

TERMS AND NOTICES.

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Religious Intelligencer.

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Rev. Joseph McLeod, D. D., - - Editor.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 25, 1903.

Editorial.

—A great opportunity and a great duty are before the Christian people of Canada in the new population now rushing into the Northwest.

—The Cuban legislature refused to make Good Friday a legal holiday, and the Roman Catholics in the United States are much incensed. What business is it of theirs, anyway?

—The church makes a serious mistake when it admits to membership the unregenerate, for the sake of the social distinction or the financial strength they are supposed to give. Weakness, not strength, is sure to result.

—A man who had moved next door to a church was invited by the pastor to attend the services. He replied: "I seldom go to church. When I do I go to hear Mr.—. The rest of you preachers always cast some reflections upon our business. Mr.— never does."

The man was a saloon owner and a gambler. Perhaps Mr.— would regard the rum-seller's statement a compliment to his preaching. And yet there can be no stronger condemnation of the occupant of a Christian pulpit than to be so commended by a wicked man.

—Though the revised Bible has been nearly twenty years before the public, and is much used as a help in study of the scriptures, it has never taken the place of the authorized version in the pulpit and the home. While, as the *Christian Intelligencer* remarks, it is conceded to be more faithful and accurate in rendering the original Greek and Hebrew, it lacks the vigor and grace of style which makes the authorized version a monument of forceful English, and those whose memories are stored with favorite passages of the

older version are unwilling to adopt the changes made by the revisers.

—The best evidence of Christianity is a Christian. In conversation about the miracles recorded in the Bible, a Japanese said: It needs no argument to prove to me the miracles in the Bible. My friend is one. He is a resurrection from the dead; he is like the blind receiving sight and the lame walking; he has completely changed, and is a living miracle.

Such witnesses of this gracious power Jesus expects all his disciples to be. The man "created anew in Christ Jesus" is the great and unanswerable argument. Are we Christ's disciples? What impression does our manner of life make on our fellows?

THE ONCE A YEAR OFFERING.

It is the custom of too many churches to make their contributions to missions and other denominational objects at the end of the year—just a few days before Conference. Then for twelve months more they refrain from thought about it. The habit is not a good one. The executive committees having the several branches of denominational work in charge are not only left without money most of the year, but are in a state of uncertainty, which makes it difficult to pursue a vigorous policy with any degree of confidence or comfort. It is bad for the churches, too. The work of the body is not kept in their thought. Or, if the matter is presented to them, and they do not give anything to meet the need during the intervening twelve months, it is still bad for them. The failure to respond to appeals has a hardening effect. Interest is developed by aiding an object. If we aid a good work as infrequently as but once a year, the interest is not likely to grow very rapidly or become very strong.

If churches and people could be induced to make monthly contributions to the enterprises of the denomination, both they and the work would benefit by the practice. The work, being kept constantly before the people's minds, would gain a deeper place in their sympathies, giving would become a joy, and contributions would be larger.

Pastors and church officers will do well if they persist in their endeavors to establish the system of frequent contributions to denominational work. Much improvement has been made in this respect in late years, yet much remains to be done. What would be thought of a Christian who should undertake to do all his praising and praying once a year? Scarcely more unreasonable is the plan of doing all our paying once a year.

The moral effect on the people who give to the Lord's cause is to be taken into account, as well as the supply of the needs of the work. The Lord could have dispensed with our gold and silver, and done his

work in another way. The reason why he has made it the law that his cause can go on only as his people support it, is that he knows that their doing so is necessary to their growth in grace. To praise and pray are necessary; to pay is equally so. Hence the wisdom of the New Testament rule: "On the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store as the Lord hath prospered him;" so is the Lord honored with our substance.

LOST CHURCH MEMBERS.

Christian people frequently express much sadness concerning the lost condition of the unconverted ones who are outside of churches, and their condition is indeed sad; but it seems to me that there is even greater reason for sadness in the cases of those members in the churches who are yet unsaved. It may be said that it is far more difficult to convince such ones that they are still lost to God and to themselves, that they are yet in the bonds of sin and death, than it is to convince those outside of the Christian church that they are verily lost in spiritual darkness. The lost ones in the churches are very apt to fancy that they have special and secure advantages over the common sinners in the world. Have they not been baptized, and taken upon themselves sacred vows? And do they not say prayers, and set apart money for God's cause? Furthermore, do they not often attend the house of God, while thousands of outsiders never enter any church? We may presume that such questions as these occupy the minds of many of the lost ones in the churches, and the tendency is to make the most of such supposed advantages.

But the serious fact remains that unless a church member has been born from above, unless he has a regenerated heart, and therefore possesses the love of God and the Holy Spirit as a witness, he is as certainly lost as is any sinner in the world. And the lost sinner in the church is apt to be much more blind to his real condition than is a sinner outside of a church. In Christ's day the publicans and harlots, the classes that were commonly regarded as being in a degraded condition, were much more susceptible to the Gospel call than were the Pharisees, who were members of the Jewish Church or congregation.

And today the hardest class to affect by calls to repentance are the lost members. It is a solemn fact that but very few of such ones are brought to genuine repentance, and hence to true life. In many instances they will temporarily bestir themselves during a series of powerful meetings, and then will soon subside. And what pastor or evangelist is there who makes special and direct efforts to secure the salvation of the lost church members? I do not recall personal knowledge of such a thing, and yet it is just as necessary work as that of trying to save sinners outside of churches. Oh, it is lamentable that there are those in all churches, having the best of opportunities to be verily saved, and therefore to be forever in Christ's kingdom, who are fearfully lost!—C. H. Wetherbee.

LORD'S DAY WEEK.

"Lord's Day Week" has won nearly as prominent a place in the thought of evangelical Christianity as the Week of Prayer. In Britain, United States and Canada it is quite generally observed. It always begins with the first Sunday after Easter. It therefore begins with Sunday, 19th April.

Some one may ask, "Why a Lord's Day Week at all?" We may answer:

1. Because there is special need of a revival of reverence for the Lord's day. The divine authority of the Sabbath law is called in question, or openly denied. The day itself is observed by many—even Christian people—with growing looseness. Attendance at Divine service is giving place to general reading, social gatherings or pleasure-seeking. What wonder, therefore, if the worldly and non-religious without hesitation or apology make the holy day of God a holiday of the world?

If God's day be dishonored, neither his word nor his name, nor other sacred thing will long be revered. Does the twentieth century need anything more than a revival of reverence?

2. Because these is serious danger of the Lord's day, as a national Canadian institution, being seriously impaired, and of its becoming a day of business and toil for a large number of the people. Many corporations yield to the "pressure of business," and make use of the Lord's day to get relief and to increase their profits. Especially is this true of foreign concerns, which, not content with an effort to secure a lion's share of our phenomenal natural wealth, openly scout our religious convictions and defy our laws. Important labor, too—American, European and Asiatic—is ready too often to enter seven-day-in-the-week bondage for the money there is in it, and not a few Canadians will work on the Lord's day rather than risk losing employment. Between 100,000 and 150,000 in Canada already have no Sabbath rest!

3. Because a general effort, at one season, throughout the country, by all who value the Lord's day, is bound to make an impression upon the public mind that will last.

How shall we observe "Lord's Day Week?" What use can we make of it? In other years it has been used in the following ways, which may be regarded as suggestions to those desiring such:

1. Special sermons are preached on the Lord's day, and Christian people encouraged specially to pray for its better observance.

2. Some special reference is made in Sunday-school, urging upon the children the claims of the Lord's day—its sacredness or its benefits. The same is done in Y. P. S's, Y. M. C. A's, W. C. T. U's, etc.

3. Lord's Day Alliance Executives arrange for union meetings in their centre or vicinity.