

# 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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## True and False Conversions Distinguished.

Concluded

Satan practices his wiles in respect to conversion with astonishing success. Some of those wiles—as I am led to view them—have fallen within my own observation.

A man advanced in life, who had obtained a hope for thirty years before, told me his experience, which was in substance as follows: One night he was in great distress about his soul, so that when he turned over in his bed, it seemed to him like turning over in hell. Soon after this, he thought he saw a light come down through the roof which rested upon his breast. When the cock crew, he thought it was the sweetest sound which he had ever heard. When he arose in the morning, the face of things was altered; for it seemed to him that every thing was praising God. I inquired of him for the fruits of this change, which had been of so long standing. I could not learn that he had ever had any stated worship in the family or closet; or that he made any conscience of sanctifying the Sabbath, even so much as to feel himself obliged to refrain from labour. Indeed, he appeared to be a total stranger to all the fruits of the Spirit. And yet what is painful to relate, he seemed to have no doubts of the genuineness of his conversion; but could not be made to call it in question. Perhaps you may wish to ask me how I may account for the new face which nature wore the morning after he saw that light; and how I account for the new language which it seemed to him to speak, even praise to God. I answer, The visionary light removed his fears, and excited a full belief that God had delivered him from his state of condemnation. This was enough to make him feel very glad, very happy; and to cause him for a while to abound in giving thanks to God. In this particular there was a resemblance of a true conversion; but still it is easy to account for it in the principles of mere selfishness; and what went before, and what followed these joyful feelings, are enough to convince us that they could not be that joy in the Holy Ghost which is peculiar to true converts.

I will now turn your attention to the case of a woman, who gave me an account of a hope on which she had relied for the term of eighteen years; which for substance, is as follows: "About that time," said she, "I lost a sister. This excited great distress in my mind, as I viewed myself unprepared for eternity. Eternity was an awful thought to me. The word kept ringing in my ears. One day, while I was thus distressed with the thoughts of eternity, as I threw myself on the bed, something seemed to say to me, 'Eternity is none too long to enjoy God and Christ.' This afforded me immediate relief." She, like a person drowning, caught on this straw, and on it she hung for eighteen years, when a merciful God was pleased to open her eyes to see that it was nothing but a straw. Do you ask me wherein this experience appears to be fallacious? I answer, first that there is no Scripture in favor of such an experience. I would add, that the experience appears to be wholly of the selfish kind. What preceded her relief was not conviction of sin; it was nothing but terror. And her comfort did not rise from beholding the glory of the Lord, or any thing of the kind; but merely from a belief that the eternity which she had dreaded would not be spent in misery, but in happiness. The holy enjoyments of heaven were not, as I could learn, taken into the account.

I am acquainted with a man, who, when he was awake, being in distress of mind, thought he saw Christ rush down his arms to rise him up out of the gulf into which he fancied he was sinking. This he related to me soon after it took place, expecting that he should give me that joy which is occasioned by the repentance of a sinner. But the relation of it led me to make a new effort, in dependence on divine help, to rescue him from the snare of the devil. The Lord was merciful; a new and different experience succeeded, which produced a lasting conviction in the mind of the man, that the visionary discovery of Christ reaching down his arms was not of the nature of a Christian experience. I heard a young woman give a reason in her hope, who seemed to lay the greatest stress on this: that she awakened one morning with these words sounding in her ears: 'Daughter, be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee.' In this there were three things

which probably had influence in leading her to hope. 1. That the words contained a cheering promise, which, being appropriated to her own case, implied that her sins were forgiven. 2. These words came to her mind unexpectedly, and without any pains being taken on her part, which was probably one thing that led her to think they were sent as a direct message from God.

3. The words gave the more consolation, as they were conceived to be the words of Scripture. To me, however, none of these reasons are sufficient to prove her conversion to be sound and saving. The devil knows Scripture, and can quote it. He can quote a promise, and can bring it suddenly and unexpectedly to the mind. For proof of all this, let me refer you to Matt. 4: 6. The Spirit of God makes us love the Scriptures because they are "Holy Scriptures," and the promises, because they are holy, and because by them we are made partakers of the divine nature; but the devil seeks to comfort with the promises, those whose hearts are not changed, and who have no preparation to be pleased with the promises of God's word, except by a selfish application of them. A sinner dreads eternal punishment, and therefore will be pleased with the promise of the forgiveness of sins, when he merely contemplates it as an escape from that punishment.

Satan is said to be transformed into an angel of light. It is his work to deceive and beguile, and thus to destroy souls. The several cases which I have stated, to me appear like the work of the Deceiver. If the relation of them should be the honored means of breaking up or preventing an false hope, I shall not have cause to regret that I have put them on paper.

I beseech my reader not to lose his soul by such amazing folly as that of turning his back on the marks of grace laid down in the Scriptures, and trusting to those which have no scriptural foundation. Will you not now resolve, that you will collect together all that in which you have trusted, and put it into the balance of the sanctuary, and see whether it has any real weight? If I saw you selling your estate for those worthless strips of paper of which I spoke, I would caution you against doing so foolish a thing; but when I see you about to lose your soul by mistaking the wiles of the devil for Christian experience, I know not how to hold my peace. The command of God is, to look diligently, lest any man fail of the grace of God. Those who are set to watch for souls, should watch "as they that must give account."

My reader will bear with me while I add one more caution. Do not confine yourself to one particular mark of grace. If your conversion be the work of the Spirit, you will have all the marks of grace. One who is born of God, however feeble his strength, has all the members of a living and proper child. If you love the brethren with complacency, you will love enemies with good will. If you love God whom you have not seen, you will love your brother whom you have seen. If your zeal is the fruit of the same Spirit, be also clothed with humility. If God prepare your heart to pray, he will also prepare you to every good word and work. And if he begin a good work in you, he will perform it unto the day of Jesus Christ. If, therefore, you do not "endure to the end," you lack an essential mark of a gracious state. Yes, I may add, if your conversion is the work of God's Holy Spirit, your religion will not be stationary; it will advance. You will go from strength to strength, until you appear before God in Zion.

This paper may fall into the hands of some who are not ignorant of Satan's devices. The prayers of such I would request in its behalf, that it may be the happy means of delivering precious souls from the snare of the fowler. Pray, my Christian friends, that this subtle deceiver, who has filled Christendom with his false and delusive conversions, may soon be chained, and not be suffered any longer to practise his successful wiles.

From the New York Tribune.

## THE GREAT REVIVAL.

THE MEETING AT THE NORTH DUTCH CHURCH.

The noon-day prayer meeting held at the "Old North Dutch Church" on Monday was as well attended as usual. This meeting, more properly speaking three meetings, as the congregation is divided into three parts, assembling in different parts of the building. At a quarter before 12 o'clock, the main room, on the second floor, was nearly filled, and before the time of beginning, many persons were turning away from the house, unable to get in at any of the meetings.

The audience consisted chiefly of men, although about a hundred ladies were present. The latter occupied front seats, and were very cheerfully accorded their places, although a desire has been repeatedly expressed by some that the ladies would keep away from this meeting, and attend others not so specially designed for business men.

The exercises were begun punctually at 12 a. m. A hymn of four verses was sung, beginning,

"Descend from Heaven, Immortal Dove, Stoop down and take us on thy wings."

The singing was very earnest and effective, the congregation participating in it with great unanimity. There seems to be a devotional element in men's voices, which is always lacking in the singing of a more miscellaneous gathering.

The Rev. Dr. Taylor, of Newark, said that he would mention an incident for the encouragement of parents to pray for their children:

"Many years ago an old man, a devoted Christian, started a prayer-meeting, which is still continued, having resulted in many and glorious fruits. As a pastor it was my privilege to be with him, particularly during his last illness. In several visits made to his house I found him on the mount, looking over on to the Land of Promise. Finding nothing seemingly to mar his comfort or interrupt his joy, one morning as I went to his dwelling (he was a poor man and lived in straitened circumstances), I determined to satisfy myself whether there was nothing that gave him any trouble of heart. On entering his chamber I asked him, in simple terms, 'How are you this morning?' 'Oh, Sir,' said he, 'I am well; why should I not be well? I am near home. Yes, I am near home—near heaven.' I took the opportunity to ask him, 'My dear Sir, has there been nothing of late resting upon your heart, as an occasion of trouble?' He spoke not a word, but turned his head over the wall, and lay so between five and ten minutes; then he rolled his head back upon his pillow, with his face toward me, and I saw the tears streaming down his cheeks. 'Oh, yes, Sir,' said he, 'there is one great trouble.' 'What is it?' I inquired. 'Speak your whole mind to me freely.' 'Well,' said he, 'I have ten children, and I have prayed to God for more than thirty years that I might see some one of them converted before I die; but he has denied me. They are all grown up, as you know, but are not yet Christians.' 'How do you get over that trouble?' I asked. 'Ah,' he replied, 'I get over it, as I get over all other troubles—by rolling it over upon Christ. I know that God means to answer my prayers, but he means to wait till I am gone. But he will do it; I know he will; my children will be converted.'

"This man has been in his grave for fifteen years, and I have watched over his children ever since his death; and now to-day I am able to say that seven out of the ten have been born into the kingdom of God, and that the eighth also has just experienced conversion. This is the answer to my prayer! God did not forget; he only waited; and in like manner he will answer the prayers of all parents who pray in faith for the conversion of their children. Let us, therefore, take courage, and lay hold upon the precious promises of God!

After prayer was again offered, the congregation sang the hymn, "I know that my redeemer lives. What comfort that sweet sentence gives!" A young man then arose and requested that prayer might be offered in behalf of some persons who paid an outward respect to religion, attending church with great regularity and circumspectness, but not enjoying an inward experience of religion. He said that many such were to be found in every congregation, and that they were proper subjects of prayer.

Prayer was accordingly offered in behalf of this class of individuals, and of the others mentioned in the previous requests. After another prayer, the final hymn was given out which the congregation sang standing: "O come, thou great and mighty power, Accept a home within my breast."

THE JOHN STREET METHODIST CHURCH.  
The noon-day prayer meetings in the old Methodist Church in John street, for the past two days, have been unusually interesting. The attendance is, if possible, greater than ever before; and is measured now more by the numbers who go away, than by those that succeed in getting into the building.

Two meetings are held every day at the same time, one in the basement and the other in the main audience room of the church. Geo. H. STUART, esq., President of the Philadelphia Young Men's Christian Association, was also present, and addressed the congregation; during the course of his remarks he read a religious poem entitled "What the News?" the special interest connected with which he said "arose from the fact, that the author was a young man 'now dead, who was insane on almost every subject except that of religion, on which he continued to the last thoroughly sane and intelligent.'"

The following are the lines, which we publish at the request of the meeting: WHAT'S THE NEWS? Whence we meet you always say, What's the news? What's the news? Pray what's the order of the day? What's the news? What's the news? Oh, I have got good news to tell! My Saviour has done all things well, And triumph'd over death and hell— That's the news! That's the news!

The Lamb was slain on Calvary— That's the news! That's the news! To set a world of sinners free— That's the news! That's the news! 'Twas there his precious blood was shed, But now he's risen from the dead— That's the news! That's the news!

To heaven above the conqueror's gone— That's the news! That's the news! He's pass'd triumphant to the throne— That's the news! That's the news! And on that throne He will remain Until as judge He comes again, Attended by a dazzling train— That's the news! That's the news!

His work's reviving all around— That's the news! That's the news! And many have redemption found— That's the news! That's the news! And since their souls have caught the flame, They shout hosannah to His name, And all around they spread His fame— That's the news! That's the news!

The Lord has pardoned all my sin— That's the news! That's the news! I feel the witness now within— That's the news! That's the news! And since He took my sins away, And taught me how to watch and pray, I'm happy now from day to day— That's the news! That's the news!

And Christ the Lord can save me now— That's the news! That's the news! Your sinful hearts He can renew— That's the news! That's the news! This moment, if for sins you grieve, This moment, if you do believe, A full acquittal you'll receive— That's the news! That's the news!

And then if any one should say— That's the news! That's the news! Oh, tell them you've begun to pray— That's the news! That's the news! That you have joined the conquering band; And now with joy at God's command, You're marching to the better Land— That's the news! That's the news!

The gentleman read an extract from a letter from a brother in Philadelphia, in which it was stated that, on the day previous, over 3,000 persons were present at a union meeting in that city. The following are some of the special requests for prayers presented at the meetings yesterday and the day before: "A father begs the prayers of this meeting in behalf of a son and daughter, who are seeking God sorrowing, that they may find redemption and the forgiveness of all their sins."

"Your prayers are solicited on behalf of a young man who will soon embark for a distant land, but who is still unconcerned in regard to the interests of his soul."

"A mother desires an interest in your prayers for the conversion of her two sons." "Several believing young men in a large mercantile house in this city have long felt and do feel an ardent desire for the conversion of their employer, now absorbed in money making."

"The prayers of this meeting are earnestly solicited for two Jewish families. They have been conversed with, and listened with an encouraging degree of attention to the subject of the religion of our blessed and true Messiah. The parents of one of these families were induced to send their children last Sabbath, for the first time, to a Sabbath school."

"DEAR BRETHREN: I have promised a devoted mother your united, prevailing prayers to Almighty God for the conversion of her two sons, and that he would lead the elder into his ministry, for which he was early set apart by his faithful, pious parents."

"A pious mother requests the prayers of this congregation that her son, 18 years of age, an only child, who from his birth has been dedicated to God for the ministry, may be brought at once to Jesus Christ."

UNION PRAYER-MEETING AT BEDFORD STREET METHODIST CHURCH.

About a week ago one of the members of Young Men's Christian Association, having made the previous arrangements, opened a Union Prayer-Meeting in the Lecture-room of the Methodist Episcopal Church, located on the north-east corner of Bedford and Morton streets.

The audience during the week have been principally composed of ladies. The neighbourhood is one that is densely populated, and in which Mr. V. deemed it advisable to commence his work. Although himself an Episcopalian he professed to know no sect in this effort, and his success has been most admirable, for his meetings, besides having many features varying from the other Union meetings hitherto reported, are instinct with life and vigour. As will be seen in the brief sketch, the ladies not only give their presence but offer prayers. On Saturday our Reporter was present. Owing to the fact many of the ladies had domestic duties in preparation for the solemnities of the Sabbath to attend to, this assembly was not so numerous as upon the previous days.

Mr. Van Beuren, as leader, opened the exercises with a brief and appropriate appeal to the Throne of Grace. He then addressed the congregation, mentioning the fact that, through the instrumentality of that meeting, one person had been hopefully converted on the previous day. He said that he saw one of his brethren of the Young Men's Christian Association present, from whom a few remarks might be expected.

Accordingly, the young man referred to rose, and very briefly reminded those present that what the young men were now doing in this city was a work which commended itself to every believer in Jesus Christ. He was proud to respond as a member of that noble Association—one of the first and fairest ornaments to our city. He would simply counsel those who were yet in doubt to go on praying, and, as they continued in prayer, to keep on trying; for, in his estimation, the very effort was itself an approximation to the grand end in view. He concluded by advising the most implicit faith in the power of the Holy Spirit, through the merits of that sacrifice which, as much now as ever before, was calculated to gladden and lighten weary and sorrowful hearts.

A lady next took the floor. She said that she praised the Lord for the religion which so thrilled the hearts of the people. She had tested it in many trials and afflictions, and always found it a sufficient solace. She solicited the prayers of the meeting for the conversion of some of her children. She was happy to say two of them had been brought into the fold of the Good Shepherd already, and the Divine Spirit was striving with another.

An old gentleman rose, and stated that he had started a second time to seek the Lord. He had nine children, eight of whom were living in their sins. He had endeavored by a godly example to bring them into the path, and he was sure that, combined with him, the efforts of others would succeed in guiding them nearer to the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sins of the world. He had a son twenty-six years of age who was extremely wicked, but he believed that through the efficacy of prayer he would be brought to see the error of his way. As for himself, he did not expect that Heaven was a place of standing still, but a life of progress; that as long as the ages of eternity would roll on new light and truth would be imparted, new duties would present themselves, and glory yet untold, unthought, unsung, would be revealed to the ever-onward marching saints.

The hymn beginning, "O, for a thousand tongues to sing My Great Redeemer's praise,"

was sung to a lively tune, and a young woman sang by reading the passage, "Ye must be born again," she had been led to consider what she must do to avert the danger of impending punishment for sin. She had read the same passage to her father, and through the simple circumstance he too was converted—lived four years a Christian life, and then died in Jesus. She had strong faith in prayer, and she hoped through its efficacy at last to meet them all in Heaven where there should be no more parting.

An old gentleman said that in a printing office, where one of his sons was employed, there were over one hundred and twenty hands, and so intense was the spiritual work going on among them that they could hardly pursue their duties. A prayer-meeting had been established on the premises, and a hopeful work was going on.

Another prayer was offered for the spread of the gospel and the salvation of souls. This meeting is to be continued in the same place throughout this week.

A SAILOR'S STORY OF HIS CONVERSION.

At one of the recent prayer-meetings in this city, a sailor rose and narrated to the congregation the circumstances of his conversion. He was a young man, a native of England, with an intelligent face and an impressive manner of speech; and his remarks were received with great attention. He said:

"I am a stranger here, and such a scene as this is one that until very recently, would have been altogether new to me. Nine weeks ago I was converted, and since then have become in some degree familiar with prayer-meetings and church-services, though before that I knew very little of either. I have been a very wicked man. For one so young, I have gone into almost incredible dissipation, and have committed almost every known sin. I can hardly imagine a person to have a greater round of wickedness than I. I am the youngest of a large family of children. My father is dead, but my mother is living. She is an old woman, now more than 75 years of age. She is a devoted Christian, and has always tried to bring up her children to be like her, and some of them have followed her example. Several of my brothers and sisters are earnest and sincere Christians, who with her, have oftentimes at home prayed for my salvation. But I could never endure a single thought of religion. Whenever the subject was mentioned to me, I immediately repelled it, and repelled it often with a horrid oath. The thought that the members of the family prayed for me always made me angry. I was warned against my dissipation, but went more into it the more I was warned. I grew more and more wicked every day, out of spite, and I tried to be a great sinner. At last I determined to leave home. I wanted to get away from the influence of a praying mother. I wanted to be free from all restraints, so that I might indulge myself in whatever I chose, to my own satisfaction. My mother implored me not to go. I told her I was going to sea, and would go. Her eyes filled with tears, and she could say nothing more. With whatever sins I had, I had some love for my mother, and I gave way before her tears. She asked me to promise her that I would never go to sea until I could first obtain her consent. I consented, and remained awhile at home. A young man who was my companion in dissipation, left England and came to this country, and after he had been here a short time returned in the same ship. He told me that I could enjoy myself grandly if I would go away from home as he had done, and that there was all manner of pleasure in New-York. I again determined to go to sea in company with him. My mother, seeing that I was bent on going, could not bear the thought that I should leave without her consent, and so she gave it. I accordingly made preparations to ship at Liverpool. Just before I started, which was about the first of last December, my mother gave me a scaled letter and a small Bible to put in my trunk, and told me not to open the letter until the 21st of December. That was

her birthday, when she would be 75 years old. She gave me her blessing, which I shrank from receiving, and I went off. As soon as I got clear of home I felt at liberty. I said to myself, 'Now there will be no one to pray for me, and I shall not be annoyed with Bibles and texts.' I left home without any sadness, but rather with a kind of wicked pleasure; and when I got on board ship, I soon forgot all about mother, and brothers, and sisters. After we had set sail, and were well on with the voyage, a storm arose that was very violent. Just about this time I was taken very sick—not with sea-sickness, but a dangerous fever. I lay in my bunk, tossing about with the ship, as wretched and miserable as a man could be. The doctor told me that I was at the point of death, and that if I had any preparation to make for eternity I had better make it, for I had not long to live. This he repeated also in the cabin among the passengers, one of whom, an aged man, came to see me. I remember his face; it was all kindness; but I hated the sight of him. He came with a book in his hand, and said to me: 'Young man, you are almost gone: I have come to read to you something out of the Word of God.' I looked up at him a moment, and said in a rage: 'Hand me the books; and when he offered it to me I took it and put it to my lips, and made a solemn oath that I would have nothing to do with God or with religion. I told him that if he read to me I would not listen, and bid him with an oath to leave me alone. He then went away, and I lay stark alone in my bunk. It seemed to me that I was at that moment more miserable than I had ever been before in all my life; I do not refer to my bodily sickness, but to my distress of mind. It was evening, and there was no light near me, but all was as dark as midnight. Suddenly the thought came over my mind that it was the 21st of December, and I remembered my mother's letter. I could not rise and get it, for I was not able, and my first impulse was to call one of my messmates to get it for me. But I remembered that it was between the lids of my Bible. I was ashamed to let any one know that I wanted the Bible; and I did not want that, but my mother's letter. I lay for some time, and at last determined to call some one. One of my messmates came at the call, I asked him to get a lantern, and to go to my trunk and get a Bible with a letter in it. 'Ah,' said he, with a sneer, 'now you're sick, you begin to be a coward; what do you want with that book?' 'I don't want that book, but the letter in it,' I replied. In a few minutes he brought a lantern, opened my trunk, and handed me the Bible and letter. He then left the lantern on my bunk and went away. I sat up a little in the bed, and opened the scaled package. The very first words that I caught brought tears to my eyes. They were my mother's words—'My dear Tom.' I read the letter carefully from beginning to end. It was a mother's prayer for the conversion of her son. I had been miserable before, but those words made me more wretched than ever. I then began for the first time to feel remorse for my sinfulness, and to have a fear and dread of judgment. I turned about in my bunk in agony which I cannot describe. I had been told that I could not live, and now I was afraid to die. What could I do? I began to pray! This was what I had always had a horror of before, but I was forced to come to it at last. I prayed to God to let me get well again, and made a solemn promise to Him, on my bed, that if he would only raise me up I would reform my life. The burden of my sins almost crushed me. Even if I had not been sick, it seemed as if I should have died of these. I continued to pray, and when it was expected that I would die I was still alive, and I was kept alive, and instead of growing worse I grew better. The doctor told me then that I had had a narrow escape, and that I had been lying at death's door. As I got better, I got more and more comfort. The light gradually dawned in upon my dark soul, and its darkness was dispelled. At last, one day there came a sudden joy—a sweet peace that wrapped me like sunshine. My heart was happy, and while I was wondering what it was, the mercy of Christ was made known to me. I felt the conscience that my sins were pardoned. I began to be stirred with a new life. Whereas before I hated my home, now my heart yearned toward it. My mother—oh I wanted to see her, and to put my arms around her neck. I wanted to tell her that I had read her letter, and what I had found in it. And my brothers and sisters I had no more desire to be separated from them, but with my whole soul I longed to see them, and tell them that I had found the Saviour. My joy continued, and I told my shipmates of it. Some of them laughed at me, but I didn't care for that; I knew in whom I believed. At last we came into port; it was on a Saturday morning. On the next morning I found the Minister's Church, and my kind friends, I have been here ever since. I am happy to be here, and can only thank God that He has led me to himself, and has led me to go home and see my aged mother. She is very near the grave, and I want to throw myself upon her neck before she dies, and thank her and thank God for her prayer for a wayward son!"

NEWARK.—"AWFUL" GARDNER'S BROTHERS.

A correspondent informs us that four brothers of "Awful" Gardner have been recently converted in Newark, N. J. Gardner's conversion seems to have made a deep impression upon the community generally, which will no doubt be still further deepened