

# Religious Intelligencer

## Hard Times.

"Hard Times" is now on eve y lip,  
And breathed from every tongue;  
The banks are cursed by one and all,  
The aged and the young.  
The merchant has to close his doors  
At which he never by;  
Such times he vaws were never seen  
By any mortal eye.

The shopman quits the counter's side,  
For customers are few;  
The house is now all "tight,"  
It makes them all look "blue";  
The citizen in vain essays  
To make more than his bread;  
A pound of which he now declares  
Won't weigh a pound of lead!

There's not a d y, but some one falls,  
Some house that goes to smash;  
And names that once stood high on Change,  
Are out for want of cash.  
Those whom we thought were millionaires,  
And rich in shares and stocks,  
Their "million-hands" now disappoint:  
They fall, and leave no "rocks."

"Hard times! hard times! Was ever seen  
Such times as hard as these?"  
This is the cry from morn till night,  
In which each one agrees  
"Say how do you think 'twil do?  
Pull off your coat, roll up your sleeves,  
And work these hard times through!"

## Brief Newspaper records.

Some readers of a daily newspaper often turn first to the list of marriages and deaths, these are placed together, as if to remind us that there is a time to rejoice, there is a time to weep, and that these times may often be found in close connection. The announcement of a marriage implies a season of joyousness and the assembling of glad hearts, offering their congratulations, and intent upon enjoyment. It is a brief record, but full of impressiveness. Before the curtain are happy faces, fond hearts, and gay visions; behind it, and in the vista of coming years, are stern realities, and sad and sober reflections. Life has its seasons of happiness, which are usually brief, and if on its entrance it is a vale clothed with verdure and scented with the fragrance of flowers, it soon reveals its true character as a vale of tears.

There are not only hymeneal notices, but obituary records, to arrest our daily attention; the one denoting seasons of gladness, the other seasons of sorrow. In scanning the latter we have often imagined that we were behind the curtain, and privy to the scenes enacted, which have furnished the data for the brief record. All that meets the eye is that such a one has died, with date and age appended. If the persons whose destinies have thus been unalterably fixed are unknown to us, the record is no sooner read than forgotten. But each event of the kind has its memories, and, alas, they are saddened ones! There are households shrouded in mourning, there are family circles invaded, there are hearts overpowered with sorrow, the loving wife is an inanimate corpse; the husband, in the prime of his days, ceases any longer to take a concern in his family; the child, the pride of its parents, has bid adieu to all earthly scenes. These things may be inferred from the brief notice that death has taken another victim. There are scenes still more thrilling connected with the records which we so carelessly read. They are associated with the departed. We may imagine what they are from what we have seen. Often are they terrible, sometimes they are cheering. Let us exemplify them: "Died, J. T., aged forty-five years." This meets the eye which curiously runs over the announcement. Pause a moment. There are circumstances connected with the event which do not appear. J. T. was a merchant in prosperous business, who was in ent' upon acquiring fortune. He was cautious, prudent and successful. Although his accumulations were considerable, he had not yet reached that high mark at which he aimed, and on the attainment of which he had promised himself repose and enmity. With this world alone he was conversant—he thought little of the next. With firm health he scarcely imagined that there might be but a step between him and death. In the midst of his business he is struck with alarming disease. His return to his house is full of anxiety. Physicians promptly repaired to his relief. Their disturbed looks alarm him. He finds himself on the verge of a dark and gloomy eternity. Terror seizes his soul. His grasp of this world is relaxing, and he has no saviour to lean on. In the few hours which remain to him of life, a concentrated terror takes possession of him which no language can express. Friends surround him, who, ignorant as himself of the way of life, thinks only of mitigating his bodily pains. There he lies struggling and gasping for breath, the sweets of death rolling from his forehead, and his heart pierced with an incurable grief. Dark and gloomy is that chamber, for a soul is passing hence without God or hope. In a moment the body is still; but where, O where is the soul? It has realized the full weight of that folly which could o' love the world as to forget God and eternity.

Here is another example: "Died, J. R., aged twenty-five." A young man just entering upon life as it were, and yet cut down in his immaturity. Such the comment we would be likely to make. What his secret history? He was a dissolute son from his youth, and being without discipline, he grew up without principle. Only twenty-five years of age, and yet there was not a vice with which he was not familiar, and which he had not indulged with reckless boldness. He was a polluted profligate, and, coming out of one of his midnight revels, with his brain disused and maddened, he died a raving maniac, and went to his place. The scene was frightful, and such as the observer never would again wish to witness.

A third record refers to the death of a gay and beautiful girl, aged seventeen years; she the admired of all; the belle of the ball-room, and utterly brightness of everything but present amusement and enjoyment. Sickness invades that fair form. Her friends, anxious for her recovery, cheer her with flattering hopes, The word death is not permitted to be named in her presence, and yet that death is steady to his purpose, and is making his gradual advances. The truth at length flashes upon her with all its undescribed horror—she must die—no power on earth can save her. Unhappy girl! she has never been religiously instructed, and now in her extremity she knows not where to flee. Where am I going? Why did you not tell me I was die?" are among her last agonized words.

To relieve these sombre shades of the picture, we advert to one other record. It is as brief as the preceding, and as silent about all the attendants of death. "Died, W. L., aged forty." And who was he? He was distinguished for neither learning or wealth. He was comparatively unknown. Known to God, however, he was. For years he had been an humble and conscientious Christian. Daily he conversed with God and his own soul, and his chief aim was to do God's will and to prepare for his presence. When the summons came, it found him ready. He suffered greatly in his last sickness, and neither day nor night brought relief to his distressed and wearied body. He was calm and submissive; his faith failed not. He was beyond that at which men are fairly prepared to lay it out would not have presented the slightest inducement to undertake the task.

Within a month a gentleman who has a house in a single year, cleared six hundred thousand dollars, has been sent to the lunatic asylum, and has since died, at an age, but little beyond that at which men are fairly prepared to lay it out for purpose.

Little does the careless and penitent light-hearted passer-by of the splendid palace of Fifth Avenue, and Union Square, and Fourth street, imagine what storms of fear, what wrecks of heart and hope, what withering of the sweet joys and anticipations they cost their owners.

\* What did that house cost? is not an unfrequent enquiry. I am ashamed to tell, or more than it is worth, is a very common response. The true answer in many instances, 'It has cost me my soul.'

To maintain a good name at the bank, at the exchange, or on the 'street,' is an idolatry with many New Yorkers; and to that idol, rather than be sacrificed, men will offer heart, conscience, independence, everything. A good name, certainly, can never be overvalued; it is worth more than the millions to us in business, it is as much his duty as his interest to maintain it at any pecuniary cost, at any personal sacrifice, and it is highly creditable to our business community that so honorable a feeling generally prevails.

But the error consists in men placing themselves in positions which present the strongest of all possible temptation to sacrifice independence, and heart and conscience, in order to maintain their standing in the business world. Beyond all question, the universal error of the age of this country is, 'hastening to be rich'; and this neglect brings with it, in multitudes which we know of, the premature decay of body and mind together, and in the sweeping ruin carries with it, down to death, truth, malfeasance, heart, conscience, all—confirming the saying, 'They that will be rich fall into tem, tation, and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition; which, while some men covet after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced them selves through with many sorrows.'

And again, 'He that hasteth to be rich shall not be innocent.' He that hasteth to be rich hath an evil eye, and considereth not that poverty shall come upon him.—[Hall's Journal of Health.]

The efforts to keep up the name of the firm would now eat out my mind.'

Another gentleman, still in active business who lives in his own house, and who is adding to his fortune every year, said with the seriousness of a man who in a moments retrospectioon had lived over the strifes of a quarter of a century of business, 'Could I have known the day I entered New York a boy, the cares and anxieties which I have had to encounter Manhattan Island and all that is upon it would not have presented the slightest inducement to undertake the task.'

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And again, 'He that hasteth to be rich shall not be innocent.' He that hasteth to be rich hath an evil eye, and considereth not that poverty shall come upon him.—[Hall's Journal of Health.]

## Authorized Agents.

NAMES.  
E. M. Truesdale, General Agent, Woodstock.  
T. O'Donnell, Agent do Johnston.  
W. B. Boyer, Agent do Waterfield.  
William Mallon, Jackson.  
Benj. Nibley, do Jackson.  
Wm. S. Nevers, do Brattleboro.  
John Alexander, do W. H. Brewster,  
W. F. Bonnell, do W. H. Brewster,  
J. T. Tool, do Cambridge.  
Robert Slipp, do Wickham.  
Thomas Vanwart, do Hampstead.  
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J. Cameron, do Andover.  
Wm. Evert, do Holliston, Me.  
Elijah Elbert, do Lez River.  
John C. Parker, do W. K. Wilcox.  
N. B. Millbury, do Phillipsburg.  
Benj. Noble, do Montague.  
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