

# RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCER,

And Bible Society, Missionary, and Sabbath School Advocate.

McLEOD, Editor.

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

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better medium than our columns.

## LOVE TO THE WORD.

Every living thing which God creates requires food. The life that God imparts needs sustaining and nourishing. It is so with animal and vegetable life,—with birds, beasts, fishes, reptiles, insects, and plants. It is equally so with spiritual life. When the Holy Ghost raises a man from the death of sin, and makes him a new creature in Christ Jesus, the new principle in that man's heart requires food, and the only food which will sustain it is the word of God.

There never was a man or woman converted, from one end of the world to the other, who did not love the revealed will of God. Just as a child born into the world desires naturally the milk provided for its nourishment, so does a soul born again desire the sincere milk of the word. This is a common mark of all the children of God,—they delight in the law of the Lord.

Show me a person who despises Bible reading, or thinks little of Bible preaching, and I hold it to be a certain fact that he is not yet born again. He may be zealous about forms and ceremonies. He may be diligent in attending sacraments and daily services. But if these things are more precious to him than the Bible, I cannot think he is a converted man. Tell me what the Bible is to a man, and I will generally tell you what he is. This is the pulse to try,—this is the barometer to look at,—if we would know the state of the heart. I have no notion of the Spirit dwelling in a man, and not giving clear evidence of His presence. And I believe it to be a signal evidence of the Spirit's presence, when the world is really precious to a man's soul.

Love to the word is one of the characteristics we see in Job. Little as we know of this Patriarch and his age, this at least stands out clearly. He says, "I have esteemed the words of his mouth more than my necessary food." (Job xxiii. 12.)

Love to the word is a shining feature in the character of David. Mark how it appears all through that wonderful part of Scripture, the cxxxix Psalm. He might well say, "Oh! how I love thy law."

Love to the word is a striking point in the character of St. Paul. What were he and his companions but men mighty in the Scriptures? What were his sermons but expositions and applications of the word?

Love to the word appears pre-eminently in our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. He read it publicly. He quoted it continually. He expounded it frequently. He advised the Jews to search it. He used it as His weapon to resist the devil. He said repeatedly, "The Scripture must be fulfilled."—Almost the last thing He did was to open the understanding of His disciples, that they might understand the Scriptures. Ah! reader, that man can be no true servant of Christ, who has not something of His Master's mind and feeling toward the Bible.

Love to the word has been a prominent feature in the history of all the saints, of whom we know anything, since the days of the apostles. This is the lamp which Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and Joseph, and David, and Solomon, and the prophets, and the apostles, and the martyrs, and the saints of all ages, have followed. This is the compass which kept the Vallensius and Albigenes from making shipwrecks of the faith. This is the well which was re-opened by Wycliffe and Luther, after it had been long stopped up. This is the sword with which Latimer, and Jewel, and Knox, won their victories. This is the manna which fed Baxter, and Owen, and the noble host of the Puritans, and made them strong to battle. This is the army from which Whitefield and Wesley drew their powerful weapons. This is the mine from which Bickersteth and McChesney brought forth rich gold. Differing as these holy men did in some matters, on one point they were all agreed,—they all delighted in the word.

Love to the word is one of the first things that appears in the converted heathen, at the various Missionary stations throughout the world. In hot climates and in cold,—among savage people and among civilized,—in New Zealand, in the South Sea Islands, in Africa, in Hindostan,—it is always the same. They enjoy hearing it read. They long to be able to read it themselves. They wonder why Christians did not send it to them before. How striking is the picture which Moffat draws of Africa, the fierce South African chieftain, when first brought under the power of the Gospel! "Often have I seen him," he says, "under the shadow of a great rock nearly the live-long day, eagerly pursuing the pages of the Bible." How touching is the expression of a poor converted negro, speaking of the Bible! He said, "It is never old and never cold." How affecting was the language of another old negro, when some would have dissuaded him from learning to read, because of his great age. "No!" he said, "I will never give it up till I die. It is worth all the labor to be able to read that one verse, 'God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life.'"

Love to the Bible is one of the grand points of

agreement among all converted men and women in our own land. Episcopalians and Presbyterians, Baptists and Independents, Methodists and Plymouth Brethren,—all unite in honouring the Bible, as soon as they are real Christians. This is the manna which all the tribes of our Israel feed upon, and find satisfying food. This is the fountain round which all the various portions of Christ's flock meet together, and from which no sheep goes thirsty away. Oh! that believers in this country would learn to cleave more closely to the written word! Oh! that they would see that the Bible, and the Bible only, is the substance of men's religion, the more they agree! It is probable there never was an uninspired book more universally admired than Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress. It is a book which all denominations of Christians delight to honour. It has won praise from all parties. Now what a striking fact it is, that the author was pre-eminently a man of one book! He had read hardly anything but the Bible.

Away with the foolish idea, that making the Bible alone the rule of faith hinders unity, and that those who profess to glory in the Bible, and nothing but the Bible, are hopelessly divided!—It is a weak invention of the enemy. It is a base calumny. No doubt there is much dissension and party spirit among mere outward professors; but among the great bulk of believing Protestants there is a wonderful amount of unity,—real, thorough, and deep, far deeper than the boasted unity of Rome. Their differences are merely about the outward trappings of Christianity. About the body of the faith they are all agreed. Their differences are studiously exaggerated by the enemies of true religion. Their points of agreement,—such as the "Harmony of Protestant Confessions" exhibits, are studiously kept out of sight. Their differences are differences which in times of common danger are soon forgotten. Their unity is an unity which in front of sin, heathenism, and persecution, stands boldly out. Ridly and Hooper forgot their old disagreements when they found themselves in Queen Mary's prison. Churchmen and Nonconformists laid aside their quarrels when James II. tried to bring back Popery to England. Protestant missionaries, of different denominations, find they can work and pray together, when they are in the midst of idolaters. Protestant believers in London have proved to the world that they can agree to labour together for the conversion of souls, by maintaining that glorious Institution, the London City Mission. And what is the secret of all this deep-seated unity? It comes from this,—that all believers on earth are not only born of one Spirit, but also read one holy book, and feed on the bread of one Bible.

Ah! reader, it is a blessed thought that there will be "much people" in heaven at last. Few as the Lord's people undoubtedly are at any one given time or place, yet all gathered together at last, they will be a "multitude that no man can number." They will be of one heart and mind. They will have passed through like experience. They will all have repented, believed, lived holy, prayerful and humble. They will all have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. But one thing beside all this they will have in common. They will all love the texts and doctrines of the Bible. The Bible will have been their food and delight, in their days of their pilgrimage on earth. And the Bible will be a common subject of joyful meditation and retrospect, when they are gathered together in heaven. Rev. J. C. Ryle, B. A.

## Facts and Reflections.

Is there one who professes to love our Lord Jesus Christ—one who has experienced the peace of pardoned sin, and the sweets of communion with the Father of our spirits, who does not feel his heart glow with the strongest emotions of gratitude and joy, when he hears how "God is doing wonders among the heathen," and bringing the kingdoms of the earth under the government of His grace?—Is there one who does not ardently desire the privilege and the honor of working together with God in this glorious enterprise? Is there a sinner who has been redeemed by the blood of the Cross, who is henceforth no longer his own, having been bought with a price, that can withhold his efforts in this cause without the blackest ingratitude to Christ, and the most reckless treachery to the interests of immortal souls? Oh! when will the church awake to her true position, and act as if the voice of her Lord was still ringing in her ears, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature?" When that time shall arrive, the consummate glory of the millennium will dawn, and "the mountain of the Lord's house will be established in the tops of the mountains, and all nations will flow unto it."

Before we leave the South Sea Islands, permit us to refer to the cases of some individuals, which prove that the gospel is the "power of God unto salvation, even to the most degraded and miserable of the human race."

Among the converts in Tahiti, was one named Vava, who had formerly been a great man in the way of procuring human sacrifices; and on one occasion he even murdered his own brother for this purpose. Another office held by him, was to rally dispirited warriors, and many a night had he walked from house to house, rousing the savage spirit of the people by assuring them, on the authority of a pretended communication from some god of their success in an approaching battle. But this implacable and unmerciful heathen became a humble and devoted Christian, and to the day of his death, he adorned his profession. He was baptized, and for many years was a member

of the church under the care of Mr. Orsmond.—His eyes were bad, so that he could not learn to read, but being in the habit of treasuring in his memory passages of Scripture, he obtained a correct and extensive knowledge of the great and essential doctrines of the gospel. He was visited in his last hours by Mr. Orsmond, from whose account of his death we extract the following:

"Seeing that his end was approaching, I said to him, 'Are you sorry that you cast away your lying god, by which you used to gain so much property?' He was aroused from his lethargy, and with tears of joy sparkling in his eyes, he exclaimed, 'Oh, no, no, no. What I can't be sorry for casting away death for life? Jesus is my rock, the fortification in which my soul takes shelter.' I said, 'Tell me on what you found your hopes of future blessedness.' He replied, 'The blood of Christ is my foundation.' A little after I asked him, if he was afraid to die; when with almost youthful energy he exclaimed, 'No, no! The canoe is on the sea, the sails are spread, she is ready for the gale. I have a good pilot to guide me, and a good haven to receive me. My outside man and my inside man differ. Let the one rot till the last trump shall sound, but let my soul wing her way to the throne of Jesus.' Will he not through eternity sing hallelujahs to God and the Lamb because of the South Sea missions?"

In Raiatea, there was an old warrior, named Me. He had been the terror of all the inhabitants of that and the neighboring islands. He was brought under the influence of the gospel, and though blind, so carefully did he treasure up what he heard in his memory, that he obtained great familiarity with the truths of the New Testament. When near death he was visited by the missionary, who inquired what he thought of himself in the sight of God. "Oh," he replied, "I have been in great trouble this morning, but I am happy now. I saw an immense mountain with precipitous sides, up which I endeavored to climb, but when I had attained a considerable height, I lost my hold and fell to the bottom. Exhausted with perplexity and fatigue, I went to a distance, and sat down to weep, and while weeping I saw a drop of blood fall upon that mountain, and in a moment it was dissolved. Wishing to obtain his own ideas of what had been presented to his imagination, the missionary said, 'This was certainly a strange sight: what construction do you put upon it?' He exclaimed, 'That mountain was my sins, and the drop which fell upon it was one drop of the precious blood of Jesus, by which the mountain of my guilt must be melted away. He then went on to state, that the words of Divine truth, which he had heard, were now his companions in solitude, and his comfort in affliction.—He was constantly cheerful and happy, longing to part and to be with Christ. His last exclamation was, 'On death was my resting place,' and his happy spirit departed to be with that Savior, one drop of whose blood had washed away the mountain of his guilt. Oh, that the death bed of every heathen—of every one of the six hundred millions now on the earth—could be cheered with such heavenly hopes! But alas! there is no light in their pathway, and no ray illumines the grave.—The mountain of guilt rests on their souls, and no man points them to the Lamb of God.—Mrs. G. V. Ramsey.

## Love Your Enemies.

Look at the English soldier giving some water to the poor wounded Russian. How kind, was it not? I am sure I should have liked that soldier, he was so good-natured and feeling-hearted. Ah, what a sad thing war is! What a pity it is that men should fight, and kill one another! The gospel of Jesus Christ is the gospel of peace and love, and if it were spread through all the world, if everybody believed and practised it, there would soon be an end to all the miseries of war. It teaches us to love our neighbor as ourselves, and to love even our enemies.

Love our enemies! That seems strange, does it not? But it is certainly in the Bible. A very little girl once doubted this. She was sitting on her mamma's lap, trying to spell out the text for the day from her little text-book. She could not read, but she knew her letters, so she named them one by one, and was then told the words which they formed. In this way she repeated the text, "Love your enemies! Love your enemies." But she was so astonished at this unexpected advice that she thought there must be a mistake in the printing; and, looking up with a smile of discovery, she exclaimed, "I think it ought to be, Love not your enemies!"

Now there are many boys and girls who act as if they thought little Susan's version were the correct one. They could not be more unkind and unforgiving if there really such a text was in the Bible as "Love not your enemies." They imagine that if they are kind to those who are kind to them, it is the utmost that can be expected from them. "Not revenge myself on those boys, sir!" said a Sabbath school teacher, who was endeavouring to persuade him to forgive some lads who had injured him; "It's impossible! of course I must be even with them; I don't meddle with anybody who does not meddle with me, but it isn't in the nature of flesh and blood to be kind to those who ill-treat us." And yet that boy read his Bible, and went to school and to church every Sunday!

It is not rational to be like Jesus Christ, is it? But if we ask him to give us his Holy Spirit, he will soften and purify our hearts, and make them gentle, and loving, and forbearing. He will help us to learn that most difficult of lessons, to love our enemies. It has already helped many to learn it.

A few poor Cherokee women who had been converted to Christianity, formed themselves into a society for the propagation of the gospel which was now become so dear to them. The produce of the first year was about ten dollars, and the question was to what object this should be applied. At length a poor woman proposed that it should be given for the benefit of the Osage nation; "for," said she, "the Bible tells us to do good to our enemies, Matt. v. 44; and I believe the Osages are the greatest enemies the Cherokees have."

It is said of Archbishop Cranmer that the way to have him as one's friend was to do him an unkindness. I am afraid, dear reader, that would not be a very likely way of gaining your friendship.

Well, let us try, and let us pray to follow more in the steps of our Saviour, who loved us, while we were his enemies, and gave himself for us.

## Take Care of Your Thoughts.

Sin begins in the heart. If you keep your thoughts pure your life will be blessedness. The indulgence of sinful thoughts and desires produces sinful actions. When lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin. The pleasurable contemplation of a sinful deed is usually followed by its commission. Never allow yourself to pause and consider the pleasures or profit you might derive from this or that sin. Close your mind against the suggestion at once, as you would lock and bolt your doors against a robber. If Eve had not stood parleying with the devil, and admiring the beautiful fruit, the earth might yet have been a paradise. No one becomes a thief, a fornicator, or a murderer at once. The mind must be corrupted. The wicked suggestion must be indulged and revolved in the thoughts, until it loses its hideous deformity and the anticipated gain or pleasure comes to outweigh the evils of the transgression.

Your imagination is apt to paint forbidden pleasures in gay and dazzling colors. It is the serpent's charm. Gaze not upon the picture. Suffer not the intruder to get a lodgment. Meet the enemy at the threshold and drive it from your heart. As a rule, the more familiar you become with sin the least hateful it appears; so that the more completely you preserve your mind from unholy and wicked thoughts, the better. Avoid the society where obscenity or blasphemy is heard. Cultivate the society of the virtuous. Read nothing that is unchaste or immoral. Make a covenant with your eyes. Familiarize not your mind with the loathsome details of crime. Never harbor malicious or envious thoughts. Direct your thoughts towards pure and holy subjects. Contemplate the character of the spotless and perfect Son of God. Keep your spirit untainted, your thoughts uncontaminated, so shall your life be virtuous. As a man thinketh, so is he. Take care of the thoughts, and the actions will take care of themselves.

THE WHOLE BUSINESS OF LIFE.—The amiable and gifted Jane Taylor, the last time she took up her pen—it was on the day preceding her death—wrote as follows:—

"O, my dear friends, if you knew what thoughts I have now, you would see as I do, that the whole business of life is preparing for death."

How much time is spent in preparing to live! How little in preparing to die!

One who had lived more than fifty years, said, as the hand of death was upon him, "I have all my days been getting ready to live, and now I must die."

Would men but spend as much time in preparing to die, as they spend preparing to live, the physical agonies of death would not so frequently be heightened by the agonies of despair.

"The whole business of life is to prepare for death." Thousands of death-beds—death-beds of rejoicing and death-beds of despair—have borne witness to this truth. The reader will bear witness to it—perhaps at an early day.

In view of this truth, this very day should be spent in preparing to die. Our chief attention should this day be given to things which shall prepare us for the closing day of life. In the same way should all our coming days be spent.

Such a course would not render life a dreary waste. Far from it. That man best enjoys life who is best prepared to leave it.

It is a mournful thought, that in all probability, some reader of these lines will meet death without being prepared for its dread realities.

## Idle Words.

No man knows the effect of fugitive words. How well we remember conversations, heard years ago,—casual remarks, dropped here and there, and forgotten the next moment by those who uttered them! So it is with all men. Impressions are given fast, but they may remain for ever. The lava the next hour hardens into rock. One thoughtless word, at an untimely moment, a jest or a laugh, may dispart the impression of the most solemn religious services. A thousand such foolish and wrong things are said by us, which we think of only for the instant. But others remember what we forget, and will remember them when we are in our graves. And those random speeches, made in hot haste, or in mere folly, may leave a print on their characters, and affect all their future destiny. What an account for every thoughtless man, who rocks not of the ill he does, and that he is going to God, who will call him into judgment for every idle word, and every mispent hour!

## New York Correspondence.

Bible Societies.—Bibles Burnt.—Pope's Edict.—Colporteurs.—Religious Statistics.—Decrease in the Churches.—Converted Romanist.

New York, December 10th, 1855.  
Mr. Editor.—Some forty years ago the Pope of Rome taking alarm at the work of Bible Societies, issued his Edict against them, commanding his minions to burn the Bible. That burning has been done, no doubt, to a large extent, and thus many volumes have perished which were sent out by the extraordinary activity of the Bible Societies during the last forty years. So that the Pope himself has since said, "Bible Societies are perfectly harmless, they have circulated their millions of Scriptures among my people, and they have burned them." This boast is not all true, but undoubtedly there has been too many cases in which there has not been proper discrimination in circulating the word.

Owing to this state of things, and the further facts, that in our country there are now about six millions foreigners, most of whom do not read the Bible, and nine millions more who do not attend church. The American and Foreign Bible Society has come to the decision to adopt an extensive system of Colportage. The design is, to send a man with a praying heart where the Bible is sent. In the cities and populous places it is designed to have a Colporteur in connection with each of the churches, and he is to labor in connection with the Pastor, and to a certain extent, under his direction. It is perfectly manifest, the church must awake to new activity, or have great guilt resting upon it. In 1845, the population of our city was 371,223, and now it is 633,189, or nearly double. Then the Baptists numbered 8,376, and now 7,993; then the Presbyterians numbered 11,089, now, 10,429; the Methodist Episcopal, then, 9,780, and now, 9,319. In Philadelphia, the Baptists have raised their number from 5,680 to only 6,395; though the population has increased 100,000. Not a new church; and the increase for ten years but little exceeds the increase in your denomination for the last year. There must be new life and new appliances, or each year will take us farther and farther from the millennium.

The above facts I have condensed from the "Colporteur" of the A. & F. Bible Society, a publication, the first number of which is this week issued, and it is to report the results of the labors of the Colporteurs of that Society. Their Colporteurs have been but a few weeks in the field, and the results are in a high degree encouraging. This number of the "Colporteur" is very interesting. This periodical is under the editorial care of H. T. LORE, the Corresponding Secretary of the Society.

The following incident from that paper is one which I had the pleasure of communicating. The colporteur is a member of my church, and has established already a second prayer meeting, and generally his labors seem very successful. I will add, that since the following, the convert has been baptized and admitted to my Church, and already begins to show the genuine fruits of the great change by her usefulness among those who are in the gall of bitterness, and bonds of iniquity. Allow me to add, as I related her experience on the occasion of her baptism, almost every one present manifested a tearful interest. Against how many of this generation will the wicked of past generations rise up in judgment?

## A CONVERTED PAPIST.

Yesterday, one who has recently been awakened to a sense of religious duty in a prayer-meeting, instituted a few weeks ago by brother P., one of your Colporteurs, came to me and related her experience as follows:—

"I was brought up a Papist. My native place is Halifax, Nova Scotia, where Papists, at least some of them, have the Bible. It was in my father's house, and I have read it from my youth. About twenty-four years ago, when I resided in Quebec, I remained in the Cathedral one morning after Grand Mass, till nearly all were gone, and saw the cloth removed from what I had supposed was the coffin for the body of Jesus, when, to my utter astonishment, there appeared only two benches. From that time my zeal for the papal church cooled, and from that time I considered myself no longer in the bosom of the church, though I, a few times after, went to confession."

"After removing to this city, my husband died, and I was left desolate among strangers. A kind Christian lady invited me to go with her to church in street. The text for the occasion was, 'Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you.' The minister spoke of God's parental kindness in terms that brought so much joy to my desolate heart, I manifested my joy ere I was aware of it by loud exclamations. Some thought I was then and there converted, but I think not. About three years after, however, I believe I was converted, though I have not been so earnest in religion a part of the time since as I ought, and have been very negligent in religious duty. But for the last six months my thoughts have turned again toward religion; I have felt guilty and very wretched for my negligence; I have given up my novels and my Sunday papers; I have betaken myself to secret prayer.—When the prayer meeting was begun in L— street, by Colporteur P., I attended."

Three weeks ago a great cloud was removed from mind. I have felt much comfort since in reading the Scriptures. My trials are severe, but I have hope in God and prayer. Christ is giving me power over my