

# 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.

G. W. DAY, Printer

VOL. II.—NO. 34.

SAINT JOHN, NEW BRUNSWICK, FRIDAY, AUGUST 24, 1855.

WHOLE NO. 86

THE RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCER,  
Published at St. John, N. B., every FRIDAY,  
for the General Conference of Free C. Baptists  
of New Brunswick.

TERMS:  
ONE DOLLAR A YEAR IN ADVANCE.

Our Circulation  
We have great pleasure in informing our numerous readers that the weekly issue of this paper has reached  
**FOUR THOUSAND COPIES.**  
Parties wishing to advertise widely, cannot well find a better medium than our columns.

## Death-Bed Repentances.

There is no duty more frequently presented in the Scriptures, and none to which we are more frequently urged by conscience, than repentance; and yet there is none which we are more frequently inclined to postpone. When sin once takes up its lodgings in the heart, it is difficult to dispossess it, and hence the disposition to put off repentance to another day. But it should be remembered that He that has promised life on repentance has not promised life until we repent; and that if we repent not in this time, he may not accept of it when it suits our interests to defer it. While true repentance is never too late, late repentances are seldom sincere.

Hence the awful delusion of putting off repentance to a sick-bed and to the last hours of life. To give up the world when we can no longer use it, to mourn over passions that we can no longer indulge, to express sorrow for sins when just going to the tribunal where we must meet them all, would seem, on the face of the statement, to be fatal to our sincerity; and then to build up hopes upon such repentances, in the great majority of cases, is like building a house upon vapours which vanish before the sunlight, or upon the ice which dissolves before the first breath of summer. And however true and sincere, because there is no time to test them, death-bed repentances, in the nature of the case, must be ever unsatisfactory to surviving friends; and the return of those to sin on their restoration to health, who, when all hope of life was given up, seemed truly penitent and prepared to meet their God, goes very far to cast a very deep shade over all such repentances, should induce all ministers to protest against them, and should lead all men to conclude that the Ethiopian is not thus usually washed white,—that the spots of the leopard are not thus easily removed. In my whole ministerial experience of twenty-five years, I remember but one case of severe sickness, which was supposed to be unto death, that resulted in true repentance, and in a new life on recovery.

There was a gay, dashing young man under my early ministry, the son of pious parents, who had passed into the skies, leaving him in early life to be cared for by others who did not neglect him. He was taken sick, and of a lingering disease, which seemed steadily pursuing its fatal purpose. I soon became a visitor, and then a daily attendant upon him. His sins came up in order before him, and he was intensely anxious about his salvation. Nothing, for many days, could soothe his disturbed feelings. I sat by his side, resolved, as far as possible, to remove every doubt and every objection from the Bible which I held open in my hand. He urged his great sinfulness. I pointed to Manasseh, David, Paul, who found mercy; and told him of John Bunyan, and of many cases which passed under my own observation. He feared that Christ would not receive him. I told him of the errand of Christ to seek and to save the lost; I taught him as to the way in which the salvation of sinners added to the declarative glory of the Saviour. When all objections were removed, and when his fears were thus quelled, I placed the plan of salvation in its simplicity and efficacy before him, and urged his acceptance of it; and before I closed my Bible, he said, "Well, I never saw things before in this light; I think I can thus receive and rest upon Christ for salvation." I prayed with him, and retired.

At my next visit he was rejoicing in Christ, and in the most familiar manner narrating his new feelings to his friends. The disease steadily progressed until I expected daily to hear of his death, but there seemed not a waver in his feeling of confidence in Christ. His spiritual joy increased with his feebleness, until he longed to depart and to be with Christ. His feelings, at times, rose up into the region of rapture. He selected his funeral text and hymn, and talked freely and peaceably about his departure; and although my confidence in such conversions was always weak, yet I felt that this was a genuine case, and so spoke of it to many.

To the amazement of all, a change, as if by miracle, took place in his disease, and he commenced slowly to recover. My visits became less frequent, and with returning health there came a dryness of conversation on religious subjects. At each visit I could mark a declension, until finally there was a reluctance to hear any thing personal on the subject. When I saw him for the first time, weak and wain, in the street and tottering on the top of a stick, I approached to congratulate him on his getting out again; but, observing me, he turned into an alley. Often did he send for me when sick, but now, when recovering, he avoided me. He soon regained his usual strength, and returned to his ordinary pursuits, and as if for the purpose of erasing all impressions of his sick-bed repentance, he went to every excess of riot. Before his sickness he was wild, now he was wicked; before he was gay, now he was a drunken rascal; before he was full of noisy nonsense, now you could hear his boisterous profanity all over the street. He openly scoffed at God, at the Bible, at religion in all its forms; and whenever he saw me approaching him in the street, he always crossed to the opposite side, ashamed to meet one who had so often bowed with him in prayer while apparently on the crumbling verge of eternity, and to whom he so often expressed spiritual hopes and joys, which, in the belief of their sincerity, caused me to thank God and take courage.

No case of repentance on the borders of the grave ever inspired me with greater confidence, and in no case of backsliding were my hopes so utterly dashed. Many years have passed away since I saw this young man. Whether he is gone, whether living or dead, I know not; but when I last saw him, he was as far from the kingdom of heaven as any person I ever knew. And yet, had he died of that fearful sickness, I would have held him up as an instance of true conversion on a dying bed. "Man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart." From very many similar instances I select another. Mr. B. was an active, skillful mechanic, of bright mind, ready wit, and free, social habits. But he was profane, given to drink, sceptical, and neglectful of all religious ordinances. I often sought to make some

serious impression in some way upon him, but I was only beating the air. He fell into a slow consumption; and while he could go about, my visits to him in sickness were, like those in health, apparently in vain. When his lungs were almost gone, and in a very warm day in summer, when the air was motionless and filled with vapour, and when even those in perfect health felt oppressed, he sent for me. I found him gasping for breath, and apparently dying. He, in broken accents, confessed his great sins, and implored forgiveness of God. I told him of Christ, and of the freeness of his salvation to all who truly repented and believed. "Oh," said he, "I repent and believe with all my heart." I told him that all God required was trust on Jesus, and that when we believed with the heart the justifying righteousness of Christ was ours. "I believe with all my heart," was his energetic reply. I prayed with him, and retired, deeply pondering the event.

I called next day and found him considerably relieved, but yet breathing with difficulty. I made him inquiries as to his symptoms. "Oh!" said he, "there is nothing the matter with me but these lungs; swearing and striking his breast with great violence; 'they are getting better, and I hope to be soon out again.' I was shocked at his profanity. I sought to recall the feelings and confessions of the previous day, but, inspired by his temporary relief with the hope of recovery, it was all in vain. The heart, which in the presence of death had melted as wax before the fire, had resumed its accustomed icy hardness and coldness. Fear had inspired his feelings; and when fear subsided, his feelings passed away like foam upon the troubled waters.

But soon death came again, and with a determination not to be driven from his prey. I was again summoned in a great hurry to his dying bed. He was in the last struggle. The big, cold sweat came gushing from all his pores. He strove to speak, but in vain. He looked on me imploringly, and with a keen earnestness which made impressions now as fresh as when made, though years have passed away. I held up Christ to him, dwelling upon the text, "Look unto me, all ye ends of the earth, and be ye saved." I told him that though he could not speak nor turn, yet he could look,—that it was only to "look and live." He understood all, he assented to all. And he died, leaving on my heart the deep impression that all his religious feelings were induced by the fear of death, and that if he had recovered, his confessions and prayers would have been subjects of mirth while occupying a seat among the scorners, and among the fools that hate knowledge. Instances like these have taught me—

1. To place no strong confidence in death-bed repentances. Even when they are such as to inspire some hope, I say but little about them. I would not rudely tear away the comfort they give to surviving friends, but I carefully refrain from making them the basis of hope to any. Before God they may be genuine, but before man they must ever be doubtful, as we must judge of repentance by its fruits.

2. They have taught me to warn all men against postponing repentance to a dying bed. Repentance is the work of our life, and of every day of it. And to put it aside until we can sin no more among our fellow men, until the last sands in the glass of life are running, is utterly preposterous. When men make their will in health, why will they put off repentance to sickness and a dying bed? Are the favours of God—our eternal all—matters of such inferior importance as to be crowded into the last hours of life, and when utterly unable to attend to earthly things? True, the thief on the cross repented and was pardoned in the last hour of his life, but we do not know that he ever had, previously, a call to repentance. Had he been frequently called, and had he frequently refused to attend, we have no reason to conclude that he would have been called again. The most hopeless of men are those who have most frequently quenched the Spirit, and who have most frequently turned a deaf ear to the calls of mercy. Iron is converted into steel by being frequently hardened and suddenly cooled; and the heart of steel is made. The only sure way to secure a truly peaceful and happy death is to live the life of the righteous. The thief on the cross is the only instance of true repentance at the close of life in the Bible, and that is placed on record to forbid presumption and despair. If one is on record, who need despair? But if only one such case is on record, who should presume?—*Parish Pencillings.*

## THE WORDS OF A TALE-BEARER ARE AS WOUNDS.

How few believe it,—how few indeed regard these words of the wise man as having any connection with themselves! Were a minister to announce as his text these words, there would be scarce one among his hearers who would consider it applicable to himself. Yet are there not very many of whose words it may be truly said, "they are as wounds?" Nay, may we not go further, and say that there are few who are not, sometimes at least, guilty of inflicting these wounds,—not, perhaps, in malice, often not in uncharitableness, yet through indifference and carelessness,—it may be from a deep-rooted selfishness and insensibility to the pain of others? Thus, a reputation that yesterday stood forth fair and untainted, to-day is dragged, without mercy, soiled and bleeding, through the dust. The triumphant murderer of fame, and the fair-seeming Pharisee, trample it alike into hopeless degradation. The story of sin and shame flies readily, swiftly, from lip to lip; hopes are crushed out, hearts are broken, homes and hearths desolated.—"The righteous perish, and none layeth it to heart."—"The righteous!"—ay, start not that we say—"the righteous." Who was it that cried out, in the depth of his agony, "I lie even among them that are set on fire, even the sons of men, whose teeth are spears and arrows, and their tongue a sharp sword?" Even David, the man after God's own heart,—David, the sweet singer of Israel. Who can dare to say, My skirts are clean, I have not offended? Are there not everywhere those who, but for "the scourge of the tongue," might have walked upright and happy among their fellows; perhaps have outstripped them in the race of virtue and religion? The voice of these wounded crieth unto the heavens, and the voice of God asks, "Who hath done this?" Shall the church reply, "Am I my brother's keeper?"

Glance a moment at the social circles where Christians mingle. How is the ear open to the tale of transgression; how is condemnation pronounced and judgment passed, when the tear of pity should have fallen, or the prayer for pardon have been offered? How often is the mantle of charity thrown backward over the sins of the professed Christian? When is the pleading voice of love raised to defend the rash offender, who, even while the venomous tongue of the tale-bearer is publishing his shame, lies weeping in secret humiliation over the crime of a moment, but which shall rise up, like a ghastly spectre, in his pathway, casting its black shadow backward over the joys of the past, and forward over the hopes of the future?—Ah, poor suffering one! well will it be for thee it, in thy trouble, thou lose not sight of Him who alone will not condemn thee, but bid thee "go, and sin no more."

Ye who tread the smooth and even road, and gather up your skirts from the touch of the unclean one, or who, perchance, pass by on the other side, and repeat your horror of his offences to your brethren in purity and pride, pause a moment, and remember a word of Jesus, which perhaps you have forgotten, "That joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which needs no repentance." Ha! "more joy?" Ay, verily. In heaven's courts there shall rise a sweeter, loftier anthem, when the poor earth-worm wanderer is received into his eternal rest, than over the purest angel in the realms of glory. And we may well believe it.—Those ministering spirits have a deeper acquaintance with that wayward course of sin and sorrow, than an earthly heart, however near. They have traced his steps through the wilderness, and when fainting and ready to die, they have showed him a well of water, even the water of life; through the crowd of unsympathising men and scornful women, they have guided his faltering steps; and in the night of anguish, when the hidden wounds bled afresh, and the heart was breaking, the Angel of the covenant has stood by and touched him, strengthening him. The broken and the contrite heart He does not despise.

Ah, men and women! ye know not what ye do, when ye go up and down as tale-bearers among your people. If ye could but glance into the hearts ye have wounded, how would ye shrink, as David, at the words of Nathan, "Thou art the man!" Tale-bearer! hasten, in thy penitence, to heal where thou hast wounded, bind up, pour in oil and wine. "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God." Say to them, "Though ye have lien among the pots, yet shall ye be as the wings of a dove covered with silver, and her feathers with yellow gold." Extend a hand to the fallen, speak comfort to the suffering, win the erring back to virtue, cover the sin that thine eye seeth, and pray for those thou mayest not win.

A fearful Death-Bed.

The scene of my first pastoral labors was a thriving village of about 1,400 souls, containing three churches, and seven or eight stores, where spirituous liquors were sold, three of which were dignified with the name of Tavern, and so recognized by the law which gave to them its ample protection. The history of those three taverns, if written, would make an argument in favor of a prohibitory law, which all the legal authority in the land could not gainstay. Many a broken heart yet weeps out its secret sorrows over hopes which have been shattered. Many a widow looks to those haunts of infamy as the scene where her husband forgot his plighted vows, and entered the path that led him to a drunkard's grave. Many a mother still mourns over buried hopes, which but for those scenes of dissipation might have been the support and comfort of her declining years.

Early in the Washingtonian movements, this place became the theatre of active operations among the friends of the Temperance reform, and earnest and noble efforts were made to arrest the progress of the evil which was sending such numbers to a drunkard's grave. Among those who were induced to sign the pledge was a man whom I had regarded as being utterly beyond any hope of even a partial reform. L., was notorious for his intemperance. The tavern was his constant resort, where he spent his time and his money. Scarcely a day passed, that he might not be seen there, his unshaven face, his matted locks, his senseless and strange eye, his reeling form, a fitting testimony to the work of ruin that was there carried on. It had scarcely entered the mind of the most sanguine friend of the cause, that he could be induced to attempt, even a reformation, or if so, that any permanent change could be effected. His old friends boasted that he would be back with them before the week was ended. To the surprise of all, L., kept his pledge, and indicated a manly determination to break off from his hateful and ruinous practices. For a long time I missed from the street the poor and wretched inebriate, but was told that he was at work steadily, and remained faithful to his promises.

One Sabbath, I noticed among my congregation a tall, well-dressed stranger, a gentleman in appearance, and a serious and attentive listener to the services of the hour. At the close of worship I enquired who he was, and was asked in reply, Why don't you know L.—? I could scarcely believe my eyes, the transformation was so complete. The pledge had worked wonders, though it needed something more to perfect the work, by a renewal of the heart. On inquiry, I learned that he had wholly deserted the tavern, and avoided passing it, if possible, for fear of relapsing into his old habits. It is needless to say how this change was felt in his family, to which for years he had been the source only of sorrow and shame.

Several months after I was called upon by a former companion of this man, himself also a reformed drunkard, and asked to go and visit L., who was sick and probably dying. I was shocked to hear of his illness, and more so when I learned its cause. For nearly a year and a half he had been from his old habits, and firmly resisted all attempts to draw back into his former associations.

The keeper of the tavern at whose bar he had for five years fed his appetite, and squandered the means which ought to have been given to his family, boasted publicly that he would make him break his pledge; and had often tried without success to accomplish his fiendish purposes. One fatal day, as he was passing his old haunts, he was told that a person wished to see him within, on special business. He entered the bar room, unsuspecting any mischief. As he looked around him, he saw many of his former associates, still pursuing their career of vice and shame, while at the bar stood the man who had long supplied him with the draught of death, and who now approached him with a glass of brandy, which he asked him to drink. The unhappy man firmly and nobly replied, "I have been free from this habit for more than a year. I have seen my family restored to happiness! I am once more respected. A single glass would bring on my old appetite and ruin me." With an oath, the tavern-keeper replied, "you shall drink it;" and pouring out some upon his hand forced it against his lips. The poison was thus tasted, and the work was done. The slumbering appetite awoke again, and revived with tenfold intensity. In less than three months he was prostrated with delirium tremens, and I was called to see him dying.

Following his friend, I passed on to a poor and dilapidated house, and ascending a pair of stairs that cracked and trembled at every footstep, I entered the home of the drunkard. Everything showed that the work of ruin was complete. The evil spirit, for a time of banishment from his bosom, had returned with seven others, worse than the first. In three months all his earnings had gone, to fatten men whom the law had licensed for the public good to ruin the peace and happiness of society. On a miserable bed lay the victim of a traffic that is evil and only evil: his eyes staring from their sockets; his limbs trembling with an uncontrolled agony; his breath short and convulsive; his countenance denoting an unearthly horror; and his groans seeming like the prelude to the sorrows of hell. By his side stood his broken-hearted wife, with her children pale and wan; and over a few brands that smouldered upon the hearth, a half-drunken associate was trying to warm some gruel for his food. It was a scene for an artist's pencil, that desolate room, against whose broken and patched windows howled the winter's wind, and where death was doing its fearful work.

I could do nothing for the unhappy man. His mind was already shattered and gone, and his life was fast ebbing away. He evidently was already unconscious of all that was going on around him, and the solemn and awful shadows of eternity were rapidly gathering around the dying man. To converse with him was useless: he heard me not. I could only kneel and commend his afflicted family to God. Two days after, I was called to officiate at his funeral. His pall-bearers were twelve of his old associates. I felt that on such an occasion my duty was to the living and not the dead; and so selecting for my text, the warning of the wise man, "And thou mourn at the last, when thy flesh and thy body are consumed, and say how have I hated instruction and despised reproof," I sought to set before his companions the bitter elements of sorrow they were preparing for themselves in death and in eternity. I have often thought of that scene. What was the act but murder, that sent that man to the drunkard's grave? And yet around him at whose bar his appetite was fed, and by whose horrid act he was drawn away from the paths of virtue, the law threw its protection, and sanctioned his unholy traffic. O could I have no pity and care for the helpless family of his victim. Must Liberty and the Constitution be forever pressed into the service of men whose only work is ruin and death. Blessed be God for the dawn of a brighter day, which will bring some measure of security to men, who earnestly desire to break from the spell of the enchanted cup, and to wives and children who have too long suffered the bitter woes which must ever follow in the train of those who put their bottle to their neighbor's mouth to make him drunken therewith.—N. Y. Obs.

## Truth in Italy.

An Italian correspondent to the New York Independent, gives the following interesting incident:—

As I was on my way from Turin to Genoa; I happened to meet with a pleasing instance of those true conversions from Popery to Christianity, which are becoming every day more numerous in the Sardinian States. We were in the cars, at one of the stations, some thirty or forty miles from Genoa, an old man carrying in his hands his little luggage wrapped up in a blue handkerchief, entered our waggon. He had evidently travelled a good deal on foot to meet the train, and when he sat down wiping his heated forehead, he exclaimed in a loud voice, "What a poor creature I am now with my seventy years! I have no more teeth to eat with; my legs refuse to bear me along, my eyes are dim, I am laden with infirmities; one thing remains to me. The contemplation of future blessedness: were it not for that, I would be wretched indeed," he added speaking to me. I could not help being struck with the earnestness of the old man, but I did not know what could be the ground of the hope he

expressed. "Do you read sometimes?" I asked. "Oh, yes, I read much." "And what books do you read?" "History, Geography, are the subjects I prefer." "Well," said I, "I know a book infinitely superior to all others." "Which do you mean?" inquired the old man eagerly. "I mean the Gospel." "Oh, for that book," he exclaimed, and his countenance was lighted up, "for that book the sun grows pale before it!" We were some eight persons together. On looking around my interlocutor saw everybody looking towards him, upon which he ceased to speak. A few minutes after we were in the Genoa station. The countenance of the old traveller, the few words he had said, had interested me; I wanted to know more about him. Therefore while everybody was hurrying out of the waggon, I stayed a while, and helped him out, then I spoke into his ear and said, "Do you read the Word of God?" "The Word of God?" he exclaimed, "there it is," striking his little blue bundle—"my joy, my hope!" and he showed me his Bible, and the diminutive hymn-book used by Italian evangelical Christians. I had been right in my suspicion, there stood before me an evangelical Christian. I took hold of his trembling hand and shook it, saying, "We are brethren." "Blessed be God," he answered. I invited him to accompany me to the hotel, and learned his touching history. Early in life he had had doubts concerning Popery, but had found no one to enlighten his mind. He had long travelled as a sailor, had visited England and America, but not knowing one word of English, had learned nothing in his travels about true religion. Finally he had returned with a little competence to his native village, and there, a year ago, he had heard, from their enemies of the existence of evangelical Christians of Genoa. He had then left his native village in search of them, and finally had succeeded in finding out the Rev. Mr. Geymonat, the Waldensian minister, from whom he had heard with unutterable delight the glad tidings of salvation. And now he was coming to town, as he did as often as his means would allow, from a long distance, to attend on the following day the services of the church. He said he was yet the only one in his village acquainted with the Gospel, but was in hopes to see before his death several others, who now came secretly to him for instruction, brought to a saving knowledge of Christ.

## The way to be Happy.

A story is told of two travellers in Lapland, which throws more light upon the art of being happy than a whole volume of precepts and aphorisms. Upon a very cold day in winter, they were driving along in a sledge, wrapped up in furs from head to foot. Even their faces were mostly covered; and you could see hardly anything but their eyebrows, and these were white and glistening with frost. At length they saw a poor man who had sunk down, benumbed and frozen in the snow. "We must stop and help him!" replied the other; "you will never think of stopping on such a day as this! We are half frozen ourselves, and ought to be at our journey's end as soon as possible." "But I cannot leave this man to perish," rejoined the more humane traveller; "I must go to his relief," and he stopped his sledge. "Come," said he, "come help me to rouse him." "Not I," replied the other, "I have too much regard for my own life to expose myself to this freezing atmosphere any more than is necessary. I will sit here and keep myself as warm as I can, till you come back." So saying, he resolutely kept his seat, while his companion hastened to the relief of the perishing man, whom they providently discovered. The ordinary means for restoring consciousness and activity were tried with complete success. But the kind-hearted traveller was so intent upon saving the life of a fellow-creature, that he had forgotten his own exposure; and what was the consequence? Why the very effort he had made to warm the stranger warmed himself! And thus he had a twofold reward. He had the sweet consciousness of doing a benevolent act, and he also found himself glowing from head to foot, by reason of the exertions which he had made. And how was it with his companion who had been so much afraid of exposing himself? He was almost ready to freeze, notwithstanding the efforts he had been making to keep warm!

The lesson derived from this little incident is sufficiently obvious. We are all travellers to a distant country. At every step of our journey we find other travellers, who need our friendly aid. Nay, God has brought them around our path in great numbers,—and as far as the eye can reach, we see their dense and gloomy ranks. Now there are two ways of meeting these objects of Christian sympathy and brotherly regard. We can go forward with the stern purpose of a selfish and unloving spirit, saying, in reply to every appeal which is addressed to our feelings, "Depart in peace; be ye warmed and filled;" or we can say, with the warm-hearted traveller, "I cannot see this man perish; I must hasten to his relief." And the rule which we adopt for our guidance in such cases, will determine the question, whether we are to be happy or unhappy. The man who lives only for himself cannot be happy. God does not smile upon him; and his conscience will give him no peace. But he who forgets himself in his desire to do good, not only becomes a blessing to others, but opens a perpetual fountain of joy in his own bosom.—*The Child's Companion.*

A SNAKE REPTON.—A heathen could say, when a bird, scared by a hawk, flew into his bosom for refuge, "I will not kill thee, nor betray thee to thine enemy, seeing thou hast fled to me for sanctuary." Much less will God either slay or give up the soul that takes sanctuary in his name.—*Dr. Gill.*