

## CHRISTIAN HERALD.

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## The Care of the Needy.

"But whose hath the world's goods, and beholdeth his brother in need, and shutteth up his compassion from him, how doth the love of God abide in him?" 1 John 3: 17.

One of the great objects of the church on earth is the mutual benefit that its members shall be to each other—both in spiritual things and temporal things. The commands to "exhort one another" and to "do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith," cover these two departments of our work.

There is always danger of these reciprocal favors as God's children, being neglected. It is not usually so much the result of intention as of inattention. The cares of the world gather thickly around and absorb so much attention that many think they have no time for other matters.

The mutual strengthening of each other is highly important, as few persons could live close to duty as Christians without some good influences thrown around them by others, and the more holy the influences the more easily can the Christian life be lived. These influences all must help to exert in their every day walk and conversation, and by meeting with the people of God on the Lord's day, or at other times of meeting, to engage in praying, singing, or exhorting each other, or sitting together around the table of the Lord to talk of and commemorate his death.

But this constitutes only one side of duty. Assistance in temporal matters, whenever needed, is quite as important. There has been a distribution of the poor among the churches of the world so that all may find a field for doing duty of this kind. That it is much neglected, is lamentably true. That no one has the promise of acceptance with God who so neglects, is also true. See Matt. 25: 31-46.

The chief reason for this duty's being neglected where there are organized churches, is the lack of system. Whenever it is known to any member of the church that a brother or sister is in need, relief should at once be given; but if it is a case that will require continued assistance or attention, it should be promptly reported to the deacons

of the church. If these are holy men who feel the responsibility of their calling, they will, at once, make provision to give whatever assistance is required.

If it is a case of poverty, the church treasury should furnish the funds for relief, from the weekly contributions, but if there happens to be insufficient in the treasury, the members are called upon for a special contribution, and every lover of the Lord will gladly respond. True Christians are not found lamenting because they have the poor to assist; with them it is a joy to have the opportunity of doing good to some poor unfortunate one.

In case of protracted sickness, the matter should also be referred to the deacons. Usually there are those who are willing to wait upon the sick, but for lack of system the burden may fall too heavily upon a few. At the weekly meeting of the church, the deacons should call for volunteers to wait upon the sick during the following week. These should be arranged in order, so that each may know when his time comes, and the sick will be constantly and well cared for. In large towns it is more convenient to hire a nurse to go and wait upon the sick, but it should not be done when it can be avoided, as the changing countenances of friends and brethren are beneficial to the sick, provided always that there shall be such a perfect understanding among the different nurses as will insure a single plan to be uniformly carried out. If, however, it is a case of contagious disease, it is a necessity that a suitable room be provided, and a nurse who is not liable to the contagion secured for constant attendance.

By system, the usefulness of the church to her membership may be greatly increased. No man need seek a better field of usefulness to the needy than is found in the church. Vastly more is now being done by the church in this work than she gets credit for. In fact she asks no credit in this world for doing simple duty, consequently many conclude that nothing is being done except by other societies. The reason of this conclusion is that these other societies make a great ado about whatever may be done by them, and by a great sounding of trumpets make an appearance fully equal to the work done. The church very properly works on quietly, and the

statistics carefully taken to-day will show that she is doing more for the good of mankind and at greater cost, than all other societies combined. During the past few months cases have come under our personal observation where large sums of money and much labor has been given by churches to relieve some particular case of need. Yet not a word was said about it publicly. These things we say not boastingly, but to encourage brethren to go on in doing the Lord's will and working in his name, remembering his commandment, "Whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him," and his precious promise, "Whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward."

## Co-operation of the Churches.

Possibly a word at this time will not be inappropriate. The State Coöperation has been in existence for the last five or six years. As a coöperation of all the churches of the State, it has been a failure. Not that no good has been accomplished by these gatherings. Much has been done in various ways; but very little in comparison with what might have been accomplished.

Why? We shall both ask and answer this question in few words. The many congregations of the valley have not taken the interest necessary to insure success. Many have not sent any delegates to the meeting. Some have not sent reports, and when collections have been requested for missionary purposes, a very few have responded. So this cannot truly be called a State Coöperation.

Why these things are not done, the churches can determine. The facts exist. In view of this fact, then, what should be done. It is plain we should not continue to meet as the "Coöperation of the churches of Oregon," when they do not coöperate.

This is evident for several reasons. First, the object of the movement being principally missionary, it is necessary that we know what churches can be depended upon. Second, we need to have a fair representation of all such churches. Third, the Missionary Board need to know that their

efforts to place evangelists in the various fields will be wisely and heartily seconded. Fourth, they need to know that any requests for contributions will not be slighted.

Again, we all realize the fact that this is a matter in which the churches should exercise their freedom. There is no compulsion. Nor should there be any inequality, that one person or church be burdened and another eased.

The only feasible plan, then, is to secure the pledged coöperation of the churches of this State that are willing to so associate themselves for the purpose of a systematic and thorough organized missionary work. No one denies the benefit of united effort. Some may question the feasibility. Let all such refrain from entering into the work. But for the sake of the cause, let none refuse to do the proper part in this great work of carrying the good news to those out of Christ.

Some churches may be so isolated that they cannot coöperate, as those in Eastern Oregon. Let them associate themselves, as we are glad to know they have done.

Then shall we have a coöperation of the churches of Western Oregon, of the Willamette valley, of so many counties, of one county, or none at all?

By all means let us have what we pretend to have. Let not the Missionary Board be chagrined in the knowledge of the fact that the very churches which by their delegates elected them, forget to send means to assist them in putting preachers in the field. If a church is desirous of coöperation let it send delegates. If not, let it not think that counsel will alone support the ministry of of the word.

It is far better that two or three congregations coöperate heartily than that a dozen enact a farce.

To conclude, as the annual gathering will soon be here, may we not suggest that the various congregations take this subject under advisement and if they are ready to coöperate in deed, as well as in word, let them signify the same by sending delegates. If not, let them say so.

Then at the coming Coöperation let the Board secure the names of all churches which are full of this missionary spirit and can lend a helping hand and be ready at such times as may seem practicable, to second the efforts of laborers in their midst; and these shall consti-