methodist Episcopal Church—and we hope the alarming truths, with the natural and necessary inferences, will produce abiding conviction in the bosom of every reader, that it is not right to license men to do such outrageous wrongs.
Tem. Recorder.

Whom most to be blamed, he who sells the first or the last poison to the drunkard, or who is guilty alike?

A tavern-keeper of my acquaintance, a professor of religion, related to me, a few days since, the following circumstance:—"A man who had been to market, probably with a load of wood, on a very cold day last week, as he was returning just at night, called at my house. Not being in the bar-room myself, he desired my boy to let him have some rum. The boy, not considering that he was nearly drunk already, complied with his wishes. He drank, and went his way.—Not long after his departure he was met by a man, who found him lying on his back on the street, totally helpless, and nearly frozen to death. He contrived to turn his oxen about and drive them back to my house. We carried him in and worked at him until near nine o'clock in the evening, before he became perfectly recovered. Indeed, a little more and he would have died on our hands. After he had recovered he insisted on going home, which was a considerable distance, as his family would be much concerned about him. So I let him depart, sending my hired man to see him safe over the river. But for all this kindness he never offered to pay one cent, nor even thanked us."

What do you think was my reply to this unfortunate tavern-keeper? Why, I told him the man served him just right. He had administered the poison, and I thought he ought to take on himself the expense of the cure. I told him I thought he might be very thankful the man did not die under the influence of the dreadful poison, and he have been subjected to an arrest for man-slaughter, if not for murder! And how do you think this pious tavern-keeper justified himself in this case? First, he remarked, that he did not give him the rum, it was his boy. When I had driven him from this subterfuge, by showing him that he was the one who was accountable to his country and his God, he then remarked, that he had not laid the foundation for his drunkenness; for he was more than half drunk when he came to his house. He thought the man who gave him the rum, was more blameworthy than he. I then endeavored to show him the fallacy of this reasoning. I made him confess, that if the man had called on him when sober, he would have dealt out as much as the other man had, and would have thought it no harm. Poor tavern-keepers, to what straits are they driven about these days. Each may exonerate himself and cast the blame on others, but I believe God, when he maketh inquisition for blood, will condemn every man who has voluntarily and knowingly contributed to make drunkards.

ANOTHER.

In the foregoing I have stated a case which presents the evil of selling the drunkard's drink, in a very strong light. I will now state the facts in a case which occurred in the same county, on the same week, and only two days after. A Mr. S., well known by all his acquaintances as a notorious drunkard and brutal abuser of his family, called at the store of Mr. G. in the neighborhood where he resides, where he was supplied with what poison he wished to drink, by his kind-hearted neighbor. And after filling his bottle for his Sabbath's supply, he set off for home, to kindle again the fires of a hell on earth in his poor family. But he was too drunk to accomplish his journey. He was found the next morning on the way, dead and stiffened with the frost. On the next Monday, his polluted carcass was followed by a number of his neighbors, out of respect to his afflicted family and friends, to the meeting house, to be put in the drunkard's grave. But the minister, who happened to be present, when he had learned the circumstances of the case, refused to preach. The only reason he assigned was, that he was not prepared; but the principal reason was, in the peculiarities of the case. If Mr. G., who had administered the poison, would have taken his seat in front of all, between the mourners and the coffin, and the preacher could have taken these words for his text, viz.—"Thou shalt not kill," he would have preached, unprepared as he was. He would have found sufficient inspiration in his theme. But there were two obstacles in his way. Mr. G. was legally authorized to sell this poison. The board of excise had granted him license, he was acting under the high authority of the legislature of the state of New-York. Therefore, all the drunkards he made and killed, were made according to law. And besides this obstacle, there was another which stood more in the way of the preacher than the one just named. There was in the assembly a member of the church of which the preacher was pastor, who also sold this poison, and who was as much authorized to make drunkards as Mr. G. Under these circumstances he thought it best to decline preaching, lest he should offend all and profit none. He commended the relatives and friends to God in prayer, and dismissed the assembly. The coffin was then opened, and the people, as they passed out of the church, beheld for the last time the body which they had seen so many times wallowing in the ditch. The afflicted wife and fatherless children, for a moment, wept over the remains of him who had given them so much abuse.—And behold the man-slayer gazed for a moment on his victim, as he passed out. But how he contrived to ease his conscience, I have not learned.