

Religious Intelligence.

BIBLE SOCIETY, MISSIONARY, AND SABBATH SCHOOL ADVOCATE.

McLeod, Editor.

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

TERMS.—ONE DOLLAR A YEAR, IN ADVANCE.

VOL. IV.—NO. 15.

ST. JOHN, NEW BRUNSWICK.

FRIDAY, APRIL 10, 1857.

WHOLE NO. 171

The Missionary Spirit of the Christian Religion Illustrated in the Progress of Christianity from its rise to the present time.

CENTURY IV.—The first Christian missionaries to Ireland were Kieran, Aibé, Declan, and others, all from the British Churches in England and Wales, faithful and self-denying missionaries of the Christian Faith, and little sullied from its original lustre. The spirit of their arrival is very likely to have been the early part of this century, when Irish Christians may have sought refuge in the mountains from the fury of the Diocletian persecution, then raging throughout all the provinces of the Roman Empire; for, as Ireland was beyond the boundary of the empire's dominions, it was almost the only place that could afford an asylum to the Christians, and the return of peace and security. Christianity was for a long time confined to the northern portion of the island; but even here progress was slow. A few families and solitary hermits constituted the infant church. Ireland is commonly regarded as the first step to the fourth century Chrysostom, archbishop of Constantinople, maintained many hermits and others in Phoenicia, partly at his own charge, and partly by the assistance of pious and well disposed persons, whose work it was to instruct the inhabitants in the truths of Christianity. During the fourth century, Constantine, surnamed the Great, was raised to the imperial sceptre; and, in his person, Christianity ascended the throne of the Caesars. Unfortunately, Constantine preferred coercive measures for the establishment of religion, and deemed the sword a more efficient instrument in the destruction of idolatry, than the milder endeavours of the missionary instruction. But the order issued by him for the transcribing of fifty copies of the Sacred Scriptures to be placed in the different churches of the empire, was a more legitimate missionary work. It was about the same period that the Gospel, having been carried to the Goths, by some Christian prisoners, Ulphilas, who had been appointed their pastor or bishop, undertook to form an alphabet, and to translate the Scriptures into the Gothic language. Fragments of this version are still in existence, from which transcripts have been made and published by Dr. Darrett of Dublin, and M. Maio of Rome.

Christianity was introduced into Georgia by Nino, a pious female who was carried captive into that country, and by her exhortations and prayers, prevailed upon the Cyprian king to embrace the religion she professed; but some suppose she voluntarily left Rome to visit Jerusalem, from whence she proceeded into the ancient Iberia, accompanied by Sionia and Abria, and succeeded in establishing the Christian religion. Many of the monks, at this early period, are said to have engaged in the missionary work, and to have been very instrumental in extending the Christian faith, particularly among the Persians and Saracens. A monk named Abraham laboured with success among the idolatrous inhabitants in the vicinity of Edessa, until a church was formed, and pastors from among themselves placed over them.

In this country, Armenia, into which Christianity had before been introduced, was completely Christianized, through the labours of Gregory, the Enlightener. The Gospel was also further propagated, during this century, in Persia.

Notwithstanding the utmost efforts of the Christian bishops in the European provinces of the empire, great numbers of Pagans still remained. In Gaul, however, the labours of the venerable Martin of Tours were so successful in the destruction of idolatry and superstition, and the propagation of Christianity, that he justly acquired the title of the Apostle of the Gauls.

In respect to the rapidity and extent of the propagation of Christianity in these early ages, besides the evidence furnished by the brief narrative of Luke, and the incidental allusions of the Epistles, the Christian Fathers have left abundant testimony. Clement, who was a contemporary with Paul, says of the labours of that Apostle, "He preached in the East and in the West, leaving behind him the glorious report of his faith; and so, having taught the whole world into righteousness, and for that end traveled even unto the utmost bounds of the West, he at last suffered martyrdom." &c.

Justin Martyr, who wrote about one hundred and six years after this ascension, has these words: "There is not a nation, either of Greek or barbarian, or of any other name, even those who wander in tribes, and live in tents, amongst whom prayers and thanksgivings are not offered to the Father and Creator of the universe, by the name of the crucified Jesus."

Irenaeus, who died A.D. 202, speaks of the Christians of his time living in the Court of Rome: "But how is it those who are in the regal halls are faithful? Does not each one of those who have charge of Caesar's utensils, and those who have not, stand forth prominently according to his merit?"

Tertullian, who comes about fifty years after Justin Martyr, refers very frequently to the success of the first missionaries of the cross. He says, "We, so great a multitude of men, almost a majority of every state, pass our lives in serenity and quietude. If we desired to deal with open enemies and not

with hidden foes, we should not lack the power of numbers, and the influence of ample resources. Doubtless the Moors, and the Germanic race, and the Parthians themselves, or any nations, however great, are more numerous, yet dwelling in one locality, and circumscribed by their own limits, rather than diffused through the whole world. But we, though of yesterday, have filled every sphere of life: cities, castles, islands, towns, the exchange, the very camps, the plebeian populace, the seats of the judges, the imperial palace, the seats of the forum. They (the heathen adversaries of Christianity) lament that every sex, age, and condition, and persons of every rank also, are convert to that name." "We have been able, though unarmed, and not sedulous, but only differing in opinion, to contend against you by the odium of separation only; for if we, such a vast company of men, should retire to some remote corner of the world, assuredly the loss of so many citizens irrespective of their character, would over-extend your dominion, and at last would bring upon you the retribution of desertion itself. Without doubt you would be greatly terrified at your solitude, the stillness of things, and a species of stupor as of a dead city. You would search for subjects in those places in which you might have held the sceptre."

Chrysostom, who wrote towards the close of the fourth century, attests, that at that time, the Christian faith had become almost universally diffused; he says: "But consider and think within yourself, in how short a time the whole world became filled with so many churches, and such populous nations converted to the faith; people persuaded to abrogate their country's laws, rooting out their old habits and customs, and everywhere overturning the heathen altars in the regions of the Romans, Persians, Seythians, Maurians, and the Hindus, to the world's end."

And to these may be added the testimony of ancient Pagan writers. Tacitus, in giving an account of the fire which happened at Rome about thirty years after the ascension, asserts that Nero, in order to suppress the rumours of having been himself the author of the mischief, had the Christians been accused of the crime. Speaking of this event, he writes: "They only were apprehended who confessed themselves of that sect; afterwards a vast multitude were discovered by them." This was about six years after Paul wrote his Epistle to the Romans, and something more than two after his arrival in Rome himself. Pliny the younger, the governor of Pontus and Bithynia, on applying to the emperor Trajan for directions as to the treatment of Christians, says: "Suspending all judicial proceedings, I have recourse to you for advice; for it has appeared to me a matter highly deserving, especially on account of the great numbers of persons who are in danger of suffering; for many of all ages, and of every rank, of both sexes, likewise, are accused and will be accused. Nor has the contagion of this superstition seized cities only, but the lesser towns also, and the open country. Nevertheless it seemed to me that it might be restrained, and corrected. It is certain that the temples, which were almost forsaken, begin to be more frequented; and the sacred solemnities, after a long intermission, are revived. Victims, likewise, are everywhere bought up; whereas, for some time there were few to purchase them. Whence it is easy to imagine that numbers of men might be reclaimed, if pardon were granted to those that shall repent." We need not pursue these testimonies farther. Nothing can be more satisfactory as evidence of the progress which Christianity achieved in the hands of its first missionaries.

To be Continued.

The Infidel Son—or the Last Admonition.

"I will never be guilty of founding my hopes of the future upon such a compiled mass of trash as is contained in that book (the Bible), mother. Talk of that being the production of an infinite mind; a boy ten years of age, if he was half witted could have told a straighter story, and made a better book. I believe it to be the most—mess of lies ever imposed upon the public. I would rather go to hell, (if there is such a place), than have the name of bowing to that impostor, (Jesus Christ), and be dependent on his merits for salvation." "Beware! beware my son! for, God is not mocked," although, "He beareth with the wicked long, yet he will not keep his anger forever." And "all manner of sin shall be forgiven men, except the sin against the Holy Ghost," which has no forgiveness. And many are the examples, both in sacred and profane history, of men who have been smitten down in the midst of their sinning against that blessed Spirit."

"Very well, father, I'll risk all the cutting down that I shall get for cursing that book, and all the agonies connected therewith. Let it come, I'm not at all scared." "Oh! Father, I'm not at all scared, for I know what I am about, and what I say—and mean it." "John, do you mean to drive your mother raving distracted? 'O my God! what have I done that this dreadful trial should come upon me in my old age?' "Mother, if you do not want to hear me speak my sentiments, why do you always begin the subject? If you do not want to hear it, don't ever broach the subject again, for I never shall talk of that book in any other way." The above conversation took place between two fond

parents and their only son, who was at home on a visit from college, and now was about to return. And the cause of this outbreak was the kind hearted and Christian parents had essayed to give him a few words of kind admonition, which, alas! proved to be the last. And the above were his last words which he spoke to them as he left the house.

How anxiously those fond parents looked after him as though something told them that something dreadful would happen. What scalding tears were those that coursed their way down those furrowed cheeks! Oh! that they might have been put in the bottle of mercy! Poor, wretched young man, it had been better for him had the avalanche from the mountain crushed him beneath its deadly weight ere those words escaped his lips. Little did he think that He who said, "Honour thy father and mother," and "He that hardeneth his heart, and stiffeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without mercy," was so soon going to call him to give an account for those words, so heartrending to his aged parents, and so dreadful in the sight of a holy God. He had imbibed those dreadful principles from an infidel roommate at college.

Beware, young men, with whom you associate, lest you fall as did this unfortunate young man. John B.—left his home and hastened to the depot, where he took the cars which were to bear him to M—, where he was to finish his studies, the whistle blew, and away swept the cars across the trembling plain. But alas! that had not gone but a few miles when the cars coming round a curve in a deep cut came suddenly upon an obstruction on the track, which threw the engine and two of the cars at once from the rails. As fate would seem to have it; the wicked son (John B.—) was that moment passing between them. He was thrown in an instant from the platform, his left arm being broken and his skull fractured by the fall, and in an instant one of the wheels passed directly over both his legs near the body breaking and mangle his body in the most dreadful manner. Strange as it may seem, no one else was injured. The dreadful news soon reached his already grief-stricken parents, and ere long that beloved, yet ungrateful son, was borne back to them; not as he left, but lying on a litter, a poor, mangled, raving maniac. Why these poor parents were called to pass through this dreadful trial, He who knows best, and who knows that this is the way of His wrath many might be saved. Many skillful physicians were called, but the far of the Almighty had gone forth and man could not recall it. When the news reached the college his classmates hastened to see him. When they came nature was fast sinking, but the immortal part was becoming dreadfully alive. Oh! that heart rending scene. His reason returning brought with it a dreadful sense of his situation. His first words were, and O may never mortal hear such a cry as that again upon the shores of time, "Mother! I'm lost! lost! lost!—damned! damned! damned! forever!" and as his classmates drew near to his bed, among whom was the one who had poisoned his mind with infidelity, with a dreadful effort he rose in the bed and cried, as he fixed his glaring eyes upon him; "I— you have brought me to this, you have damned my soul! May the curses of the Almighty and the Lamb rest upon your soul forever." Then, like a hellish fiend, he gnashed his teeth, and tried to get hold of him that he might tear him to pieces. Then followed a scene from which the strongest fled with horror. But those poor parents had to bear and see it all, for he would not suffer them to be away a moment. He fell back upon his bed exhausted, crying "O mother! mother, get some water to quench this fire that is burning me to death;" then he tore his hair and rent his breast: the fire had already begun to burn, the smoke of which shall ascend up forever. And then again he cried, "Oh mother, save me, the devils have come after me. Oh! mother take me in your arms and don't let them have me."

And, as his mother drew near to him, he buried his face in that fond bosom which had nourished and cherished him; but, alas! could not now protect or shield from the storm of the Almighty's wrath; for he turned from her, and with an unearthly voice he shrieked, "father! mother! father save me; they come to drag my soul—my soul to hell—" And with his eyes starting from their sockets, he fell back upon his bed a corpse. The spirit had fled, but not like that of Lazarus, borne on the wings of a convoy of angels, but dragged by fiends to meet a fearful doom. May his dreadful fate prove a warning to those who would unwittingly walk in the same path as the prayer of the writer.—Christian Guardian.

Fixing the Mind.

We very often meet with the complaint on the part of the inquirer—"I cannot fix my mind on Jesus. Sometimes the effect of affliction is such that the poor tried one can think of nothing but the restless malady. As a woman once said to me—"O, Sir, the pain takes up all my thoughts!" At other times it is some troubling matter of the world that will have the whole thought to itself. Again it seems the mere tendency of the mind to wander. Perhaps, dear reader, you yourself are in difficulty from one or other of these causes. You are ready to say—"All I can do, I cannot get my thoughts to settle on my Saviour." We think we might be enabled to say a word that will help you. It is clear that you are making a mistake of some kind. The point at which that mistake is committed may be shown to you, and so you may correct your error. You are trying to force your mind unreasonably to do what can only be done by letting it be led naturally to its object. Your thoughts can be drawn around Jesus, and then they will stay as much as they need to stay for your good; but if driven to him, they will not stay at all. If you know and turn attention to the warm, kind love which he ever feels for you, and see how very deeply he sympathizes with your struggles to think of him as you ought, your thoughts will not need to be driven to such consideration. If you know and remember that the more you are tried with the temptations that tend to drive you off from him, the more tender and kindly his heart clings to you, you will be glad you have such a Saviour, and you will think of him as much as you have need. If you are in distress or in pain, and know that he would not for worlds add to that by wishing you to strain your mind in an effort to fix thoughts upon him, but that he most kindly seeks to suggest to you his deep feeling for your trial, it will be most natural then for you to think of him as far as you need to do so. Suppose that you were standing by the bedside of an afflicted friend, dearer to you than life itself, and that tried one was adding to his afflictions trying to think of you, or to speak to you, would you not at once assure him how much you desired that he should rest his weary spirit,

drawn from the design of our Lord's mission and death, and from His power and willingness to save, even the chief of sinners. He listened with great attention to all I said, but to every argument he replied, "It is too late now, sir! I have loved my money, and neglected my soul; yes, sir, it is too late!" I altered my method of address, and multiplied my arguments of encouragement, but the same reply came with still stronger force of utterance, "It is too late now, sir!" I proposed praying with him, he objected, saying, "It is too late now, sir!" After a kind and lengthened trial, he consented; we knelt together at the throne of grace; and when we arose he said, with an accent I shall never forget, "It is too late now, sir!" With this horrible sentence in my ears, I descended from his bed-room, and walked away; sighing as I went, and occasionally turning, as I passed onwards, to look on the dwelling in which still lived a sinner, who could only utter one sentence, and that one sentence proclaiming his fixed belief that it was "too late" for him to hope for salvation. He lived after this heart rending interview only a few hours, and then died—

Without one cheerful beam of hope.

Or spark of glimmering day."

Reader, thank God with all your heart, that it is not yet too late for you to seek salvation through faith in Jesus Christ. Seek it now, lest you should be hardened through sin. Every hour you neglect it, your heart becomes harder and harder; and religion put off generally ends in the loss of the soul. The door is opened now, but soon it will be shut. The language of the Redeemer now is, "Come;" but in the great day of account, it will be to the impenitent, "I never knew you, depart from me." As you are at death, so will you be forever. Your character, your memory and conscience, will remain with you in eternity. And if your sins are not pardoned on earth, the ever enduring sentence will be, "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still; and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still." Rev. xxii. 11.

Turn ye then to the Saviour. He waits to receive you, and there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth. He knows your heart and your wanderings. He has marked your sins; not one of them is forgotten before him: yet may you look to Him for forgiveness and eternal life: "The blood of Jesus Christ his own cleansing," from all sin, John i. 7. "Wash and be clean." Delay not, lest the time given you for repentance end, and you perish in your sins. Strive to enter in at the strait gate; for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able. When once the Master of the house is risen up, and hath shut too the door, and ye begin to stand without, and to knock at the door, saying, Lord, Lord, open unto us; and he shall answer and say unto us, I know you not, whence ye are: then shall ye begin to say, We have eaten and drunk in thy presence, and thou hast taught in our streets. But he shall say, I tell you, I know you not, whence ye are: depart from me all ye workers of iniquity." Luke xii. 24-27. "Watch therefore,—for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh." Matt. xxiv. 42, 44.

The Rail Road Disaster.

The following statement relative to the late Railroad calamity near Hamilton, Canada, is by one of the survivors.—[Ed. Ixt.]

W. R. Marshall, of Woodstock, was one of the few fortunate persons who were not killed by the late fearful accident. From his statement which appears in the Spectator, we make the following extract: "There were no incidents of a striking nature on the trip from Toronto to the Junction with the main line near Hamilton. When within sight of the Hamilton station Mr. Beatty asked me what time it was. I looked at my watch and told him it was a quarter to six. About this time the train began to go slower. Nearly half a minute afterwards I perceived quite a commotion in the cars, passengers running to and fro, apparently much excited. At the same time I felt a strange sensation as if caused by something impeding the motion of the train. It was not a shock, but at the same time every one seemed to think that something was wrong. As I was not aware of the dangerous character of the place we were approaching, I retained my seat, and advised others to do the same. A slight pause ensued, myself and those sitting with me remaining still, but anxiously waiting the result, when with one jerk we were precipitated into the yawning abyss below. While descending I retained perfect consciousness, and felt we were going down some awful precipice; not a voice was heard in the descent. On reaching the bottom there was one general crash, after which I found myself in total darkness, hemmed in on every side; and crushed almost to suffocation by human bodies and broken seats. The blood oozed from my mouth, and it seemed as if every breath I drew would be the last. The next few minutes would be the most awful I ever witnessed; oh, that it may never be my lot to experience the like again. Some prayed, others called upon the saints, others swore. Fearful oaths, and all seemed writhing in the deepest agony. I can only liken the place to a slaughter house. The blood streamed down over my face and

and let you think for him of everything? How much more kindly must you Saviour feel to you? O! did you but know a thousandth part of his love to you, it would never for a moment appear to your mind that he could be gratified by efforts to think of him in such a way as you seek to think when trying to fix the mind's eye upon him in time of pain. The true direction in the whole matter is to know your Saviour more fully, and your whole heart will naturally go out to him as often as it is desirable it should go.

A Feeling in Prayer.

In many prayers that are sincerely and earnestly offered to God, we have reason to fear there is a feeling which seems to us to do him wrong. We are apt to pray as if we had no real interest in our greatest good, or in that of others for whom we pray. Indeed we are sometimes tempted to feel as if he had no real sympathy with us at all. This most unquestionably does him wrong. It is quite true that he does not all at once give us what we ask—He even altogether refuses to grant us some things for which we are most deeply desirous; but all this is perfectly consistent with the very deepest desires for our temporal and spiritual happiness, and with the very kindest interest in those for whom we pray. For example, when a parent is in prayer for the right guidance of his child, and he feels as if he alone were concerned about that child's welfare, and as if he needed to wake up an interest in God's heart on behalf of the object of his own anxiety, there cannot be a doubt that he is wronging God by willingly continuing such a feeling. That child is unutterably dearer to God's heart than he ever can be to the heart of any parent. No mother ever felt a thousandth part of the kindly interest in her son that God feels in him every moment. To keep this in mind does a world of good to the praying heart, and saves from doing the wrong to our loving Father which is otherwise done. He directs us to pray, not surely because his heart needs waking up by our petitions, but that we may sympathize with his infinite love, and that it may be wise and right in him to do what otherwise could not be wisely and rightly done. If then, my dear reader, you have prayed with the feeling that I have just described, let your supplications be for his infinite kindness. Through the great Saviour such prayer is never in vain.

Is it True?—Is it true that there are in the world 670,000 of our fellow-creatures who are still bowing down to sticks and stones, ignorant of the living and true God; and all this in a time emphatically called "The age of missions?"

Is it true that by far the greater portion of professing Christians never effectually aid in the work of evangelization, save by occasional subscription, or temporary effort?

Reader, what are you doing for Christ?—You have now entered upon the first quarter of another year. Is it not well to call yourself to account for the manner in which you have spent the last? Have you lived for yourself or for your Saviour? Have you got nearer to heaven or nearer to hell than you were at the beginning of the year? Answer to God and your own conscience in view of the judgment seat of Christ?

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clothes as if some huge beast had been slain above me. In this fearful situation were placed eighty or ninety human beings, who a few moments before rejoiced in excellent health and spirits, their minds occupied with worldly cares or pleasures; little thinking they would be so soon called into the presence of their Eternal Judge. What an awful lesson does this shocking event teach those who had habitually put off making their peace with God to some future day, or to a death-bed.—The writer of these few lines will consider himself amply repaid, if his description succeeds in persuading one sinner to seek refuge in Him who has promised to be a present help unto his people in every time of trial.

We remained in the position above described for about ten minutes, during which time I spoke to several around me, advising them to be patient and wait for help. The top of the car was then knocked in, giving us light and air, and enabling us to breathe more freely. At this instant a crow-bar or something of the kind from without, grazed my temple, and the blow was about to be repeated, when, by a sudden effort I grasped the instrument, and called upon the person to desist or he would kill me. Immediately afterwards, a hand (from the size I should think it was a woman's) was placed completely over my mouth, so as to nearly suffocate me. With great exertion I removed it, being relieved from the pressure above, I succeeded in dragging myself from the wreck and reaching the edge of the canal, whence I was raised to the top by a chain fastened under my shoulders. On arising there, I was carried to the switchman's house, and received much kindness from the doctors in attendance, and also from many of the Company's servants, who were anxiously and actively rendering every assistance in their power to the unfortunate sufferers."

Correspondence.

Boston Correspondence.

Weather.—Poisoning.—Banks.—Kansas and the Administration.—Kevins.—Peter Sinclair, Esq.

Boston, March 28th, 1857.
DEAR BROTHER:—Winter is passing away, sowing water, mingled with snows and snow and patterning rain, with now and then a frosty night. But evidently the grim tyrant's rule is passing away, as the dominion of all tyrants must eventually do.

An unusual number of poisoning cases has occurred in the past two or three months, and although the newspapers have given some of these an unnecessary notoriety, yet where there lies any suspicion, too strict an investigation cannot be made, in order that justice may be done to all parties, and crime prevented.

Some parties are apprehensive of a general suspension of payment by the Banks in Massachusetts. These fears are grounded on the report of the Bank Commissioners, which shows that of seventeen banks reported, the immediate liabilities were \$13,000,000, while the immediate resources were only \$4,260,000. So, if called upon immediately to meet their liabilities, they could not pay more than \$33 in the \$100. Many Banks have petitioned the Legislature for an extension of capital; this has been granted in a few instances only. There are one hundred and seventy-two banks in Massachusetts; thirty-six of these are in Boston. It is evident that the multiplication of banks here is a nuisance to the public, and one which should be guarded against by every Government.

Governor Geary, having been sent out to Kansas by President Pierce with full powers to administer the Government, after the Presidential Election was over last fall, found that President Pierce was unwilling to support him in the exercise of those powers. It seems he met with the same "cold side" from Buchanan, and finally was obliged to leave Kansas to the border ruffians.

This is the statement of Gov. Geary and the anti-slavery party, which I suppose is correct. The Governor's flight from Kansas caused some little talk here, for a day or two. The "signs" and acts of Mr. Buchanan's Administration appear to be unfavorable to anti-slavery policies, and probably, will prove to be so in the end.

There has been quite a time of revivals in many of the Churches here; in the Park Street Church, the Baldwin Place Church, and now in the North Bennett Street Church, over which Elder Dunn is Pastor.

The spirit of the "children of disobedience" shows itself on these occasions; and when there is an effort made by Christians to awaken sinners to a sense of their fearfully dangerous state, we see there are those, who make high pretensions to religion of some sort, ready with their scoffs and sarcasms to throw all the obloquy possible upon such over pious exercises as they are pleased to term revival preaching.

I must not omit to notice Peter Sinclair, Esq., of Edinburgh, Scotland, who has been visiting Boston the last two weeks. Mr. Sinclair is the Apostle of the juvenile Temperance movement in Scotland. Finding it impossible wholly to eradicate the wine-and-older propensities of the present generation, he has determined to act upon the old adage, "an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure," and accordingly he is striving to inculcate strictly Total-abstinence principles in