

TERMS AND NOTICES.

THE RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCER, published in the interest of the Free Baptists of Canada, is issued every Wednesday.

SUBSCRIPTION. \$1.50 a year, in advance. When not paid within three months the price is \$2.00 a year. Subscriptions may begin at any time.

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ADVERTISING rates on application. ST. JOHN OFFICE: Barnes & Co's, 84 Prince William Street.

All letters, whether on business or for publication, should be addressed to THE RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCER, Box 284, Fredericton, N. B.

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Religious Intelligencer.

(ESTABLISHED 1853.)

Manager's and Editor's Office: Fredericton, N. B.

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

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 23, 1903.

Editorial.

—To all our readers, old and young, we wish most heartily a good Christmas. May His love whose birth is celebrated sweeten and gladden every life.

—Congregational singing should be encouraged. And wherever possible, it would be well to have an instructor of the congregation.

—No one prays for the success of the liquor traffic. Many pray for its overthrow. Some who pray for its overthrow vote to perpetuate it. Prayers and votes should agree.

—The plans of the best and wisest people sometimes fail. Disappointments are in the lot of the truest of God's children, whose sole desire is to do His will and glorify Him. But even the sorest disappointments may be made to work into the divine plan for the disappointed. Just keep on seeking to know God's will, and earnestly striving to do it, and all will be well.

—Commercialism has no more contemptible form than when it dons the part of religion, as it sometimes does. The *Examiner* well says that the man who "seeks membership in the church for the social or other advantage thus secured, is guilty of the most disreputable form of commercialism. He is making an investment for gain instead of giving himself to Christ with unreserved devotion and love. But gain of this sort is really loss. The investment is of the earth, earthly. It perishes with the using.

—If last Sunday's sermon did you good, it might comfort and encourage the preacher to know it. Perhaps, as the *Watchman* suggests, he preached in doubt and anxiety of spirit, fearing lest it was falling upon inattentive or unresponsive hearts. It will cheer him to know that at least one sympathetic heart received and was helped by the message. Such commendation, if he be a true man,

will not make him proud; but it will encourage him in his work, and make him a better preacher. A little judicious praise, spoken with honest lips from a sincere heart, is good for all of us. Don't fail to speak the kindly word when your heart prompts it.

—The latest reports from Australia indicate that the feeling favourable to union of the Presbyterian and Methodist bodies is strong and growing stronger. The joint committee on union has had its last meeting prior to reporting, and has prepared a statement of the points of difference in doctrine, polity, and worship, and expressed satisfaction that these were so few and comparatively unimportant. The points of agreement between the two bodies are held to be many and vital. The next General Conference and General Assembly will be asked to consider definitely the question of the desirability of union. If union comes it will likely apply to both churches in the Australian Commonwealth and New Zealand.

CONFESSING CHRIST.

To be of real use to a friend, we have to know him well. If we do not know him pretty well, we may say things of him which, though meant for his good, may do him harm. What is true of human friendship is no less true of the spiritual. To be able to confess Jesus well, we need to know Him well. We may do harm to the cause we love by want of knowledge or by want of tact in speaking of Christ. But we may do still more harm by not speaking of Him at all. For every one who does harm by talking unwisely about Christ, ten do harm by keeping still when they should speak out.

It was not by a rich and powerful organization that Christianity was spread, but by the boundless enthusiasm of individuals who were feeling in their own personal experiences the influences and blessing of Christ's word and touch. Each one testified that which he knew of Christ in his own experience. Such testimony was with power, by the Holy Spirit. Such testimony is always effective.

The life of Christ manifest in the lives of His disciples is the real instrument that turns men to righteousness. When there are better Christians, there will be more of them. The indifferent, non-confessing Christian is the hurt of the world. Savourless salt cannot flavor. Hidden light does not illumine. Christ must be confessed by those who know Him. He must be confessed in their lives. Sacrifice for Him is loud-speaking confession. It is a language that all men understand. It is impressive. It persuades. By it disciples are multiplied.

CALENDARS.—We are indebted to Mr. J. D. Fowler, the Fredericton jeweler and optician, for a very pretty and convenient 1904 calendar. Mr. Fowler's business, which is advertised in the INTELLIGENCER, is first-class in every department.

Mr. E. H. Hoben, grocer, and Mr. Geo. Beatty, meat dealer, both of Fredericton, have, also, favored us with neat calendars.

CHRISTMAS.

Christmas enshrines the supreme thought, the great formative force of the centuries: "The Word was made flesh." It is the complement, the completion of the divine order, necessitated by human need; the fulfilment of the old covenant, and the light and glory of the new: "In Him was life and the Life is the Light of men."

We are sure of the fact: "For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord." Never more sure than today; after the searchlight of the ages, a wearied, trodden world turns with joy and exceeding gladness to "Time's great birth."

Hail to the Lord's anointed;
Great David's greater Son!
Hail, in the time appointed,
His reign on earth begun.

His name shall stand forever;
That name to us is—Love.

Made incarnate, unfolded from the cradle to the cross. The dearest word of home; the greatest word of life; and the "sweetest note of seraphs' song":

Love divine all love exceeding,
Joy of heaven to earth come down.

This is the joyous, triumphant note of Christmas! Other notes the world has had, but love completes and crowns all, as sunlight gilds the day with glory:

The Lord is come! In Him we trace
The fulness of God's truth and grace;
Throughout those words and acts divine
Gleams of the eternal splendour shine;
And from His inmost Spirit flow,
As from a height of sunlit snow,
Rivers of perennial life,
To heal and sweeten nature's strife.

Of "peace and good will" the blessed angels sang as they came from the home of love:

Still through the cloven skies they come,
With peaceful wings unfurled,
And still their heavenly music floats
O'er all the weary world;
Above its sad and lowly plains
They bend on hovering wing,
And ever o'er its Babel-sounds
The blessed angels sing.

The song of the heart, the glad song of merry Christmas.

No ascetic was our Lord; the feast shared His benign presence, and the social board had His benediction. He gave the best, and dowered all in "peace and good will."

Fast and feast go together—the fast of wisdom in wise-hearted understanding, and the feast of gladness in the smile of peace and sincere good will. A fast of corroding care, destroying destructive hate, and the unlovely spirit that darkens and narrows life and clouds the heart. A feast, a royal feast, because of the presence of the King, in the spirit of all beauty, the loveliness of the cherished angels' song. The Divine Life, giving glory to the fair season of happy Christmastide.

"The heart grows rich in giving;" gifts shared are gifts blest. "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."

Wiser than the miser's hoards
Is the giver's choice;
Sweeter than the song of birds
Is the thankful voice.
Welcome smiles on faces sad
As the flowers of spring;
Let the tender hermits be glad
With the joy they bring.

In the joy-spirit of the Christmas bells:

In this glad hour when children meet,
And home with them their children bring,

Our hearts with one affection beat,
One song of praise our voices sing
For all the faithful, loved and dear,
Whom Thou so kindly, Lord, hast given,
For those who still are with us here,
And those who wait for us in heaven.

For all, accept our humble praise;
Still bless us, Father, by Thy love;
And when are closed our mortal days,
Unite us in one home above.

We wish and pray for each and all a happy, joyous Christmas, a treasured memory, a light for days to come: "In His name," for His sake, a merry Christmas. S.

CANADIAN CITIZENSHIP.

Rev. Dr. Carman, General Superintendent of the Methodist Church in Canada, made an address a few days ago, in Toronto, on the duties, the dignity and the dangers of citizenship. As usual, he dealt with his subject in a clear and strong way, using great plainness of speech. He said many things that citizens would do well to have in mind just now, and act upon when they elect representatives, as they are likely to have to do very soon. A synopsis of the address says:

He thought there was about as much need of a revival in this country on the question of citizenship as there was need of a revival of religion. "Don't consider me heterodox," said the doctor, "but there is nothing in the land that is so badly in the mind, so disgraced and degraded, as the high and honorable relation of citizenship." In estimating citizenship, Dr. Carman asked his hearers to throw it on the background of slavery, serfdom, peonage or vassalage. As "I am a Roman citizen" was once a shield around the world, so there was now no prouder name than "I am a Briton, a citizen of this great empire." Religion was, of course, essential, vital and fundamental to true living. His idea was to get the people to be Britons.

There was no use talking about patriotism and loyalty and then standing behind the bar and selling his boy what would ruin him. The first duty of citizenship was one's character, which must be one that will stand examination; then one must be intelligent, and it would be better to be like dumb cattle and driven at the will of some master than to be of our citizenship and remain in ignorance of public affairs. Public spirit and patriotism were likewise necessary qualities. Our very freedom in this land led to indifference. "There is a moral inertia, a social inertia, a political inertia, and it is harder to push forward the mighty engine of reform than to pull a locomotive through a dozen Alpine snow banks. What is the trouble? It is the party spirit! Oh, the littleness and narrowness and trickiness and hardness of party spirit! If there is anything I would like to break it is the shackles of party spirit. Mere party spirit is precisely what the slavery of sin is to the soul of the man. It is the struggle for place, a struggle for pre-eminence, a struggle for office, a struggle for position and for honor.

I want to tell you, liberals and conservatives are abdicating their manhood and giving up their liberty and high functions and privileges of British citizenship into the hands of unworthy party leaders, and until we can have a different order of things we will never get satisfactory temperance or social re-