

Religious.

Rev. W. B. Johnson, D.D., Dear Brother, The Brethren of the Conference, who were present at the meeting, approve of the following essay, as expressive of their decided opinion, on the subject discussed therein; and request you to have it published in the Advertiser, and Biblical Recorder.

Yours with esteem, JAMES M. CHILES, Gilgal, Edgefield, S. C., Aug. 23d, 1839.

TO THE EDGEFIELD BAPTIST MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE.

BELOVED BRETHREN: In accordance with your request, I present to you this essay, on the following query:—

“Can a Member of a Church of Christ, consistently with his Profession, own a Ticket in a Lottery?”

A lottery is a scheme formed by a body of rational beings, in which the many must lose, and the few must gain, considerable sums of money. The gain and the loss depend upon the turning of the wheels, according to the principles of chance. In the process of the operation, there is no room for the honest exercise of the intellectual or moral powers. The gain of the few is at the loss of the many, without the return of the smallest equivalent. This constitutes gambling; and as all gambling is wrong, so is a lottery wrong.

In the discussion of this subject, I shall first treat of gambling in general, and then apply the principles laid down, to the lottery scheme.

The indications of the Divine Will, and our duty, are given to us in the constitution of things, and in the written word of God. The appetite of hunger points out the duty of taking food; that of thirst, the duty of taking drink. So the possession of intellectual faculties, whose proper food is knowledge, indicates the duty of using them in acquiring information. The principles and objects of nature are the subjects in the investigation, in the right application of which, these powers are to be employed. The result of such investigation and application tends to the development of human energy in the most advantageous manner, and by necessary consequence to the benefit of mankind.

We possess moral powers that render us capable of being allied to God; the existence of which indicates the duty of their improvement in those pursuits, which will raise their possessor to union with God, and prepare him for pure and holy service here and hereafter. “To fear God and keep his commandments: This is the whole duty of man.”

In accordance with this train of remark, is the truth which is taught throughout the Bible on this subject. The parables of the pounds and the talents, in connection with the above passage from Solomon, shall suffice, as illustrative of this point, for the present purpose.

In the parable of the pounds, a man is represented as about to travel into a far country. Before he departs, he commits to each of his servants one pound, saying, “Occupy, till I come.” In the parable of the talents, the owner is represented as going to receive a kingdom, and to return. Before he sets out, he gives to each of his servants, a different amount of talents. On the return of each master, the servants are respectively called to give in their account. The industrious are rewarded. The slothful are punished. By these parables we are evidently taught, that God has given to all men ability and means to serve Him; that it is their duty to improve what He has thus given them; that they, who do so improve His gifts, shall be rewarded—and that they, who do not, shall be punished.

Now, according to the variety of talents given to men, they engage in different pursuits. Some employ their talents in the professions of law, medicine, and science. Others engage in the business of mercantile trade, agriculture, and the mechanic arts. In the regular adjustment of these various pursuits, the principles of science are carried out most profitably and happily. Commodities of different regions are exchanged. Men of remote countries, and of different climes become neighbors. The improvement of the more favored is communicated to the less polished; and thus, by gradual accessions to the great interests of our race, its parts are being brought out of their degradation and ignorance, and mankind is advanced to a higher rank in the scale of creation. By the improvements effected in the right employment of our various talents, the way is opened for the progress of the Gospel; and hence, as science and good government gain ground, religion extends her borders. The missionary follows the navigator and the merchant. The man of science is not slow to be numbered in the train. And thus, in ob-

dience to the constitution of things, and the written word of God, the earth is subdued—the elements of nature are rendered subservient to the operations of mind—and the genial influence of commerce, science, and religion are shed down upon the nations of the earth.

Let us now inquire, if gambling has the remotest tendency to carry into effect the will of God, thus plainly indicated in the constitution of things, and the written word. The business of the gambler is to employ himself at the card table, the faro bank, or in some other scheme for the purpose of winning money. His intellectual energies are taxed to the uttermost in so playing his part of the game, as to win from his antagonist all the money that he can. His intellectual effort tends to no good. It does not enlarge his mind. It fits him for no other employment, than that of injuring his fellow-men. The moral energies of the gambler are made worse. The second precept of the Divine Law commands us, to love our neighbour as ourselves. Love worketh no ill to his neighbor. Does the gambler obey this law? What love has he to his neighbor, who will win from him his last cent, and reduce him and his family, if he have one, to a state of degraded poverty? It is such love as “vultures show to doves—tigers to lambs.” The gambler does nothing in the line of his business to cultivate the earth, enlarge the boundaries of science, improve the arts, or advance the interests of religion. The tendency of his pursuits is to destroy all improvement, and render the earth a waste-howling wilderness—to banish all religion from the minds of men, and the knowledge of God from the world. Let us contemplate for a moment the scene which the gambling table presents. Behold the company assembled. Do they begin their work with prayer? They dare not invoke the blessing of God upon their unholy doings. A death-like silence pervades the assembly whilst the game proceeds, until some sudden turn of luck draws forth an exclamation of horror or of joy, from the loser or the winner, accompanied with an awful oath. When the game is ended, the successful party withdraws to count over in triumph his ill-gotten gains. The unsuccessful party retires with confusion and remorse, to exacerate his folly.

Multiply such assemblies in the earth, and what will be the result? Mankind will be divided into two classes—the winners and the losers. But from the nature of the case, the losers will form the larger body, and the winners the smaller. These having engulphed all the property, the losers will become the abject vassals—the degraded, servile victims of their covetous destroyers.

Now, suppose the Great Master JESUS CHRIST to come and reckon with these his servants. What account will they have to render? What improvement will they have made of the talents committed to their charge? Neither will have the insulting plea to offer:—“I knew thee, that thou art an hard man, reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not strewed; and I was afraid, and went and hid thy talent in the earth. Lo! there thou hast that is thine.” Slothfulness cannot be alledged against them. For they have been industriously engaged in employing their talents—not for good, but for evil. They can offer these talents entire, though not improved, that they might receive a better direction, but abused—polluted—ruined. What must be their doom! If the slothful servant has that, which he hath, taken from him, and himself cast out into utter darkness, where there is wailing and gnashing of teeth—whither, O! whither, shall the gambler be driven?

If the views just presented of gambling be correct, can it be consistent with the profession of a Christian, that he should give countenance to it in any form—even in the shape of a lottery, the most plausible form which it can assume? Surely not.

But let us take another view of gambling. It is sometimes urged in favor of gambling, that it is a transaction, like any other among men, proceeding upon fair and honorable principles. The parties agree to be governed by settled rules, and established laws. The loser has nothing to complain of, as he knew before hand the terms upon which he agreed to gamble. All this wears a plausible aspect; but let us examine it more minutely.

In the arrangements for gambling, each party “stakes up,” as it is called, the sum for which it is agreed to play. But let us ask, for what purpose is this done? Is it the intention or wish of either party, that what he stakes up should go over from the winner to the loser, as an equivalent for the loss he sustains? On the contrary, is it not the intention of each, in staking up what is agreed upon, to retain what is so staked, and to add to it what is set up against it; so as to become master of the whole, without the slightest remuneration or equivalent to his antagonist? In this lies the true spirit of gambling. Here is found under the specious form of agreement, fairness, and honorable dealing, the enormous guilt of gambling. Is this not the very essence of covetousness, which consists in desiring what is another's, without a fair equivalent, and contrary to his wish,

and in retaining more than ought to be retained? With all the plausible showing of fairness in gambling, does not its true nature lie in this, that the gambler covets and seeks to get the property of his neighbor without a fair consideration—a just equivalent? Now this prominent feature in gambling takes it out of the course of the ordinary transactions of men, which are settled by mutual agreement. For in such transactions among just and honest men, one man offers a sum of money for a commodity or possession which his neighbor has, which sum is considered as an equivalent for the article to be purchased. Both parties are benefited, or suppose themselves benefited by the exchange. But nothing of this kind takes place in gambling. No exchange is contemplated. No equivalent is thought of. Two men stake up, each a thousand dollars, making the sum of two thousand dollars. A card is turned, or the dice are thrown, and it is decided, that the two thousand shall be the property of one of the parties. What has the loser in exchange for his proportion of the sum staked? What has the winner done to gain this amount? Is there fairness?—is there honesty?—is there benevolence in such a transaction? Is there not covetousness in the whole concern—covetousness which is idolatry, and which excludes from the kingdom of God?

It has been supposed that there may be honest and honorable gamblers. One, supposed to be so by the community in which he lived, said to a gentleman of that community:—“Sir, there can be no such character as an honest or honorable gambler. It is a mistake to suppose that such a character can exist.”

I trust that it is now demonstrably evident, that the very nature and tendency of gambling is wrong, and destructive. That it violates the constitution of things under which we are placed, and the written laws of God. No form, therefore, which gambling can assume, is right, or should be countenanced. But the lottery scheme has obtained favor in the eyes of good men, professors of religion, and even Clergymen. Grave Senators, and wise Legislators have lent their sanction to the lottery system, by legislative enactments; and the erection and endowment of literary institutions, and places of worship, in honor of the Holy One of Israel, have been promoted by the profits arising from such schemes.

Let us examine minutely the principles of these schemes. In the organization of a lottery a given amount is to be raised. For this purpose a number of tickets are sold at a stated price. The avails of these tickets constitute the funds. Usually there are about two blanks to a prize. Two-thirds of those who purchase the tickets are losers, whilst one-third only gain. At the time appointed, the managers have two wheels constructed. To each of these a box is attached, which is turned by the wheel. Into one box is put the tickets or their numbers, and into the other the blanks and the prizes or their numbers. The wheels are turned. A number is drawn from the box, containing the tickets or their numbers, and then from the box containing the blanks and prizes, another ticket or number is drawn. If opposite to the number of the ticket there is drawn a blank, the owner of the ticket is a loser. If a prize, the owner of the ticket is a gainer. This is the process. Now it is evident that there can be no beneficial exercise of the intellectual or moral powers on the part of the managers, the turners of the wheel, or the purchasers of the tickets. The whole depends upon what we call chance. The parties are altogether winners; or altogether losers. There is no beneficial exchange of services or commodities. The purchasers of tickets, as those who gamble with cards or dice, or any other way, stake up the price of the ticket, not that their amount so staked shall go as an equivalent for some valuable commodity, but as the means of getting a large sum, and what they stake up, too. Thus obtaining, if they succeed, the property of others without equivalent, and keeping what they seemed willing to give for it.

Suppose there be nine thousand persons who purchase as many tickets at \$10 a ticket; this will make the sum raised \$90,000. There is one prize of \$25,000, another of \$10,000, another of \$5,000, and smaller prizes to the amount of \$20,000 more—this will make \$60,000 to be drawn by the purchasers of tickets, and \$30,000 will remain for the lottery makers. Now these \$30,000 are a clear loss to the lottery ticket purchasers; and as the proportion of blanks to a prize is about two blanks to a prize, it is evident that out of the nine thousand persons, who purchase the tickets, six thousand are losers. Not only do these lose the time spent in the purchase of the ticket, but they lose the time spent in their thoughts and imaginations on their supposed gains.

Now, let us sum up the vain imaginings, the foolish calculations, that are indulged by these nine thousand persons in reference to their chances for winning the highest prizes, all of which must be an utter loss to eight thousand nine hundred and ninety-four of the nine thousand, and still there are but four high prizes. But since it may be urged, the literary institution is benefited, the meeting house is built—good is done. But what saith the Scripture? Let us do evil, that good may come. Nay, verily, God may in His infinite wisdom bring good out of evil, but His creatures should never do evil, that good might come.

The owner of the ticket may say, “I did not make the lottery—I am not a manager. I only buy the ticket, and quietly wait the issue.” All this may be true, but if there were no purchasers of tickets, there would be no lotteries made. The purchasers, therefore, sustain the lottery. They are accessories to the fact of the lottery, and equally guilty with the principals who make it. If the essence of gambling is, that covetousness, which is idolatry—if it excludes from the favor of God—if a lottery is a species, one form of gambling, then, indeed, a member of a Church of Christ cannot, consistently with his profession, own a ticket in a lottery.

The Advertiser.

EDGEFIELD C. H. THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 5, 1839.

Military Encampment.—The encampment of officers at Shibley's, Edgefield District, closed on the 31st ult. We are informed, that there was a full muster of the several regiments, and that there was a fine display at the review. The companies generally, were complimented by the Governor, but that which was commended by Colonel Wigfall, was particularly distinguished by his Excellency, and General McDuffie. A negro boy was shot by a sentinel during the night, but it is said that the wound is not dangerous.

The editors of the Augusta Daily News, alluding to our recent “splendid present,” say—“The editor of the Edgefield Advertiser is a lucky chap. The gals have been sending him lots of goodies, such as figs, grapes, plums, and peaches.” The editors then give us some good advice in a delicate matter. They seem to think that we are in high favor with the young ladies. Would to heaven, that we were! If the lovely sex felt as warm a regard towards us, as we do towards THEM, our lot would be happy, indeed! But our feelings will not permit us, to say any more on this subject.

Colonel Caughman, of Lexington, is announced as a candidate, to fill the Congressional vacancy in Colonel Elmore's District.

Vexations.—Editors often complain if a letter of business, with the postage not paid, is sent to them. They are indignant, if a communication for which they are taxed, is addressed to them. But what words can express their vexation, if they receive, though the mail, a letter of advice, not paid for the giver? We find the following reasonable request on this subject, in the Journal of Belles Lettres:—“We are obliged to any of our subscribers for any hints or advice given in good feeling, but we must request them to send their advice free of postage.”

Death of Bishop Bowen.—The Charleston Mercury, of the 27th ult., announces the death of the venerable Bishop Bowen, of the Protestant Episcopal Church. He died, in Charleston, on the 25th ult., of the disease under which he labored for many years. He was for more than twenty years, Rector of St. Michael's Church, and Bishop of the Diocese.

The editor of the South Carolinian recently set out for the North, in order to procure a power-press, as the extension of his business requires it. A very pleasant excursion this, truly! Did our business warrant it, we would go to the North ourselves, for the same purpose; but we must still toil on with our old-fashioned press, and hope for better times.

Mr. Espy.—Though this philosopher is not a witty man himself, we believe, he is “the cause of wit in others.” It is said, that he lately visited this place, and made it rain every day, while he stayed. He literally travels “In thunder, tempest, and in rain.”

Commander William G. McKenny, of the U. States Navy, died on the 24th ult., at the Navy Yard, Brooklyn, N. Y.

A writer in the Tallahassee Star, of the 21st ult., mentions the death of Colonel A. Bolamy, a gentleman of distinction, and a citizen of Jefferson county, Florida.

Indiana.—In this state, George H. Proffit, Whig, has been elected to Congress. The Van Burenites have gained three members.

The St. Augustine (Florida) Herald, of the 15th ult., contains a reprint of the recent vote of the citizens of Florida, on the adoption of the Constitution. The Constitution proposed to the late Convention, it seems, was adopted by a majority of 95 votes. The vote in favor of it being 2,070; against it, 1,975.

The Pendleton Messenger, of the 30th ult., announces the arrival of Colonel B.E. Bee, from Texas, at that place.

Death of Commodore Patterson.—The National Intelligencer, of the 26th ult., says—“We regret to announce that our esteemed fellow citizen, Commodore Daniel T. Patterson, of the United States Navy, and the Commandant at the Navy Yard and Station in this City, expired on the morning of Sunday, 25th inst., at a quarter past eight o'clock, after a severe illness of about thirty hours.”

Kingston, Jamaica.—A very severe shock of an earthquake was felt at Kingston, on the morning of the 29th of July. It occasioned great alarm, but it was not known that any damage had been caused by it.

Martinique.—On the 2d of August, two severe shocks of an earthquake, each lasting forty seconds, were experienced at Martinique. Many houses were thrown down, at Port Royal.

The Charleston Courier, of the 26th ult., contains an interesting account of the celebration of Huch's defeat, at Bratonsville, York District, S. C., July the 12th, 1780; a brilliant affair, in which seventy-five Carolina Whigs, (principally composed of citizens of York and Chester, led on by Colonel Bratton of the former, and Captain McClure, of the latter,) achieved a signal victory over six hundred British regulars and Tories. The celebration was held, where the battle occurred, on the plantation of Dr. John S. Bratton, of York District, whose father was the patriot hero of the event. An address, giving the historical details of the incident and period, was delivered by Colonel Beatty to an assemblage of citizens, who then partook of a fine barbecue, hospitably prepared by Dr. Bratton, where a number of suitable toasts were read. The citizens of Chester, Chester District, also commemorated this victory of the Whigs, by a dinner, at which many toasts were read, and an address delivered by Major Eaves.

Letters of Eliza Wilkinson, during the Invasion and Possession of Charleston, S. C., by the British, in the Revolutionary War. Arranged from the Original Manuscripts, by CAROLINE GILMAN.—The Journal of Belles Lettres passes the following criticism upon this work:—“These are familiar letters, detailing the harsh treatment and miseries experienced by the writer's family during the invasion and possession of Charleston, S. C. We cannot see much propriety, interest, or utility in making them public at this time. They are written in a very plain, unadorned style.” Some year ago, we read in a Charleston paper, some letters written by Eliza Wilkinson, during the Revolution. We presume that they are the same letters now collected by Mrs. Gilman. 'Tis true that they are written in a plain style, and have not those meretricious ornaments, which abound in the writings of many letter writers of the day; but still there is in them a beautiful and pleasing simplicity. The authoress describes vividly and impressively, the scenes which she saw, and which were the absorbing topics of the day. We think that the letters are of sufficient interest and utility, to warrant their publication at the present time.

The Stranger's Fever.—The Charleston Courier, of the 28th ult., says—“A reference to the Bill of Mortality, published this morning, will show that this disease is rather stationary, than on the increase. The number of deaths, from this cause, for the week ending on the 24th instant, is 15, a maximum which was reached four weeks ago. For the three weeks preceding the last, the number of death, from stranger's fever, having been respectively 4, 1, 15.”

The publication of the Augusta Mirror is suspended for a few weeks, in consequence of the indisposition of the persons employed in that establishment.

The August Constitutionalist, of the 29th ult., says—“From this day, until further notice, the Constitutionalist will be published but once a week; viz., on Thursday's. A day extra will be issued from the office, containing the reports of the Board of Health, together with such other interesting information as may come to hand.”

The Augusta Chronicle and Sentinel, of the 31st ult., says—“We have hitherto delayed referring to the prevailing disease, with which our city is at present afflicted, having no official data upon which we could found a contradiction to the ‘thousand and one’ rumors which we understand prevail throughout the country. Of its existence and fatality, we have had melancholy evidence in the demise of many valuable and respected citizens, and the panic consequent upon its sudden and unexpected appearance, and its still more rapid and fatal consequences, has, we fear, in some instances, contributed, ere apace, but too effectually to the extension of the disease. Of its character and the causes of its production, opinions have varied, yet, whatever they may have been, the faculty, or at least a majority of them have, we believe, concurred in the opinion of its non contagion. The limits the disease have provisionally for the health of our citizens, been comparatively circumscribed; the squares immediately contiguous to Bridge Row, having been the principal theatre upon which it has acted, and where its ravages have been most distinctly marked. The subjoined report of the Board of Health, shows the extent of the mortality up to yesterday, at 12 M. We shall endeavor to keep those of our citizens who may be from the city, advised of any changes which may take place either in the character or extent of the disease.”

BOARD OF HEALTH. Friday, August 30, 12 M. The Board report that no death by Fever has taken place in this city since 12 o'clock yesterday—one person had died in the city within that period of a chronic complaint—and one of fever or intemperance, beyond the corporate limits. The new cases that have been reported to-day are generally of a mild character, and the Board are not aware that a single case can be properly called malignant.

The number of deaths since the morning of the 18th inst. (when the first deaths occurred) within the city, or of persons who retired to the country, but were interred in the city, up to 12 o'clock to-day, is thirty-eight of whom twenty-eight died of the prevailing fever, two of old age, three of consumption, and five were children under five years of age. The total number of deaths in the city from the 1st to the 30th August, inclusive, were 48. Published by order of the Board. A. CUMMING, Mayor. Samuel M. Thompson, Secretary.

A gentleman from the immediate vicinity of Augusta, who arrived here on the 3d instant, says, that the fever was still raging at that place.

Late New Orleans papers state, that the yellow fever was raging fearfully at that place. Strangers are advised to flee for their lives.

Mr. Clay in New York.—The New York Express, a Whig paper, gives a long account of the reception of Mr. Clay in that city. The Whigs paid high honors to the distinguished Senator. On his arrival in the city, crowds of people, on foot, on horseback, in carts, and carriages, greeted him with a hearty welcome, and formed his escort. They carried him to the Park, where Mr. Dudley Selden addressed Mr. Clay, and welcomed him, it is supposed, to the city. Mr. Clay replied, it is said, with great feeling and effect. He expressed his gratitude for the unexpected hospitality he had received, and complimented the State of New York, in a high degree. He spoke of the President, and the Van Burenites in no measured terms. He spoke about a certain Imperial Chief, who had issued his fat at Castle Garden; compared the modern Whigs to the good old Whigs of the Revolution, and ended, as orators generally do, by talking “of the duty of his party, in the defence of their principles, to die in the last ditch!” The crowd, as might be supposed, threw off their caps, and gave three hearty cheers. Thus ended the great pageant in the city of Gotham.

INSTRUCTIONS TO POST MASTERS.—The following is an extract from a letter, which the Post Master General recently addressed to the Post Master at Newport, R. I., to which we wish to call the attention of our subscribers.

“Post Masters may enclose the money in a letter to the publisher of a newspaper, to pay the subscription of a third person, and frank the letter if written by himself, but if the letter be written by any other person, the Post Master cannot frank it.”

A Post Office has been established, at Reedy Creek, Marion District, S. C. and SAMUEL J. BETHEA, appointed Post Master.

The Great Race across the Atlantic.—It is known to many of our readers, that the steamers, the Brit's Queen and the Great Western, started from New York, on their last voyage, very nearly at the same time. Much has been said about their progress across the ocean. There can be very little doubt that the officers of these boats were running a race. We make the following extract on this subject, from the Temp.ance Advocate:—

We had remarked some days since, the various accounts brought into the ports of New York and Charleston, by different vessels which had met, or seen the Great Western and British Queen, and had remarked the interest that seemed to be manifested as to their relative positions to each other, but we could not believe that it was to be a trial of speed across the Atlantic. We feared that the captains of these boats felt a rivalry, and were disposed to test their speed, but little did we expect to see the Press in this country, especially in South Carolina and Georgia, seeking to excite an interest in this murderous rivalry of Boats, and hurraing for the foremost. We mean not this rebuke for the journal we have quoted alone, and we beg him to understand it so; the papers are teaming with it. And what are we to expect from the course the Press is taking in this matter? It is inflaming passions already excited, inducing steam-boat captians to suppose that the speed of their boats is narrowly watched, and that they are estimated according to their ability to beat other boats in a race. In a little time an explosion will take place, the hulls of these stately vessels will be shivered, and some of our most honored and valuable citizens, with their wives and little ones, may be seen clinging to a plank in the broad Atlantic, hopeless and perishing. Oh! how the time will be changed then—what will the Press then team with?—This odious practice of Racing—Congress must do something—the Captains ought to be hung—the mates guillotined, and the crew thrown into the boiler—steam-boat owners ought to be brought to justice—it is murder, &c. &c. &c. This is all very good, gentlemen—very pretty, and very patriotic, and very sentimental. We have no doubt you will be found with crane on your arms, and great big tears rolling down your cheeks, & writing very pathetic things about the “Awful Calamity!” the “Dreadful Visitation!” Now, gentlemen, while you are so vehemently condemning the practice after the accident has happened, and so strenuously urging the hanging of Captains, the decapitation of mates, and the boiling of crews, just permit us to say, if you would recommend a high string round the waist and scores of Editors, you would be striking rather near the root of the evil, than even hanging captians and guillotining mates. The damage by the boats at Birmingham England, was estimated at £40,000.