

# 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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## Practical and Moral.

### Ungodly Marriages.

"Be not unequally yoked."

This was the particular sin for which God drowned the old world.

Some of Lot's daughters married in Sodom, and perished in the overthrow.

Both Ishmael and Esau married irreligiously, and were both rejected and turned persecutors.

The first blasphemer that was stoned by God's command is marked as an offspring of one of these marriages—his mother had espoused an Egyptian.

The first captivity of the Jews after their settlement in the Holy Land, is ascribed to this cause.

The whole passage is very instructive. It is said that the remains of the nations "were to prove Israel to know whether they would hearken unto the commandment of the Lord which he commanded their fathers by the hand of Moses."

And the children of Israel dwelt among the Canaanites, Hittites, and Amorites, and Perizzites, and Hivites, and Jebusites; and they took their daughters to be their wives, and gave their daughters to their sons, and served their gods. And the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord, and forgot the Lord their God, and served Baalim and the groves; therefore the anger of the Lord was hot against Israel, and he sold them into the hand of Chusathathaim king of Mesopotamia; and the children of Israel served Chusathathaim eight years."

David married the daughter of Talmi, king of Geshur, by whom he had Absalom—the disgrace and curse of his family.

The case of Solomon is a warning to all ages. His son Rehoboam, that lost the ten tribes, sprang from one of these forbidden marriages—his mother was an Ammonitess.

The marriage of Ahab is thus awfully noticed: "And it came to pass, as if it had been a light thing for him to walk in the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, that he took to wife Jezebel the daughter of Ethbaai, king of the Zidonians, and went and served Baal and worshipped him. But there was none like unto Ahab, who did sell himself to work wickedness in the sight of the Lord whom Jezebel his wife stirred up."

What was it that Ezra so grievously lamented, and so sharply reproved? It was, that "the holy seed had mingled themselves with the people of the land."

And what says the zealous reformer Nehemiah? "Their children spake half in the speech of Ashdod, and could not speak in the Jews' language, but according to the language of each people."

And I contended with them, and cursed them, and smote certain of them, and plucked off their hair, and made them swear by God, saying, "Ye shall not give your daughters unto their sons, nor take their daughters unto your sons, or for yourselves. Did not Solomon king of Israel sin by these things? yet among many nations was there no king like him who was beloved of his God, and God made him king over all Israel; nevertheless even him did outlandish women cause to sin. Shall we then hearken unto you to do all this great evil, to transgress against our God in marrying strange wives?"

Now these things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things as they also lusted."

### What is Prayer?

Every minister of the Christian sanctuary is, or ought to be, in a high and peculiar sense, a man of prayer; but let us never forget that acceptable prayer is not limited to him. For, what is prayer? Prayer is, after all, but the breath of faith, the pulse of the regenerate heart, the direct and necessary outflowing and emanation of the quickened spirit. Let the soul be effectually touched by Divine grace, and immediately it lives, however feebly; and living spiritually, it must and will breathe out its heavenward desire and wistful longings: and this soul-breathing is the very essence of prayer. One friend may pray for another, in the sense of intercession, as a friend, but not for another vicariously, as a hired or appointed priestly substitute. To pray in this manner is to pray by proxy; and to pray to God by proxy, as tens of thousands of mere formal, superstitious worshippers are now doing, is in itself as absolutely preposterous and useless as for a man to eat or drink by proxy, or to breathe by proxy, or sleep, or walk by proxy. If there be a particle of physical life in a man, he must eat,

drink, breathe, sleep, walk, and perform all other corporeal functions, for himself; otherwise, it is a sign that there is no life in him, or that it will soon expire. So it is with the soul of man. If it be awakened by the spirit of God, it must pray and perform all other spiritual functions for itself; and if it do not, it is a sure and infallible sign either that there is no spiritual life in it, or that it is fast lapsing into inanity or total extinction.

As there are no exclusively authorized persons, so neither are there any exclusively authorized forms, for prayer. It is not true that the very babe, not yet able to speak in accurate grammatical style, or even to list a single intelligible sentence, can make its wants thoroughly known to the living mother by signs and cries, if in no other way? And so with the babe in Christ.

In the absence of distinct verbal utterance, there may be heartfelt sighs, and groanings which cannot be uttered, but which reach and pierce the ears of God, and, clearly apprehended by him, are answered, and soon return with richest blessings.

In like manner, there are no exclusively authorized times for prayer. The God whom we worship is not like the feeble dependent god of the blinded Pagan, who needs sleep and rest, and who therefore must have special times for his service. Our God, the Good Shepherd of Israel, neither slumbereth nor sleepeth. The Psalmist could rise at midnight to praise him. Neither are there exclusively authorized places for prayer. The gods of the heathen, who have material forms of images, can only be addressed in prayer where the image is. Jehovah, our God, is omnipresent, and all places are alike unto him. The house-top, the verdant field, the mountain solitude, the ocean shore, the wooded wilderness, the naked desert, the noisy street, the densely thronged market-place—all, all are alike unto him, and no man can be where he cannot give vent to the aspirations of a quickened soul, at least in secret sighs or broken ejaculatory utterances.—Dr. Duff.

### Conversion of La Harpe.

The following confession, says the N. Y. Evangelist is too remarkable to be lost. As we have never met with it in English, we translate it from the French. La Harpe was a celebrated infidel writer of the last century, of the school of Voltaire. During the Reign of Terror he was seized, and narrowly escaped the guillotine. It was while shut up in prison that he became a believer in the Christian religion. He says:

"I was in my prison, alone in a small room, and profoundly dejected. For some days I had read the Psalms, the Gospels, and some good books. Their effect had been rapid, but gradual. Already I was restored to faith, I saw a new light; but it threw me into terror and consternation, for it showed me an abyss—that of forty years wandering. I saw the whole evil, and no remedy; nothing around me offered the aid of religion.—On one side, my life was before my eyes, such as I saw it in the light of celestial truth; on the other, death—which I daily expected. The priest no longer appeared on the scaffold to console the condemned; he ascended it only to die himself. Full of these desolate thoughts, my heart was completely prosed and addressed itself in a whisper to God whom I had just found, and whom even then, I scarcely knew. I said what must I do? what am I to become? I had upon the table the imitation of Christ, by Thomas a Kempis; and I had been told that in this excellent book I should often find the answer to my thoughts. I opened it at random, and fell, on opening, upon these words, 'Here am I, my son! I come to thee because thou hast called me.' I read no more; the sudden effect which I experienced is beyond all expression. It is no more possible for me to describe it than to forget it. I fell prostrate, with my face to the earth, bathed in tears, stifled with sobs, raising cries and broken words. I felt my heart consoled and expanded, but at the same time ready to break.—Overwhelmed with a crowd of ideas and of feelings, I wept a long time, without retaining any remembrance of this situation, except that it was without comparison an emotion the most powerful, and the sweetest I have ever known; and these words, 'Here am I, my son!' have not yet ceased to echo in my spirit, and to stir most deeply all its faculties."

### Trust in the Lord.

A pious woman, who was reduced to extreme poverty and deserted by her intemperate husband, was taken sick, and lay several days without physical power to provide food for her two little children. She had directed them where to find the little that was remaining in the house, and they had eaten it all. Still she lay sick, with no means of obtaining more, as night closed upon the hungry household. The children soon forgot their hunger in sleep; but not so the mother. She saw no help for them but in God, and she spent the night-watches in spreading before him their necessities. As the morning approached her confidence in God increased, and that passage from his word rested with peculiar sweetness upon her mind, "Trust in the Lord and do good; so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed."

Morning came. The starving children managed by her direction to build them a little fire, and almost before they had commenced telling their mother of their hunger a stranger came in. She introduced herself as Mrs. J. saying she had known for some time that there was a new family in the neighborhood, and intended to call and make their acquaintance, but had been prevented. During the last night she had been so troubled and disturbed about it, that she thought she would run in early, lest she should again be prevented and see if

there was any way in which she could be of service to them. The mother in bed with her head bound to mitigate its pain, revealed the story of her sufferings, and the good lady soon learned their entire destitution. They were immediately made comfortable; and all will be glad to know that it was the beginning of better days to that deserted wife and mother.

### REPORT

OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE N. B. A. BIBLE SOCIETY.

This meeting as noticed by us in our paper of the 5th inst., was held on the evening of the 3rd inst., in the Centenary Chapel. Every part of that spacious building was filled with people, probably not less than 1800 being present. The President, (Judge Parker), occupied the chair, and around him on the platform were seated ministers and gentlemen of different denominations, all minor differences between them being swallowed up in the great object of this Institution:—

(Continued.)

The Rev. Mr. Bennett, in moving the second Resolution, said:—

Mr. CHAIRMAN.—The Resolution put into my hands speaks of the Society's unwonted success during the past year, and of gratitude owing to God on that account; and certainly, that Great One who inspires with good thoughts, and blesses all noble undertakings, is by this Society greatly to be praised. I need not say how pleasing it is to me to be the herald of grateful acknowledgment on behalf of this Society. While other institutions are languishing into life, or dying of atrophy—groping their infant way to action, or sitting in the chair of age—the Bible Society rejoices in the strength of manhood, and having accomplished herculean labours, nerves itself for mightier efforts, to cleanse the Augean stables of vice, superstition, and idolatry, with which a great portion of the world is yet filled, by turning the full current of the river of the Word of Life upon these accumulations. Your Society, sir, has been doubly successful during the past year in benevolently spending what it has been active in winning.

In speaking to the Resolution, I shall take the liberty of inverting the order of its terms. The circulation even of Bibles being dependent on the acquisition of money, we shall deal first with the ledger. In order to dress the bare, says Mrs. Gamp, first catch it. And your Society's first task particular and well rewarded pains to catch the needful; and a rich and varied feast of the Word of Life has been forthwith prepared for the poor of the land, the inmates of jails, of ocean homes, of the camp field, and of the dark places of the earth. During the past year £222,600 have been cast into the Society's treasury. By three separate efforts—by the ordinary means of revenue, by the Jubilee fund, and by the China Testament fund—has this result been attained. And I find that by meeting the accounts after paying all liabilities, and squaring all engagements—the liquidation of some of about £20,000 would remain in the Society's coffers for future efforts and prospective benevolences. Your Society, sir, is rich. If not a millionaire, it is yet in the flourishing condition of a wealthy merchant, whose trading adventures have succeeded beyond expectation. I have seen a definition given of a rich man—one who, on settling his books at Christmas, finds he can pay his debts and have something left. And we might well congratulate the Bible Society if it could only square its accounts, and have a balance, however small, on the right side. But when we find that the Society has a whole year's ordinary revenue on hand after satisfying every liability, we have much reason to rejoice and feel grateful to God for the state of its funds. There are many members of the aristocracy of the land, of the merchants of our cities, of the mechanics of our workshops, and of the learned professions, who would be glad to find themselves in possession of a whole year's income, without liabilities. I dare say many are ready rather to say with the young English gentleman "I'd be a rich man if my debts were paid." But then it may be suggested that this result has been attained by a miserly carelessness of the poor, who, finding like the spirit of a Mide, has appealed for money; but unlike that mythical one, who, finding everything he touched—his clothes, his food—all becoming gold, was furnished with riches, your Society has received the gift of transmitting all the gold it can lay its hands on into food and clothing—the bread of life, and the waters of life, and the robe of righteousness. Like the old Scotch servant, addicted to brown rappee, whom the Laird of Logan tells us of, and who, on being told to make a request for whatever he desired, asked just a house full of sneeshan; which being granted, and being further told to ask for something else, after deep consideration, replied—"Just mair sneeshan"—so your Society just asks for Bibles—more Bibles. Bibles—not for their own selfish wants—but for the wants of a dark and dying world. And if your Society is not in debt, it is owing to the difficulty which has occurred in procuring the necessary instrumentalities for carrying on the anti-alchemic process of transmuting gold into Bibles. But there is another matter connected with the monetary position of your Society. It has become possessor of a large estate, which, by good cultivation, is ever raising an increasing revenue. I do not now refer to its consols or its exchequer bills; nor has it any broad lands in the voluntary benevolence of an entire Christian people, who are every year, as tenants of the grace of God, ready to pay, as God hath prospered them, into the Bible exchequer; or rather, as subjects of the King of kings, to tax themselves as largely as necessary for carrying on the great warfare, with the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God, against the systems of ignorance, superstition, delusion, and idolatry, which Satan has set up in the world.

But there is another part of the Resolution to which I must refer. It is that we have much cause for gratitude in the manner in which your Society has been enabled to spend its large income. Herein lies matter for greater rejoicing than in the expansion of its funds.—The grounds of the rich man spread forth plentifully only to his more abundant condemnation; and many a lordly income is spent in adding new names to the list of profligacy, to swelling the volume of the tide of licentiousness, and in accumulating guilt on the head of its possessor. Great wealth may be a great curse. It is so to the majority of the favourites of fortune. But the Bible Society spends its revenue in the noblest of causes; not in making it the producer of more wealth; not in adding field to field; and house to house; but in enterprises of greater piety and merit—in enlight-

ening the cottage of the poor man, the ocean home of the sailor, with heaven-born truth—a light which, while it discovers immortality, guides to its possession, and cheers the lone path even of misery and mourning.—Oh, sir, who can tell how many an old man gray, and how many an ardent youth and maiden, may have received an immortal benefit from that increased home circulation referred to in the Report. And how many of those of whom our country is so justly proud for deeds of desperate valour, living and dead, who have come to bless the Bible Society for the gift of the Word of God, which during the past year has been circulated among them. And who can tell how many on the heights of Alma, on the fields of Balaklava and Inkerman, blessed with their dying breath the men who called their attention to long forgotten truth by the gift of a Bible, put into their hands so shortly before the day when they were to shed their precious blood in defence of the future liberties of England and of Europe.

Certainly, sir, the Bible Society is under a deep debt of gratitude to God for the means of usefulness given, and for the excellent ends obtained; and it deserves our confidence and our support beyond almost every other. The Resolution ranks it among the noblest institutions which have sprung into existence since the Apostolic era. It dates its origin from a period in many respects remarkable; but in none more so for the hostility which had during the preceding age, been displayed towards the Bible. It was subsequent and closely connected with that period of the age of reason which promised fair to destroy the foundations of superstition and the temples of religion. Hence, the prince of sceptics, had propounded his argument against miracles. Gibbon had unfolded his natural causes of the propagation of Christianity. The satiric wit of Voltaire had been applauded and repeated in the saloons of Paris and the places of Versailles. Fa'ne had spouted his vile abuse on the white neck of Christianity. The Court of Frederic had become the resort of the sceptic and the atheist. Rousseau had sent forth from Luke Leman those sylphic inspirations by which he had hoped to charm away the moral malady of humanity. Bayle had published his philosophical Dictionary—Volney his Ruins of Empires; and a thousand more minds had uttered their borrowed sarcasms against the Cross and Him who suffered on it. The Age of Reason had been solemnly inaugurated over the ruins of Religion; and the Goddess of Reason had been set up for worship, in the image of a prostitute, in the temple of Notre Dame. And as the just and appropriate finale, the guillotine had become drunk with the blood of nobles, and princesses, and kings—the best blood of France; and the war of revolution was sweeping over the world. Then—it was then that men's minds began to feel how important is religion, how necessary is faith, and that Book which alone can produce and sustain a natural faith. Then it was that the Bible Society took its origin, and rose above the horizon, as the Star of the East at the birth of the Saviour, to guide the wise men of every country and clime to the place where "the desire of all nations" might be found; and it has for the last fifty years shone forth with ever increasing magnitude—among the institutions of the land a "bright particular star."

And during the past year may we not say it has doubled its lustre? Is it not also peculiar, that at such a time as this, when perhaps the most powerful arms that ever were employed against Christianity have been used; when criticism has undermined the foundations of much that was thought history; when the mythic theory was thought to have resolved Christianity into an original nebula of heterogeneous atoms; when the development hypothesis had well nigh brought back the pantheism of Spinoza; when the tide of scepticism, which had swept over England's flumes and Gibbons over France, and then over Germany, was beginning to beat back over the place which gave it volume and vastness; when eloquent and learned men, such as Froude, and F. W. Newman, and the author of "Vestiges," and Auguste Comte, and Emerson, and Theodore Parker, had taken up the cause of infidelity;—at such times does the Bible Society rise in might and majesty to stay the devastating surges, and sweeten the poisoned waters, by casting into the depths of society, where ruin was likely to be the greatest, its millions of copies of the word of the living God? It may suit the *Times* and *Punch*, and less respectable periodicals, to sneer at the assemblages and the enthusiasm of Exeter Hall and the Bible Society. But at any rate they display a faith in the Gospel as the regenerator of mankind which you will in vain look for among the advocates of pantheism, and spiritualism, and other transcendental speculations, proposed as panaceas for the restoration of the moral health of humanity, and balance weights to restore the equilibrium of a spiritual world reeling to and fro as a drunken man. We should like to see among the destroyers of what has been called in this learned age Bibliolatry, an association, however small, and money poured into its coffers for circulating any of the panaceas of scepticism which would indicate faith as a grain of mustard seed in the vale of their nostrums. But let the truth be confessed. The only hope for humanity's renovation lies in the pages of Scripture. If not, then it is no where as yet on earth, and we have still to wait for that which Christianity was supposed to be—the gospel—the life-giving word—the re-novator of the broken strands which once bound earth to heaven, humanity to its God—the proclaimer of peace and good will—the ark which should save a world drowned in misery and superstition by a single family—the angel of mercy, which should cheer the sorrows of the afflicted, administer balm to the diseased mind, and "pluck from the memory each rooted sorrow"—the chariot which should from the dying and dead carry but one immortal Elijah to heaven.

Hon. W. B. Kinnear, in seconding the resolution, spoke as follows:—

I rise, Sir, for the purpose of supporting the resolution which has just been offered. I do it the more gladly on the present occasion, from having been so long prevented by the pressure of public business from meeting you at your anniversary. It is truly delightful to see the great change which has taken place since the time when I last had such an opportunity as the present. Although there has never been any cessation since you occupied that chair, as regards the prosperity of this noble institution, still from the long line of supporters surrounding you, from the great gathering of this evening, and the immense pressure of its friends desiring to get in, as well as the increase of that prosperity beyond what I could have conceived, and hail with satisfaction the state of religious feeling which it evinces in this large and growing community.

You, Sir, together with others who have preceded me in addressing this meeting, have referred to that part of the resolution just proposed which speaks of the circulation of the Bible in the army and navy; but I still

feel there is room left for me to offer some remarks on the same exciting subject—a subject which rivets the attention of so many minds at the present time. It has long been anticipated that should a fresh war break out in Europe, after so long a period of peace, it would be a most sanguinary one, from the great advance of science, the power of steam, and the opportunity afforded to men to invent new modes of fortification and prepare more deadly weapons of destruction; and the present war has fully realized those forebodings. But thank God, there have sprung into existence moral appliances which are equal to the emergency. Our soldiers, with all daring and unflinching determination which belong to their character as Britons, and which have never been exceeded in any previous war, even by Britons, have acquired in addition a moral power heretofore in a great measure unknown. In the earlier struggles of the Peninsula, the Bible Society had only begun its operations; it was speedily followed by the Naval and Military Bible Society; and our soldiers, no longer considering themselves as the Russians now do, a mere machine, by permuting the free circulation of the Bible among them, and by inculcating canons from every regiment, and by substituting reading rooms and useful books, have elevated the mind of what has been called the common soldier; and now the natural consequence is, that each man feels that he is the army, and performs deeds of almost incredible valor, as has been most gloriously evinced in the three great battles of the Crimea. The Russians fight and fight well, but brutalized, by strong drink, by barbarous treatment and fanaticism, can only fight in masses. One of the greatest of the French Generals of the old war, Marshal Soult, has said of the English soldier, even in his day, that "they never knew when they were beaten"—a vaunt of the Frenchman which amounted to this, that they may have been beaten, but they were sure to be sure to persevere as till they conquered; and nobly as General Canrobert, the present commander of our men, when at the battle of the Alma, he said, as he saw their gallant bearing in the midst of the most terrific fire,—"If I could die fighting at the head of such men, I should die happy." That the influence of the Bible has exerted great power on the minds of these men, we believe from one or two other facts. The agent at Malta of the British and Foreign Bible Society observed, in writing home, that on applying to the colonels or commanders of not less than thirteen regiments, which stopped there on their way to Turkey, not only did they gladly receive the offers of the Scriptures, but themselves took an interest in distributing them among the men. And very shortly before the great battle of the Alma, Sir George Brown, that ardent and gallant leader of the Light Division, was requested to allow prayer to be offered to God before they rushed to the attack. It was immediately complied with, and there these three thousand men, formed into a hollow square, and in full view of the heights covered by the enemy and every weapon of destruction, in the vine-covered fields of the Crimea, beneath the blue canopy of heaven, and with that glittering river in eight or soon to be dyed with their blood, knelt on the ground, while the Chaplain offered up prayer to the God of Battles for their temporal and eternal welfare. They sought no temple, or church, or ceremony, but in the simplicity of Bible truth sought the Most High in prayer, evidently showing their acquaintance with the Divine Redeemer's words—"No longer in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, shall the true worshippers be found, but the true worshippers are they who worship God in spirit and in truth; for the Father seeketh such to worship Him."

It has been said by one of the most gifted minds of the present day, the eloquent historian and orator, and the brilliant essayist, referring to the decay of Greece, the most celebrated land of antiquity, that "England must one day share its fate, and fall into decay, and when civilization and knowledge shall pass to distant continents, some traveller from those far off lands shall visit the country, and standing on some broken arch of one of the noble bridges which now span the Thames, shall behold falling columns and ruined temples, and shall in vain endeavor to decipher on some broken pedestal the memorial of her proudest chief; while some savage shall chant his hymns to a misshapen idol, or the solitary fisherman wash his nets in the river of ten thousand marts." It is possible that this day of England's decay may come, but I believe that this gifted man has forgotten that which is England's greatest glory, I believe that such a catastrophe can never happen, so long as the Bible continues freely to circulate among her free and happy homes—so long as to every quarter of the world, along with her wide extended commerce, there goes forth the sacred volume, and with every returning breeze there are wafted back to her bosom the blessings of those who are ready to perish; so long as the principle of love for the Bible is steadfastly adhered to by her sons—a principle which requires obedience to God rather than man, when God commands us, as he does, Sir, in that book lying before you, "to search the Scriptures;" a principle which will not suffer us to bow down to graven images, nor to any image whatever of a more questionable shape: which will not surrender the truth to ninety "Tracts for the Times," no, nor to ninety thousand tracts for the times although written by the most talented men to be found in the world; a principle which has made her the refuge and the home of the oppressed and persecuted of every clime, whether it be the dethroned monarch, the exiled parrot, or the timid female who for circulating the Bible only escapes being chained to the galleys for life, by perpetual banishment from her native land: a principle which is the origin of all freedom, whether civil or religious, whether exhibited on the brow of the white man or stamped on that of his sabbler brother, according to the glowing language of the poet, "he is the freeman whom the truth makes free," and in the more lofty and sublime language of the holy volume, "If the Son of God make you free, then shall you be free indeed." I never can believe it, so long as—

"Her land, from plain to mountain cave  
Is freedom's home, or glory's grave."

and sending forth her brave men to the battle at the call of duty, accompanied by the Bible, shall point them to the God of the Bible, and the God of Battles, as "their sun and their shield." No, Sir, instead of thinking she will ever decay, I believe she will go on with her Bible Societies and a thousand other kindred institutions, until through her instrumentality, with other countries imitating the same high example, the Gospel of the Kingdom shall be published among all nations; and then, according to the inspired word, "the end shall be;" the end of this day of sin and suffering, and the bringing in of the joyful millennium on the earth, when "Ephraim shall no more envy Judah, nor Judah envy Ephraim," when "there shall be