

# RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCER,

## And Bible Society, Missionary, and Sabbath School Advocate.

E. McLEOD, Editor.

That God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ.—PETER.

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G. W. DAY, PRINTER.

### Harlan Page, the Joiner.

BY THE REV. ROBERT STEEL.

The love of souls is a Godlike emotion. It was this which sent the Redeemer to the world. This moved so deeply the heart of the Son of God, and led Him, in obedience to His Father, to endure humiliation and death. It was this which dictated such words of welcome to anxious sinners, such tender and tearful exhortations with the careless, such awful rebukes to the wicked as were uttered by Him who spake as never man had done. It is this love of souls which causes the Holy Ghost to hover over our troubled world, notwithstanding its long rejection of most marvellous grace.

Every child of God feels this love. It is an important characteristic of the renewed nature. It beats with its pulse of life, and in proportion to its liveliness. In some it merely exists, because faith is weak, and love to the Lord lukewarm; therefore little prayer and little effort for others mark them. They hide their Lord's money. In others it is fervent: they have strong faith, possess the Spirit of Jesus, and wrestle in prayer for souls till Christ be formed in them, and use means to obtain their desire.

Harlan Page exhibited a zeal in the conversion of souls seldom seen among the godly, and because of this, we select him as the subject of a sketch for the improvement of our readers. He was born at Coventry, Connecticut, on the 28th July, 1791, and after receiving a common education, became a house-joiner, at which he laboured for many years. He married in 1813. In 1814 his spiritual life began, when, as a burdened sinner, he found rest in Jesus. His distress for sin was so great "that he frequently left his work to retire and pray, and as he rode to and from a neighbouring town, where he was employed in business, he often felt constrained to stop and go into the grove to plead for mercy." It was the crises of his history. He was in the throes of the new birth. His eternity depended on that hour. It was not strange, therefore, that he was so earnest. Luther, in the same ordeal, was wasted to a skeleton; Saul of Tarsus could not eat nor drink; an old saint "forgot to eat his bread." "A Stranger Here" could not sleep till the great controversy was settled. Reader, were you ever so deeply concerned about your salvation?

Harlan Page believed and lived. He passed the strait gate. He confessed his Saviour. Then he thus evidenced his love of souls. "When I first obtained a hope, I felt that I must labour for souls. I prayed year after year, that God would make me the means of saving souls." This is the miniature of the man—the epitome of his life. Would that the same resolution were engraven in the heart of every Christian! How many intercessors would there be! How many untiring labourers would there be in the Lord's harvest! With what a full bosom would each harvest man go home to rest! Thus Harlan Page felt, resolved, laboured, and saved souls.

"In him Jesus crucified again,  
For every sin which he could not prevent  
Stuck in him like a nail. His heart bled for it  
As it had been a nail sin of his own.  
Heavy his cross, and stoutly did he bear it,  
Even to the foot of holy Calvary;  
And if at last he sunk beneath the weight,  
There were not wanting souls, whom he had taught  
The way to Paradise, that, in white robes,  
Throng'd to the gate to hail their shepherd home."

He endeavoured to do good to others in various ways, but the chief were writing letters or speaking to individuals most solemnly regarding their eternal state. His words, whether written or spoken, were always pointed, urgent, and tender. "Nothing but love impels me to write," he would add to his appeal. "I think much of you," he wrote to a female relative, "and long to see you in the ark of safety. Have you reason to hope that your sins are pardoned through a Saviour's blood? If not, consider your danger." To another, "Will you not take up in earnest the great subject of the salvation of your own soul, feel your guilt and danger, and flee to the arms of the blessed Saviour? Now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation." Writing to a young woman, he addressed her thus: "An affectionate regard for your immortal interest has induced me to write a few lines, though I know not that they will be welcome or beneficial. While others have been accepting Christ, I have anxiously hoped to hear the same of you. . . . On no other subject should I address you; but on the momentous concerns of the soul you will not feel that I need to apologize for the performance of the duty." When at a religious meeting, we are told, "his mind would often become intensely fixed upon the conversion of some impenitent individual. He would address the individual with great solemnity,

urging an immediate compliance with the terms of the gospel; and as his friend accompanied him homewards, such was sometimes the pressure upon his heart, that they would seek a retired spot, and there, even in the depth of winter, kneel and plead with God for the person's salvation."

Prayer-meetings were the delight of his soul. He was ever ready to join with a few to supplicate the throne of grace. Having had occasion to labour in Jewett City, he speedily established meetings for prayer. He also conversed with each person employed in the factory on the state of their souls, instructed classes, visited families, distributed tracts, succeeded in forming a church, and securing an evangelical pastor, where none had before been. What a valuable mechanic, thus working for God and the good of souls! O that each workshop had even one!

Tract distribution was ever with him a favorite means of doing good. Inclosing them in letters, he would add a word from his pen, "Accept the inclosed from one who earnestly desires your best good; and may I beg the favour that you will read it with candour, and weigh well the sentiments it contains;" or thus: "Will you and your companion oblige me so much as to give the inclosed an attentive perusal before you go to rest this night?" He paid "entrance" to the workshop in which he was employed, by giving tracts to the workmen. In 1825 he was appointed depository of the American Tract Society, and removed to New York. There he laboured during the remaining nine years of his life, as if he were in haste to die. Nor were his labours merely official. He dealt with the consciences of the persons employed in the tract-houses, taught Sabbath schools, visited the degraded, kept prayer-meetings, wrote spirit-stirring letters with increased devotedness. He lived to win souls. "He ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears."

Let us mark the results of his labours of love.—He was as leaven in the world, and his blessed influence spread far and wide. "Mr. Page's conversation first led me to think seriously of my soul and eternity," said one. "But for the efforts of Mr. Page, and a dear Christian friend of his in Coventry, my soul, to all human view, must have been lost," confessed Captain T. Of one hundred and twenty-five of his Sabbath-schoolers in Coventry, "eighty-four are thought to have given evidence of piety, and six are preachers of the gospel." Of individuals in the same place, with whom he had conversed personally or by letter—and he knew of no young person in the congregation untaught by him—thirty adorned the faith. Upwards of one hundred young women were employed in the tract and bible houses, and of these about sixty were brought into the kingdom, besides binders and printers. "Many sheets of the Word of God and tracts," he says, "as they have been folded and stitched, have been moistened with the tears of the convicted sinner, and the broken-hearted penitent; and thence gone out on errands of mercy to a perishing world." What a blessed baptism! Would God that this paper had the same.

In answer to prayer suggested by him along with fellow-labourers for eighty-eight individuals, in a district of tract distribution in New York, thirty-four hopeful conversions occurred in 1832. Prayer and effort were rewarded. Thirty-two teachers were his hire in Sabbath-schools, of whom nine sought the ministry. He himself knew of more than one hundred souls converted by his instrumentality. Thus largely were his early resolutions fulfilled, and prayers answered.

His death was triumphant, on the 23d September, 1834. His family were in the faith, his widow was provided for through the generosity of friends. And "he being dead, yet speaketh," by means of his most interesting and edifying memoir, republished in this country by the Religious Tract Society, and which we earnestly request all Sabbath-school teachers, tract distributors, and those who love the salvation of souls, to peruse. It is a hand-book to Christian effort.

Christian reader! what are you doing for souls? Let Mr. Page counsel you. "I doubt not you feel how great is their danger, and long for their salvation. Do write to them; it may be God will make you the instrument of salvation to their souls." Endeavour to win some to Christ, make such a subject of prayer, of address, of a letter. Then of you it may be said, as the pastor said, "There comes Mr. Page with another lamb." "He that winneth souls is wise."

READER! ARE YOU SAVED? We cannot close such a sketch without an appeal. If there was cause for the zeal recounted, what do you mean by impotence and unbelief? Oh why will ye die? We beseech you to be reconciled to God?

### The Patience of Hope.

BY MISS M. A. S. BARBER.

If every human being could weigh in a balance all the sorrows of his life, we doubt if his fears would not be found to outweigh all the rest. His fears; that is, his apprehensions of dangers and sorrows which have either never come upon him at all, or coming, have not been half so terrible, as they seemed in the distance.

There is scarcely any thing to the fear of which we are not subject; we fear sickness, losses, sorrow, disappointment, danger, and death. These fears are kept alive also by our earthly desires.—We wish so much for the things of this world, that we live in constant alarm lest we should not obtain them, or having them, lest we should lose them. A faithful Christian minister had once a wife whom he tenderly loved, and whom God took from him. When she was gone, he was happier

than when she was alive, because he had no longer the fear of losing her.

It is sad to think that the Lord's best blessings should be thus some times lessened, while we possess them, by our own anxieties. The remedy, if we are Christians, is in our own hands; "the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and into the patience of Christ." The patience of Christ is always the patience of hope; for no disciple of the Lord is called upon to endure any thing except for good; nothing out of which there is not some good thing to come, either now or in the future.

The patience of hope has two sides—the darker side of suffering, and the brighter side of acting. We say brighter, because we doubt whether it is not generally easier to do than to suffer, as a task is easier to perform by day than by night. In the silence, the quiet, the obscurity of suffering, especially in little things, many of the daylight helps of doing are wanting.

The patience of hope is sometimes called the patient abiding in the hope. We remember to have read the story of a celebrated miser, who, although enormously rich, had never allowed himself during his life the most common and necessary comforts, but would live about in half-finished houses, denying himself everything, in order to hoard up his money. As he grew old, the sin long indulged became insanity; so that the money which he had never used, he fancied he did not possess; all his fortune, he thought, consisted of a few silver pieces, which he used to hide for security in different places; sometimes he would forget where he had put them; then his distress was so great that nothing could console him; in vain he was reminded that hundreds and thousands were lying in his name in the bank; it was all of no use, the old miser groaned over his lost half-crowns. It is a sad picture, but it is more sad than the Christian, who, possessing the hope of an eternal inheritance, is groaning and fretting, and cannot be comforted over losses and crosses in the things of this world? and more especially when they are in the small things even of this world, the little every-day troubles of the man, the woman, and the child?

Are these your temptations to irritability and impatience—the little vexations of daily life? O stay upon such occasions, and say, "I am looking for my half-crowns!"

The patience of hope has also its brighter side of acting. As every Christian may hope from his suffering, however small, some present or future good, so every Christian may expect the same for his work, however humble, if it be only in the Lord.

In a room open to the road, in a missionary home in the East, sits the wife of a missionary at her labours. Her children are at play in the adjoining veranda; beside her sits her teacher a native of the East; and there, nearly all the long day, except when the cares for her children or her family call her away, she may be seen, notwithstanding the intense, prostrating heat, labouring earnestly, labouring always. The books and papers, with which the table is covered, show that her labour is the translation of some English tracts into an Eastern language. It is not that of the people amongst whom she dwells. A missionary in Burmah from her early youth, a teacher in the Sunday Schools among the little Burmese children, a teacher in the Bible class among the grey-haired women of Burmah, she would have found but little comparative difficulty in her task, had it been only to transfer a message of life into a language so familiar to her. The translation is being made into the Peguan, an Asiatic language little known, and seldom spoken, and hence the difficulty, hence the study and exertion required. The Peguans are a people who live among the Burmese, but are entirely distinct from them in everything but heathenism. About a hundred years ago they conquered Burmah, but they retained it only a short time, and the Burmese revenged themselves by putting to death the chief men among the Peguans, and oppressing the rest.—Their language was forbidden to be used; none dared to speak it except in remote places. It became all the dearer to the vanquished people, and the missionaries soon found that the most effectual way to their hearts lay through the accents of their mother-tongue. They were, therefore, very earnest that some among them should learn it, and one of these was Mrs. Judson. So there she would sit all day long, in the hot sultry hours, labouring earnestly for the Lord. The room, as we have said, was open to the road; and often would the passer-by stop, and look on with curious interest at so strange a sight in Eastern lands as a lady student. Sometimes she would speak to them. "Perhaps," thought she, of a man whose eyes one morning she saw very intently fixed upon her, "perhaps he may be one of God's chosen people." She asked him what he wanted; he was looking, he said, to see her write. She invited him in; he was Shan; a man who lived in his boat, and had come thither for the purpose of trade. She spoke to him of the true God and Eternal Life; he listened, and promised to pray. It may be she gave him a tract. Thus the days were spent; many little books, and tracts under her supervision appeared in the Peguan language; among others was one called "The Golden Balance."

Many years passed away. The missionary's wife was laid in a distant grave—far from her native land, far even from her mission home—but her husband was there still, toiling still to gather in a Christian Church from among the surrounding heathens. One day a middle-aged man, an Asiatic, presented himself before him, and requested to be baptized. Struck with such a request from a stranger, the missionary, of course, proceeded to question him. It was evident he came from a distance; he spoke the language imperfectly; he was not a Burmese; it appeared upon inquiry that he was a Peguan from the neighbourhood of Bangkok, in Siam. "Why," he said, "do you wish to be baptized?"

"I believe in the Lord Jesus Christ; and I wish to enter his religion and obey his commands."

"How do you know that this is one of his commands?"

"I have read about it in the 'Book of Truth.'"

"How did you first become acquainted with the religion of Jesus Christ?"

"Before I came to this region, a countryman of mine chanced to mention a wonderful little book, which a foreign teacher at Bangkok had given him; I got it and read it. I have never worshipped an idol since."

"What book was it?"

"The 'Golden Balance.'"

The missionary was silent from surprise and emotion. His strange and welcome guest sat beneath the very roof where she, then long departed, and toiled through the sultry days, in the translation of that very tract into his language, which had carried to him in that distant region the message of salvation.

We need not say that in due time the man was baptized. What cheered the lady in her long and wearied labours, what rewarded her in the accomplishment of them? Was it not the patience of hope? The more beautiful and valuable the work of man, the more slowly generally is it brought to perfection. A palace is not built in the same time as a cottage; and all those actions which have reference to immortality must, generally speaking, await immortality for their reward.

The patience of hope, both in its darker and its brighter side, has reference to distant and a future day; but there is one respect in which it differs from all earthly hopes,—it admits not of disappointment. We may strive to be great—we may strive to be rich—we may strive to be loved—we may strive wisely and well, for many other worldly things; and the things which we strive for may be lawful and good, and yet we may lose all our labour, and the end of life may come, and find we have not attained them. But that at which we labour, in the patience of hope, having respect to immortality, can never fail us. "In due season we shall reap, if we faint not."

### A Preliminary Inquiry.

Whether a dream or an imaginative reverie, it is not important to determine, but methought I stood in a large church structure, crowded with anxious spectators, eagerly intent, as it would seem, on some solemn procedure which was about to commence. Two personages of commanding appearance occupied a raised platform, one of whom, as I soon learned, was the representative of the World, and the other, with angelic countenance, the representative of the great Head of the Church. After a breathless silence of some minutes, the latter arose, and addressing the assembled congregation, said, "Ye who are here congregated have all publicly professed discipleship to my Divine Master; and as he who stands by my side has put in a claim to the service and allegiance of some here present, I have been commissioned to test his claim according to the rule of righteousness. All, therefore, will prepare for the investigation which is to follow." Each one, in his order, was then called by name, and after close scrutiny, a verdict was pronounced, and agreeably to this the individual took his position on the right or left of the platform, as belonging to Christ or the world. A specimen only of these examinations can be given, and yet they may answer for the whole.

A. B. was called up. Had been a professor for ten years; and the father of a large family; did not believe that parental influence should be used to constrain children to read the Bible, learn the Catechism, and attend church; children should be permitted to exercise their own liberty in such matters; was accustomed, however, to require strict attention in them to their worldly duties; had never established family prayer, because it was not convenient, and had known some who where very strict in such matters, while they were no better than they should be; did not think he should be questioned as to his attention to secret prayer, as that was nobody's business but his own; his motive for becoming a member of the church was because he considered himself as good a Christian as any around him.

"I claim this man," said the World's representative; and as there was no objection, he was placed on the left side.

C. D. was then called. He had been a professor from youth; was a merchant in fair business; made it a point to attend church once on the Sabbath, and considered it right to rest or take recreation in the afternoon; thought that too much religion unfitted a man for worldly occupation; had never been guilty of any great sin; he did, indeed, get his letters from the post-office on a Sabbath, as they might contain some important information; had sometimes travelled on a Sabbath, when the claims of business seemed to require; did not make it a practice to read newspapers on that day, but would occasionally to it on the arrival of a foreign mail; thought himself bound to attend to family business strictly, that he might provide for his family; would take advantage in making a bargain, as it was the way of business-men, and was considered as an evidence of shrewdness.

"I claim him," said the World's representative.—"The claim is admitted; let him take the left hand."

E. F. was summoned. Had been a professor for forty years; was not sixty years old; had by industry and business tact accumulated a large fortune; wished to leave his children in independent circumstances; denied that he was prodigal, although his position required him to live handsomely and make as much show as his rich neighbours; did not give much to religious

objects, as he did not think he was bound to give the fruit of his labours to others; had not much opinion of missionary and such like societies, and thought it foolish to expend so much money upon them; paid his poor rent regularly, and thought that was all that should be required of him.

"I claim him," said the World's representative; "pass to the next."

G. H. was a very old man, and rich withal; considered himself a pattern of prudence; had never expended a farthing unnecessarily even on himself; had no family to provide for; was chiefly occupied in finding out investments for his money; by care and economy had struggled from a poor boyhood to a rich manhood; never gave any thing in charity, but intended to leave his money for benevolent objects.

"I claim him," said the World's representative; the claim admitted.

I. J. was called. Was the mother of the family; devoted herself to her children in introducing them into the best society; had no opinion of puritanical preciseness; indulged her children in all innocent amusements, such as parties, dancing, operas, and theatres—could see no harm in it; had had her own pleasure in her younger days, and was not averse to occasional participation still; considered her hope of heaven as good as any of her neighbours.

"I claim her," said the World's representative; the claim admitted.

K. L. was called forward. Was devoted to literary pursuits; his life had been without a blemish; avoided time-consuming amusements; listened to a sermon with pleasure, when it was logical and eloquent; believed in the Christian religion; was chiefly anxious to secure literary fame; sometimes felt envious of the successes of others; acknowledged that literature had more charms for him than religion.

Claimed by the World's representative, and claim admitted.

M. N. O. P. Q. R., and others of the same class, were called forward, when it appeared that they were men and women against whose outward conduct no thing could be alleged; they attended church with considerable punctuality, and were thrifty in the management of their secular concerns; but, on close examination, it appeared that their notions of religion were only superficial, and that they had no conception of a religion which consisted in a holy and daily walk with God. These seemed much surprised when they were adjudged to belong to the world.

S. T. was the next in order. She seemed much abashed and downcast; feared she had no religion, was daily examining her heart by the Word of God, and could see little but her own great defects. She very frequently besought God in her closet to reveal his Son in her, and although she thought she loved Christ, yet she was grieved that she did not love him as she ought; she still hoped, however, that he would not leave her to perish, for he was the only Almighty Friend that she wished to appeal to.

"Enough," said Christ's representative, "I put in a claim for this humble woman," and the World's representative had not a word to say.

U. V. was a man of bright countenance. He said he had nothing to say in his own behalf, except this—that he had fled to Christ as his life, his strength, and righteousness, and that it was his pleasure to serve him with the fullest purpose of his heart.

The World's representative had no claim to put in here.

W. X. and Y. Z. were found also to be professors, who lived consistently, worked the works of righteousness, lived lives of prayer, set not their affection on earth, but on heaven, and were claimed as the true property of God.

Here I awoke from my reverie, and thought seriously of the last great day of accounts.—Presbyterian.

### The Prayer-Meeting.

There are three classes of persons that occur to us with reference to the prayer-meeting:—

The first consists of those who are only occasionally there. If they happen "to feel like it," if the weather be very inviting, if they "can go just as well as not," why then they are there. But as these favourable circumstances occur only occasionally, they are seldom found in the church prayer-meeting. They feel little interest in its services; they do not know its value; and they derive little benefit from it.

The second class is composed of those who are never there. Judging from the number usually found at the prayer-meeting, the class of those who are never there must be a very large one. The pastor looks in vain for them. His heart is never cheered by their presence and their prayers. Their fellow-Christians who are there are saddened by the remembrance of so many others whose faces are never seen in that praying circle.

The third class of persons is composed of those who are always at the prayer-meeting. They are always there, unless an absolute necessity compel their absence. Their pastor soon learns who they are. He knows that he can depend upon them. The very seat which they occupy he knows well. He expects to see it filled with their well-known persons, just as much as he expects to be in his own seat. When those seats are vacant, he knows that something has occurred. He misses their presence as something almost essential to his own comfort there. These are the pastor's joy. These are these minister's helpers. Many a blessing does he breathe on them. With them he holds sweet communion. They bear him in their hearts, and he cherishes them as his warmest, truest friends.

Where does the pastor look in his hours of deepest anxiety for the prosperity of his work? When his own heart is oppressed and sad, and he longs to see men converted to God, where does he turn his anxious gaze for sympathy and for helpers? Always, always to the praying circle. If that disappoint him not, he is ready for any toil.

They who are always at the prayer-meeting are the persons to receive the blessing of God's Spirit and presence whenever it comes. They lose no such sweet manifestation as that which Thomas lost.

Happy is that pastor and that church where there are many who are always at the prayer-meeting. May such churches be increased a thousandfold!—Evangelist.