

# Religious

# Intelligencer.

BIBLE SOCIETY, MISSIONARY, AND SABBATH SCHOOL ADVOCATE.

E. McLEOD, Editor.

That God in all things may be glorified

through Jesus Christ.—PETER.

TERMS.—ONE DOLLAR A YEAR, IN ADVANCE

VOL. IV.—NO. 10.

ST. JOHN, NEW BRUNSWICK.

FRIDAY, MARCH 7 1857.

WHOLE NO. 166

## "The Door was Shut."

THE CRISIS OF THE IMMORTAL SOUL.

Concluded.

But others approach still nearer the door of mercy, and never enter. They feel that they would gladly give up all for Christ; earth has lost its charms; its transient pleasures have become tasteless; they sigh and mourn in secret places, but find no rest. The difficulty is, they have met a cross, which some form, lies directly across their path, and they are not quite willing to take it up. They may be some positive religious duty, but they are not quite willing to take it up. They may be some positive religious duty, but they are not quite willing to take it up.

A farmer in M.—had lived to be the father of three children, while buried in the care and toils of the farm. He seemed to care more for his oxen than his soul, and took more of his calves and lambs than the spiritual welfare of his children. When his eldest daughter was about six years of age, his attention was called to the interests of his soul; and, as he was at work in the door-yard one morning, that little daughter came to him, and with the artless simplicity of childhood said, "Pa, why don't you pray with us?" As he made no reply, she continued, "We never heard you pray, pa—would you pray with us?"

The simple appeal sunk into his heart. He went to his field, and, as he followed the plough, the question seemed to ring in his ears. "Why don't you pray with us?" It awoke unutterable reflections. He looked over the whole period that he had been a husband, and saw that he had done nothing for the spiritual welfare of his family. He remembered that he had taken far greater pains to sow good seed in his field, than in the hearts of his children. His tears fell in the furrows. When the toils of the day were ended, and he sat by the evening fireside, with the little group around him, that awful question came rushing upon him again, "Pa, why don't you pray with us?" A tempest of conflicting emotions raged within him. "I ought," he said to himself; "but can I? they know how worldly I have been—how wicked: my sins—" It was the crisis of his soul.

Almost weighed down to the earth, he took his Bible, read a portion of Scripture, and prostrated himself before the Lord. Having taken up the heaviest cross that lay in his way, it was easy to surrender all and enter upon the discharge of every Christian duty. He rose with a calm submission to the will of God, and determination to follow Christ. He has long been an active member of the church. But others have not the responsibility of families, and to them the cross comes in another form. Perhaps it is in disclosing their feelings upon the subject. They wish to become Christians, but they would do so secretly—not even their dearest friends must know it, till they are fully established in Christian hope and joy.

The writer will never forget the emotion produced at a religious meeting, during a revival in N.—, by the following narrative, related by Rev. Joseph Whiting, now gone to his gracious reward. Said he, "During a revival of religion in Yale College, several years ago, two young men were awakened at the same time. One of them had been remarkable correct in his general deportment, and was amiable in his disposition: the other was a wild, frolicsome, sportive youth. As they walked one evening, they agreed to call upon the professor of theology and make known to him their anxiety, and seek advice. They came to the gate, when the amiable young man leaped over the fence and said, 'I believe I want to go; I don't know as I will do me any good.' His companion replied, 'You can do as you please; but, for myself, I feel that I need all the counsel that man of experience can give: I am resolved to go in.' Here they parted. The former passed on. He smothered the flame in his own breast, and shrunk from the cross and from Christian counsel. He was soon found to be declining, not only in religious feeling, in correctness of moral deportment; and before the time to graduate arrived, he had wandered so far as to be expelled from college for immorality: he sunk rapidly in vice, went to the West Indies and there died, not long after, a miserable sot. The other went in, opened his heart, and received direction in the way of life. He soon found peace in believing, entered the ministry, and now stands before you, a redeemed sinner, saved by grace."

Thus unnumbered multitudes pass the crisis when standing at the very threshold of heaven. Our limits would not allow an illustration of every form in which this cross is presented; it may be the confession of an injury to the person, character, or property of another; it may be forgiveness of an enemy; it may be to make restitution for some fraudulent transaction, or renounce a favorite system of belief; but whatever it is, heaven is only to be entered by taking it up, and the soul stands and trembles in agony, till the awful decision is made, and "the door is shut."

So terrible is the conflict, that often strong men, educated, able, honorable men, having great pride of character to be slain, deprived of physical and prostrated on the earth. With many, the scale is turned by the Redeemer's blood. Christ has said, "He that comes to me, and hateth not (that is, comparatively) father and mother, and wife

and children, he cannot be my disciple;" but the test is a severe one, and multitudes make shipwreck of their souls upon it.

Mr. and Mrs. —, very respectable people in New York, were awakened to feel the terrors of the world to come, but could not be prevailed upon to decide for Christ, for fear of offending Mrs. —'s parents, who were Universalists. They expected soon to remove to Ohio, and intended then to become religious. Soon after their removal they were surrounded by a powerful revival. Their impatient friends and neighbors were converted, and added their entreaties to those of the church and pastor, mingled with prayers and tears, that Mr. — would join them. They replied that they were left by the Spirit of God, to a hard heart and a reprobate mind. They continued indifferent to all around them, manifesting the utmost recklessness in regard to the realities of eternity. Shortly after, Mrs. — was brought to a dying bed. "I called to see her," says the pastor, "and found her more hardened than before, and in that awful state she was hurried unexpectedly into the presence of her Judge. Mr. — is still living, and to all human appearance, a vessel of wrath fitted for destruction."

How different the result with the daughter of an English nobleman. When her attention was directed to the salvation of the soul, she forsake every worldly pleasure, and gave herself up to serious consideration and retirement. Her father, a doting parent, and a Christian, was filled with grief and mortification that his daughter should relinquish all her prospects of worldly preferment and become a gloomy Christian. He resorted to every device to allure her back to the gayeties of life, but in vain. At length, he invited a few select young ladies to his house, with the intention of beguiling her into a performance upon the piano, in which she was very distinguished, with the hope that some animating waltz or hornpipe might reclaim her to the world. Her young associates all understood the plan, and united in the effort. The evening was passing in pleasant conversation when music was proposed; one and another of the young ladies were called upon, and gratified the company with their enchanting strains. At length the daughter was called for: all was expectation; to refuse would be a violation of good manners; to comply, they thought the accomplishment of their wishes. She took her seat at the instrument, and ran up and down the keys as none but she could do. The noble lord looked certain of success; when, mellowing down the thrilling tones of her voluntary into a rich and melodious accompaniment, she sang with a clear, seraphic voice, the hymn of which the following is a part:

"No room for mirth or trifling here,  
For worldly hope or worldly fear,  
Life's so soon is gone:  
If now the Judge is at the door,  
And all mankind must stand before  
Th' inexorable throne.

No matter which my thoughts employ,  
A moment's misery or joy;  
But O, when both shall end,  
Where shall I find my destined place?  
Shall I my everlasting days  
With friends, or angels spend?

Nothing is worth a thought beneath,  
But how may I escape the death  
That never dies.  
How make my own election sure,  
And when I fall on earth, secure  
A mansion in the skies."

It was a victory, but not such as the nobleman expected, for, as she turned from the piano, at the close of the song, he was bathed in tears, and from that time became a zealous advocate of the cause which he had so heartily despised. She was not only established herself upon the rock, but permitted to draw her beloved parent with her.

In other cases this crisis is brought about by special providence. A college classmate of the writer, the son of a wealthy gentleman in P.—, was a miserable devotee of pleasure. The bowl, the dance, the jovial club, were his chief delight. He resisted the efforts of Christian friends for his salvation, and few wished to make themselves the butt of ridicule by attempting to talk with him about his soul. All the hallowed influences of a little season of refreshing in college, made no sensible impression upon him. Even the prayers and tears of a pious mother seemed to be lost.

At length C.—'s seat at the college exercise was empty; and it was understood that he was summoned away to stand by the bedside of that mother, apparently drawing near to death. Several weeks elapsed before his return; and when he arrived, the badge of mourning evinced that a sore earthly bereavement had befallen him. Sadness sat upon the brow that had been a stranger to care and grief. "Is it the effect of his affliction, or is it discovery of himself?" was the anxious inquiry of all who felt for his salvation. Nor did that inquiry long remain unanswered. "Where is your prayer-meeting to-night?" inquired he of an humble follower of Christ, that before he would have disdained to greet with respect. He was pointed to the room. When the hour arrived he was there; and never shall I forget the interest of that hour, when the proud Edward C.— bowed the knee with us in that upper chamber. There he told us that the dying chamber and prayers of his mother, together with her joyful and triumphant death, had wrought, through grace, that change in him which all other means had

failed to do. He is now a devoted minister of the Gospel.

But how hopeless the condition of those who at such a moment hesitate, and turn their backs upon the open door of heaven. Even the heathen have a proverb, that "Whom affliction will not soften, the gods abandon as desperate." Thousands look back to such a period, as shedding the last ray of light upon their darkened way. When stripped of worldly wealth, laid upon a bed of anguish, or weeping over the cold remains of some cherished child, companion, or friend they felt the transitoriness of all earthly joys, and were almost persuaded to be Christians.

But once more: untold multitudes pass this fearful crisis in seasons of special attention to the subject of religion in the community where they live. The thousands who at such times are sealed to the day of redemption, may be known by their public avowal of Christ; but the thousands who seal their everlasting ruin, will never be known till the great book of God is opened. What is the general aspect of such a season? When the Spirit is poured out upon a people, the house of God is crowded. Breathless stillness pervades the assembly. Truth penetrates more or less deeply the mass of the congregation. Many are awakened, and perhaps many converted; but what becomes of the remainder? They sink back into indifference, and few inquire, "Will it be possible to renew them again unto repentance?"

Before another season of refreshing comes, many have passed away; and when it comes, they who felt most deeply before, are not the persons to feel most deeply again. Ministers of the largest experience upon the subject, give it as the result of their observation that persons hardly are ever awakened after passing through two or three seasons of the outpouring of the Spirit. At such a time, all the instrumentalities provided by Infinite Benevolence to affect the heart, are brought to bear upon it. The Gospel is preached with earnestness, power and frequency; Christians pray much and with strong faith; private conversations are frequent, pointed, and faithful; friends and associates are converted, and add their solicitations with all the ardour of their first love. It becomes the universal theme of their conversation; the tide of worldliness is arrested; the Spirit breathes upon the soul; and if all this proves insufficient, and the stubborn heart resists, is it wonderful that the Master of the house should rise up and "shut the door?"

Having now traced some of those forms in which this crisis is met, let us pause and contemplate the scene before us.

How critical the position of a serious, reflecting sinner! He stands upon the summit of a hill, pondering which side he will descend. It is said that the waters of the Missouri and Columbia rivers originate within a few yards of each other, upon the top of the Rocky mountains. As the rain descends upon that lofty point, how slight a breath of air from east or west will waft the drops to one side or the other; but when they have commenced their downward course upon the mountain side, how hard to arrest their progress. They mingle with other streams, dashing and foaming over precipices, and through dark ravines, till they are merged in the deep current of a mighty river, rolling with resistless power towards the ocean. Those upon the west side are borne out to be rocked upon the ever-heaving bosom of the broad and calm Pacific. Those upon the east, are hurled into the raging billow of the stormy Atlantic, to be made the sport of a thousand tempests. At their commencement how near and how much alike; but in their end how widely separated!

Impenitent friend, in whose bosom a faithful monitor is now heard, saying, "Listen to the voice of wisdom; enter, while you may, the gate of life," it may be that you now stand upon the top of that mountain. On the one side of you, far out of sight, lies the ocean of God's love, with which the river of life is connected—an ocean shoreless, cloudless, peaceful; on the other side, the foaming billows of his wrath, equally shoreless, sunless, tempestuous; and a muddy stream rushes from your feet into that bottomless abyss. A breath may convey you now to one of these streams or the other. A heedless word, a look, a laugh, a sneer, an amusement, a trifling book, a business call, may waft you to the declivity towards it at boisterous ocean. A tear, a sigh, a kind word, a pressure of the hand of Christian sympathy, a verse of the Bible, a page of pious reading, under the blessing of the Spirit, may bear you to the other side. O, beware, for your soul's sake, to what influences you yield at this moment. Decide for God and heaven while you may. Embark upon that river of life, and drink of his soul-refreshing waters. Linger not on that fearful summit, where one step may plunge you into that tide whose dark waters will bear you to a hopeless, returnless distance from God, from peace, from heaven!

And how responsible the position of those associated with a sinner at these crisis of his being. The weight of a finger may push him over the brink of endless woe. A word, an art, a look of Christian solicitude, may win him to glory and to God. At such a moment how cautiously should the Christian guard his life, his tongue, his heart, that no movement of his may weaken the claims of God upon the sinner's conscience. How agonizing to the Christian will be the reflection, "My son, my daughter, come to the open door of heaven, and were just ready to

enter in; but my levity, of worldliness, or silence, discouraged them. They have passed by, and that door is shut for ever!" "My impenitent husband, or friend, was almost persuaded; he seemed dejected and reserved, and I attempted to cheer him, but not with pious counsel and tears. He has passed the crisis, and is shut out of the kingdom of God!"

May the Holy Spirit awaken you, dear reader, to know the time of your merciful visitation, and attend to the things that belong to your peace before they shall be hid for ever from your eyes!

## The Lamb Taken.

An irreligious couple residing at W.—, near S.—, as I was told by an old man in my congregation, upon the death of their only child were deeply affected, and, being destitute of Christian hope, they loudly expressed their discontent at the Providence of God, and entreated their faithful minister to tell them why He, who is the Lord of all and whose very name the Bible says in Love, should have removed from them their only, their darling child. The man of God—and this name is rightly applied to their good pastor, who has since entered the joy of his Lord—endeavored to answer these questions in the sermon which he preached after the death of the child, and concluded his address with the following words:

"Do you desire to understand why God has seen fit to call your child to himself? I answer, it is his will that one of your family should be in heaven. If the hearts of the parents were not set in heavenly things, neither would the child have been directed thither had its life been spared. Listen to a parable. There was once a good shepherd, who had prepared a rich pasture for his flock; the gate was set open, but none of the sheep came to enter; as often as he called them to enter, they would flee from him, till he took a lamb in his arms, and carried it into the enclosure; then, behold, all the sheep hasten to follow. This good shepherd is Christ—the pasture is heaven—the lamb, your child; and if you have a parent's heart, seek to be admitted also. The Lord has removed your lamb to himself, that the parents may follow. Amen."—From a German Paper.

## Wonderful Increase of Bibles.

The Rev. Dr. Dowling, of New York, in his recent address at National Hall, at the anniversary of the Philadelphia Bible Society, stated the remarkable and encouraging fact, that more than ten times as many Bibles have been printed and issued in the last fifty years, than had ever been issued in the whole world, previous to that time. It has been ascertained, said Dr. D., by the most accurate data, that previous to the present century, all the editions of God's word then printed, amounted to less than four million copies, in about forty different languages, while, in the present century, more than forty million copies have been issued by Bible Societies alone; exclusive of the millions of copies that have been printed by private publishers. "Since the epoch of modern missions," added the speaker, "this blessed volume has been translated for the 360 millions of China, for the 100 millions of Hindostan, for the twenty or thirty millions of Burmah; and has been printed in not less than 160 different languages and dialects, into 120 of which, the Bible had never been translated before. Of these forty million Bibles, the British and Foreign Bible Society, established in 1804, has issued about twenty-five millions, and the American Bible Society, established in 1816, the noble Society to which yours is auxiliary—about eight millions. Of the remaining seven millions, about one million have been issued by the American and Foreign Bible Society, established in 1837. The other six millions have been issued by about sixty other Bible Societies in different parts of the world. Of these societies six are in India; the Calcutta, the North India, the Madras, the Bombay, the Colombo, and the Jaffna Bible Societies. What an interesting fact, remarked Dr. Dowling, "that the six societies in India—that land, till so lately enveloped in Pagan darkness—have alone issued over sixteen hundred thousand copies of the sacred Scriptures!" [Christian Chronicle.]

## Unconscious Influence.

The following striking instance of unconscious influence was told to me a short time ago by a clergyman. He said, "At the grammar school at which I was educated, there were, not many years ago, two boys, who, to the casual observer, seemed to present in every respect a most striking contrast; one, whom we will call Hardy, was strong, brave, and active, while the other, by name Clarke, was a gentle, retiring little fellow, who was generally made a butt of, and bullied by a good deal by the other boys, and not the least by Hardy. Clarke, however, was a regular teacher in a Sabbath-school, and it happened one Sabbath, that as he was walking with the boys to church, they passed a house where Hardy lived, and where unknown to Clarke, he was watching them from one of the windows. 'Well said he, to himself, 'if young Clarke, whom every one despises, is a teacher in a Sabbath-school, what must I be?' He immediately fell down on his knees, and prayed, for the first time in his life, that God would change his heart and make him fit to serve him. That prayer was heard, and he is now labouring as a curate in a large parish; while Clarke, who was the unconscious

means of his conversion, is being educated at one of our Universities as a missionary, and he did not know till many years afterwards how the change was wrought in Hardy, who now became one of his most firm friends. "I can vouch," said my friend, "for the truth of this anecdote, for one of these boys was my own brother."

## Romish Infallibility.

The Reformation addressed to Rome the last call to reconsider her position, and change her course while yet it was possible. It said to her, in effect, Repent now: to-morrow it will be too late. Rome gave her reply when she summoned the Council of Trent. That Council crystallized, so to speak, the various doubtful opinions and dogmas which had been floating about in solution, and fixed the creed of Rome. It did more,—it fixed her doom. Amid these mountains she issued the fiat of her fate. When she published the proceedings of Trent to the world, she said, "Here I stand; I cannot do otherwise; so help me." To whom did she make her appeal? To the Emperor in the first place, when she prayed for the vengeance of the civil sword; and to the Prince of Darkness in the second, when she invoked damnation on all her opponents. Then her course was irrevocably fixed. She dare not now look behind her: to change a single iota were annihilation. She must go forward, amid accumulating errors, and absurdities, and blasphemies: amid opposing arts and sciences, and knowledge, she must go steadily onward,—onward to the precipice!—Wythe's Pilgrimage from the Alps to the Tiber.

## Plain Women.

We like homely women. We have always liked them. We do not carry the peculiarity far enough to include the hideous or positively ugly; for since beauty and money are the only capital the world will recognise in women, they are more to be pitied than admired; but we have a chivalric, enthusiastic regard for plain women. We never saw one who was not modest, and unassuming, and sweet tempered, and seldom came across one who was not virtuous, and had not a good heart. Made aware early in life of their want of beauty by the slighted attentions of the opposite sex, vanity and affectation never take root in their hearts; and in the hope of supplying attractions which a capricious nature has denied, they cultivate the graces of the heart instead of the person, and give to the mind those accomplishments which the world so rarely appreciates in a woman, but which are more lasting, and in the eyes of men of sense, more highly prized than all personal beauty. See them in the street, at home, or in the church, and they are always the same; and the smile which ever lives upon the face is not forced there to fascinate, but as the spontaneous sunshine reflected from a kind heart—a flower which takes root in the soul and blooms upon the lips, inspiring respect instead of passion. Plain women make good wives, good mothers, cheerful homes, and happy husbands, and we never see one but we thank heaven that it has kindly created women of sense, as well as beauty, for it is indeed seldom a female is found possessing both.—Golden Era.

## Wonders of the Sea Bottom.

But let us pass from the deep above to the deep below. The lead is let down to the bottom of the sea, and it is curious to see the world that is going on there. Beautiful coral islands are built up there; perhaps a part of one, if we could dissect it, would be found to have come down the Mississippi, from the rocky mountains, or to have been borne upon the bosom of the great Amazon, from the tropics of South America; or, indeed, parts in that island may have come from every part of the world, by routes which, if we could trace them, would seem wonderfully long and strange. In the cell which one of these little animalcules has built for itself, we should recognize a part of the Table Rock from Niagara, and sand from the Holy Mountains.—It may contain matter from the Euphrates, from the sunny plains of southern Europe, from the battle fields of the Nile and the Nile, or from the soil of classic Italy. We know all this, because mariners have told us of the islands these corals have built up; they seem to have been at work in the sea ever since the waters were gathered together in one place, and looking at the work they have done, the islands that have been built up, we have a proof of their eternal diligence and perseverance. It shows that we had no idea of the operations that were carried on in the depths of the sea till we began to explore it with lead and line, and now it seems a great chancel-house. Every body who has stood upon the shore of the sea has desired to fly away upon its waves, and learn what there is beyond it; or if possible to dive below, and learn what there is beneath it.—Leut. Maury.

THE SINNER.—Poor miserable dying sinner! "He that, being often reproved, hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy!" Suddenly, you dash upon the breakers and are gone! Your friends move solemnly along the shore, and look out upon the rocks of damnation on which your soul is wrecked, and weeping as they go, they mournfully say, "There is the wreck of one who knew his duty but did it not. Thousands of times the appeals of conviction came home to his heart—but he learn-

ed to resist them—he made it his business to resist, and alas, he was only too successful!"—Finney.

## NEWS COLUMN.

### China.

The following important extracts are from a recent publication, "The Chinese and their Rebelions," by T. T. Meadows, Chinese Interpreter in Her Majesty's Civil Service, pp. 446—448.

"THE EASTERN PRINCE HAS STATED, IN WRITING, THAT UNDER THE RULE OF THE TAE PINGS THE BIBLE WILL BE SUBSTITUTED FOR THE SACRED BOOKS OF CONFUCIUS, AS THE TEXT-BOOK IN THE PUBLIC-SERVICE EXAMINATION."

The capitals are Mr. Meadows'; he remarks, respecting this statement—"I fairly despair of imparting an adequate idea of the importance of that resolve of the Tae Pings, or of the immense significance which it gives to the piece of yellow shadding, in the middle of the accompanying map of China. Upon the gradual extension or diminution of that piece of shadding, during the next ensuing years, it depends whether or not in a prosperous population of 360 millions of heathen, all the males who have the means, and are not too old to learn—all the males, from boyhood to twenty-five or thirty years of age, who can devote their time to study—will be assiduously engaged in getting the Bible off by heart, from beginning to end. Should the thing take place, it will form a revolution as unparalleled in the world for rapidity, completeness, and extent, as is the Chinese people itself for its antiquity, unity, and numbers."

A great variety of concurrent and independent testimony, subsequently received, confirms the above statement of Mr. Meadows, and places it beyond a doubt, that so far as regards their literary examinations, the Bible is the text-book of the insurgents.

### The Bible and the Public Schools in P. E. Island.

In consequence of recent attempts made by the Romanists to infringe upon the privileges of Protestants in regard to the system of education in operation in this Island—a communication having been received by the Board of Education from the Roman Catholic Bishop, complaining that the Scriptures are read and a form of prayer used in the Normal and District Schools, and demanding that such usages be discontinued—the Protestants of this Island, of the various denominations, feel called upon to resist any such attempts. A public meeting was accordingly held in the vestry of the Wesleyan Church, on Tuesday evening, the 27th of January, which was numerously attended, for the purpose of taking these matters into consideration, and of expressing to the Board of Education the views of the Wesleyans of Charlottetown in relation thereto.

The meeting was opened with singing, and prayer by the Rev. A. DesBrisay, after which the Rev. John McMurray took the Chair, and stated the object of the meeting. Rev. A. DesBrisay was requested to act as Secretary. The following Resolutions were then unanimously agreed to, after being spoken to, and enforced with much earnestness and ability:

I. Moved by the Rev. Mr. Burnett, seconded by Mr. James Moore, and supported by Mr. Thomas Dawson—

That in the judgment of this meeting every system of education not based on religious principles, and which does not recognize man's relation to the future, as well as to the present, life, is essentially defective.

II. Moved by Mr. Henry Smith, seconded by Mr. John Bowyer, and supported by Mr. William Heard—

That the Protestants of this Island are loudly called upon to use every legitimate means to ensure, that in the Normal and District Schools of this Island, the form of prayer heretofore ordered by the Board of Education, and heretofore used, shall not be discontinued; and to demand, as a right, that our children be daily instructed in the reading of the authorized version of Scriptures.

III. Moved by Mr. George Beer, seconded by Mr. Wm. McKay, and supported by Mr. Jernam Moore—

That the views of this Meeting, on these questions, be communicated to the Board of Education, by the Secretary, for the purpose of carrying out the objects of this Meeting.—P. Wesleyan.

ECCENTRIC PRAYERS.—Rev. Nathaniel Howe, of Hopkinton, exchanged with a brother on a Sabbath when the morning chanced to be rainy, and the afternoon pleasant. Observing a much larger attendance at the second service, he commenced his prayer with the following petition:—"O Lord! have mercy on afternoon hearers and fair weather Christians."