

Religious Intelligence.

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

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The Blood and Pardon.

The apostle, in writing to the Christian Hebrews, and treating of the pattern of things in the heavens, says that without shedding blood there is no remission. Hebrews ix. 22. In this statement he was speaking of the blood of inferior sacrifices; but he speaks of that in its symbolic relation to the blood of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, which cleanseth us from all sin. The truth that without shedding of blood there was no remission of sins under the ceremonial system, is used by him to demonstrate the necessity of the shedding of better blood in the crucifixion of Jesus, as the Lamb of God, who bore the sin of the world. It is of incalculable moment to cling closely to the word of eternal truth on such a subject as this. We may, therefore, strive our reason to consider it, both as a matter of fact, and as one of doctrine, and also in its bearings on human experience. Guided by the Bible, we are compelled to regard it as a matter of unquestionable truth, that without the shedding of blood, there is no remission of sin. In illustration of this, we turn at once to those prominent points in the human history, to which the mind of man is naturally attracted, as he looks back over the progress of his kind. Abel "being dead yet speaketh," on this very point. The highest authority tells us, that "by faith he offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain." Heb. xi. 4. Let it be most carefully marked that we are not told that he came in a better state of mind, though that is true, but that he offered "a more excellent sacrifice." The offering of his brother was refused where his was accepted by Jehovah, and we are expressly told it was a more excellent sacrifice. Cain brought the fruits of the earth—Abel, a firstling of the flock. There was blood to shed in the one case, and none in the other. Even at this early stage of the history of man, therefore, it stands out as a matter of fact, that "without shedding of blood there is no remission of sin." Advancing along the stream of time, we come at once to Noah. Here we must be guided by what we already know. The patriarch not only offered what he had at hand, in his approach to God, but he offered that kind of sacrifice which Abel offered, and which was "more excellent" than that of Cain. Gen. viii. 20. Taking the two facts together, we are inevitably convinced of the truth of Paul's assertion. We next turn to Abraham. When "the father of all those that believe" was commanded to offer up his beloved Isaac, he rightly understood the command to be a test of his faith, and when the ram caught in the thicket, relieved him of the necessity of that tremendous deed, it was provided as a victim whose life's blood was to be shed instead of that of the young man. When we go back again to the "more excellent sacrifice" of Abel, as compared with that of Cain, and taking along with it that of Noah and that of Abraham, we can see the force of the apostle's words, that, as a matter of divine history, without shedding of blood there is no remission of sin. Leaving the sacrifice of Abraham, we come next to Moses, and that vast and most instructive system of ceremonialism, to which the apostle is writing in the Hebrews, refers. It is utterly impossible to study that system, or even to read over the account of it which we have in the Scriptures, without seeing that, under the law, almost all things were purged with blood, and without the shedding of blood there was no remission of sin. Make of it what we may, it is an indisputable matter of fact. We may, then, at once come to the conclusion, that Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up. This lifting up, as applicable to Jesus, is clearly explained, when we regard to his own use of the same phrase; it is stated that he said this "signifying what death he should die."

The question naturally arises—Why must he be thus "lifted up?" He replies "that whosoever believeth in him shall not perish, but have eternal life." But another question arises, how is it essential to this eternal life to be lifted up? And the reply is evident from the Scriptures. All the faith there could ever have exercised would never have given them life, had he not been lifted up in the accursed tree. "Without shedding of blood there is no remission of sin," and consequently no amount of belief could have been of any avail, had he offered no sacrifice in which they might believe as a propitiation for sin. For Christ is not entered into the only places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us: yet that he should offer himself, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with blood of others; but then must he offer himself since the foundations of the world; but now once in the end of the world he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment; so Christ was once offered to bear the sin of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation." Heb. ix. 24-28. Such then, is the great matter of fact. Let us consider it for a little as a matter of doctrine. What does this great matter of fact teach us? To be as bold as pos-

sible, we must seize on the main thought which it presents to our minds. The truth that men had sinned and were perishing, and the other truth that Jehovah infinitely pitied and sympathized with man, while he infinitely loved sin, are not necessarily connected with the fact before us. We can easily conceive of God's infinite pity regarding the guilty, and also of his infinite purity abhorring evil, without its being true that apart from the shedding of blood there is no remission of sin. Paul teaches us the true doctrine here involved, when he says of Jesus: "Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are passed, through the forbearance of God; to declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus." Rom. iii. 25, 26. Here is the blood shed on Calvary, and here, too, on the high authority of the Eternal Spirit, is the reason why a sinner could not be remitted without its being shed. God could not be just and the justifier of those who believe in Jesus, unless their faith could be faith in his blood. Mark it well, not faith in his compassion, but "IN HIS BLOOD." In this alone could their faith be such that God might be just, and justify them in conversion with it. It is the doctrine of the Divine Spirit, that it is supremely taught as in this matter of fact, that "without shedding of blood there is no remission of sin." As the Judge of all the earth, seated on his supreme judgment-seat, and justifying those who believe in Jesus, that he may be just in doing so, he requires the shed blood of his only-begotten Son, as that of Him who appeared once in the end of the world to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. We are thus led without any circuit to the bearing of this momentous matter on the experience of humanity. It is an unquestionable truth that man becomes, sooner or later, like the object of his worship. If his god is a creature of his own imagination, lacking the attribute of inflexible justice, the more earnestly the man worships that god, the more certainly and speedily will all that may be in him of such an attribute be away, and the more surely will all such elements of character be perverted from ever forming in his moral nature. We are aware that those who seek to draw attention from the blood of Christ as shed for sin, speak in the strongest terms of God's justice; but sound will never go for sense as a matter bearing upon the experience of man. While they cry aloud about justice, with the one breath, they speak of the will of God as something the guilty without restraint in the text. They even denounce those who refuse to accept divine mercy; but they see some reason for believing that God can be just while he pardons. They thus deprive their strong statements of Jehovah's justice of all but the outward. Not so Paul. He says that God set forth Jesus a propitiation, through faith in his blood, that he might be just, and the justifier of those who believe in him. This is giving the reason paid in the blood, and it is the reason on which the poor guilty heart may rest, and intelligently welcome the own forgiveness as a perfectly just as well as merciful dealing on the part of God. He is thus saved from the fearful view of his great Judge in which he would see nothing but fiery wrath, and he is equally saved from that in which he could see only sinning and arbitrary power. Mercy and truth have met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other. It is not difficult to see what must be the effect of this view of God on the character of him who is a sincere worshipper. While it is infinitely well adapted to banish his every fear, it is equally adapted to establish in his soul the principles of strongest rectitude. We have many times over seen ample practical evidence of the truth of these conclusions. In years of experience and observation among hundreds who have believed in Jesus, the conclusion has been established, in continually increasing strength, that he alone proves a stable and worthy Christian who takes a true view of the blood of the atonement. The man of "mercy mercy" is also a man of very full stability. Beloved reader, how stands it with you? Have you believed in Jesus? Has your faith in him been such as justifies the Judge of all at the bar of your conscience? Have you been such as you have taken strong ground in looking for pardon? Do you see clearly that "without shedding of blood there is no remission of sin?" Depend upon it, these are momentous questions. God has not guarded the great sacrifice of Calvary that it might be set aside with impunity. Your nature is not such that this divine ransom may be safely ignored. O, be faithful to your own most precious soul, for surely your God, in his boundless love has been faithful in providing you abundant cause of such thankfulness. Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and thus shall he save. Be sure to take him as he is, and you will find him fulfilling for ever.

To every proffered ground of comfort, would be oppose the lamentation: "I am damned by the righteous judgment of God! Already now am I shut up in hell! My torment no longer can tell. And this awaits me too in all life to come. All hope, Every mercy of God is forever gone. I have committed the sin against the Holy Ghost, which cannot be forgiven either in this life or in that which is to come. Whoever is guilty of this blasphemy, is delivered over to the wrath and punishment of God. I am not able, even to love God, but I have him with a perfect hatred! Soon will the measure of my deserved punishment be full, and shortly will I see my awful end. God will show me to the elect, as an example against the denying of his name!" Touching the "blasphemy against the Holy Ghost," he is said to have spoken frequently in moving eloquence and with impressive kindness; but invariably with a pained application to himself. On one occasion his friend from Cincinnati, the Presbyter, Antonio Fontana, visited him, who had been in company with him perhaps seven or eight months before—and inquired on the day that he departed of Venice. As soon as the miserable one saw him, he sorrowfully groaned: "O that cursed day! O that cursed day! O that I had never gone, or died at the time!" Hereupon they directly questioned him in reference to his former faith; whether he ever really believed, and in what way he had fallen from it—saying that it is not to be looked for in the regenerate indeed. He answered: I verily believe that Christ is the atonement for our sins, and through him only can we gain redemption and justification—this I never doubted. Yet never did I contemplate aright the benefits of Jesus Christ, to a confession of the truth. I never with the heart ever loved him in return. Yet, I even turned the gospel faith into scorn for the flesh, and abused it in presumptuous sinning, neglecting all striving after sanctification.

Turning to a company of by-standers, he addressed them thus: "My sons, listen to my words. I speak these things not in the least to detract from the holy gospel which you believe to be incontrovertible—but that you may not so rely upon your faith as to regard good works to be unnecessary! Trust in my experience!" Then, with sighs and tears, he recommended to their chief pastor St. Peter's letter, an Apostle of the highest rank—which it exhibits the faithful unto piety, charity, sanctification, and a life unspotted. "Nevertheless," continued he, "who boasted of having attained unto a perfect faith, preached boldly, and held the command to live a godless and ungodly life, on which account my soul remains so fearful! Behold, stretched out before you, the manifold judgment of God, who yet hold on, not unto repentance, but unto complete damnation!"

A Word to New Converts.

Do you know converts depart from Gospel simplicity and purity?—lose their first love—become worldly-minded, proud, selfish—return to the beggarly elements—bring darkness, heaviness and wretchedness into their souls? Is there danger of this sad, grievous downfall? Every step is fraught with danger. Where then is safety—hope permanent? None but in God—the God of Israel. No safety save in going close—pressing on to higher attainments—aiming constantly and perseveringly for the mark of the prize of the high calling in Christ Jesus.

It is an awful, fearful, ruinous mistake, to suppose a Christian can stand still in religion. New converts, especially, should be instructed to go on from strength to strength, shining brighter and brighter till the perfect day—improved, deepened, sanctified, by the importance of having Christ dwell in the heart by faith—of being rooted and grounded in love—of comprehending with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height of this great salvation—and to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge, that they may be filled with all the fullness of God. Let this doctrine of holiness be inculcated and enforced, in the very outset of the Christian course. The young convert should be urged on, by every motive and consideration, to present his body a living or continual sacrifice—holy, acceptable unto God as a reasonable service. The lamb of the flock must be carried in the bottom of burning fathers and nursing mothers.

In every protracted effort for the salvation of souls, there should be two revivals at the same time—a revival of conversion or justification, and a revival of holiness or sanctification. The very moment the new-born soul enters the promised land, he should put on the whole armor of God, be fully equipped for the battle field, and rest not day nor night till every Canaanite in the land is driven out, exterminated entirely.

One of the saddest, most ruinous and fatal mistakes the Israelites ever made on entering the promised land, was in coming to destroy the wicked Canaanites, riot and banquet, as God had commanded. They suffered them to live—and soon they became thorns in their side, and finally proved their downfall. This example of warning, God in mercy has placed before our eyes—a lesson, high as heaven. Ministers, will you heed it? Young Christians, will you? Examine every Canaanite—the least and last remains of old Adam and his deeds.

Then, and not till then, are you safe—prepared to run the Christian race with per-

severance and alacrity. "Rejoice evermore, pray without ceasing, and in every thing give thanks."—God. Rule.

A Remarkable Vision.

We make the following extract from a memoir of Dr. Bond, published in the Christian Advocate:—About this time occurred a very extraordinary incident in the life of Dr. Bond, which we narrate, with great doubt as to the propriety of the publication. He very rarely mentioned it, and never ventured to designate or explain it.—Its truth is, however, beyond question. The circumstances forbid the supposition of optical illusion, or temporary hallucination. There are those living who testify to such of the facts as were subject to observation, and the memorials of the transaction are yet distinctly preserved in the religious character of sons and daughters of some who were immediately affected by it.

Being on a visit to his father, he was deeply grieved to find the church, which he had left in a state of prosperous activity, languishing, lukewarm and weak. His thoughts were much occupied with the subject, and of course, it was the matter of earnest and frequent prayer. In this state of mind, one morning he was walking over the fields to a neighboring house, when suddenly he seemed to be in a room where a number of people were assembled, apparently for worship. The room he recognized as an apartment in the house of a neighbor, where a prayer-meeting was to be held on the evening of that day. Had he stood in the midst of it, he could not have been more conscious of the scene. There was nothing of the dim, or shadowy, or dreamy about it. He recognized the people, noticed where they sat and stood, remarked his father near the table, at which a proclaimer was rising to give out a hymn, and near the middle of the congregation he saw a man named C., for whose salvation he felt considerable anxiety, standing with his son beside him. While gazing with astonishment upon the scene, he heard the words, "Go and tell C. that he has an offer of salvation for the last time."

Naturally supposing that the too great concentration of mind upon one subject had induced some hallucination of the senses, Dr. Bond fell down on his knees, and besought God to preserve his reason. The scene, however, continued; it would not disappear or change in any of its particulars. A vain he struggled to dispel it, the voice yet repeated, with indubitable distinctness, "Go and tell C. that he has an offer of salvation for the last time." Yet how would he dare to deliver so awful a message! For a great length of time he struggled for deliverance from what he still considered an illusion. At length an expedient occurred to him, which he adopted. He had never been in the room in which he was apparently present, when it was used for a public religious meeting. He, of course, did not know how it was commonly prepared for such occasions. He therefore noted with great care the particulars of the scene. He saw where the little table for the proclaimer, and the benches and the chairs for the people, were placed. He noticed his acquaintance, and where they sat and stood; and when he was satisfied that he had perfectly himself perfectly of these details, he said, "I will go to this meeting, and if I find all things there as I saw them, and that a want of correspondence with what I now see, I shall be as a sign from the Lord, and I will deliver the message." Immediately the scene vanished, and he was alone in the green fields.

The Roman Church in Mexico.

The riches possessed by the Church in Mexico, are of importance just now, in view of the efforts of the new government to wrest them from that old and deeply-rooted institution. Comanfort performed a daring act. The archbishop, with nine bishops under him, all having cathedrals and chapters, except the Prelate of Soconusco, with 185 prebendaries and canons, 1,200 parishes, and a regular and secular clergy amounting to 10,000 persons, was no inconsiderable personage. Of the regular clergy, 2,500 reside in the capital, and the orders of the Dominicans, Franciscans, Carmelites, and Mercedarians, possess 150 convents. The salary of the Archbishop is \$130,000 per annum, and that of the Bishop of Puebla \$110,000. The remaining bishops receive, altogether, about \$200,000 more. It has been extremely difficult to ascertain the real value of the general property of the Church. Some years since the Archbishop admitted the following figures:—

Real Estate in town and country, \$15,000,000
Churches, houses, convents, furniture, jewels, and precious vessels, 52,000,000
Floating capital, 20,000,000
Total, 87,000,000

But at present, it is believed that the total above mentioned, is not above one quarter the amount. The Signor Leado de Tegoda, who is now at the head of the finances, asserts with perfect confidence, that the real property of the clergy is of the value of from \$250,000,000 to \$500,000,000.

In the city of Mexico, containing five thousand houses, worth \$80,000,000, the church owns one-half, and the income has been estimated by the Minister at fully \$20,000,000. The houses in mortmain alone amount to \$50,000,000. A single balustrade, about 300 feet long, in the National Cathedral, is supposed to be worth \$1,000,000. Is it any wonder that the people are impoverished?

Tracts.

A man who has resided among the heathen twenty years for the purpose of investigating their spiritual condition, told me that he knew of a numerous class, with whom it was an article of religion not to suffer a single female child to live. One of them, however, on the birth of a daughter, being overcome by natural affection, resolved to preserve her. He secreted her, and intended to nurse her. He succeeded without his being known till she was, I think, seven years old. Then it became known that he had in his house a daughter. And being abroad one day, he was so overcome with

the scoffs of his countrymen, and with the obloquy which they cast upon him, that he returned, and with an axe hewed her in pieces.

And not only are they miserable in this life, but in death. A Hindoo of a thoughtful, reflecting turn of mind, but devoted to idolatry, lay on his death-bed. "As he saw himself about to plunge into that boundless unknown," he cried out, "What will become of me?" "O," said a Brahmin, who stood by, "you will inhabit another body." "And where," said he, "shall I go then?" "Into another," said he, "And where then?" "Into another, and so on, through thousands of millions." Daring across this whole period, as though it were an but instant, he cried, "Where shall I go then?" And paganism could not answer. And he died agonizing, under the inquiry, "Where shall I go last of all?"

Another Hindoo lay on his death-bed; he, however, had seen a religious Tract, and had read it. It had led him to religious teachers, and to Christ. His friend, hearing of his sickness, came to see him, and found him in the last stage of disease; and as he bore up his languishing hand, watching to see him breathe his last, the dying man broke out in ecstasy, "Sing, brother, sing." "What," said he, "shall I sing?" "Salvation," said he; "salvation, by the death of Jesus"—and winged his way to bow with ransomed millions before the throne.

Persecution at Florence.

A Protestant, recently converted to that faith died at Florence a few weeks since, after having long resisted the importunities of his physician, of his cure, to whom the physicians had denounced him, and of several priests. He persisted in saying that he acknowledged but one Saviour, and but one Sovereign Pontiff and head of the church, Jesus Christ. He also persisted in refusing the sacraments. His wife, equally Protestant, who was urgently solicited to persuade him to consent to their administration, showed the same firmness. After his decease, the parish refused to bury the remains. The widow having been summoned before the Chancellor, was interrogated respecting the conversion of her husband, and asked who had led him astray, who had given him the book, &c. The magistrate ended by informing the widow that it was for her to find the means of his interment. She replied, that she was abandoned by her relatives and friends; that she had none but females with her, that consequently, if interment were refused the body she must place it in her parlour, and shut it up in her bedchamber, let whatever might come of it. They let her go; and at ten in the evening the police came to take the body, escorted by four gendarmes; the cavalcade took a solitary road leading beyond the walls of the city. A group of people, and several of the neighbours who had come out of their houses pursued it with hootings and imprecations.

Sick-Bed Repentance.

The faithful and laborious minister of a very large and populous parish, had been accustomed, for a long series of years, to preserve notes of his visits to the afflicted, whether remarks on the issue of their affliction, whether life or death, and the subsequent conduct of those who had recovered. He stated that, during forty years, he had visited no fewer than two thousand persons, apparently dying, and who discovered such signs of penitence as would have led him to indulge a good hope of their safety if they had died at the time. They were restored to health, when he expected that they should bring forth fruits meet for repentance; but, alas, of the two thousand not more than two persons manifested an abiding and saving change; the rest, when the terrors of eternity caused to be in immediate prospect, forgot their religious impressions and their solemn vows, and returned with new avidity to their former worldly-mindedness and sinful pursuits, as the dog returns to his vomit again, and as the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire!

Dr. Lyman Beecher, the father of the "Beecher family," while lecturing at a theological class at Lane Seminary, some years since, suddenly closed the book out of which he had been reading, jerked off his spectacles and said:

"Except freedom from sin, intense piety, untrusting action, is the winds highest pleasure. I would not wish to go to heaven, did believe that its inhabitants were to sit inactive by purring streams, to be flamed into indolent slumbers by balmy breezes. Heaven, to be a place of happiness must be a place of activity. Has the far reaching mind of Newton rested from his profound investigations? Have David and Isaiah sung up their harps, useless as the dusty armor in Westminster Abbey? Has Paul glowing with godlike enthusiasm, ceased iterating the universe of God? Are Peter, and Cyran, and Luther, and Edwards, idling away eternity in mere psalm-singing? Heaven is a place of activity, of never-tiring thought. David and Isaiah will sweep noble and lofty strains in eternity, and the minds of saints unclogged by cumbrous clay, forever feast on a banquet of thought—rich, glorious thought. Young gentlemen, press on—press on—press on—get through. An eternity of untiring thought is before you, and the universe of thought is your field."