

Religious Intelligencer.

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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RELIGIOUS SELECTIONS.

The Life of God in the Soul of Man:
OR
THE NATURE OF TRUE RELIGION.

By Henry Scougal, A. M.

CHAPTER II.

1. A Principle of Divine Life—2, distinguished from the Natural Life, which is explained; 3, the different tendency of it considered.

(CONTINUED.)

1. By this time I hope it appears that religion is with a great deal of reason termed a life, or vital principle, and that it is very necessary to distinguish between it, and that obedience which is constrained, and depends on external causes. I come next to give an account why I described it by the name of divine life; and so it may be called, not only in regard to its fountain and original, having God for its author, and being wrought in the souls of men by the power of his Holy Spirit, and by the word of truth; but also in regard to its nature. Religion being a resemblance of the divine perfections, the image of the Almighty shining in the soul of man; nay, it is a real participation of his nature, it is a beam of the eternal light, a drop of that infinite ocean of goodness; and they who are endued with it, may be said to have God dwelling in their souls, and Christ formed within them.

2. Before I descend to a more particular consideration of that divine life wherein true religion doth consist, it will perhaps be fit to speak a little of that natural or animal life which prevails in those who are strangers to the other; and by this I understand nothing else, but our inclination and propensity towards those things which are pleasing and acceptable to nature; or self-love issuing forth and spreading itself into as many branches as men have several appetites and inclinations: The root and foundation of the animal life I reckon to be sense, taking it largely, as it is opposed unto faith, and importeth our perception and sensation of things that are either grateful or troublesome to us. Now these animal affections, considered in themselves, and as they are implanted in us by nature, are not vicious or blameable; nay, they are instances of the wisdom of the Creator furnishing his creatures with such appetites as tend to the preservation and welfare of their lives. These are instead of a law unto the brute beasts, whereby they are directed towards the ends for which they were made; but man, being made for higher purposes, and to be guided by more excellent laws, becomes guilty and criminal when he is so far transported by the inclinations of this lower life, as to violate his duty, or neglect the higher and more noble designs of his creation. Our natural affections are not wholly to be extirpated and destroyed, but only to be moderated and over-ruled by a superior and more excellent principle. In a word, the difference betwixt a religious and wicked man, is that in the one divine life bears sway, in the other an animal life doth prevail.

3. But it is strange to observe unto what different courses this natural principle will sometimes carry those who are wholly guided by it, according to the divers circumstances that occur with it to determine them: and the not considering this doth frequently occasion very dangerous mistakes, making men think well of themselves by reason of that seeming difference, which is betwixt them and others, whereas perhaps their actions do all the while flow from one and the same original. If we consider the natural temper and constitution of men's souls, we shall find some to be brawling, frolicsome and light, which makes their behaviour extravagant and ridiculous; whereas others are naturally serious and severe, and their whole carriage composed into such gravity as gains them a great deal of reverence and esteem. Some are of a humorous, rugged and morose temper, and can neither be pleased themselves, nor endure that others should be so; but all are not born with such sour and unhappy dispositions, for some persons have a certain sweetness and benignity rooted in their natures, and they find the greatest pleasure in the endearment of society, and the mutual complacency of friends, and covet nothing more than to have every body obliged to them: And it is well that Nature hath provided this complexionable tenderness to supply the defect of true charity in the world, and to incline men to do something for one another's welfare. Again, in regard of education, some have never been taught to follow any other rules, than those of pleasure or advantage; but others are so inured to observe the strictest rules of decency and honour, and some instances of virtue, that they are hardly capable of doing any thing, which they have been accustomed to look upon as base and unworthy.

In fine, it is no small difference in the deportment of mere natural men that doth arise from the strength or weakness of their wit or judgment, and from their care and negligence in using them. Intemperance and lust, injustice and oppression, and all those other impurities, which abound in the world, and render it so miserable, are the issues of self-love, the effect of the animal life, when it is neither overpowered by religion, nor governed by natural reason; but if it once take hold of reason, and get judgment and wit to be of its party, it will many times disdain the grosser fort of vices, and

spring up unto fair imitations of virtue and goodness. If a man have but so much reason as to consider the prejudice which intemperance and inordinate lust do bring unto his health, his fortune and his reputation, self-love may suffice to restrain him; and one may observe the rules of moral justice, in dealing with others, as the best way to secure his own interest, and maintain his credit in the world. But this is not all; this natural principle by the help of reason may take a higher flight, and come nigher the instances of piety and religion; it may incline a man to the diligent study of divine truths; for why should not these as well other speculations be pleasant and grateful to curious and inquisitive minds? It may make men zealous in maintaining and propagating such opinions as they have espoused, and be very desirous that others should submit unto their judgment, and approve the choice of religion which themselves have made; it may make them delight to hear and compose excellent discourses about matters of religion; for eloquence is very pleasant, whatever be the subject; nay, some it may dispose to no small height of sensible devotion. The glorious things that are spoken of heaven may make even a carnal heart in love with it; the metaphors and similitudes made use of in Scripture, of crowns and sceptres, and rivers of pleasure, &c. will easily affect a man's fancy, and make him wish to be there, though he neither understands nor desires those spiritual pleasures, which are described and shadowed forth by them: and when such a person comes to believe that Christ has purchased those glorious things for him, he may feel a kind of tenderness and affection towards so great a benefactor, and imagine that he is mightily enamoured with him, and yet all the while continue a stranger to the holy temper and spirit of the blessed Jesus; And what the natural constitution may have in the devotions of some melancholy persons, hath been excellently discovered of late by several learned and judicious pens.

To conclude; there is nothing proper to make a man's life pleasant, or himself eminent and conspicuous in the world, but this natural principle, assisted by wit and reason, may prompt him to it; and though I do not condemn these things in themselves, yet it concerns us nearly to know and consider their nature, both that we may keep within due bounds, and also that we may learn never to value ourselves on the account of such attainments, nor lay the stress of religion upon our natural appetites or performances.

To be Continued.

Brian and the Priest.

The following anecdote was related before a large audience in New York, by the Rev. William Arthur, who is now on a deputation to the United States, to raise means to evangelize Ireland. It is a good illustration of the ignorance and superstition of Irish Romanists:

In a certain part of Ireland, there lived a farmer. On a certain occasion the preacher, who was travelling the circuit, having heard of him, determined to pay him a visit, which he accordingly did. Almost as soon as he entered the house the son of Wesley opened his message, and requested the privilege of preaching in the neighbourhood. This was granted; the word of God was attended with power, the Lord opened the farmer's heart, as he did that of Lydia of Thyatira, and he opened his parlour and invited the preacher to make it a preaching place. This of course was accepted with gladness, and it was not long before the farmer and his family, and several of the neighbours, were happily converted to God. A class was formed and the farmer was appointed its leader. He had in his employ a cow-herd, a Roman Catholic, who, hearing of what was going on, became wonderfully alarmed. It was his custom to bring the cows home at a certain hour in the day; but whenever the period arrived for meeting he was always sure to anticipate the time by an hour, so that he might be away, and not annoyed by the "swaddlers," as the Methodist preachers were called. While he was using all his precaution, the Spirit of God was silently yet powerfully working in the soul of the simple-hearted man. He had heard enough of Gospel truth, by rumour and otherwise, to awaken him to a sense of his lost condition, and he became sad and despondent. As he went moping about with a dejected countenance, unfit for work, his wife said to him one day—

"Brian, what ails you? You are good for nothing."

"Molly, my dear, I'm afraid I'll lose my soul."

"Lose your soul, man, an' how's that? Are ye not the best man in the parish, and don't ye attend to all your dues and duties? What have ye been doing? Have ye been robbing anybody?"

"Nae, Molly; the truth is I'm afraid I'll lose my soul—indeed, I will lose my soul!"

"Why, Brian, what makes ye think that?"

"Because," said the deeply-convicted man, "I'm all dirty within!"

"My advice is, that ye go immediately to the priest, and tell him all about it."

Brian accordingly went to see the holy father, and commenced telling him how bad he was and how badly he felt.

"What's the matter, Brian?"

Brian then related the conversation which

passed between him and Molly, and close by saying, "O, holy father, I'm all dirty within!"

"O, you dog!" said the priest, you have been to hear the swaddlers preach."

"Not I, yer reverence; I kept far enough away from them. To be sure I did, and niver a one of them have I heard prache!"

The priest then tried to allay his fears about his losing his soul, telling him to come to confession, and attend the mass, and all would be well. But, alas Brian grew worse and worse, until finally the priest told him to go to Loch Dergh, St. Patrick purgatory. In the midst of Loch Dergh, or Red Lake there was a rocky island, which was called St. Patrick's Island, or the purgatory for refractory, incurable Catholics. And indeed it was a purgatory, a bleak and dreary spot, and the banished one was obliged to go barefooted upon the sharp stones, and kneel upon his bare knees, fasting and praying to the Virgin, until they were restored, or had suffered sufficient to atone for their sins.

Brian accordingly went to Loch Dergh, and crossed over to St. Patrick's purgatory, where he went through with the penance upon his bare knees. After remaining there for some time he returned home.

As soon as his wife saw him, she said,—"Well, Brian, you won't lose your soul now."

"Och, dear," he replied, "I've been to Loch Dergh, but I'm dirtier than I ever was before!"

"Well, then, you must go and see father Tom again; when he did, and the priest meeting him, said, "Well, Brian, it's all right now."

"Nae, holy father, I am dirtier and dirtier!"

"Brian," said the priest, "you must try and get your spirits up. There is to be a dance at such a place; go, and don't forget to take a drop; it will do you good."

Brian supposing that any advice from the clergy was right, never having been instructed otherwise, went to the dance, and did take a drop, but it was a drop too much, and he became intoxicated. He came home late at night, and his wife was awakened by hearing him rolling and roaring on the floor, saying, "Sure, and I'll lose my soul!" She became alarmed, and commenced crying, and together they wept and prayed as well as they knew how until morning.

That day he went to his work, and as usual, brought the cows for his master; but he forgot that it was the day of the meeting. He concluded to stay and hear the preaching. The text was, "What must I do to be saved?" He found the sermon wonderfully to correspond with his own thoughts, and he became intensely interested. The preacher alluded to the different answers sometimes given to the question, "What must I do to be saved?" and among others he remarked the poor convicted sinner is told by the priest to go to Loch Dergh, and he will be saved.

"Och, I'll declare," said Brian audibly, "it's me, sure. Haven't I been there?"

Sometimes he is asked to go and drink, and drive away his sorrows.

"Och, and wasn't it only yesterday the praste told me to do that same; and the devil's advice it was, too."

At this the master went out, and brought him in and quieted him. After the preaching was ended Brian whispered to his master and said, "I would like to stay and spake to that gentleman."—When the congregation was dismissed, and they were about to hold class-meeting, his master requested him to stay, which he did; and when he was spoken to he got up and told the whole story we have been relating. "You say," addressing the preacher, "that if I believe on the Lord Jesus Christ I shall be saved. How do you know that?"

"By the word of God," said the preacher. "An' have you that word?"

"Here it is," said he, holding up the Bible.

Brian sat down comforted; but before the class was through he sprang to his feet, and, seizing the preacher, he said, "What ails me, sir? I don't feel bad any more at all, at all; I'm all clane within."

"You are converted," the preacher replied.

"And whin will ye convert again? I'd like to have Molly converted."

He went home a happy man, walking, and leaping, and praising God. When he met his wife he exclaimed, "O Molly, I'm all clane within; the Lord Jesus Christ has converted my soul!" On Sunday morning he took Molly with him to meeting, and it was not long until she was brought to taste the pardoning love of God. Still Brian had not forgotten his Church, and he said to his master, "Shall I go to mass?" The master, believing he was under the teachings and guidance of the Spirit, told him to go if he desired; he and Molly accordingly went to church, and after the ceremony of reading the prayers in Latin was over, the priest, addressing Brian and his wife, said, "Come up here, you heretic dog!" (Many a man has thus been singled out and denounced from the altar, and not long after had a bullet shot through his heart.)

"You have deceived me, you arch heretic," continued the priest; "you have been to hear the swaddlers."

"Yes, your reverence, glory be to God! I have been converted, and so has Molly."

"How dare you speak to me thus! Go down on your knees before the altar and pray to the Virgin, or I'll curse you bell, book, and candle."

Finding him unyielding, he then uttered the curse before the whole congregation. Candles were placed around, and at the ringing of a bell the curse began. All the saints, and angels, and holy martyrs were invoked to curse him. The curse went into detail, extending to every member of his body from his hair down to his toes. He was cursed in all possible conditions and circumstances in life. Such a curse overbearing malice only could invent. The person cursed was cut off from all the sympathies and aid of the congregation; and if he were a merchant, mechanic or labouring man, all custom would at once be withdrawn. After the curse he was permitted to leave, and he went out notwithstanding a happy man; for how can a priest "curse whom God has not cursed?" Brian and Molly led consistent and pious lives, died in the faith, and went up to glory. This case, said Mr. Arthur, illustrates the condition of a vast majority of people in Ireland.

He then drew a picture of the physical, mental, and moral condition of the country, contrasting it with Scotland, England, and Wales, and showed that while the latter were of the same stock as the original Irish, the Welsh language and literature were flourishing while that of Ireland was going into decay. The Irish, he remarked, were looked upon everywhere as hewers of wood and drawers of water. In many hamlets in Ireland there is no Bible, not even a book. In six counties, comprising seventy-four towns, there is not one book-seller, and in all this region nothing can be seen scarcely but mud cabins, brown and dingy, with a mud chimney scarcely defined, out of which the smoke creeps soggily, or comes out at the door, where may be seen men, women, children, and pigs. Nothing but cheerlessness is to be found. If you were in the midst of this waste to see a neat cottage with everything cheerful about it, you need not ask if it was occupied by a Protestant; you might be sure of that.

"Is it not a Little Thing?"

Do ye deem sin, any sin, a little thing? Fool's sometimes make a mock at sin. But the saints who have had a glimpse of its exceeding sinfulness, the damned who feel its awful consequences, the glorified spirits who view, unveiled, that God against whom it is committed, and Jehovah himself, who from his throne surveys its nature, malignity, and tendency, all look upon sin, upon the least sin, with very different views.

They see in it that selfish disposition which right or wrong, seeks its own gratification, however small. They see in it a rebellion against the highest authority in the universe, and a violation of the most powerful and enduring obligations—obligations which an eternity of praise cannot repay. They see in it a disregard of the most important interests. Right or wrong, the sinner will have his way, though he sacrifice his immortal well-being. Right or wrong, he will indulge a spirit which, were it universal, would fill all worlds with insubordination, guilt, and wretchedness.

They see in it an impious trifling with the most solemn concerns. What lifted the flood-gate through which the tide of human misery has been pouring for 5,000 years and more? Sin. The whole earth has become one vast graveyard; and "who slew all these?" Sin. Sin kills beyond the tomb. Sin kindled the fires of hell, and sin feeds the unquenchable flame. Before the smallest sin could be pardoned, Christ must die; and sin it was that slew the Lord of life and glory—and it is sin a little thing?

If one sin is so sinful, what must be the guilt of the sins of your whole life? If one drop contains such venom, what does an ocean contain?

If sin be such an evil, how can you trifle with it as you do; dallying with a scorpion which is stinging you to death?

Do you not daily allow yourself in what you know to be wrong, under the impression that it is a little thing? The floating of a weed may indicate the current of a stream, and apparently small offences show whether you regard the whole law. He that is faithful in that which is little, is faithful also in much. He that despiseth little things, shall fall by little and little.—Am. Tract.

REASONS FOR BEING HOLY.—A man who has been redeemed by the blood of the Son of God should be pure. He who is an heir of life should be holy. He who is attended by celestial beings, and who is soon—he knows not how soon—to be translated to heaven, should be holy. Are angels his attendants? Then he should walk worthy of his companionship. Am I soon to go and dwell with angels? Then I should be pure. Are these feet soon to tread the courts of heaven? Is this tongue soon to unite with heavenly beings in praising God? Are these eyes of mine soon to look on the throne of eternal glory, and on the ascended Redeemer? Then these feet, and eyes, and lips should be pure and holy; and I should be dead to the world and live for heaven.—Albert Barnes.

"AWAKE, THOU THAT SLEEPEST!"—The belief of the understanding may be unaccompanied by the belief of the heart. There is as much difference between simply believing we are sinners, and feeling we are sinners, as there is in believing upon the word of another, that there is much pain in a surgical operation, and feeling that pain from being the subjects of the operation ourselves.—Mrs. Herchell.

CORRESPONDENCE, ETC.

New-York Correspondence.

Christmas in New York—Children's Festival—Kansas—Iniquity of American citizens in relation to Nicaragua—Government action—Capture of the California steamer "Northern Light," by an American Cutter.

New York, Dec. 25, 1855.

Mr. Editor,—Of all stormy days we have experienced this fall and winter, this is the chief—a cold rain storm without intermission or respite has been in progress through a portion of last night and all this day. This is a sad occurrence for the little folks, as this is the highest of their days in the whole year in this city, where it is observed as the children's festival with as much preparation as in olden times, when first grafted upon the church from the old Roman festival for children. It has now little influence with the masses here as a church festival. Business, however, nearly ceased, quite as much I should judge, as upon Sabbaths. There is certainly no good reason why all Christians might not observe some day as commemorative of Christ's death, though the knowledge of the true day is lost.

The news concerning affairs in Kansas is confirmed. For the present, at least, bloodshed is avoided and the principle of liberty maintained. There are indications that there was a falling out in the pro-slavery camp. As the cold weather set in about the time the "Ruffian" army was disbanded, the men suffered much, and lost many of their arms, and horses. But more when the particulars come to hand, and they soon will be along now.

Our city, last evening, was the scene of great excitement from a novel occurrence. The people of the slave states are exceedingly anxious to extend our domain in a southern direction that they may enlarge the area of slavery. Hence the annexation of Texas, California, New Mexico, and Utah. And now a certain marauding set are waging war on the feeble state of Nicaragua. When this feeble Central American state was reduced to the lowest extremity by intestine war, a company of adventurers went into the country, and by taking up for one of the factions, succeeded in getting the power into their hands; and the United States Ambassador, being none other than the same contemptible pro-slavery man who lost his slaves at Philadelphia last summer; he hastened to recognise the government set up by these marauders. This so called government immediately proclaimed great advantages for colonists, the object being to draw thither from this country the material to recruit their army.

Let the above state of things be taken into account, and then let it be considered that the intelligence of this conquest, and especially the action of Wheeler, our Ambassador, arrives at Washington just at the time the affray began in Kansas, and that was just as the anti-administration party is on the eve of organising the House against the administration, and you will see there are several cogent reasons for the administration to be cautious what steps it takes at this moment. Therefore, however much in favour, secretly, of the course taken by Wheeler, there must be parity and pretended regret at his course. The administration delays to endorse the action of Wheeler, and issues a proclamation forbidding any adventurers to join the expedition of what we call "Fillibusters" in Nicaragua. But these brave lads, as they think themselves, are the last to heed mere words, and hence the excitement above alluded to, by making a show of something besides words.

The "Northern Light," one of the steamships of the California, via Nicaragua, was to sail yesterday. It seems the U. S. District Attorney, became aware that about three hundred and fifty of the "braves" of the first ward, one of the lowest in our city, were in readiness to sail by her to join the expedition in Nicaragua, and so the day before gave warning that he would by the President's authority, arrest her in case she took the adventurers on board. Notwithstanding, the owners were determined to run the risk, and got the clearance, by some blunder on the part of the officers from the Custom House, even after the U. S. Officers had gone on board the "Northern Light" and forbidden her to sail. Precisely at the time appointed the Captain put to sea, carrying the United States Officers and his promising crew. This he ventured because he had his clearance. But all was not over. The U. S. Revenue cutter "Washington," gave chase to the "Northern Light" as she bore down the Bay, and overtook her the virtue of blank cartridges without effect. Next she tried the virtue of something besides "words and grass" and succeeded in bringing her to, and she by order of the cutter came back and cast anchor in the North River. The capture of an American steamship by a Revenue cutter was a novel scene in our bay, and the excitement it caused was unwonted. Though the "Northern Light" was watched closely during last night, it is said several of her birds took wings and reached the shore. In our next we shall be able to state the progress of this novel affair.

No Speaker yet, and the Republicans remain hopeful.

There is a statement in the papers to day that Dr. Stuart has made further discovery of the re-

mains of Sir John Franklin's party. If this is true, you will soon have the particulars.

yours G.

A Massachusetts Village.

Mr. Editor.—Having escaped for a few days from the confusion of the city, as well as from that portion of the curse of our first ancestor which declares that he and his descendants shall eat this bread by the sweat of their face, I will attempt to give your readers some idea of the quiet retreat from which I am writing.

Leaving New York by the Fall River steamboat upon the last day of the old year, we were soon admiring the scenery of the East River, beautiful even under the severe reign of the frost-king, but too often described to need farther notice. At an early hour the next morning we entered the cars at Fall River, and by the various connecting lines of railway reached at eight o'clock the town of Abington, Mass. This town is on the line of the Old Colony Railroad, between Boston and Plymouth, and about twenty miles distant from each. It contains about 7,000 inhabitants, mostly comprised in four villages a few miles apart, known as North, East, South, and Centre Abington. Each of these except East Abington is a station upon the Old Colony railroad. Of these the centre is the most important place; and so much do the numerous villages in this section of country resemble each other, that any description which can be given of one, will by changing the name, location, and occupation of the inhabitants, apply to almost any other. As a representative, then, of a village in Eastern Massachusetts, I will speak of Centre Abington.

The streets, not always straight and frequently meeting at oblique angles, give at first view an impression of carelessness in the arrangement of the place, but at the same time relieve it from the monotony inseparable from places laid out in equal rectangular squares. The houses, steep-roofed and almost uniformly painted a brilliant white, stand far enough from the street to allow a garden in front, which is usually contained between the buildings, in which can be seen in their season all the flowers and fruits adapted to the climate, and the whole has an air of neatness seldom equaled and never surpassed in any portion of our country with which I am acquainted. The village is provided with a good hotel, three churches, a bank, post office, telegraph office, free academy, and weekly newspapers. To the eastward of the village is a clear quiet pond, enveloped in summer by the white sails of pleasure-boats, and at this season by skating parties. On a peninsula stretching out into the pond is a beautiful grove of pines, a celebrated place of resort in summer for parties of pleasure from Boston and other places, and for public gatherings generally. The manufacture of boots and shoes employs the most of the capital and labor of the place, and as carried on here exemplifies in a remarkable degree the modern tendency to a division of labor in all mechanical employments. The making of boots alone is divided into eight or ten distinct branches of business, which are again sub-divided, so that it would be safe to say that at least twenty persons are employed upon each boot manufactured. By this division of labor and the application of machinery wherever it is practicable, each person acquires a degree of dexterity and skill in his or her particular part by which they are able to produce much more and better work than could be done by the same number of persons were each employed in making complete boots or shoes, and thus both the producer and consumer are benefited.

The inhabitants are lineal descendants of the Puritans, with very little admixture from any other source, and still retain to a great extent the habits of life and thought of their distinguished ancestors. The Puritans of old had indeed their faults, and their descendants in our own times have also theirs; but most sincerely do I wish that the zeal to extend the principles of the gospel of Christ, and the spirit of religious liberty which drove the little company of the May Flower to our shores, and that strict observance of at least the externals of religion, observable among their descendants, were far more generally copied.

S. S. Centre Abington, Mass., Jan. 4, 1856.

Sabbath school Addresses.

The following are the Addresses delivered by some of the Scholars at the Sabbath school Celebration, in the Free Baptist Meeting-house at Jones' Creek, on New Year's Day. They were deferred last week for want of space.—Ed.

DELIVERED BY ALBERT BARNES.

My dear friends and fellow Scholars.—We, who are the pupils of this Sabbath-school, should at all times be heartily thankful for the great privileges we are thus enjoying, and for the kind Providence of God, in thus conferring upon us the great blessing of being allowed to attend at this house from Sabbath to Sabbath, to hear the faithful instructions and kind counsels of our teachers. Thousands of children as young as we have been brought to God by means of Sabbath-schools. Myriads of these bright spirits which now surround the throne of God, bless the day that means, such as are now being applied to us, were under God, instrumental in awakening their minds. We should be thankful then, my dear young friends, that we are enabled to enjoy these very means which have been proved to possess such