

THE RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCER,

AND

Bible Society, Missionary, and Sabbath School

ADVOCATE.

VOL. I.

SAINT JOHN, N. B., JANUARY 15, 1853.

NO. 2.

THE RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCER

IS PUBLISHED ON THE

FIRST AND FIFTEENTH OF EACH MONTH,

In Saint John, N. B., by

E. McLEOD AND JOSEPH NOBLE.

At One Shilling and Three Pence per Volume of Twelve Numbers, in advance.

Communications, Orders, or Remittances for this paper may be directed, (post paid,) to B. J. UNDERHILL, Saint John, N. B.

Religious Intelligence.

REFORMATION IN IRELAND.

The following is from the Speech of the EARL OF ROSEN, delivered at the last Annual Meeting of the BRITISH AND FOREIGN BIBLE SOCIETY, held in London. It will be perceived that he is an eye-witness of what is occurring in Ireland. He is, we believe, President of the Hibernian Bible Society; and has been for more than thirty years engaged in the Bible cause.—[En.]

During the last month it was my privilege to attend a Meeting of the Hibernian Bible Society; and those whom I am addressing may perhaps be aware of the wonderful effects which have taken place in that country to which I am proud and happy to belong—the wonderful manifestation of God's blessing in the dissemination and in the reception of His holy word. These great events are now taking place in many parts: in many parts, did I say? I would say, through the whole of that country, for there is a moving in the minds of men in all parts, even where its demonstration has not been effected to the extent it has been in others, which nothing but God's Holy Spirit could ever produce. I think, My Lord, it would be more satisfactory to this meeting that I should state some simple facts, which I have seen with my own eyes, and heard with my own ears, rather than go into any declamation, or attempt to express, in words only, my own feelings with respect to this great institution. During the last year, (1851,) in the month of September, hearing that a very great change had taken place in the Roman Catholic mind in various parts of the country—and I will confess, being very sceptical as to the extent of that change, and as to the nature of those circumstances to which I refer—I determined, when an opportunity should enable me, to visit those localities, and see really what the effect of God's word—for it was nothing else—the effect of that book which you distribute had been upon the minds of thousands upon thousands of my Roman Catholic fellow-subjects. With this determination I visited the western parts of Ireland, where these great events are taking place; where the whole sites of the country had come over out of the Church of Rome, and, through the medium of the Scriptures, had been led to join the Protestant Church. I went, therefore, in the first instance, to the west of Galway; from thence I proceeded to visit the various Missionary Stations, some under the Irish Missionary Society, some under the Irish Society, some under the Coast Society, some under the Reformation Society, and some under the Presbyterian Church Society; but all of them working together for the same object, all of them imbued with the same harmony; and no kind of attempt to meddle one with the other, except to give each other all the assistance they can in the great work in which they are all engaged. There was a feeling, which I cannot attempt to describe, amongst the ministers and people whom I visited. My Lord, I could not but say, after visiting several of those Roman Catholic counties, that the half was not told me. I could not attempt to impress upon the minds of those to whom I spoke on the subject the important work that was going on; for having been so sceptical myself, I could not help thinking that those who had not seen it must be equally sceptical. But I implored them, when I spoke to them of what I saw and heard, that they would go for themselves, and see what was going on, and they would then be able to bear the testimony which I am enabled to bear before this vast assembly to-day. My Lord I need not tell you, for it has already been referred to, that the great enemy to the Bible is Rome. When I visited those parts of the country, I was met at every moment by the violent persecution that in some places existed, of those whose only crime was to read God's holy word, and which persecution was carried to such an extent, that even the public burning of that word was displayed in open day, as a book which must bring misery and wretchedness upon those who read it.

My Lord—there is one very interesting circumstance in the whole of this great work that this blessed word of God which you are distributing is effecting throughout Ireland—that nothing else will satisfy the people but that word; that they ask not what man says, not what the Priest says, not

what the Protestant Minister says, nor what the Readers say, but, What does God say? And it certainly did afford me great delight and satisfaction, when attending the several Missionary fields of labour, the different schools, and the various sources of instruction, to hear one great object set before the people by Ministers, by Readers, and by Schoolmasters, and that one great object was Christ, the Saviour of sinners. I could read to you many other interesting documents connected with this teaching, but I am unwilling to take up the time of this Meeting. But, My Lord, before I conclude I must tell you, that those forebodings which have been so strongly and justly referred to by your Lordship, and by the two speakers who preceded me, as to what will happen with respect to hostility to the Bible, has arisen in many parts of the country to which I have referred. In connection with that object, I will take the liberty of stating two circumstances which I saw myself, and which I heard from the individuals connected with them. In the neighbourhood in which the Bishop of Tuam lives there is a great work going on as to inquiry. The Clergyman of the parish, a most excellent minister, who has been labouring amongst the Protestant as well as the Roman Catholic parishioners for some years, and who has been the means of a great blessing to many, was shot at whilst in his bed. Three shots were fired into his bedroom through the window: one of those shots went close to his wife's head, but most providentially neither of them were hurt. In the very same locality, a few miles distant, there was a poor woman, who had her children at the school, and who had herself left the Church of Rome. There was also a poor man, a respectable farmer, who had also, through the labours of the Readers, left the Church of Rome and attended the Bishop's Church, which was four or five miles distant. Being interested for the children about him, as well as for his own children, he entreated the Bishop to establish a Sunday School in his neighbourhood. The reply immediately was, from those to whom it referred, that there was no place to hold a school in, there was no school-house, and what, therefore, could be done? This poor man came forward himself, and said, "Here is my kitchen it is very much at your service: if you will send a Schoolmaster and a Reader to collect the children who are willing to be taught, they are most welcome to be taught under my roof." In the course of a few months after this transaction the poor man was visited by a banditti at night—men with their faces blackened and with arms in their hands. He was drawn out of his bed; he was dreadfully beaten; two of his ribs were broken, and a great piece of his ear cut off. Having heard of this circumstance, I said nothing could make me believe it but seeing it. So I went to the man, and saw the place where the ear was cut off, and he told me the whole story. The ruffians told him, that if he did not immediately take away his kitchen from the use of the school, they would come back again, and he would fare worse. However, this man, notwithstanding this treatment, continued his kitchen for the use of the school, till the Bishop built a school-house himself, which is now filled with children. There was also a poor woman with three children. She could hardly speak English, but she had been brought to a knowledge of the truth by hearing the Scriptures read through the ministrations of those valuable Readers; and in no assembly can I ever express too strongly the value of those dauntless, Christian, excellent men, who are employed in this part of Ireland. My Lord, this poor woman, with her three or four children, was attacked at night by similar banditti; she was pulled out of her house by the hair: her children lay on a bed of straw in a corner of the room. The banditti remonstrated with her for having left the Church of Rome, and attending the Bishop of Tuam's Church every Sunday. She told me, for I went to see her myself, that they set fire to the straw on which the children were lying, but they soon afterwards put it out, fearing, as she supposed, that the light of the fire would discover who they were. But however that might have been, she was pulled out of her house, dragged by the hair, and very unmercifully beaten. They wished her to promise that she would not go any more to the Bishop's Church; but so far from doing so, every Sunday, from that period up to the time I visited her, she walked, with two of her children, four miles to attend service. My Lord, when I saw this poor woman sitting at the end of the school-room, I went up to her, and said to her, "I am afraid you are suffering very much from the persecution that is going on, on account of your conscience." "Ah! yes, Sir," said she, "I am suffering, and no one can tell what my sufferings are. I am afraid that I shall be murdered this winter, if there is not a police establishment within the neighbourhood in which I live; for when they visited me they told me that if I did not give up going to the Protestant Church I should be visited again, and it would be worse with me then than it is now. Ever since that period," she added, "up to the present day, I have never slept in my house at night; but, when night falls, I take my children out of my house, and we go to the back of the ditch, where we remain all night till the morning comes, when we return again to the house." She then added, "This I can do in the summer, but now the winter

is coming what am I to do?" I really felt almost unable to answer. I said to her, "Well, my good woman, He in whom you trust, and for whose cause you are suffering these things, is able to protect you, and to preserve you in the midst of the greatest foes." "Ah!" said she, "Sir, I know that, but God has often allowed many of His most devoted servants to be put to death, and I am not prepared to leave my children behind me." Really I could say no more to this poor woman; but I could not help thinking what a wonderful manifestation this was of that species of civil and religious liberty which the demagogues of Popery boast so much about. However, the Bishop of Tuam, always anxious for the welfare of those around him, and for the prosperity of that work in which he was engaged, applied to the Government, and procured a police settlement close to the place where this poor woman lives. I believe she is now there, and I have every reason to think that she is going on her way rejoicing. She told me, also, that she had had an intimation, that if she would leave the Church of England, and return to her own Church, she would get £50, and be sent to America with her children. My Lord, I feel I have taken up too much time. I will only add, in conclusion, that I most sincerely concur in the great object which this Society has in view: and I trust your Lordship will live many years to preside over it.

PROPOSED MISSION TO INFIDELS.

Rev. John Angell James has written a letter to the Editor of the British Banner in reference to the refusal of Mr. Holyoake, the teacher of Atheism, to accept the challenge of Mr. Grant to a public discussion of the principles of natural and revealed religion, in which he proposes that the friends of the truth should employ Mr. Grant as a missionary to the Infidels of the kingdom. He states that undisguised and avowed atheism, is now the form which infidelity has assumed in England.—Their chief design at present, is to win over the laboring classes of the community. The Infidels are not without sanguine hope of effecting their object. Their plans are laid.—Organization centralized in London, and extensively ramified through the land, there is reason to believe has been effected. Popular lectures are already employed, and more will soon be engaged to sow the seeds of atheism over the country. What is needed, he says, is a class of men thoroughly competent, by acuteness of intellect, boldness of character, readiness of utterance, and tact in controversy, united with patience, kindness, and courtesy, to encounter the apostles of unbelief, and confound them before the audiences they are wont to assemble,—men who shall follow these unhappy corruptors of the public mind from town to town, expose their sophistry, and counteract their efforts, and who shall deliver lectures themselves, and invite discussion from any one who, in a respectful and inquiring disposition, shall have objections to offer, or information to seek. And he thinks such a class of laborers, might be of immense service in protecting the laboring population against the wiles of their adversaries, and convince them that atheism is at war with their present comfort as well as with their eternal happiness.

To sustain his position, Mr. James says:—One of the travelling agents of the Religious Tract Society lately stated in our Town Hall these three facts:—1st. There is an organized system of infidelity at work in this country.—2d. The object of this is to revolutionize the country in its political constitution. 3d. This organization has continental connections and continental resources. And he sustained each particular by facts. We have only to refer to the crimes and horrors of the first Gallican revolution to learn what unbridled and maddened atheism accomplished in that country, and which it may be expected, under similar circumstances, to repeat wherever it prevails.—Morning Star.

RELIGION IN ALGIERS.

Among the three millions of people inhabiting Algiers, now under the rule of the French, there are one hundred and twenty-five thousand Europeans, chiefly French and Spaniards. Of these, about six thousand are Protestants, who are scattered over the whole country. Protestant worship is held in the city of Algiers, and in six other places. Protestant preachers and colporteurs have free access to Europeans; and by preaching the gospel to Spaniards, they are virtually giving the gospel to Spain, while Spain is shutting it out. A door of access is open also to the Jews and to the Mohammedans; and one of the missionaries has preached the gospel in a mosque, to a mingled assembly of Arabs, Protestants, and Papists.—16.

DR. BRIDGEMAN ON CHINA.

Rev. Dr. Bridgeman, who has been for twenty-three years a missionary in China, was one of the speakers at the meeting of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, lately held in Troy. He said that when he went to China, there was but one missionary labourer in that country, while it was a capital offence to preach the gospel. Now the country is open to a great extent, and seventy missionaries are in the field. Dr. Bridgeman estimates the population of China at four