

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

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Moral & Religious.

Seed Corn.

BY THE REV. J. C. RYLE.

Do you read it?
READER.—Do you read your Bible? To have a Bible is one thing; to read it is quite another. I dare say you have got a Bible. But do you read it?

I am firmly persuaded that the Bible of many a man and woman in Great Britain is never read at all. In one house it lies in a corner, stiff, cold, glossy, and fresh as it was when it came from the bookseller's shop. In another it lies on the table, with its owner's name written in it, a silent witness against him day after day. In another it lies on some high shelf, neglected and dusty, to be brought down only on grand occasions. In another it lies deep down at the bottom of some box or drawer, among the things not wanted, and is never dragged forth until the arrival of sickness, the doctor, and death. Ah! these things are sad and solemn. But they are true.

I am firmly persuaded that many in Great Britain, who read the Bible, do not read it aright. One man looks over a chapter on Sabbath evening, but that is all. Another reads a chapter every day to his servants, at family prayers, but that is all. A third goes a step further, and hastily reads a verse or two in private every morning, before he goes out of his house. A fourth goes further still, and reads as much as a chapter or two every day, though he does it in a great hurry. But each and every one of these men does what he does in a heartless, scrambling, formal kind of way. He is glad when the task is over. He forgets it all when the book is shut. Oh! what a sad picture is this! But in multitudes of cases, oh! how true!

Ah! reader, it is a painful thought, that there should be so much profession of love to the Bible among us, and so little proof that the Bible is read! It is an awful thought, that many have the Bible but do not read it, and many who do read it do not read it aright! Now what do you do?

LITTLE SINS.

READER.—Never trifle with little sins. A small leak will sink a great ship, and a little allowed sin in like manner will ruin an immortal soul. Take my advice, and never spare a little sin. Israel was commanded to slay every Canaanite, both great and small. Act on the same principle, and show no mercy to little sins. Well says the Book of Canticles, "Take us the foxes, the little foxes, that spoil the vine."—(Cant. ii. 15.)

Depend on it, no wicked man ever meant to be so wicked at his first beginnings. But he began with allowing himself some little transgression, and that led on to something greater still, and then he became the miserable being that he now is.

There are two ways of coming down from the top of a church steeple; one is to jump down, and the other is to come down by the steps—but both will lead you to the bottom. So also there are two ways of going to hell;—one is to walk into it with your eyes open—few people do that—the other is to go down by the steps of little sins; and that way, I fear, is only too common. Put up with a few little sins, and you will soon want a few more. Even a heathen could say, "Who ever was content with only one sin?" And then your course will be regularly worse and worse every year. Well did Jeremy Taylor describe the progress of sin in a man. "First it startles him, then it becomes pleasing, then easy, then delightful, then frequent, then habitual, then confirmed!—then the man is impatient, then obstinate, then resolves never to repent, and then he is damned."

Reader, the devil only wants to get the wedge of a little allowed sin into your heart, and you will soon be all his own. Never play with fire. Never trifle with little sins.

THE ASSIZES.

READER.—Settle it down in your mind that there can be no peace with God unless you feel that you are justified by Christ. You must know what is become of your sins. You must have a reasonable hope that they are forgiven, and put away. You must have the witness of your conscience that you are reckoned not guilty before God. Without this it

is vain to talk of peace. You have nothing but the shadow and imitation of it. "There is no peace saith my God, to the wicked."

Did you ever hear the sound of the trumpets which are blown before the judges, as they come into a city to open the assizes? Did you ever reflect how different are the feelings which these trumpets awaken in the minds of different men? The innocent man, who has no cause to be tried, hears them unmoved. They proclaim no terrors to him.—He listens and looks on quietly, and is not afraid. But often there is some poor wretch, waiting his trial in a silent cell, to whom those trumpets are a knell of despair. They tell him that the day of trial is at hand. Yet a little time and he will stand at the bar of justice, and hear witness after witness telling the story of his misdeeds. Yet a little time, and all will be over,—the trial, the verdict, and the sentence,—and there will remain nothing for him but punishment and disgrace. No wonder the prisoner's heart beats, when he hears that trumpet's sound!

Reader, there is a day fast coming when all who are not justified shall despair in like manner. The voice of the archangel and the trumpet of God shall scatter to the winds the false peace which now buoy up many a soul. The day of judgment shall convince thousands of self-willed people too late, that it needs something more than a few beautiful ideas about God's love and mercy, to reconcile a man to his Maker, and to deliver his guilty soul from hell. No hope shall stand in that awful day but the hope of justified man. No peace shall prove solid, substantial, and unbroken, but the peace which is built on justification by the blood of Christ, and comes from faith in him.

FOUND DEAD!

READER.—There are many dead people in the world, who are not yet buried. There are thousands who have been dead for many years, and are not yet put into their graves! Perhaps you are one of them. Perhaps, while you read the tract now in your hands, you are yourself a dead man.

Reader, when a man's heart is cold and unconcerned about religion,—when his hands are never employed in doing God's work,—when his feet are not familiar with God's ways,—when his tongue is seldom or never used in prayer and praise,—when his ears are deaf to the voice of Christ in the gospel,—when his eyes are blind to the beauty of the kingdom of heaven,—when his mind is full of the world, and has no room for spiritual things,—when these marks are to be found in a man, the word of the Bible is the right word to use about him,—and that word is "dead."

This is the true explanation of sin not felt, and sermons not believed, and good advice not followed, and the gospel not embraced, and the world not forsaken, and the cross not taken up, and self-will not mortified, and evil habits not laid aside, and the Bible seldom read, and the knee never bent in prayer.—Why is all this on every side? The answer is simple. Men are dead.

This is the true explanation of many things which bring a faithful minister's heart. Many around him never attend a place of worship at all. Many attend so irregularly, that it is clear they think it of no importance. Many attend once on a Sabbath who might just as easily attend twice. Many never come to the Lord's table, never appear at a week day means of grace of any kind. And why is all this? Often, far too often, there can only be one reply about these people. They are dead.

Reader, are you found dead? Seek Christ that you may have life. Repent of your sins and be converted this very day. Pray to the Lord Jesus Christ, and you shall be made alive.

Faith in Christ.

Unbelief is a heinous sin. God's denunciations against it are fearful: "He that believeth not, is condemned already." "He that believeth not, shall be damned."

And so faith is a precious grace. "He that believeth shall be saved." "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved."

WHAT THEN IS FAITH IN CHRIST? What does one do when he believes on the Son of God? The matter is of the gravest importance. Let every man be candid with his own soul.

Sometimes faith in Christ is called coming to Christ. "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." "Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out." To come to Christ, is to have such dispositions as would lead us, if he were on earth, to come to him in person, and apply to him for salvation on his own terms. Thus we should approach him sincerely, humbly, and earnestly. One poor woman came to him very stealthily; but she came and touched him, and got the blessing. The Canaanitish woman came with the lowest esteem of herself; but true humility is never offended in Christ, and true earnestness can never be driven away from Christ.

Sometimes faith is called looking to Christ. "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else." "They shall look upon me whom they have pierced." "Run with patience the race that is set before you, looking unto Jesus." "Behold the Lamb of God." Of old, the Israelite, bitten by the fiery serpent, was bidden to direct his eyes to the brazen serpent, and as many as looked were

healed. "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up; that whosoever believeth in him might not perish, but have eternal life."

Sometimes faith is spoken of as receiving Christ. Thus Zachæus received him not only civilly as his guest, and kindly as his countryman, but joyfully as his Saviour. Christ is freely offered, and we gladly take him as offered. He is held out to us in the gospel, and we lay hold of him as the Lord our righteousness, as the true God and eternal life, as all our salvation. "As many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to as many as believed on his name."

Again, faith in Christ is spoken of as fleeing to him. We flee from our sins and from the avenging wrath of God to lay hold on the hope set before us in the gospel. Christ is our city of refuge. In him we are safe from the flaming sword of justice. He is our hiding-place from the tempest, our covert from the storm. We run to him, and his blood atones for us, his righteousness covers us, his grace is sufficient for us, his intercession avails for us. In him we can never be reached by the destroyer.

Those who have faith in Christ trust, and rest in him. Their faith repose on him. They lean upon him. "In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth." This true faith in Christ has some remarkable characteristics.

1. It refuses all other helps, hopes, refuges, and mediators. It divides not its love and confidence between Christ and a host of others, or any other.

"Thou must save, and thou alone."

To look elsewhere is inconsistent with reliance upon him. He saves wholly, or not at all. His blood may not be mingled with our sufferings, nor his tears with our anguish, nor his merits with our deservings. "There is none other name given under heaven among men, whereby we must be saved." "Other foundation hath no man laid." Build on the Rock, or not at all.

2. Genuine faith is not temporary, but lasts and holds on its way. It cleaves to Christ through good and through evil report. It holds him fast, and will not let him go. It will even bear tortures, not accepting deliverance purchased by a denial of faith in him. It will walk in darkness, and yet trust. It will cover itself with sackcloth and ashes, and cry, "Unclean"; but it will not renounce Christ. It is not only exclusive, it is also firm.

3. It enlists all the affections. "With the heart man believeth unto righteousness." Devels believe, but not with the heart. The confidence of faith is a firm, efficacious, and operative principle in all the emotions and feelings of the soul.

4. Genuine faith therefore purifies the heart. It begets strong desires after holiness. It leads the soul to Christ, who is our sanctification as well as our righteousness. It begets the deepest aversion to sin. When tempted it cries, "How can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?" In the eyes of believers, sin is exceeding sinful, and holiness very lovely.

5. True faith in Christ also works by love. It draws its chief motives from the divine love. It awakens the affection of love in the love. It says, "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed on us," and then it gives him all that has, is, or hopes to be.

6. It also gains and keeps the ascendancy over the things of time. "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith."

Faith looks not at things which are seen and temporal, but at things unseen and eternal. It draws its strength and firmness from the sight of things invisible—from an unseen Saviour, an unseen heaven, and an unseen eternity.

Religious & Secular.

Facts Relative to China.

[From public statements made by the Rev. Mr. Voorman, returned Missionary.]

"The Government of China is the oldest now in existence. With only slight changes, its present form reaches far back into the middle ages of the Hebrew nation. This form is peculiar, being in theory eminently patriarchal. The Emperor is the Supreme Ruler; all his subordinate officers are called fathers in their respective provinces. And each father in his own family has almost unlimited power—a power which terminates only in his death—so that the grandfather and great-grandfather have still authority each over his own sons and daughters, and can punish them for any abuse of their paternal authority. It sometimes happens that a father for supposed abuse of his young family is called to account and punished by his father, and if this correction is deemed objectionable, the case comes under the review of his father—the little fellow's great grandfather being the final umpire.

The civil Government is in some respects the most despotic on earth, while in other respects it is eminently democratic. The will of the emperor is supreme law.

The functions of subordinate officers are not sharply defined, as in our country. They are rather required to see to it that crime be punished, and hence they often bear a leading part in all the processes towards this result.

One and the same officer will perhaps

make the same writ, serve it on the criminal, and then be witness, judge and jury. Note all this peculiarity—that the local authorities are not only to punish crimes actually committed, but they are to anticipate the causes of crime and of public disturbance, and forestall their operations. Indeed they are held responsible for any mischief that may be done under their supervision.

There are two peculiarities in their government and usages which greatly affect our access to them as foreign missionaries.

1. The magistrates, being held personally responsible for the peace of the community, are exceedingly apprehensive least some disturbance should arise from the residence of foreigners among the people—the more so because the large share of the foreigners who go there are wont to make them more or less trouble. Hence the first impression of the civil magistrates is sure to be unfavorable to the residence of missionaries within their provinces. To obviate this difficulty the missionaries try to live a better life than other foreigners have, to avoid with great care, everything likely to create needless disturbance, and to make the authorities feel that they at least shall be exempt from all responsibility for any misdeeds of the missionaries.

2. Over against this is a usage which may one day work in the missionaries' favor. This usage attaches extraordinary rights to the fact of possession. If a man has rented a house and occupied it one year, he can hold it indefinitely, and without increase of rent. He cannot be ousted by law, nor can he be driven out by any exorbitant price. Hence if the missionaries could get a footing any place and remain a year, the Chinese usages give him the power to hold his ground indefinitely. Obviously, this may work greatly to the advantage of the missionaries, while the prejudice of the people and their usages in another direction, operate against them.

Our present relations to government allow us to go into the interior as far as we can go and return the same day; legally, no further. It has been thought by the missionaries very important to penetrate the interior of the country, since they have expected to find there a more favorable state of things—less prejudice against foreigners, and more simplicity of character and manners.

In some respects, the social relations existing there encourage missionary effort. The father being the absolute head of his household, if he is converted, he can subject all his family to the Christian regulations. Their religious system, also, presents some hopeful points. Unlike many other heathen nations, they have nothing that shocks our feelings. I have never either seen or heard in their rites, anything obscene. They have some idols, yet they have terms in their language which indicate that they once had the knowledge of the true God. At present, there are six persons to whom they apply the term—"Supreme Being." Religiously the Chinese are divided into three sects: Confucianists, who follow Confucius; Buddhists, who worship Buddha, and Taoists, who are essentially Paganists, and are distinguished for the high tone of their moral system. I have seen men there who give you the same views of morals and of life that good moralists in our country give. I have often said that I could take their creed into New York and find many men who could honestly sign it. Of course this creed would have in it no Christ.

In many of their shops you will see no idols, but if there will always be something there for men to worship. I once asked a man how he could worship if he had no idol? He answered—"I would write the word 'Shin' on a piece of paper, and worship that." This word is very comprehensive, denoting all the great spirits, and is, therefore, specially convenient for them, since, as they say, we do not certainly know which is the true God, and, therefore, when we use this term, we are sure we have the true God in it, and shall be heard by one who can save.

Like the Catholic image-worshippers, they claim that they do not worship the idol, but only the god which is put into the idol. They will on no account, sell their idol after the god has been put into it; but, if they are induced by poverty, or a high price offered, to sell, they first take it to those who make their business, and get them to exercise the divinity. Then they will sell for what it costs to make it.

There is nothing in their worship specially disgusting, yet there are some things not very sensible, and which their own intelligent men do not approve.

There is much among the common people which encourages us to hope for success in preaching to them the gospel. They are eminently civil and respectful to the missionaries. Never, but in one instance, have I heard an insulting remark while speaking to them. Once, while addressing perhaps a hundred people, a man who sat near me said, he did not believe that. The respectable gentlemen present felt deeply ashamed that one of their countrymen should have done so mean a thing.

The Chinese are said to be a stupid unthinking race. This impression on foreigners may come from their politeness. They deem it impolite to contradict a teacher, and hence, whatever they may think, they might forbear to express any sentiments opposed to his.

For the most part, they seem to have no fixed belief. I once asked a man what his countrymen believed. Sitting in sight of the

river, he replied—Just like the water—now here, now there, tossed up and let down as every wind moves it. Probably no two men can be found there who hold altogether the same opinions; and no one who retains his own long. But substantially the same is true of errorists in our own and every country.—Error has no sure footing.

All the Chinese have some prejudice against foreigners—for which I cannot much condemn them. Their effort to exclude foreigners from their country, are based upon a selfish policy—one that might have been easily overcome if all foreigners had gone among them to do them good. The time was when foreigners might have gone all over that country. If they had then carried God's word in its purity, and commended it by their own life, the whole nation might have been converted, and the Bible would have become the law of the land. That opportunity lay at the feet of the Jesuit missionaries, who first went there more than one hundred years ago. They were found too corrupt to be trusted; were ordered out of the country, but left a great prejudice against foreigners behind them.

In China, men rise to eminence upon their literary and scientific attainments. Hence it is a bad policy for the government to let foreigners go into the interior, for many of them go with a power of learning and knowledge, which far outshines the most learned Chinese, and, hence, becomes dangerous to the influence of the government.

In many ways God is preparing the means to revolutionize the nation. The opium war tended towards opening the country to foreigners and to missionaries. The very use of opium, so terrible in its effects on the human constitution, is yet overruled of God to break down those influences that withstand the introduction of the gospel there. This will be readily comprehended when it is considered that the people have an overweening pride of their own intellectual achievements and power, which constitutes one of the great obstacles to the admission of the gospel into their country. The use of opium undermines the foundation of their power. Its use, is chiefly confined to literary men and government officials. This class of men are crushed and depraved by it, both physically and morally. Physically, it needs but a few years use of opium to break them down; morally, it begets treachery and corruption, since it is a contraband article, and is smuggled in through the very class of men who use it. Money and appetite combine to bribe them to betray their trust. But such rules are an abomination to the people. Daily they are sapping the foundation of the reigning dynasty, and paralyzing the power that arrays itself against missions. This general disaffection with the government gave occasion to the recent great rebellion.

China buys opium to the amount of \$13,000,000, and sells tea to the same amount. Not far from 3,000,000 of men will smoke all this opium—or about one in a hundred of their entire population, to wit; their men of office, leisure, and literary life.

OUR MISSIONARY WORK.

There are now in this field one hundred missionaries, American and European, some of whom, however, are still unable to preach in the Chinese language. The first English missionary went there in 1809; the first American, in 1829. A great deal of preparatory work has been done; about seven hundred converts have been gathered into Christian churches.

The difficulties to be encountered in the introduction of the gospel among a people, totally ignorant of it, can scarcely be appreciated by those who have never grappled with them in person. You must begin to speak in an unknown tongue. I mean all that this language implies. You may learn the Chinese tongue and be able to converse fluently on all other subjects, and the people may understand you as they understand each other; but when you come to present gospel ideas, you will need terms which they have not in their language, or, at least, which they have never applied to this subject, and in such a sense. Of course you must be content to progress very slowly.—You can move forward only by the most careful and laborious illustrations. You must remember that the whole people have a new language to learn, in which to clothe their new ideas.

As to preaching, we have two methods.—First, we open a hospital and invite people to come in at stated times, when we preach the gospel to save their souls, and then prescribe for the healing of their bodies. To ensure punctuality, we give them tickets in the order of their arrival and entrance, and when preaching service is over, we give their medical prescriptions in the same order.—By this means, we preach the gospel to many souls.

Our second method is to open a preaching station at some central point, on a great thoroughfare, and then go out ourselves and send an assistant if we have one, to invite in a congregation. Having thus drawn some people together, we give out our subsequent appointments, and sometimes have there many times in succession. But our numbers are exceedingly few. In a population of nearly (400,000,000), four hundred millions, our number is as five to the whole people of the United States. What could five men do toward evangelizing the twenty-four or five millions of our land? Especial-

ly if they had to reach them through the most difficult language on earth to master? The Chinese tongue holds this pre-eminence. I have been told by their scholars, that not a man in the Empire understands it fully.—Yet the acquisition, to our missionaries, is less difficult; the facilities for mastering it are increasing. Some of the more recent missionaries speak the language better than the older.

The American Board employ now in China seven female and fourteen male missionaries. In my judgment, the relative number of each sex should be reversed—each married lady taking one unmarried female assistant. Females are highly respected in China, especially those of education and refinement. Husbands there treat their wives with respect and regard. Missionary females can go into any family; but men are not expected even to walk through a private street unless they have special and important business. Foreign females are everywhere safe, and their presence often enables the male sex to go with safety where otherwise they could not go.

The former prejudice against mission schools has in a great part passed away, and we now have no difficulty in getting pupils.

You will ask—how many missionaries, and how many teachers do you want for China?

Not less than one minister for each thousand, certainly;—and considering the great difficulty of teaching such a people through such a language, one to each hundred would not be too many. But say one to each thousand. The entire Chinese population can scarcely fall short of 400,000,000. They want, then, 400,000 ministers. To keep the supply would demand 15,000 new recruits yearly.

On the basis of one school teacher for thirty pupils, we want two million of teachers.

Is not this a vast work? Yet it ought to be done! Jesus Christ says—"Go ye into all the world"—into China therefore—"and preach the gospel to every creature." Will you do your part.—[Oberlin Evangelist.]

Correspondence.

[For the Intelligencer.]

New York, Feb. 9, 1858.

MR. EDITOR:—While Christians so often allow slight differences of opinion to divide them, and churches so often waste their energies in contending with each other, instead of uniting against their common adversary, it is gratifying to record the occasional exceptions, and find that there are those who, while steadfastly holding their own peculiar faith, can still recognize as Christian brethren, in deed as well as in word, those who differ with them upon some points of belief. Such an instance I have now to mention.

A Congregational church, whose house of worship is located on Twentieth street in this city, found themselves unable longer to bear the heavy pecuniary burden of sustaining public worship in a place like this. They were in possession of a good house, but their various expenses were sinking them. At the same time the Freewill Baptist church (the only one in the city) were without a church building, and were holding their meetings in a public hall. The house of the Congregationalists was of ample size to accommodate both congregations. Here then was an opportunity, if the two could unite, for one to be eased from their pecuniary burden and the other to be furnished with a commodious place of worship. Propositions to this effect were made and accepted, and the result is that the building has been leased to the Freewill Baptist church until May, 1860, the members of the church which formerly worshipped there retaining their sittings, and both churches uniting for the time under the pastoral care of Rev. D. M. Graham, Freewill Baptist. Last Sabbath was the first under this arrangement, and all the exercises were conducted with a manifest feeling of fellowship and good will, which argues well for the prosperity of the united churches.—Especially interesting was the scene in the afternoon, when the members of the two churches sat down together to commemorate the death of our Lord by the ordinance which he has appointed. Churches of different denominations, and differing in belief on several points, thus uniting around the table of our Lord is a sight that has seldom—too seldom—been seen, and seemed a type of the "marriage supper of the Lamb," where all sects are merged in one, and was greatly enjoyed by all present. It is expected that during the time which this arrangement is to continue the Freewill Baptists will erect a house for themselves, while the other church will probably recover from their embarrassments, so that at the end of the time named each church will resume its original individuality, mutually benefited by their temporary union.

Business of all kinds still remains stagnant, though there is some improvement manifest as compared with the times two months since. Great numbers are still either wholly or nearly without employment, and the consequence is a vast amount of suffering. Such a state of affairs occurring in Paris as has been witnessed here this winter, would create a revolution and consign the Emperor to exile or the scaffold, and even sedate old London, if her thousands of labouring poor were deprived of employment, might have to display her regiments; but here, except at the very first, there have been no public demonstrations. The hand of charity has been