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Baptists. Rhode Island. Warren Association, 1816.
Minutes of the ... Held at the Baptist Meeting-
House in Pawtucket, (R.I.) September 10 and 11,
1816.

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MINUTES

OF THE

Warren Association,

HELD AT THE

Baptist Meeting-House

IN

PAWTUCKET, (R. I.)

SEPTEMBER 10 and 11.

1816.

BOSTON:

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MINUTES, &c.

Tuesday, September 10th, 1816.

1. **A**T ten o'clock, brother James M. Winchell delivered the introductory discourse, from 1 John, i. 3; after which, collected for deceased ministers' widows, 81 dols. 50 cts.

2. At two o'clock, the Association met, and after a short discourse by elder Sawyer, chose brother Stephen Gano, Moderator, and brother Winchell, Clerk.

3. After prayer by brother Fisher, proceeded to read the letters from the Churches, and took the following account of the members added by Baptism and by Letter, dismissed, excluded, and deceased in the year past, and the present number in each Church.

N. B. The names of ordained ministers are in **SMALL CAPITALS**; the licensed preachers in *italics*. Those ministers with this mark (*) were not present. Churches marked thus (+) we have had no information from this session. Vacant churches are distinguished by a dash ———. Res. number restored.

<i>Churches.</i>	<i>Elders and Messengers.</i>	<i>Ad. by bap.</i>	<i>Ad by let.</i>	<i>Dismiss.</i>	<i>Exclud.</i>	<i>Deed.</i>	<i>Total.</i>
1st Boston 1668	JAMES M. WINCHELL Dea. James Loring	18	1	3	1	3	178
Warren 1764	SILAS HALL Stephen Davol Miller Barney	2	2	4	1	3	222
1st Middleboro' 1756	SAMUEL ABBOTT Dea. Afahel Shaw Joshua Washburn					1	100
2d Middleboro' 1757	————— 1 res. William Ashley			3	4	1	101
3d Middleboro' 1761	SAMUEL NELSON Dea. Elisha Clark Martin Keith Josiah Barrows	3				3	149
Wrentham 1769	WILLIAM WILLIAMS Dea. Joseph Miller Samuel Haskel			1	1		57
Attleborough 1769	STEPH. S. NELSON 1 res. Dea. Joel Blackinton David Guild	83	7	9	1	11	207
Barnstable 1771	SIMEON COOMBS 2 res. Benjamin Hallet	1	2			5	239
Medfield 1776	WILLIAM GAMMELL Dea. Jeremiah Smith Davis Tripp	10	1		2	3	79

<i>Churches.</i>	<i>Elders and Messengers.</i>	<i>Ad. by bap.</i>	<i>Ad. by lit.</i>	<i>Dismiss.</i>	<i>Exclud.</i>	<i>Diad.</i>	<i>Total.</i>
Harwich 1757	JAMES BARNABY Job Chafe, jun.	14		3	2	3	195
1st Providence 1639	STEPHEN GANO ASA MESSER Samuel Eddy	94	20	6	4	9	522
Bridgewater 1785	AMASA SMITH 1 res. Israel Alger Alpheus Leach Dea. Nathan Alger	31			2		138
Randolph 1780	JOEL BRIGGS Thomas W. Tolman Moses Curtis			1	1	1	97
Carver 1791	Dea Joseph Robbins			4		1	82
Marshfield 1788	THOMAS CONANT	3	2	1		3	61
2d Sutton 1792	WILLIAM BATCHELDER* Benjamin Peck			4		3	26
2d Tiverton 1781	JOB BORDEN Enoch French John Davol	1				1	90
†Marshpee Newport 1756	Dea. S. Barker Eleazer Trevett	7		8	6	6	259
Seekonk	JOHN PITMAN Samuel Brown Sylvanus Newman	2				7	64
Grafton Taunton 1761	THOMAS BARRET SHUBAEL LOVELL 1 res. Caleb Arthurton	9	1	1	1	1	86
4th Middleboro'	EBENEZER BRIGGS Abiel Wade Joseph Dunham	2				1	43
2d Providence 1805	LUTHER BAKER 2 res. Varnum Wilkinson John S. Eddy	45	10	1	2	2	183
Pawtucket 1805	DAVID BENEDICT 1 res. Dea. Ichabod Tabor Nathaniel Lyon Dea. Remember Kent, jr.	59	5	5		3	186
Kingston 1805	SAMUEL GLOVER Stephen Bradford Seth Drew, jr.					3	85
Hanover 1806	JOHN BUTLER	2				1	85

<i>Churches.</i>	<i>Elders and Messengers.</i>	<i>Ad. by bap.</i>	<i>Ad. by let.</i>	<i>Dymin.</i>	<i>Exclud.</i>	<i>Ret.</i>	<i>Total.</i>
Warwick and Coventry 1805	DAVID CURTIS Alexander T. Shaw Caleb Ladd John Allen Cyril L. Morse	33		11	3	4	227
Holden 1807	THOMAS MARSHALL Joseph White Samuel Brooks	8		2	1		121
3d Tiverton 1808	Jonathan Smith William Norton			1	1	1	41
Plymouth 1809	Winthrop Morse Nathaniel Ripley, jr.	5				1	33
Northbridge 1780	JOHN COOPER Abner Cooper					3	29
Pawtuxet 1805	BELA JACOBS William Holdridge Job Lawton	2	1	1	1	2	63
Bristol 1811	BARNABAS BATES Dea. Royal Thresher Jeremiah Munro	2	3		4	1	58
Pembroke 1812	JOSEPH TORREY, jr. Jethua Magoun, jr.	12			2		66
Worcester 1812	JONATHAN GOING 1 res. Solomon Parsons	26	2	4	1		91
New-Bedford 1813	James Tripp Nathan Burroughs	13	2			1	45
Canton 1814	Dea. Ezra Tilden Friend Crane	10				1	50
Bellingham 1812	ABIEL FISHER, jr. Samuel Wait	2	6	2		1	39
Sharon 1814	JOHN B. GIBSON Dea. Leavitt Hewins Elijah Pratt	22		1		1	51
Whole number restored	13	528	65	76	44	94	4550

Nett increase of the Association, 392.

4. Appointed brethren Messer, S. S. Nelson, and Baker, a committee to examine the queries presented to the Association.

5. Appointed brethren Pitman, Baker and Gibson, a committee to distribute the money collected for the widows and orphans of deceased ministers.

6. Appointed brethren Bates and Winchell, a committee to examine the Minutes of the Corresponding Associations, with respect to subjects in which our co-operation or concurrence would be proper.

7. Adjourned till 8 o'clock, to-morrow morning. Brother Cornell, from the Saratoga Association, prayed.

In the evening, brother Bates preached from Romans viii. 35, to a very crowded and attentive assembly.

There was preaching also in other places in the neighbourhood.

—
Wednesday, September 11th, 1816.

Met according to adjournment. Prayer by brother Angell.

8. Voted, that the ministering brethren present, who are not members of this Association, be invited to take a seat and act with us.

Called for the Messengers and Minutes from Corresponding Associations, and received as follows :

Associations.

Messengers.

Charleston	Letter and Minutes, 1815.	
Philadelphia	Letter and Minutes, 1814 & 1815.	
New-York		
Stonington	Letter and Minutes, 1815.	Daniel Putnam.
Hartford	Letter and Minutes, 1815.	Lewis Leonard.
Snattsbury	Letter and Minutes.	Dea. Silas Covell.
Sturbridge	Letter and Minutes.	George Angell.
Savannah River	Letter and Minutes, 1814.	
Groton Union Conference	do. do. 1816.	William Northrup.
New-Hampshire	Letter and Minutes, 1816.	Andrew Sherburne.
Woodstock	Letter and Minutes.	Jonathan Going.
Bowdoinham		
Vermont	Letter and Minutes.	
Leyden		
Cumberland	Letter and Minutes, 1815.	
Boston	Letter and Minutes, 1815.	{ Joseph Grafton, and Elisha Williams.
New-Jersey		.
Saratoga	Letter and Minutes, 1816.	{ Joseph Cornell. Daniel Corey.

9. Received a letter from the Hudson River Baptist Association, and L. Leonard and Aaron Perkins, messengers, desiring correspondence with them—Voted, That we comply with their request.

10. Received a Letter and Minutes from the Dublin Association, and brother Cornell, messenger, requesting correspondence with us, Voted, that we comply with the same.

11. Voted, that agreeably to their request, by brother Cornell, we open correspondence with the Westfield Association.

12. Heard the Circular Letter prepared by brother Bates, and the Corresponding Letter prepared by brother Butler.

13. Voted, that brethren Benedict, Curtis and Torrey, be a committee to revise the same.

14. Distributed the 2d Annual Report of Baptist Board of Foreign Missions.

15. Voted, that the number of the members added to our Churches, by baptism, and the net increase of the Association during the past year, be inserted in the Corresponding Letter.

16. The committee appointed to attend to the queries presented to the Association, report,

On the question from the 1st Church in Boston, viz. Whether it would not be expedient for this Association to appoint a committee to consider the utility and practicability of a more general union of the funds and energies of the Education Societies of our denomination, in these Northern States—That the committee proposed be appointed. Whereupon,

17. Voted, that brethren Messer, Eddy, and Benedict, be that committee.

On the question from the 1st Church in Providence, viz. Whether the collection which has usually been made for the widows of deceased ministers, after the delivery of the Association Sermon, should not be converted to the education of ministers—a majority of the committee reported, that “the change of the collection proposed ought not to be made.”

18. Voted, that this report be accepted.

On the question from the 1st Church in Middleboro', viz. Whether it is consistent with the Bible for a Church of Christ to make such a covenant with the people of the world, as will give them equal authority, in all respects, according to their numbers, in the choice and settlement of a minister,

The committee reported, That we have no right or wish to appoint a preacher for others ; or, to require others to support a preacher for us. If we therefore require the aid of others in supporting a preacher, we ought to allow them aid in appointing him. A preacher besides cannot be very profitable to a Church, unless he can secure the attention and confidence of the Society ; for the prosperity of a Church will always depend on the accession to it made from the Society. In appointing a preacher, a Church, we think, should always keep in view considerations like these ; but it should, in no case, agree to the appointment of a preacher, who conducts not, or preaches not according to the simplicity of the truth revealed in the Gospel.

19. Voted, that this report be accepted.

The committee appointed at the last anniversary of the Association, to visit the Church in Sutton, reported, That the Church still continue in a low and tried state—Therefore,

20. Voted, that brethren Gano, Gammell, Baker, Curtis, and Filher, be a committee to visit the Church again, and report next year.

On motion of brother Winchell,

21. Voted, that a committee of five be appointed to report to the Association, at this meeting, the expediency of forming an Education Society, for the benefit of Baptist ministers, and if expedient, to recommend a constitution for that purpose, and that brethren Stephen S. Nelson, Winchell, Going, Jacobs, and Bates, be that committee.

22. Voted, that the next Association be held at the Meeting-House of the 1st Baptist Church in Boston.

23. Voted, that Dr. Messer preach the Association Sermon, and in case of failure, brother Benedict.

24. Voted, that brother Going be appointed to write the Circular Letter, and brother Alger, the Corresponding Letter, for next year.

25. The committee appointed to examine the Circular and Corresponding Letters, of this year, reported, that they be received, and inserted in the Minutes. Voted, that this report be accepted.

26. The committee appointed at the Association in September last, "to adjust the accounts relative to the Collections for the widows and orphans of deceased ministers, and to fund the money on hand," reported, that pursuant to their appointment, they received from elder Gano, on their return to Providence, one Note signed by elder Joseph Grafton, for 60 dols. 30 cts. dated March 20, 1812, and made payable to Thomas Baldwin, or order, in one year from the date, with interest—one other, signed by elder Elisha Williams, for 47 dols. 75 cts. dated September 12, 1810, and payable to Thomas Baldwin, and Stephen Gano, on demand, with interest—one other, signed by elder Stephen Gano, for 40 dols. dated September 16, 1815, payable to Samuel Eddy, and N. Waterman, jr. as committee of the Association, on demand, with interest. On the first mentioned note, they have received, the present week, 63 dols. 80 cts. being the amount thereof. On the second, there is now due, 65 dols. 3 cts.—and on the third, 42 dols. 40 cts.

27. Appointed Messengers to Sister Associations, as follows :

New-York	Baker, and Bates.
Stonington	Curtis, Ladd, and Angell.
Sturbridge	Marshall, Going, and Barrett.
Groton U. Conference	Curtis, Shaw, Smith, and Lovell.
Hartford	Abbott.
Woodstock	Abbott.
Bowdoinham	<i>A. Briggs.</i>
Vermont	Going.
Cumberland	<i>A. Briggs.</i>
Boston	Winchell.
Westfield	Barrett.
Dublin	Going, and Marshall.
Hudson River	Wm. Everett.

28. The committee appointed to examine the Minutes of Corresponding Associations, respecting subjects in which our co-operation or concurrence would be proper, reported that they found nothing requiring the attention of the Association, but the notice of certain impostors, whose names were mentioned in the Minutes of last year.

Having received through brother Winchell, a proposal by brother Wm. Collier, of Charlestown, (Mass.) for publishing a complete and uniform edition of the works of Rev. A. Fuller, of Kettering, (Eng.)

29. Voted, that the Association cordially approve of the same, and recommend it to the patronage of all such as are desirous of obtaining a complete set of the writings of that eminent servant of God.

30. The Association adjourned till two o'clock, P. M. Brother Gibson prayed.

Met according to adjournment. Brother Bela Jacobs prayed.

31. The committee appointed to report respecting the expediency of forming an Education Society, reported—That it is expedient and laudable that this Association form, within itself, immediately,

an Education Society, which may be instrumental in the promotion of an able and evangelical ministry, in the Baptist denomination.

32. Voted, that this report be accepted.

The committee then submitted a Constitution for that purpose, which was read, and adopted by articles.

33. Voted, that the first mentioned delegate from each of the Churches, be appointed a trustee of the Education Society, agreeably to the fourth article of the Constitution, for this year.

34. Voted, that the Association recommend to the Churches, to take a collection annually, for the increase of its funds.

35. Voted, that this Association choose a standing Secretary, whose duty shall be to keep a regular file of all papers and letters belonging to the Association, and maintain correspondence with the Baptist Board for Foreign Missions ; and also, a standing Treasurer, whose duty it shall be to receive all monies collected by the Association, or by the individuals, Churches and Societies, composing the Association ; keep a regular account both of the several sums received, and the purposes for which they are received ; make a report of the same annually to the Association, and submit a copy thereof to the Clerk, to be inserted in the Minutes.

36. Voted, that brother Nathan Waterman be Secretary, and brother Samuel Eddy, the Treasurer of the Association.

37. Voted, that the Association recommend to the Churches to meet together on the first Monday evening in every month, for the purpose of uniting with the thousands in Israel, who engage in prayer on that evening, for the more general diffusion of the light and liberty of the glorious Gospel of the blessed God.

38. Voted, that a committee be appointed to report at the next anniversary, respecting the expediency of forming a new Association, out of the Churches composing this body.

39. Voted, that brethren Winchell, Gammell, Going, Briggs, and Fisher, be that committee.

Appointed the Clerk to superintend the printing of the Minutes.

After the business was finished, the Association directed their Moderator to present their thanks to the Church and Society in Pawtucket, for the kindness and liberality they had manifested, in receiving the Messengers of the Churches ; which he accordingly did, and closed with an affectionate address to the people, and copious and appropriate prayer to the throne of Almighty Grace.

After a few minutes intermission, brother Gammell preached a valuable sermon, from Gal. vi. 9—"Be not weary in well doing," &c. ; at the close of which, a collection was taken for the benefit of Foreign Missions, amounting to 40 dollars. In the evening, brother Fisher preached an interesting sermon, from Heb. ii. 3, which concluded the numerous services of this interesting anniversary. It is believed that the business of an Association has but seldom been attended with more harmony, conducted with more dispatch, or productive of more pleasure to the spectators.

The Treasurer submitted to the Clerk, the following statement of monies received by him during the present meeting.

<i>For Domestic Missions.</i>		
From the Church in Attleborough,		\$ 6 18
“ Female Mite Society in Pawtucket,		10 00
“ Baptist Church and Society in Randolph,		10 32
“ Female Society	do.	15 06
“ Elder Simeon Coombs,		1 00
	Total,	\$ 42 56

<i>For Foreign Missions.</i>		
From Female Mite Society in Pawtucket,		\$ 20 00
Collection after sermon,		40 00
	Total,	\$ 60 00

For Widows of deceased Ministers, after the Association sermon,		\$ 81 50
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Amount of the whole, \$ 184 06

Immediately after the sermon, with which the business of the Association closed, the Trustees of the Education Society met, and chose brethren David Benedict, Secretary; Stephen S. Nelson, Treasurer, and Going, Winchell, Gammell, Fisher, Curtis, Bates, and Glover, who, with the Secretary and Treasurer, constitute the Executive Committee, upon whom devolves the management of the concerns of the Society.

The Executive Committee immediately proceeded to business, and chose brother Gammell, Chairman; brother Winchell, to prepare a subscription paper, to be circulated among the Churches—and adjourned to meet in Boston, on the anniversary of the Boston Baptist Foreign Mission Society auxiliary to the Board for Foreign Missions, on the 9th of October, 1816.

Circular Letter.

The Messengers of the WARREN ASSOCIATION to the Churches they severally represent, send Christian salutation.

BELOVED BRETHREN,

IMPRESSED with the importance of stirring up your pure minds to a remembrance of your duty, and anxious to apprise you of some of the temptations to which you are exposed, permit us to solicit your serious and candid attention to the exhortation of the blessed Redeemer: *Take heed and beware of covetousness*—(Luke xii. 15.) That you may understand the import of this portion of Scripture, and render a cheerful obedience to the duty it enjoins; we will,

first, describe the nature of "covetousness:" and, secondly, suggest a few reasons why you should "beware" of it.

First—Covetousness is an unreasonable desire to obtain those things which we have not, with an unwillingness to part with what we may possess, that others may be benefited as well as the possessor. Under the Mosaic dispensation, it probably intended only the desire to obtain any thing which belonged to another person, without being willing to allow him an equivalent, and satisfactory consideration for it. In this sense, we may understand the tenth commandment, "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house," &c. But under the New Testament dispensation, this commandment, as well as several others, has a more extensive signification; forbidding unlawful desires of every kind; hence, says the Apostle, "I had not known lust, except the law had said, 'Thou shalt not covet.'" The inspired writers of the New Testament have generally used two words, which, by our translators, are usually rendered covetousness; one of which, literally signifies, *the love of silver*, as in 1 Tim. vi. 10. Heb. xiii. 5, and the other, as in the passage under consideration, intends *the immoderate love of earthly things, especially riches*.

This definition of covetousness is illustrated and confirmed by our Saviour, in the subsequent parable. "The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully; and he thought within himself, saying, What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits? And he said, This will I do: I will pull down my barns and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods: And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry. But God said unto him, Thou fool! this night shall thy soul be required of thee: then whose shall those things be which thou hast provided? So is he that layeth up treasures for himself, and is not rich toward God."

This rich man is not accused of grinding the faces of the poor, nor of robbing or defrauding his neighbour, the widow, or the fatherless, nor of any injustice in his dealings. His "ground brought forth plentifully," which was owing to the blessing of God upon his exertions. His barns not being large enough to contain the produce of his lands, he resolves to erect larger ones, where he might "bestow his fruits and his goods." Had he not done this, the fruits of his lands might have been wasted, and he would have been guilty of improvidence. When all his produce should be securely deposited, he intends to say to his soul, "Take thine ease;" give thyself no more anxiety about the world; enjoy the good things which I have laid up in store for many years. It may be asked, What was there in this man's conduct which was so very reprehensible, as to incur the displeasure of his beneficent Creator, and brand him with the odious appellation of a *fool*? Why, he was, in the view of the great Searcher of hearts, a *covetous man*! Although his labours had been greatly prospered, his ability to be beneficent increased, and an opportunity offered him to scatter the fruits of his land among the sons of indigence and wretchedness, yet he resolves to keep all for himself, and "take his ease, eat, drink, and be merry."

Covetousness then consists in an immoderate love of the good

things of this world, especially riches, which may be properly called our own, having obtained them by our own enterprise, industry and economy ; accompanied with an insatiable desire to obtain more than what we now possess, and an unwillingness to part with what we have, that others may be benefited by them as well as ourselves. Let us,

Secondly—Suggest a few reasons, why you should “ Take heed and beware of covetousness.”

Would the limits of this letter admit, we might adduce many important and weighty reasons, from the lively Oracles, to enforce the duty of avoiding covetousness, as there is scarcely any one sin against which we are more frequently and solemnly warned. Passing by every other reason which might be mentioned, we shall invite your attention to two only, viz. the ENORMITY, and the EVIL EFFECTS of covetousness.

1. The *enormity* of covetousness is the first reason, which we shall mention, as an inducement to avoid it.

The inspired writers class covetousness with the most enormous crimes, such as “ shedding of innocent blood, oppression and violence ;” those, who are guilty of it, are ranked with “ thieves, adulterers, drunkards, revilers, extortioners, and idolaters ;” and they have denounced the heaviest woes upon such persons, declaring that they are unfit for the kingdom of God. It is considered a transgression of the holy law of God, which says, “ Thou shalt not covet ;” and is diametrically opposite to the precepts and genius of the Gospel, which teaches, “ Lay not up for yourselves treasures on the earth, but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven : Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth : Let your conversation be without covetousness.” It opposes the example of the benevolent Jesus, “ who, though he was rich, for our sakes became poor, that we through his poverty might be made rich ;” and it is equally opposed to the pious conduct of his Apostles, who cheerfully abandoned all they possessed, for his sake and the glorious Gospel. It is a deceitful evil, imposing itself upon us, under the most plausible names and appearances, and is fraught with delusions, pretexts and subterfuges.

“ How many forms doth avarice,” says an elegant and energetic writer, “ take to disguise itself from the man who is guilty of it, and who will be drenched in the guilt of it, until the day he dies ! Sometimes it is *prudence*, which requires him not only to provide for his present wants, but for such as he may have in future. Sometimes it is *charity*, which requires him not to give society examples of prodigality and parade. Sometimes it is *parental love*, obliging him to save something for his children. Sometimes it is *circumspection*, which requires him not to supply people who make an ill use of what they get. Sometimes it is *necessity*, which obliges him to repel artifice by artifice. Sometimes it is *conscience*, which convinces him, *good man*, that he hath already exceeded in almsgiving and compassion, and done too much. Sometimes it is *equity*, for justice requires that every one should enjoy the fruit of his own labours, and that of his ancestors.”

2. The *evil effects* of covetousness is the second reason which should induce us to beware of it.

It is the spiritual life and highest felicity of a regenerated person, to enjoy communion with a spiritual God, and have his affections placed upon celestial objects. That his mind may be elevated above every thing of an earthly nature, and that he may feel a lively interest in the prosperity of the Redeemer's kingdom, is his daily prayer. He ardently desires to be stripped of selfishness and carnality, that he may be enabled to present his soul and body as living sacrifices to Him, who died for his offences, and arose for his justification. But covetousness interrupts his communion with a holy God, destroys the peace of his mind, and impedes the progress of his spiritual life. It debases his affections, making them sordid and grovelling, and excludes from his heart the enjoyment of the love of God. "For if any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." Every degree of this evil habit has a destructive and fatal influence upon his mind: for in the same proportion that he practises it, he departs from the spirit and precepts of the religion of Jesus, and loses those gracious discoveries which are the life and comfort of his soul. Even its partial influence is to be dreaded, because of its baleful effects; and the Christian, who would enjoy the light of God's countenance, and a satisfactory evidence of his adoption, should flee from covetousness as from the deadliest poison.

It is a distinguishing characteristick of a disciple of Jesus "not to live to himself," but to be influenced by that "charity which seeketh not her own." This divine and exalted principle ennobles him with an holy indifference to worldly treasures, and constrains him to inquire, What shall I do for the benefit of my fellow men, the Church of Christ and the glory of God? But the indulgence of covetousness fills his mind with the love of self, attachment to his own aggrandizement, emolument, and ease, so that all his anxiety is respecting himself. He is indifferent to the toils, the cares, and the sacrifices of others, and is sometimes disposed to ascribe their benevolence and activity in the cause of religion and humanity to base and unworthy motives.

How much is science, humanity, and religion, indebted to the benevolence and liberality of those persons who "sought not their own" good only, but that of others also. Seminaries of learning, humane institutions, and places of public worship, have been very frequently originated by a single individual, whose heart was expanded with this heavenly charity, and who was unwilling to "live to himself." Had covetousness been suffered to have exerted its baleful influence, or even been consulted on these occasions, *nothing* would have been done. It would have suggested that he himself might yet need what he was about to contribute to this charity; or his family and his connexions should first be comfortably provided for; and then, if there should be any thing to spare, it might be suitable to appropriate a *little* to charitable purposes. It contracts the best feelings of the heart, paralyzes every benevolent effort to benefit others, and destroys the usefulness, as well as the comfort of those, who might do much good in serving their generation.

In the Churches of Christ, the evil effects of covetousness are frequently witnessed. Whence arises jealousy, contentions, discords, litigations, and frequently divisions in the mystical body of Christ:

Examine it to its source, and it will be very generally found to spring from the exercise of this odious principle. Instead of being willing to suffer wrong and be defrauded, it influences "brother to go to law with brother," by which the Church is rent with divisions, and the precious name of Jesus is dishonoured. It interrupts the union and the fellowship of the disciples of Jesus; and were it to be indulged, it would destroy the visibility of the Church of Christ, and effectually prevent the dissemination of evangelick truth.

How often does the indulgence of covetousness prevent the exercise of that equality in the Church which is enjoined in the sacred Scriptures. The support of the ministry, the maintenance of the poor fairs, and the entertainment of strangers, devolves upon the liberal and beneficent, who are frequently the least able to bear it; while the covetous, whose ability is equal, and perhaps superior, is eased of those burdens. It is true, he may express by words much love to the Gospel, and to the fairs; but his love is "in word and in tongue only, not in deed and in truth."

The evil effects of this sin are felt in families, which before lived in peace and amity, while brotherly love was considered of more consequence than the acquisition of riches. A determination to be rich has pierced them through with many sorrows, and produced strife and contention among those who should be bound by the strictest bonds of friendship. It is not possible to describe all the evils which covetousness produces. It is productive of injustice, fraud, extortion, and oppression; and from this evil root, proceeds theft, falsehood, evil-speaking, and, in many instances, suicide and murder.

Beloved brethren, is covetousness such an enormous sin, as to be classed, by the inspired writers, with the greatest crimes? Will the indulgence of it, as effectually exclude us from the kingdom of heaven as drunkenness, adultery, or murder? And is it a deceitful and dangerous evil, which may impose itself upon us without our being fully sensible of it? Let us then critically and impartially examine ourselves, whether, by the great Searcher of hearts, we may not be considered covetous. Be not deceived, God is not to be mocked in this matter. He knows our hearts, and what it is we love supremely. Though we may be bitter in our animadversions upon others' sins to which we have no inclination, yet our hearts may be going out after our covetousness; and in his view, who considers hatred, murder, we may stand condemned of this sin, which will unfit us for his kingdom. We should be the more critical in our examination upon this point, because this is almost the only sin which can be indulged, and we maintain a standing in the Church.

"It has long appeared to me," says the excellent Fuller, "that this species of covetousness will, in all probability, prove the eternal overthrow of more characters among professing people than almost any other sin; and this because it is almost the only sin which may be indulged, and a profession of religion at the same time supported. If a man be a drunkard, a fornicator, an adulterer, or a liar: if he rob his neighbour, oppress the poor, or deal unjustly, he must give up his pretensions to religion; or his religious connexions, if they are worthy of being so denominated, will give him up: but he may *love the world, and the things of the world*, and at the same time retain his

character. If the depravity of the human heart be not subdued by the grace of God, it will operate. If a dam be placed across some of its ordinary channels, it will flow with greater depth and rapidity in those that remain. It is thus, perhaps, that avarice is most prevalent in old age, when the power of pursuing other vices has in a great measure subsided. And thus it is with religious professors, whose hearts are not right in the sight of God. They cannot figure away with the profane, nor indulge in gross immoralities; but they can love the world supremely, and be scarcely amenable to human judgment. And whatever may prove the overthrow of a *mere* professor of religion, may be a temptation to a good man, and greatly injure his soul."

Is covetousness productive of such evil effects, as to interrupt our communion with God, darken our minds, and destroy our usefulness? Let us, then, take warning, and flee from this evil. Does it, if indulged, impede the progress of the cause of Christ; introduce contentions and divisions in the Church, and rouse the evil passions of our depraved nature into exercise? let us follow the direction of our blessed Redeemer, "to take heed and beware of covetousness."

Let us inquire, brethren, if the baneful effects of this sin are not now felt among us. May it not be ascribed to the indulgence of this principle, in a great degree, that we have not a more able and intelligent ministry among us? Were we to deny ourselves of this sin, should we not feel as able as some of our sister Associations, to make provision for the education of our pious young brethren, who may be called of God to the work of the ministry. And would not those, who are already engaged in the work, if they were properly supported, study to show themselves workmen approved unto God, who need not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth?" But now, many of them, either from covetousness in themselves, or in their brethren, entangle themselves with the affairs of this life, and are more engaged in buying, selling, and getting gain, than in reading and in meditation.

Finally, brethren, let us reflect upon the love of Christ to us guilty sinners, and our high obligations to him for our salvation. And may a sense of his distinguishing love to us while dead in trespasses and in sins, and the rich favours which he bestows upon us in such profusion, arouse us all to activity in his precious cause, and constrain us to live no longer to ourselves. We live at an eventful period. Every thing around us is calculated to excite us to action. Every thing calls upon us to active and liberal exertions in the dissemination of the truth, as it is in Jesus. No longer is the Christian world to be enslaved with the chains of superstition, bigotry and covetousness. Look abroad, and around you at the liberal contributions of Christians to diffuse the Bible, to originate and support the cause of Missions, and to patronize benevolent institutions. Let us be active, diligent, benevolent and persevering in the glorious cause of Jesus, remembering that "in due time we shall reap if we faint not."

From our Minutes you will learn the state of our Churches, and the additions made to them the past year. We have reason to acknowledge with gratitude, to the great Head of the Church, the many precious revivals which we have experienced since our last

session ; and the united, flourishing, and increasing state of the Churches, generally, which belong to this Association.

Our present interview has been peculiarly interesting and pleasant. We have in a comfortable measure realized the happiness of brethren dwelling together in unity, and can in truth say, "It is good for us to be here." May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be multiplied to all our Churches, and his peace dwell in the hearts of all our dear brethren.

Corresponding Letter.

The WARREN ASSOCIATION, to the several Affiliations, with whom they correspond, sendeth Christian salutation.

BELOVED BRETHREN,

THE occasion on which we address you by these few lines, is peculiarly animating. Assembled from different parts, not by the mandate of usurped authority, but inclined by that oneness of affection and design which the Gospel inspires, we have been edified and comforted. All other principles of union are weak, compared with the love of God shed abroad in the heart. Unassisted by nature, and opposed by the contending interests of the world, it lives ; nor can the revolutions of time destroy it. That must be a heavenly place, where Christians meet, whose hearts and hopes are one. Their fervent prayers, and solemn praise are received at the throne of grace, with infinite delight. The year past, many of the Churches in this Association have been greatly refreshed by the special influence of the Holy Spirit ; and by the same divine influence, many perishing sinners have been reconciled to God, and united with his people, according to divine appointment. The whole number added to our Churches by baptism is 528 ; and the nett increase of the Association, 392.

This is a day of good tidings. From different places in this country, and from distant parts of the earth, we hear of the irresistible progress of truth and salvation.

This precious cause, dear brethren, must prevail. The everlasting honour of Jehovah, and the best good of the universe, are nearly connected with its success. Confiding in the divine veracity, we are placed upon an eminence, which overlooks the mystery of iniquity. Here a glorious prospect fills the eye. It is the tabernacle of God with men ; and all nations and languages worshipping before him ! There, the saints, freed from the inconvenience of imperfection, and local circumstances, shall forever enjoy uninterrupted intercourse with one another, and fellowship with their Redeemer. Till we are numbered with them, dear brethren, we solicit an interest in your prayers, and a continuance of correspondence, which has been to us peculiarly pleasing, and edifying.

May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. AMEN.