

RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCER,

And Bible Society, Missionary, and Sabbath School Advocate.

PUBLISHED WEEKLY, FOR THE GENERAL CONFERENCE OF FREE C. BAPTISTS OF N. BRUNSWICK, AT ONE DOLLAR A YEAR, IN ADVANCE.

G. LEOD, Editor. Office, No. 6, King Street.

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

B. J. UNDERHILL, D. W. CLARK, WILLIAM PETERS, Pub. Committee.

NEW SERIES.

SAINT JOHN, NEW BRUNSWICK, FRIDAY, AUGUST 18, 1854.

VOL. I.—NO. 33

Religious.

PRISON SUFFERINGS IN THE DAYS OF QUEEN MARY.

It requires some effort of imagination, as well as accurate historical information, to realise the altered position of true-hearted Protestants throughout England, at the eventful period of Queen Mary's accession. After a struggle intensely arduous, they had reached the summit of their highest expectations. The shackles of an iron bondage, riveted by centuries of spiritual misrule, lay at their feet; and they were at length standing erect in the light of truth—the authors of priceless blessings to their own generation, and with every prospect of so completing and establishing their glorious enterprise, that the results of it would be safely handed down to all future time. But the sun of their brightest hopes has gone down at noon-day, and where are they now? The toil of twenty years is swept away by one fell stroke. The bright vision of the future is fled as a dream when it was awake. The emancipators of their fellow-countrymen are themselves in hopeless and helpless bondage for the truth's sake.

If we take a glimpse at their physical sufferings alone, we find these sufficiently appalling. For prisons and prison treatment were in those days far other than modern humanity allows, in this country, to the most abandoned of criminals. The doors of dark, damp dungeons were now closed on these faithful confessors, where they were even in danger of perishing had not help been brought to them from without—so scanty was their prison allowance; and in instances not a few, privative torture was added, to remove them, if possible, from their steadfastness. Bishop Coverdale, a contemporary and most truthful witness, thus describes their sufferings:—"Many were imprisoned," says he, "in dungeons, ugly holes, dark, loathsome, and stinking corners; others loaded with fetters and chains, so that they could scarcely stir; some fastened in the stocks, with their legs upwards, and their necks secured to the wall with iron collars; sometimes one leg or hand in the stocks and the other out, and without stool or stone to sit upon to ease their tormented bodies; others kept to what were called Skeffington's gyves, a frame of iron by which their bodies were almost bent double; others were starved from want of sufficient sustenance; some were starved to death—their persecutors frequently boasting that they would compel these suffering saints to eat their fingers' ends of hunger." We read of one about to be led to execution, whose legs were so worn with heavy irons in prison, and his body so weakened with evil keeping that he was unable even to stand, and that he was consequently placed in a chair, and in that posture fastened to the stake; and of another, who, when in prison, was chained upright in a position which occasioned severe pain, and was allowed no more than two or three mouthfuls of bread and three spoonfuls of water daily, so that when at last brought forth to be burned, it seemed but a trifle in comparison of the torture he had already passed through. A few prisoners of distinction were treated with more leniency and consideration, but we may imagine what were the indignities they received at the best, from the fact that, when Bonner visited Archbishop Philpot, from whom he professed some respect, in his Lordship's own coal-house, a receptacle whose name must be admitted to convey no very specific idea of comfort, the Bishop judged it too good for him, and ordered him to be conveyed through sundry dark passages into a less luxurious apartment in the Lordship's Tower.

But what bitter draughts of mental sorrow were they called upon to drink in these desolate abodes! Some had families from whose embraces they had been torn. These, they now well, were pining at home, forsaken, or dependent upon the charity of others, or about to be cast helpless on the world, branded with the disgrace which a hard-hearted generation might attach to their very names. All of them were in anguish for "the work of God." Where is the Church with her pure worship, and sacraments reduced to scriptural simplicity, and plentiful preaching of the sincere Word of God, for which they had laboured and suffered so long and so much, and apparently with such abundant success? What now is the situation of its chief pastors and faithful under-shepherds? Where too, alas! are the majority of those who had favoured and applauded and rejoiced in the mighty emancipation that had been effected, and whose hearts they had fain hoped were won over to the truth as it is in Jesus. Most graphically are these sad reverses depicted in Bishop Ridley's "pious lamentation of the miserable state of the Church in England in the time of the late revolt from the Gospel." Heart-moving "prison thoughts" are these, and moreover well worthy of attention, not only for the touching and striking contrast which they exhibit between the Roman and Reformed Faith, but for the fidelity with which all is connected with the one turning and essential point of distinction—an open or a closed Bible. "Alas!" he begins, "what misery is thy Church brought unto, O Lord, at this day! Where of late the Word of the Lord was truly preached, was read and heard in every town, in every church, in every village, yea, and almost every honest man's house, alas! now it is extirped, and banished out of the whole realm. Of late, who was not glad to be taken for a lover of God's Word, for a reader, for a ready hearer, for a learner of the same? And now, alas! who dare bear any upon countenance towards it, but such as are content in Christ's cause,

and for his Word's sake, to stand, to the danger and loss of all that they have."

And if such was their present condition, to what had they to look forward? Helpless in the hands of their persecutors, they were as lambs among the wolves.

Not only had all statutes against Popery been repealed, but the sanguinary laws of former times against any suspected with heresy were re-enacted. Even in the hard days of Henry VIII., a prisoner could not be seized for heresy without the concurrence of the civil power, or be condemned unless found guilty by the verdict of a jury. But now, Romish ecclesiastics had full power to cause any person to be apprehended at their pleasure,—to be confined as long as they chose, in prisons entirely under their own control, and then, at any time they pleased, to be arraigned before themselves, and delivered for execution to the civil power. There was no earthly source to which such captives could look either for pity or consideration. At any given moment, the door of a cell might be opened, and its hapless inmate might find himself at once in the presence of a number of Romish ecclesiastics. There would be no counsel with whom to advise—no witnesses to be examined—no judge humanly sifting their evidence—no jury to decide—no friends, whose presence at least might show their sympathy in his fate. Brought out of a loathsome dungeon—where, perhaps, he had been loaded with fetters, debarrued from the necessities of life, and enfeebled by long confinement,—after a harassing examination with many aunts and revivings,—his mock trial was usually brought to one issue. In the language of the times, he was required at once, either to "turn or burn." He might, if he pleased, make shipwreck of faith and a good conscience. If not, he must be carried away to a death of agony. And as their companions in tribulation were thus successively hurried before their iniquitous judges, abandoned to the secular power, and then led away as sheep to the slaughter, to be burned alive at the stake, each one left behind felt that his turn might come next.

But here is a thought, or rather a fact of mighty import, which we shall do well to ponder. It was out of depths such as these, that our faithful ancestors, to whose sufferings, no less than to their labours, we owe so much,—exhibited to the world one of the most convincing internal proofs ever afforded, of the reality and vital energy of the religion of Christ. If frail humanity did sink under the pressure, as well it might, such feelings were but occasional and transitory. Their letters and conversations and whole conduct evinced uniformly anything rather than depression or dismay or half-heartedness. It was no merely human courage, where with they were nerved. The strength which sustained them in more than peace—the joy which reacted and invigorated their strength—were of a higher origin than any of which this world can boast. It was by faith they endured, because they saw Him with whom they are invisible; and through this enduring faith they finally and completely overcame. Thus writes one from the Bishop's coal-house:—"a dark and an ugly prison," he describes it, "as any about London." "I taste and feel the faintness of God to his promise, who hath promised to be with His in their trouble, and to deliver them. I thank the Lord I am not alone, but have six faithful companions, who in our darkness do cheerfully sing hymns and praise unto God for His great goodness. We are joyful, that I wish you part of my joy. If we be imprisoned in this cause, we are blessed; if we lose all that we have, we are blessed, an hundredfold; if we die, we are blessed eternally; so that in suffering persecutions, all is full of blessings."

"I do earnestly believe," writes another, "that God who hath begun this good work in me, will perform it unto the end; as the faith given me, will perform it, and will always, to bear this easy yoke and light burden, as I have always found it to be, I praise my Lord God. For when I have been in prison, wearing sometimes bolts, and sometimes shackles, sometimes lying on the bare ground, sometimes sitting in the stocks,—sometimes bound with cords, so that all my body hath been swollen and like to be overcome by the pains that hath been in my flesh,—sometimes brought before the sheriffs, justices, bishops,—sometimes called devil, heretic, traitor, deceiver, thief, with other such foul names; and yet for all this I praise my Lord God,—all this that hath happened to me hath been easy, light, and most delightful and joyful of any treasure that ever I possessed. For fear hath no painfulness; but perfect love casteth out fear."

Another addresses some fellow-sufferers as follows, writing with his very blood, for want of ink:—"Oh, that it had been the good-will of God that I had been ready to have gone with you; for I lie in my Lord's little ease in the day, and in the night I lie in the coalhouse with Ralph Allerton; and we look every day when we shall be condemned, for he (Bonner) said I should be burned within ten days before Easter; but I lie still at the pool's brink, and every man goeth in before me; but we abide the Lord's time, with many bonds, in fetters and stocks, by which we have received great joy in God. And now fare ye well, dear brethren and sisters in this world, but I trust to see you in heaven face to face. Therefore give all thanks to God. You shall be clothed with white garments upon the Mount Zion, with the multitude of saints, and with Jesus Christ our Saviour, who will never forsake us." And similar expressions of steadfastness and courage, and even triumphant joy, pervade all their letters.

If the "stone out of the wall" of those dungeons could have spoken, and the "beam out of the timber" could have answered,—to how many scenes

of thrilling interest might they not have borne witness? Whilst faith such as this was in active exercise, it is not to be supposed that prison walls would chill or repress the expansiveness of that charity which is its invariable accompaniment. Laid aside from the labours of love, into which their energies had been so long thrown, they set themselves to strengthen their brethren—to warn those without, who were in danger of falling from their steadfastness so far as they could do so by writing—and to turn the hearts of all within their reach;—nor did they labour in vain. A power as mighty as that which was put forth in the prison of Philippi, wrought effectually also in the Marshalsea in London. The stern and hard-hearted jailor, to whom Sandys and Bradford were intrusted, was, as Fox expresses himself, a "very perverse Papist;" and having received such a charge, was prepared, we may be well assured, to execute it with all the rigours of which his petty authority gave him the command. But the words of love and mercy which he heard from his prisoners, unnerved his resolution—by degrees his obdurate heart softened, and at length, after many conferences, their words and whole deportment won upon him, that he began to inquire with all the earnestness of a sincere convert, "what he must do to be saved?" And on Sundays, when mass was performed in the prison chapel, this man would bring "a manchet and a glass of wine," and a copy of the proscribed but dearly valued service-book, which, as the medium of approach unto the holiest of all, had animated the faith and cheered the hopes of so many during the few preceding years,—and there Sandys would administer the Sacrament of the Supper, in its purest form, to his companions in tribulation, and their converted jailor,—in the precise form and words with which we are now privileged to celebrate it. Thus did Bradford—about to seal his testimony with his blood in Smithfield—and Sandys, little thinking of the long course of future service to which he was destined,—and their son in the faith, commemorating the dying love of their common Lord, whose presence, we may be well assured, lighted up the gloomy dungeon, where those three "were gathered together in His name."

And this while idolatry was set up everywhere around, and to be baptized in blood was the only consequence which such one must expect, from the course, to which, in the strength of God, they were pledging themselves. Surely we may learn from these prisons some important lessons. They afford additional internal evidence to the truth of our holy religion. They reveal, moreover, the principles and the motives and the hidden strength, by which the great Reformation from Popery had been brought about. In the preceding reign, these noble-minded men were only some amongst many, all apparently labouring in the same work, or at least welcoming it with apparently equal satisfaction and compliance. But the rest—where are they? Some, indeed, forsook all and became voluntary exiles to a foreign land,—neither can they be blamed for so doing, if opportunity offered. Alas! how many more were unable to endure even this less severe alternative, but veered at once with the changing current, and were known no more amongst the ranks of the faithful. Here then is the secret of that power, which, by working upward against an opposition all but overwhelming, had at last emancipated the nation, so that the pure worship of God was established, and His Word had free course and was glorified. Had not men of real and sterling Christian principle thrown their energies into the movement, which had no doubtless a beginning, it would never have been attended with such an issue.

Now, it is by agents such as these, let us remember, that God ever works. Let the "godly cease" in our own day, and "the faithful be diminished from among men;" or let them slumber at their post, and we shall soon discover that policy and expediency, and experience and education, and the a-priori enlightenment of the age, will prove feeble barriers against the insidious devices or open aggression of the same unchanged and unchangeable foe. We want larger measures of a spirit of love and faith and prayer—the motives which prompt and sustain untiring energy in the cause of Christ, while life and opportunity are afforded, and which induce perfect willingness to suffer the loss of all things, even of life itself, if need be, for His sake. All are concerned, whatever be their station in life, in this great contest. The martyrs of the Marian persecution were not men of learning and education merely,—they came forward from every rank in society. What, then, is our preparedness in the same cause? What our zeal, our faith, our constancy? Have the blessings which they prized above life itself, lost any of their value now? Are we under less obligations than they, to the Master whom they served? Is the hour of final triumph—our sore and animating hope in every conflict, and under every temporary defeat—less certain or more distant now, than three centuries more have rolled away? Let each one put to himself these important questions, and act up to the conclusions they suggest.—*Churchman's Penny Magazine.*

POWER OF MOTHERS ILLUSTRATED.
Who can estimate the value of a Christian mother's influence? Such men as Bacon, Hall, Newton, Dwight, Edwards, and a host of like renown, owed their greatness to their gifted and faithful mothers. John Quincy Adams once paid the following tribute to his mother:—"It is due to gratitude and nature that I should acknowledge and avow that, such as I have been, whatever it was, such as I am, whatever it is, and such as I

hope to be in all futurity, must be ascribed, under Providence, to the precepts and example of my mother." That maternal influence has much to do in preparing men for spheres of extensive usefulness, is evident from such facts as the following. Rev. Richard Knill acknowledged maternal agency in the formation of his own character. He says:—

"I have a vivid recollection of the effect of maternal influence. My honoured mother was a religious woman, and she watched over and instructed me as pious mothers are accustomed to do. Alas! I often forgot her admonitions; but in my most thoughtless days I never lost the impressions which her holy example had made on my mind."

"After spending a large portion of my life in foreign lands, I returned again to visit my native village. Both my parents died while I was in Russia, and their house is now occupied by my brother. The furniture remains just the same as when I was a boy; and at night I was accommodated with the same bed in which I had often slept before; but my busy thoughts would not let me sleep. I was thinking how God had led me through the journey of life. At last the light of the morning dawned through the little window, and then my eye caught a sight of the spot where my sainted mother forty years before, took me by the hand and said, 'Come, my dear, kneel down with me, and I will go to prayer.'"

"This completely overcame me. I seemed to hear the very tones of her voice; I recollected some of her expressions; and I burst into tears, and arose from my bed, and fell upon my knees just on the spot where my mother knelt, and thanked God that I had once a praying mother. And O, if every parent could feel what I felt then, I am sure they would pray with their children, as well as pray for them."

Equally to the point and touching is the following incident in the life of Dr. Todd, as related by himself. His mother was deprived of her reason when he was a child; and referring to this he says:—

"I can recollect that, when a little child, I was standing at the open window, at the close of a lovely summer's day. The large, red sun, was just sinking away behind the western hills; the sky was gold and purple conmingled; the winds were sleeping; and a soft, solemn stillness seemed to hang over the earth. I was watching the sun as he sent his yellow rays through the trees, and felt a kind of awe, though I knew not wherefore. Just then my mother came to me. She was raving with frenzy; for reason had long since left its throne, and her victim of madness. She came up to me wild with insanity. I pointed to the glorious sun in the west, and in a moment she was calm. She took my little hands within hers and told me that 'the great God made the sun, the stars, the world—everything; that he it was who made her little boy, and gave him an immortal spirit; that yonder sun, and the green fields, and the world itself will one day be burned up; but that the spirit of her little child will then be alive, for he must live when heaven and earth are gone; that he must pray to the great God, and love and serve him forever.'"

"She let go my hands—madness returned—she hurried away. I stood with my eyes filled with tears and my little bosom heaving with emotions which I could not have described; but I can never forget the impressions which that conversation of my poor mother left upon me. O, what a blessing would it have been had the inscrutable providence of God given me a mother who would have repeated these instructions, accompanied by her prayers, through all the days of my childhood! But 'even so, Father; for so it seemeth good in thy sight.'"

The influence of Cowper's mother upon his character may be learned from the following expression of filial affection, which he wrote to Lady Hesketh on the receipt of his mother's picture:—"I had rather possess my mother's picture than the richest jewel in the British crown; for I loved her with an affection that her death, fifty years since, has not in the least abated." And he penned the following lines on that occasion:—

"My mother! when I learned that thou wast dead, Say, what could conscious of the tears I shed? Hushed thy spirit, and thy sorrowing son. Wretch even thou, thy journey just begun? Perhaps thou art, though thought unfit, a king; Perhaps a test, which weep in bliss. Ah, that maternal smile! it answers, 'Yes!'"

HUMILIATION AND GLORY OF CHRIST.

Once there was a man on the earth who had the form of "a servant," and was "without any comeliness for which he might be desired." That was Jesus! But he has dipped his raiment in the sun, and is clothed with these royal garments down to the feet. Once a mob surrounded a helpless prisoner, and cried "Crucify, crucify!" That was Jesus! But now, "every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." Once they took a man, and plaited a fillet of sharp thorns for his diadem, and pressed it cruelly upon his temples. That was Jesus! But "on his head now are many crowns." Once they hung a man upon a cross, and great was his shame, and awful his agony. That was Jesus! But now, "honor and majesty are before him—strength and beauty are in his sanctuary." Once a man went down, not merely to the grave, but descended into the lower parts of the earth. That was Jesus! But now "he has ascended up, far above all heavens, that he might fill all things." At Isaiah's date, Jesus, it is true, had neither been manifested nor slain—far less, exalted. Nevertheless, the vision anticipates all events connected with him; and, conducting us amid the heavens

after that the Son of God has returned thither, shows us the man of grief and conflict, now "the only potentate." Our Lord has been to earth—has been to Bethlehem—in the wilderness—in the garden—on the cross!—but in the very flesh in which he contended and vanquished, has he entered again within the veil, "to reign before his ancient glory?"

What a Saviour, then, is our Saviour! "His visage was so marred—more than any man;—and his form more than the sons of men;" but, "behold my servant! he has prospered, and so shall be exalted, and exalted, and be very high." Men and brethren, look and wonder! The green earth lying under the rays of evening, is beautiful—the still waters, gliding in sweet murmurs to the deep, are pleasant—the stars at midnight are glorious in their very silence—what more bright or sublime than the sun when it prepares to run like a bridegroom, its race? Yet in all these there is no beauty, no sweetness, no lustre, compared to what beams forth from the man Christ Jesus "sitting on his throne!" Most lovely is the world to you—most excellent all the world contains—how ever on your lips! how near your heart! But oh! if once the soul has had a view of Christ in his glory, there only will its eye rest. There, in one surpassing beam, blaze all the rays of the infinite, supreme, eternal, holy Godhead; and we cannot help exclaiming, with David, "O Lord, our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth, who hast set thy glory above the heavens."

Rev. J. Bonar.

THE DEVIL'S HYPOCRISIES.

Be not startled, reader. The phrase, although it sounds coarsely, and has no very pious origin, is correct, and defines a really existing and by no means small class of persons.

The expression is due to Lord Chesterfield, a man who, while in some respects almost beneath a Christian's contempt (if a Christian dare cherish such a feeling toward any person), in others is entitled to all possible respect. A gay, licentious worldling as he was, wholly without religion, and amazingly insensible to eternal things, he yet was wise enough, as an English peer, to get the Gregorian Calendar adopted in Great Britain; as a viceroy of Ireland, to give that province the best administration it ever had; and as a writer, to say some of the best things in the language. The phrase is found in one of his well-known letters to his son—a youth upon whom he bestowed incredible pains, teaching him every thing but religion, but who grew up to be an awkward, booby, and miserably disappointed his dying father by a mesalliance, which only his early death brought to light.

Ordinary hypocrites are those who pretend to be better than they are. The devil's hypocrites, on the contrary, are those who pretend to be worse than the reality. It is against imitating or consorting with these that the sensible Chesterfield warns his boy with emphasis and tenderness. And with much reason; for the former class, odious as they are, yet have redeeming qualities. They pay a homage to Virtue by assuming her garb. They prove her existence and genuineness, for men never counterfeit worthless coin. They are compelled to do some good in order to this world, if only to keep up their assumed character and save appearances. And they get some good themselves; for the mask they wear hides them from many forms of open sin, and is some sort of a restraint even upon secret iniquity. We make no apology for ordinary hypocrites. None is needed, no one can be given. Their life is a cheat, and their end is destruction.

But what shall be said of the opposite class, the devil's hypocrites? These are found in all periods of life—boyhood, youth, manly years, and even under grey hairs. They consist of persons who dare not be half so bad as they desire, and who therefore make up in invention what they lack in act. Their great delight is to astound their companions with marvellous stories of their exploits in wickedness, of lies they have never told, of tricks they have never played, of indecencies they have never committed. Unable to achieve distinction in any other way, they seek it in sin. But even here heart fails them, and after doing all that they can, they are only contemptible sinners. They resort to the boundless stores of romance. For the pitiful purpose of making fools laugh, of "astounding the natives," or of acquiring the name of men of parts and spirit, they boast of vices of which they would shudder to be guilty, and relate, with great swelling words of vanity, ingenious frauds upon parents or teachers, or conquests over virtue, or insults to religious people or ministers, now of which ever had any existence save in their own depraved imagination. These devil's hypocrites are worthy of him whose livery they steal and whose patronage they ostentatiously assume. They are doing his work, aiding his cause, and preparing themselves to be down with him in the fire unquenchable. Their pretences to unaccomplished wickedness, their glowing heart over such wickedness, and their familiar canvassing of its details, fearfully harden the heart and sear the conscience. For the present their course only makes them ridiculous to all who knew their true character (and a bragart is always sure to be detected in the end, and often long before that period), but its results in the future are appalling. They who begin by being the devil's hypocrites, usually finish by becoming his sincere, direct, and willing servants. They do all that they once only boasted of, and more, so that as formerly imagination outstripped reality, now the tables are turned, and the reality exceeds description, and sometimes even belief.