

The Sabbath Recorder.

EDITED BY GEORGE B. UTTER.

"THE SEVENTH DAY IS THE SABBATH OF THE LORD THY GOD."

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WHOLE NO. 142.

The Sabbath Recorder.

For the Sabbath Recorder.

CORRECTION AND EXPLANATION.

In the Recorder of the 28th of January, I find an article by "Cryptic," containing strictures on an article written by myself in answer to INQUIRER, on the propriety of churches having "a written Covenant and Articles of Faith." It appears to me, that Cryptic's remarks have done me injustice. This is done by setting up a new issue, and by making improper quotations with remarks upon them. The question asked by Inquirer is plain, and cannot be misunderstood. To this I replied. Cryptic says, "The question is, I think, whether the covenant and rule of faith, written under the direction of the great Author and Finisher of our faith, will admit of any other not possessing like evidence of inspiration." This is another question altogether, to which I have not replied. I shall not hold myself responsible for any conclusion deduced from my reply, when applied to Cryptic's question. I know that it is the right of Inquirer to explain or correct his question; but as he has made no such explanation or correction, I understand, as before, that he meant what he said. This is all that I think his remarks call for in this part of his article. But still, under the circumstances, to save myself from misapprehension in the minds of others, I would add a few things.

Cryptic says, he thinks it is universally admitted among Protestants, that we should take the New Testament covenant as a church bond. He also says, "The question is, I think, whether that covenant and rule of faith, written under the direction of the great Author and Finisher of our faith, will admit of any other not possessing like evidence of inspiration." I suppose that the Protestant world is as much agreed on the last as on the first. No Protestant church that I know, suppose that they have a right to form a new covenant, as a church covenant, essentially differing from the one in the Gospel. Do not understand me to say, that man has not made a different covenant; this is another question. Farther, there can be no gospel churches but such as are bound together by a gospel covenant. I did suppose that the expression "gospel-wise" would fully guard me against any misunderstanding. Cryptic says, "But he saith the Holy Spirit, or some modern world's convention," &c. True enough, I did not, neither was it my business, for this was not the question. It is a matter of no importance, "only let the covenant be gospel-wise." Again, he says, "Now if Bro. Prestonian wished to say that it was proper for a church to have this divinely-inspired covenant, he was answering, I think, an unasked question." So I think. The question is not whether we may have an "inspired" or "humanized" covenant. This cannot be a question, for Cryptic says that it is admitted by all Protestants, that we should take the New Testament covenant as a church bond. He says again, "It is evident that there can be no church without this same new covenant." No one has denied it, that I know of. He also says, "God has given us a covenant, a perpetual covenant; this is gospel-wise, none other can be." Just so I think.

In remarking upon what I said relative to Articles of Faith, Cryptic says, "Prestonian says, as to Articles of Faith, I would ask, Is it proper for churches to have faith? Most assuredly; for by it the elders obtained a good report, and through faith we understand that the worlds were made by the word of God, and by it they wrought righteousness. In fact, without faith it is impossible to please God," &c. Here our brother proceeds to cut and slash the above into parts of firstly, &c. This is not correct. Cryptic will please read again. No wonder that he should think I "jumped at my conclusions." I do not suppose there was any design to misrepresent, but I think there should be a little more carefulness. But what surprises me most of all, that he should assert that Paul "said nothing in favor of articles of faith; and as all the sacred writers treated them with the same neglect, I think that I am safe in such good company, and think the church is infinitely better off without them." Then we must be in a sad plight if we have "articles of faith."

Brother Cryptic, there seems to be a difficulty in talking on this question. The notion prevails, that Articles of Faith exist only where they are "written" or spoken. Out of this mistake, I think, the difficulty grows. We should remember, that the writing and speaking of articles is one thing, and the articles themselves is altogether another. What I understand to be "Articles of Faith," is simply the various doctrines of the Scriptures, as, for instance, the existence of God, the fall of man, the atonement, &c. Whoever believes these doctrines, has articles of faith, whether they are written or unwritten. I do not know whether you hold to these articles of faith or not. But the church to which I belong does. Now can you say that we would be "infinitely better off without them." No; take away these articles of our belief, and dark infidelity hangs in prospect over our path, and all our joys are gone; yes, forever gone: The cup of hope is dashed from our lips, and trembling seizes every nerve. Time, with its mighty current, is urging us on our heavy and downward way to the dark abyss. Every moral restraint is thrown off, and we say, "What advantage it me, that I have fought with beasts at Ephesus?—let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die." Will you say, that "Paul said nothing in favor of these articles?" Read that portion of my communication giving the quotation from Hebrews, which you left out, and there you will find that he has said, "He that comes to God must believe that he is." As to the fall of man, "As in Adam all die." As to the atonement, "The good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep." If Paul does not speak in favor of Articles of Faith, I

should not know how to. It is of no use to say that he did not say, "through articles of faith," and "by articles of faith." The articles are here, name or no name, not by proxy simply, but in person. I shall not strive about words. We have the substance, and not the sign. I do not think that it is wicked for a man to write down what he believes, and consequently I think we may have written articles of faith.

V. HULL.

PITCAIRN, Feb. 9, 1847.

From the Christian Chronicle of Jan. 27.

SABBATH DISCUSSION.

Reply to "Indagator."

MR. EDITOR:—I find in your paper some exceptions to an article of mine on the Sabbath question. At this I am not surprised. "Indagator" seems to think my argument surrenders the question to the Sabbatarian. In this, I think he is utterly mistaken. I have not my article before me; but, it is presumed, I remember the views there stated. I "think we have no specific instructions in regard to the Sabbath in the New Testament." If we had, it would be an end to all controversy. Where are those "specific instructions?" I "think that the notices of the first day of the week do not justify us in supposing that it was then held as a Sabbath." I "think that Christianity recognizes a Sabbath." "Christ and his disciples sanction it." The frequent notices of it in the New Testament are "recognitions" and "sanctions" and not "specific instructions."

I hold that the "seventh" may be reckoned from any point. The law does not specify either Saturday or Sunday. It does specify the "seventh day." It says just nothing about any settled order of succession. This is one of many human additions. It is an addition, moreover, which renders the observance of the law, under some circumstances, an impossibility. The order existing when the law was given, was purely incidental. It was not fixed by law. In the nature of things it could not be. God's laws are practicable. Human additions introduce confusion and controversy. "If each seventh portion of the citizens of this city, had fixed on a different day of the week to observe as the Sabbath, each day that passes over our heads would be the Sabbath of Jehovah our God." Just so. The law indicates no preference. It says, simply and only, "Six days shalt thou labor. The seventh—i. e., the day after the sixth—is the Sabbath of Jehovah your God." Where there is no law, there is no transgression. If I work six days, and keep the seventh, I fulfill the law to the very letter. Tradition may have fixed another. God never did. If he did, let it be shown when and where. If citizens choose to keep different days, it would be very inconvenient, and foolish, and capricious, and hence sinful. Its sinfulness, however, would not lie in its opposition to the sabbatic law.

"What right has your correspondent to say, that the whole question about the day is to be determined by the law of Moses?" I must defer this question till "a more convenient season." It may involve difficulties, not so easily settled, as to the character of the law. I will now briefly observe, that "Indagator" has not carefully studied my language. "The question about the day" is universally referred to the law of Moses. Why is it that the seventh day, rather than the fifth or the eighth, is observed? Is not this determined wholly by the law of Moses? Where, in the whole Bible, is there any other specification on the subject? Partisans of both sides of the Sabbath question refer to the law of Moses. The controversy must be settled by the law to which all direct us. The New Testament contains no law on the subject. If the law of Moses is not now in force, we are without law on the subject.

"If it be said, 'this law is moral and permanent,' on what ground does this assumption rest?" If it be a mere "assumption," we need not care about the ground on which it rests. If the sabbatic law be moral, I presume its permanency will be conceded. What makes any law moral? Is not its essential utility? The law prohibiting theft is "moral and permanent," because the welfare of the human race is promoted by its observance. The Lord says: "The Sabbath was made for man"—for the benefit of man. It is universally confessed that the observance of the sabbatic law is deeply interesting to mankind—i. e., it rests on a moral basis. It is as clearly moral as any commandment of the decalogue. If it be intended to commemorate the rest after creation, does not this relate to all the tribes and generations of men? These few desultory remarks must suffice for the present. I should be happy to join "Indagator" in an investigation of the deeper points of the sabbatic law. While the law is regarded as in force, the interpretation of the law is to determine the controversy. My argument was intended to be an *argumentum ad hominem*. How far the law may be binding on the Christian church, may involve doubts in the minds of good men. I do not think the Sabbath question is scripturally inculcated by writers on the subject. I have herein indicated my views, so far as the interpretation of the law goes. The law determines what day to be kept. It does not enjoin either Saturday or Sunday. He who properly keeps either, keeps the law. His brother has no right to condemn him. I simply say, in closing, that I regard the sabbatic law as still binding.

E. W. D.

From the Christian Chronicle of Feb. 3.

MR. EDITOR:—I lately ventured to propose some queries to your correspondent "E. W. D." with a design to elicit light on the subject of the Sabbath. Their particular aim was twofold—to test the interpretation which he had given in your paper, of the law of the Sabbath in the fourth commandment (allowing this to be still binding); and then to call in question the validity of that law altogether, so far, at least, as we are concerned. The more natural order would be, perhaps, to inquire first, Is the law of the Sabbath referred to, binding on us, any

more than that, for instance, of the sabbatic year; and if it is, then, secondly, does it not restrict us to the religious observance of the seventh day of the week?

Now it is apparent that until the former of these questions is settled affirmatively, we need feel little concerned about the other. I am quite content, therefore, to pass over, for the present, what "E. W. D." in his "few desultory remarks" last week, has advanced in support of his opinion that the law does not designate any particular day of the week as the Sabbath; and to proceed to "an investigation of the deeper points of the sabbatic law." In quitting this subordinate point, I would barely add, that if he admits, with most writers, if not all, the division of time into weeks, as having been established before the age of Moses, and that some day of the seven (which were probably called the first day, second day, &c.), was intended to be set apart as a day of public rest and worship; and yet holds that although the law specified the seventh day, the Jew might observe any other as well, why then indeed I must wonder at the elasticity of his hermeneutical principles; though I have no disposition to press the point. According to this, they are justified who, from the prohibition "thou shalt not kill," because absolutely expressed, infer, in the face of all the limitations and applications of this general principle in the law itself, the unlawfulness of capital punishment for murder. I suspect that if our Saviour, standing triumphant over the rifled sepulchre, had said, "Ye shall keep the first day holy, and labor the remaining six," we should none of us think it indifferent what day of the week Christians observed. As little ambiguity or want of definiteness was there in the law of the Sabbath to those for whom it was given; and the man seized while gathering sticks, would have been justly held guilty, I apprehend, even though he could have alleged sincerely that his Sabbath only came on a different day from that of the Lord his God. Would not "the sinfulness of his conduct have lain in its opposition to the Jewish law." But I did not mean to say ten words on this topic.

If we were intent on searching thoroughly the common interpretations of this law, we should have reason to inquire whether it, as stated simply in the Decalogue, is "practicable," as "E. W. D." affirms, or even, for practical purposes, intelligible. Could a mind not enlightened from other sources, gain from the fourth commandment alone, more than the faintest idea of the real design of the Sabbath, and the manner of observing it? And while seeking for information on these points, through the law at large, would he be left in doubt as to the appointed time?

It was for the very purpose of securing an "investigation of the deeper points" of this subject, that I addressed to your correspondent the principle question above stated; and I hope that at the first "convenient season" it may receive his deliberate attention. Are we bound to keep the weekly rest prescribed in the fourth commandment? No one denies that in general the body of the institutions and precepts of the Jewish system, is abrogated. Such is the case with circumcision, the festivals, sacrifices, and many other things. Why not with the Sabbath also? What is the reason for regarding this as permanent, while all the rest have "waxed old and vanished away." This is to my mind the question. If the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus makes his disciple free from the law of sin and death, why should he be constrained by the statute touching the Sabbath, and not by those of circumcision and the distinction of meats? If it be said that the law written in the hearts of Christians requires obedience to things which are commanded, the question at once comes back, where has God commanded us to keep the Sabbath?

The common answer to this is that the law of the Sabbath is moral, (as distinguished from positive, or ceremonial, or civil, &c.) which, if it were true, in the sense commonly attached to the term "moral," would prove our duty to keep the Sabbath, not merely because it is enjoined in the Decalogue, but equally whether it were enjoined there or not. "Moral duties," says Bishop Butler in his *Analogy*, "arise out of the nature of the case itself, prior to external commands." The other duties prescribed in the Decalogue may be, and are, I think, all of this description. But is that of keeping the Sabbath? So far from it, the very ground on which a moral character is claimed for this by many, is that it is commanded in the Decalogue. It cannot be in the above sense, then, that "E. W. D." can maintain that the law of the Sabbath is "as clearly moral as any law of the Decalogue." He seems, indeed, to set up another standard of morality, in "essential utility;" but I see not how he can so apply this, if it were correct, as to distinguish the morality of the Sabbath from that of other Jewish institutions which are now obsolete. Many practices, surely, are "deeply interesting to mankind," which have not the same obligation upon our conscience as the fundamental principles of the great law of love.

Having thus, under the pressure of very engaging duties, re-stated, with some enlargement, the difficulty which I have felt in admitting some of the common views of the Sabbath, I shall await with interest, the further developments of "E. W. D." in relation to the vital points of the matter. Though I have freely propounded my doubts and queries, it is only that they may be clearly seen, and with the fervent hope that they may be fairly and satisfactorily met; and as he does not think that truth here has been "scripturally inculcated" by others, I am anxious to see his deliberate views. And I cannot but think that while Sabbatarianism on the one hand are leaving no stone unturned to spread their sentiments, and the great "World's Convention" on the other, with difficulty secure the recognition of any Sabbath, truth, simple, scriptural, Gospel truth, pertaining to the question will be eagerly embraced by many besides

INDAGATOR.

LYRIC.

From an unpublished Opera, entitled 'Life according to Law.'

BY BRENEZER ELLIOTT.

Sabbath holy!
To the lowly
Still art thou a welcome day;
When thou comest, earth and ocean,
Shade and brightness, rest and motion,
Help the poor man's heart to pray.

Sun-waked forest,
Bird that soarest
O'er the mute empurpled moor,
Thou'st the song that stream-like floweth,
Wind that o'er the dew-drop goest,
Welcome now the wo-worn poor.

Little river,
Young forever!
Cloud, gold-bright with thankful glees,
Happy woodland, gladly weeping,
Gnat within the wild rose-keep;
Oh, that they were blest as ye!

Sabbath holy!
For the lowly
Paint with flowers thy glittering sod;
For the hearts of thy sons and daughters,
Bid thy mountains, woods, and waters,
Pray to God, the poor man's God!

From the fever,
(Idle never,
Where on Hope Want bars the door.)
From the gloom of aimless alleys,
Lead thou to green hills and valleys
Where Lord-hand's trampled poor.

Pale young mother,
Grieving brother,
Sister, toiling in despair,
Grief-bowed sire, that life-long diest,
Woe-lipped child, that sleeping sighest,
Come and drink the light and air.

Tyrant's curse ye
While they nurse ye,
Life for deadlier wrongs to pay;
Yet, oh Sabbath! bringing gladness
Unto hearts of weary sadness,
Still thou art "the Poor Man's Day."

THE WAY IN WHICH IT IS DONE.

The home work of foreign missions needs the help of every member of every church. It is no less true that every member needs the blessedness of helping in this work; and that every church needs the influence of such a helper. But the question is, how can every member of every church be made a laborer in this service? We spent a part of a Sunday in the month of January with a church in one of the thriving villages of Massachusetts. The whole number of its resident members, composed chiefly of farmers, mechanics, manufacturers, and tradesmen, is two hundred; and the gross amount of their taxable property is perhaps one hundred and ten thousand dollars. This church has done its missionary work through the same system for five years. It embraces the wider diffusion of missionary knowledge; the more faithful observance of the missionary concert of prayer; the increase of the number and amount of the contributions to the missionary treasury. The results are these:—

Forty-four copies of the Magazine, and one hundred and sixteen copies of the Macedonian, pay their monthly visits to all the families in the church and congregation; the missionary concert is the largest, most attractive, and valuable evening meeting in the month; last year all the resident members of the church, and many individuals in the congregation, were contributors. In the first year of the present system, the church made an advance of one hundred per cent. on the contributions of the preceding year. The following table will show the increase in the five years:—

Years.	Con. coll.	Gen'l coll.	Total.
1842	\$50 71	\$78 00	\$128 71
1843	90 00	190 00	280 00
1844	105 88	261 68	367 56
1845	135 60	300 00	435 60
1846	138 42	560 03	698 45

Within these five years the congregation has become as large as could be accommodated in their place of worship, and would have become still larger but for the want of such accommodation. One hundred dollars have been added to the pastor's salary; an old debt of some sixteen hundred dollars has been paid; other benevolent objects have been liberally aided; but owing to removals and other causes the property of the church remains about the same that it was five years ago.

All this has been accomplished in this way. The pastor of that church determined to give his people a missionary education. He matured a system through which the pulpit, the press, the monthly concert, and individual effort, were to unite in the work of educating a missionary church. The fruits were to be gathered, except the gleanings of the concert, once a year, and by a committee of twelve, composed of six males and six females. The church and congregation were to be divided into districts, and these districts were to be divided between the committee of twelve; thus all the members of the church and congregation were to be called upon for their offerings.

These annual calls are made in the month of January, after a Sunday devoted to the consideration of the facts and claims of the missionary cause. On the Saturday preceding such a Sunday in last month, we saw the twelve small books which the pastor had carefully prepared for the twelve solicitors. In each book were written the names of the expected contributors in a district, not excepting his own. On the next Monday evening the committee were to meet at the pastor's house, to receive the books, and to pray for the divine blessing on their effort.

All that we saw in that church declared the presence of missionary life. At the close of the afternoon service the desirableness of using a missionary map at the evening meeting was suggested. We were asked to take our choice of four. When the meeting came, we found Colton's map of the world suspended before a large congregation, not on nails, driven for the occasion, but in a place, which it seemed to claim as its own; and when the time had come

to use it, the ordinary solar lamp was removed from the table, and replaced by another with a reflector so arranged as to illuminate the whole canvass.

We left the place grateful for so good an illustration of the way in which every member of every church may be made a helper in the missionary cause; and more fully convinced than ever that a missionary pastor, educating the people by precept and example, will make a missionary church. [Macedonian.]

TOUCHING STORY.

The following beautiful and touching story was related by Dr. Schenely, of Maryland, at a meeting lately held in New York, to hear the experience of twenty reformed drunkards:— A drunkard, who had run through his property, returned one night to his unfurnished home. He entered his empty hall—anguish was gnawing at his heart-strings, and language is inadequate to express his agony as he entered his wife's apartment, and there beheld the victims of his appetite, his lovely wife and darling child. Morose and sullen, he seated himself without a word; he could not speak; he could not look upon them. The mother said to the little angel by her side, "Come, my child, it is time to go to bed;" and the little babe, as was her wont, knelt by her mother's lap, and gazing wistfully into the face of her suffering parent, like a piece of chiseled statuary, slowly repeated her nightly orison; and when she had finished, the child (but four years of age) said to her mother: "Dear ma, may I not offer up one more prayer?" "Yes, yes, my sweet pet, pray." And she lifted up her tiny hands, closed her eyes, and prayed: "Oh God! spare, oh, spare my dear papa!" That prayer was wafted with electric rapidity to the throne of God. It was heard on high—it was heard on earth. The responsive "Amen!" burst from that father's lips, and his heart of stone became a heart of flesh. Wife and child were both clasped to his bosom, and in penitence he said, "My child, you have saved your father from the grave of a drunkard. I'll sign the pledge."

AUTHORITY OF THE BIBLE.

The Rev. Adolphe Monod gives the following illustration of the effects of the reading of the Bible:— "The mother of a family was married to an Infidel, who made a jest of religion in the presence of his own children; yet she succeeded in bringing them all up in the fear of the Lord. I one day asked her how she preserved them from the influence of a father whose sentiments were so openly opposed to her own. This was her answer: 'Because, to the authority of a father I did not oppose the authority of a mother, but that of God.' From their earliest years, my children have always seen the Bible upon my table. This holy book has constituted the whole of their religious instruction. I was silent, that I might allow it to speak. Did they propose a question, did they commit any fault, did they perform any good action, I opened the Bible, and the Bible answered, reproved, or encouraged them. The constant reading of the Scriptures has alone wrought the prodigy that surprises you."

DEATH-BED EXPERIENCES.—Schiller, when dying, was asked how he felt. "Calmer and calmer," he replied. Perhaps this serenity was mainly due to the state of his body; for that degree of physical weakness which no longer suffers the will to employ the muscles, but yet arrests not the internal action of the brain, is usually attended by an indescribable calm of mind. If indeed the conscience be reconciled to God, it is complete; for then the torment of conflicting affections is over, and the soul sees only that he is heir to a rich and eternal inheritance. Thus a tranquil ecstacy is often witnessed at the death-bed of the Christian—

"Is that a death-bed where the Christian lies? Yes; but not his; 'tis death itself there dies."

TOUCHING.—A recent traveler gives an account that when he was walking on the beach of Brazil, he overtook a colored woman with a tray on her head. Being asked what she had to sell, she lowered the tray, and with reverend tenderness uncovered it. "It was the lifeless form of her babe, covered with a neat white robe, with a garland round the head, and flowers within the little hands that lay clasped upon its bosom."

"Is that your child?" said the traveler. "It was mine a few days ago," she replied; "but the Saviour has it for his angel now." "How beautifully you have laid it out!" said he. She added cheerfully, "Ah, what is that to the wings it wears in heaven."

A STRIKING THOUGHT.—Among the feelings caused by the loss of domestic friends, few things are more striking than the impression of their absolute and entire surrender of the things that specially and individually belonged to them. This or that was his or hers, peculiarly and personally so; perhaps a favorite article; but they make no claim to it now; it is totally yielded up; let go absolutely and forever; it is now a thing infinitely indifferent to the person that called it "mine;" it may be taken for any person or for any use. The late proprietor "wants it no longer, knows it no more." [Foster.]

INTERMEDIATE STATE.—After all our conjectures, imaginings, and almost impatient speculations in regard to the intermediate state of the departed, here we still are in front of the awful impervious veil that hides its secrets from us. How striking to consider, while we stand here, that one and another of our friends, with us just yesterday, inquisitively conversing perhaps on this very subject, are now, at this instant, in the midst of the reality; have experiential knowledge of two worlds, while as yet we are confined to one. [Foster.]

