

The Religious Intelligencer.

AN EVANGELICAL FAMILY NEWSPAPER, FOR NEW BRUNSWICK AND NOVA SCOTIA.

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

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An Evangelical Family Newspaper.

FOR NEW BRUNSWICK AND NOVA SCOTIA.

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pers, that we want.

Religious Intelligencer.

We take from the New York Independent of

last week the following extract of an able

sermon delivered by the Rev. H. W. Beecher.

Subject—"Divine Visitations." Text, Luke

9th chap. from the 41st to the 45th verses.

After referring to some of the means by which

God visits man he speaks of

The Apparent Mysteries of Providence.

If a person thinks that man's chief end is to get

riches, and God thinks that the chief end of

man is to reach heaven with a pure heart, loving

God fervently; if a man says, "Keep your con-

science if you can, but get money; rank me

among the millionaires; this is my celestial

ambition!" and if God chooses to break a man's

hold upon this world and give him a hold where

riches shall not corrupt, and where they shall not

take to themselves wings and fly away, if a man

thinks his chief end is to burrow, and God thinks

his to fly; if a man is attempting to carry him-

self by his human and low idea, and God is car-

rying him by his divine and high idea—there are

two contrary streams that are running, the one

against the other, and clashing in perpetual col-

lision! Is it, then, very mysterious that there

should be agitation and conflict? A man, look-

ing upon the surface of a river, which has its

hidden rocks below, exclaims, "Oh, what a sin-

gular problem is this! Send for the philosopher

and ask him how this can be explained."

"Why, what is it that is to be explained?"

"The foam, the chafing, the irritation of the

surface, all these wrinkles, all those whirls

and eddies, all that common ion of the water."

"Why, that is nothing but a natural effect;

there are obstructions and rocks below; these

are the causes of the tumult."

And that is all the explanation that is wanted.

Now, here is a man going through the passage

of life, and God is attempting, by the economy

of the natural world, by the structure of social

life, by the influence of business life, and by

the aspirations of the mind and spirit, to drive him

up to something higher; to make him, if he is

animal, social; to make him if he is social

more spiritual; to make him if he is spiritual

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to it, dash it to pieces; when you have got your house and things fixed so that you are just about entering it, and are ready to say "Good by, God!" desolate your cradle, and swamp all your plans, so that you are at once crushed down, and say, "I can't stand up against these troubles; O God, hold thou me up!"—all these providences, while they may seem dark and mysterious to a lower view of life, are yet perfectly plain and transparent to a grander and more divine view. So it is all the way through life; we are trying to be independent of God. We are trying to build our tabernacles just as we please; not for Moses and Elias, but for ourselves. We are trying to stay here, and to make our staying so pleasant that we shall not go away. When you say, "I shall not want the Divine mind to make this world more satisfying to me than it now is," you have forgotten that God has determined that you shall live hereafter, and that he will not willingly allow yourself to cast yourself away.

This is the interpretation of Providence. All those influences that tend to weaken our hold upon the earth, are every one of them visitations of God, with a direct moral purpose, and intelligent design. All those influences which tend through the events of Providence to inspire religious feelings and lead men to take hold upon God and eternity, are part of this general system of divine visitations.

These divine visitations of the soul are in every possible and conceivable combination, from the simplest to the most complex, from the most indirect to the most intense, and act not only upon single faculties but upon whole natures. Do you think there is nothing in the world except that which your coarse eyes see? There are millions of things which you cannot see; which are too fine for sight. There are units of colour which you never appreciate, because your sense of colour is not sufficiently educated; there are flavours that you never can perceive because your tongue is too much dulled and tamed by coarser stimulants; there is an immensity of creation round about us, all to which we are insensible, because we are so gross. Now it is precisely the same in respect to God's moral dealings with us. If there comes a thunder clap we feel that; but when God speaks to a man only in whispers, he does not hear that. We stand in the midst of such a system of influences that here and there there are great bolts and tremendous strivings; we are put under strong pressures; there are combinations of circumstances, in which we seem to stand at a place where many waves meet, and we are buffeted on every side with their collision. We think then that we are the subjects of divine dealing. But we have been just as really so in every moment of our life preceding. God has put us in the midst of a system that grades from the finest and most delicate influences, all the way through the scale, up to those that are most intensely intoned; only we are not fine enough to appreciate those that fall below a certain amount of power.

The World and its true Worth. As a result, the world at times is made to stand before the mind of every man at its true value. I suppose there have been periods in every one of your lives—short and infrequent, perhaps, with some of you—but I believe I shall speak the experience of every man here, even of the most worldly, when I say that there are times in which the sheeted lie is rolled off, and the great corporeal lies before you as dead as it really is; to all spiritual value! There are times when, though but for a moment, a man is led to think of the past course of life, and to say, "For thirty-five or forty years I have been in the field; I have made some progress, but after all, what is it going to avail me?" There are men who stand in the porch of the temple which they have built, and feel more than any other people in the world, how little it is after all! Persons in the midst of pleasure know more of its emptiness than any minister who preaches of the worthlessness of this world. The votaries of pleasure are the least satisfied with it. He that inveighs against immorality and vices, has not half so strong a conviction of their rottenness as they who commit them. No man has such a sense of the mischief and misery of intemperance as the very drunkard himself, when for a moment he staggers back from his bowl, and has one of those peevish intervals, in which his better nature returns; and he is led to hate himself as other men hate him. No man knows how heavy care is, and how weak human strength is under it, so well as the elect children of sorrow. No man ever counts riches at their true value as measured by the other world, so truly as business men who have been the most industrious, the most anxious, the most greedy, and are after all the most unsatisfied.

The man whose hand never opens to give, but only to clutch; the man whose heart is a chest which has only one aperture, and that is to take in and not to let out; the man who builds his perpetual tomb of money; the man who has handled the dollar, and felt its electricity tingle up his arm all the way to his heart; the man who has had golden visions;—ah! this is the man who, if he would but make confession, would be able to utter the keenest satire on the worthlessness of wealth! The men who have had the most of this world that it can ever give; who have had the fullest surfeit of it; who have bled their heads with the greenest leaves of fame; who have as-

pired the highest, and have most nearly reached their aspirations;—these are the men who have left behind them the most mournful desecrations upon the worthlessness and emptiness of all the things of this world! Listen to the wailings of Byron, the more quiet but cold and philosophical confessions of Goethe, the revelations of such a man as Chesterfield, the complaints of Napoleon in exile! I take the occasional concessions and statements of these men as being an indication that there are times in which those who are gifted with the greatest worldly gifts are the men who have the most intense conviction of their worthlessness, either for joy or any worthy purpose upon the human soil!

The Soul disclosed to itself.

So again there are periods in every man's life in which the soul's own nature stands revealed to it. I suppose every man passes, at some time, into a kind of skepticism. I know I have had such times; I suppose everybody has them. At my former mountain home in Lenox, there were days in August, when, although I knew there were mountains near, they were so hazy that I could not see them. I looked to the north where old Greylock stood, and he had gone. I looked to the south for Mount Washington, and he had gone. I looked to the east for the range of mountains that rose up there, but they had stolen away. I looked to the west to see if none remained, but they too had hid themselves, and all were invisible. But when I awoke, and the night-shower, came back, so clear and distinct that the old crag upon Ten-mile distant hill stood up, vivid as a line against the sky, and my eye could sweep over all the country round about, and the trout hills seem to have traveled home again, stealthily in the night! I think it is just so in the soul; there are times when a man goes grieving, saying, "Where are those aspirations which I once felt? I am now sordid and stupid as a sponge. Where are those up-reachings that I once enjoyed? Where is all that old enthusiasm of honor? Where are all those yearnings of desire? Ah! they are all gone! Man is after all but a superior animal; he is but a part of the material creation; he is but the highest form in which matter develops." Man complains to himself, "I shall live, and like an autumn leaf, wither and die; something else shall grow out of me, and in turn something else shall grow out of that."

But though there are, in every man's life, times of obscurity, of dullness, of deadness, that come over the soul, there is no man so bad, so worldly, so obstinately set in his philosophic errors, so bound up in unbelief, that he has not certain other brighter and revelatory moments, in which he rises superior to his common life, in which his immortal nature mounts mountain-like above him, in which he stands upon the tops of his own soul, and looking out, exclaims, "I, born to fall like a sparrow and rot? I, grow like a vegetable that goes back again into the earth? Never! This that is in me so royally, shall live and mount far above the touch of decay!" He feels his affinity to God! He is, in his own consciousness, near heaven; and there is a throb of immortality in his soul!

These are hours of God's visitation. Oh, they are precious hours! Write them down! Write them down! Take the convictions which they bring; take the disclosures which they make, and treasure them as the most essential, quintessential truths that are ever to be known in this life! For when the best part of your nature is thus awakened from its sleep, it speaks to you as at other times it may never be able to speak! Not only is the world revealed to us in its true light, not only is your own soul's nature opened before us, but under this peculiar system of providential dealings there are times of visitation, when God himself is revealed to us most clearly; times when we think more earnestly, more actively, and more nobly than at times before.

WARNING TO THE IMPENITENT.

Consumption had been preying upon him for nearly two years, but his ardent temperament enabled him to follow his business till within a few weeks of his death. The morning of his life opened with bright skies, but the evening was dark with dark clouds and dismal forebodings! When a lad, he was diligent in his studies and regular in his Sunday school. He united himself with a church, and ran well for a few years. When gold was discovered in California, he, with many other young men, went, hoping to secure a fortune. He returned disappointed, and what was far worse, he lost all relief for the Gospel, and became at length an open violator of the law of God. He pursued his calling with industry, yet lived without God and without hope in the world. His companion in life, a Christian woman, vainly sought to bring him back to the paths of righteousness. During his sickness, which carried him to the grave, she watched over him with untiring attention, and prayed without ceasing for his salvation. Many a faithful man of God visited him, read the Word, lifted up Christ crucified, repeated his gracious invitations, yet all seemed in vain. "Salvation is of the Lord—He will have mercy on whom he will have mercy—It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God who sheweth mercy," were truths which came home to those who sought to bring him to Jesus. The dying man listened to all the truths and exhortations of these men, but they appeared not to produce

the least impression. The day before he died, one of them sat by his bedside, his wife weeping bitter tears, and saying, "If he were but prepared to die could give him up." He lay quite exhausted, without much apparent concern about his soul's eternal interests. She desired his friend to read and pray—the sick man asked for a little brandy and water, then said, "Tell him to be short." He complied with the wish, read 32d Psalm, and offered a short fervent prayer; then took leave of him who was about to be summoned to the presence of his God. The afflicted wife followed her friend to the door, weeping sorrowfully, asked him to call again soon; he promised, but before his next visit, death had carried off his victim to the eternal world!

How many instructive lessons does such a death teach! "He that endureth to the end shall be saved," says Jesus. "Cast not away your confidence," says Paul, and, "We are made partakers of Christ if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end."

"I knew my duty but I did not do it," said another young man, when about leaving the world. "I know all that, but have not done it," he frequently said to those who repeated the declarations of the Gospel. "I have a sort of hope but not the right hope; if I could but call Jesus mine I could die in peace; if I could but feel my sins were forgiven, then I would be glad to die." These and similar expressions were uttered frequently by him who knew his Master's will, but did not do it. These sayings, conveyed to his friends sad impressions of the anguish of his soul, and the deep darkness which surrounded him. While enduring a severe sickness four years before, he promised most solemnly, if the Lord would but spare him he would repent. God heard the prayers of his people, the young man recovered, but returned to folly; he lived on, without repentance. When reminded of his vows on the sick bed, he exclaimed, "There's time enough yet. I'm as good as many members of your churches." Poor fellow! How he deceived his soul! He forgot him who said, "He that despiseth you and he that despiseth me, I will despise him and that sent me." That fatal disease, consumption, reduced his strength, and for the last months of his life, he was confined at home, hoping even against hope, that he would recover. In his last days he sent for good men to read and pray for him. One of them read, (2 Phil.) "If there be any consolation in Christ," when he began to weep, saying, "I know there is, but I can't feel it. I know Christ is full of mercy, but I can't feel it. I know that he is able to save, but I feel lost, I am a sinful man." While his friend tried to console him with the word of the Gospel, his tears flowed freely, his heart was wrung with grief. Was it said of him, "Thou shalt see it with thine eyes, but shalt not eat thereof?" This darkness and distress followed him to the end. If saved, it was so as by fire. If lost, how dreadful his doom!

Let every impenitent man remember, "God is not mocked, or whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." "He will render to every man according to his works." Will you presume on his mercy? Darest thou provoke Him to anger? Is thy soul of no value in thy eyes? Did not his redemption cost the precious blood of Christ? Think on this! Cry for mercy! Seek pardon in Christ! Provoke not his anger, lest he swear in his wrath thou shalt not enter his rest.

A DREAM INCIDENT.

God moves in a mysterious way,

His wonders to perform."

"Thou seest me with dreams," Job 7: 14.

The following facts, deemed worthy of record, have been "kept on probation" a few months,

that the conversion apparently genuine, as it was mysterious, might be proved to be one that the opposer could neither gain nor resist. But, to the incident—

At a little distance from Meadville, Pa., lives a man upon the canal, by occupation a shoemaker. For long years, up to the winter of '58, he had made his family wretched by his intemperate habits, Sabbath breaking and profanity. Not content with his own personal profanity, he also taught his children to swear. For five years he told the writer that he had not darkened a church door. His good father, before his death, had often warned him, and in vain to turn from his evil course. But one night last winter, prior to any religious interest in the place, this man "dreamed dreams," whereof his spirit was troubled and his sleep broke from him.—Dan. 2: 1. His father appeared to him with one more solemn, final warning! This, like the others, he heeded not, but was presently startled by his own death-knell ringing in his ears. He insists that he felt like a dead man.

"It was as though the dead could feel

The icy worm around them steal,

Nor have the power to scare away

The cold consumers of their clay."

He saw his coffin, he saw his grave, he was put

into the former, but when the coffin-lid shut down

it struck his nose and he awoke—but the dream

was as a "nail fastened in a sure place," to him

it had an import awful as the voice of God and he

could not shake it off. He implored his wife, his

companion in sin, to pray for him, but she could

not. Finally they both cried unto the Lord for

mercy. They spent the livelong night in prayer,

and the Lord that met Saul of Tarsus on his way

to Damascus, appeared mercifully, almost

simultaneously to each, to "deliver them out of the horrible pit, out of the miry clay," and "establish their going;" and immediately conferring, not with "flesh and blood," they erected a family altar. At school the children of the parents in question said, "We have family prayers now at our house." Others would inquire, "what has happened to our shoe-maker, that he does not curse and swear as formerly?" For some reason the old drinking companions now shun the man that fain would do them good. The united pair for months have walked together as "heirs of the grace of life," and make little of going on foot three miles to reach the altar of the God they love—the church with which they united—evincing, even to the gain-saying, that the results of this Heaven-directed dream are thus far happy and promise well for the future.

Can it be a bad sign when "cursing and bitterness" are turned into prayer and praise?—Methodist C. Reporter.

London Correspondence.

London, July 30, 1858.

It is expected that Parliament will be prorogued by commission on Monday next, and small will be the attendance of Commons to lend a formal grace to that ceremonial. The House of Lords, with its gorgeous blazonry, already acquiring an antique tinging, will be there—the scene of the crowning act of the session, when by the royal authority the members of both Houses will be dismissed to the hills and heather, or wherever their roving fancy leads them. Some, I dare say, will take a cruise to India, to be in at the death of the mutiny, now smouldering in its dying embers. But the Royal Lady herself will be absent, and pale will be the reflected splendour of the day. Military pomp, glittering dignities, and bejewelled beauties will be absent too. Yet what an eventful session this has been, commencing with a strong liberal government, which could not keep its out, and ending with a suffrage Tory Ministry, which has been so cautious that it has almost afforded at last to be courageous.

One more practical comment has been supplied to the ancient saying (how ancient? as old as Nimrod?) that "the battle is not to the strong always, nor the race always to the swift." The Lords have been comparatively active and laborious of late, discussing the right of search question, throwing out the Bill to legalise marriage with deceased wife's sister, by a vote of 46 against 22, and passing the India Bill with a number of amendments, on one only of which they resolved last night to be inflexible.

The Commons have had the pleasure of seeing Baron Rothschild seated and voting like any other hon. member. Messrs. Spooner, Newdegate, and Warren protesting to the last, but with more of the *murder in modo* than before. The Jews are arranging to prepare a testimonial to the liberal party, whose perseverance has been successful in giving them a regular status, has been successfully consummated. The Lords still retain the power, which they would probably use, of excluding from their own House any Peer, a Jew and not a Christian, made so by the letters patent of the Queen. It is not probable that they will have a chance of showing their bigotry soon; and except as a matter of principle the right of admission to the Commons House will not be much used in times to come. The circumstances will always be exceptional under which a constituency will elect a Levitical Jew to represent them in the Imperial Legislature. A wing of the liberals have been defeated in their attempt to get a government Bill rejected, which legalises the expense of providing carriages for the conveyance of voters to the poll. The custom has been to do this, but it has never been made legal before, though I am not aware that any member has been unequipped for it as an act of bribery, as it "treated voters to a ride"—some voters it was said being willing to vote for the candidate who would provide them with a gratuity like this. It was also urged that this clause was tantamount to reimposing a property qualification, as in future the voters would expect to ride to the polls as a matter of right, and so the largest purse would win the day, and we should have many Phillips on a smaller scale opening our cities with a golden key. Last night, in the Lords, this permission was studiously resisted, but the Tory peers were constant to their leaders, and outvoted the complainant. The boldest proposal of the Ministry has been one affecting the Thames drainage difficulty, and they have won over the House of Commons to sanction the committal of that operation to the Metropolitan Board of Works (nick-named the Board of Words), and the loan of three millions from the Treasury, to be repaid in forty years. What plan the Board will adopt is uncertain. Mr. Corde, a gentleman of great ability, maintains in a pamphlet, that the sewage could be collected and disposed of in such a way as would pay all expenses, and have a handsome surplusage to the Metropolis. How happy all the rate payers would be if this were accomplished. If Mr. Corde should persuade the Board that he is right, and also induce it to carry out his plans, he will deserve a statue of gigantic dimensions and costly materials.

The Havelock Memorial Fund will soon be closed. The East India Company, and the Grocers Company have each given two hundred guineas; but the total subscriptions do not exceed £3,000, a small sum, considering the enthusiasm

of last year, and to be accounted for from the want of organized machinery to give effect to the public feeling.

Arrangements are in progress to invest the Cherbourg inauguration with great éclat. Members of Parliament are to be conveyed by the Oriental and Peninsular Steam Company for five pence a piece, and a naval guard of honour is to attend the Queen, of imposing size and strength. The *Morning Advertiser*, which has a reputation for false intelligence, foresees a design to capture Her Majesty and her Court! As a joke, it would be too practical to be perpetrated; and as anything more than a joke it would be paid for by the Emperor's crown and blood.

On Saturday and Sunday (24th and 25th) we were visited by a gale of wind, which covered some parts of London with pieces of broken chimneys and carried desolation among the orchards and gardens of the suburbs. All England, and a portion of the continent came under the infliction, but here it was most severe. Children could scarcely walk the streets for the violence of the storm. Were it not well known that the land and sea were not always subject to the same atmospheric phenomena, we should have been alarmed for the Atlantic Telegraph Squadron, which has again departed on its delicate mission. I fear we are again doomed to disappointment, but not to despair. The *Times* correspondent boldly says that the iron casing of the tubing is the cause of all the mischief, because it necessitates the use of a complicated paying-out apparatus, which can never be worked with security day after day for a week together. He states that without this iron coating the cable can be laid, and (there being no strain) the danger of rupture would be avoided. Query—would it be sufficiently heavy to sink into its ocean bed? Perhaps if it did not sink so far, but only to half the sea depth, it would be equally secure.

Railway accidents have not disappeared, and in almost every instance one or more lives are sacrificed. A remarkable accident is recorded which calls to mind the story on which the song of the "Mistletoe Bough" is founded. Four children were playing in a stable, and having got into a large corn chest the lid suddenly fell, and the holder catching the staple they were made prisoners, and exposed to suffocation if not relieved. A labourer came into the stable to feed the cattle, but he would have retired if he had not heard a rustling, as he thought, close at hand. He was thus prompted to examine the chest, and on discovery of the inmates to effect their rescue. He was barely in time, as they were all insensible from the detention they had undergone. So snatched from "the jaws of death," we cannot but hope and half conclude that these boys are reserved for some great end in life.

The ecclesiastical waters are not smooth. The Bishop of London has had to defend himself in Parliament in regard to the Exeter Hall services resumed by a Committee of Churchmen, and conducted by the London Clergy. The Bishop leaves Mr. Edouart to undertake proceedings, and Mr. E. is not rich enough to venture. Why does not Mr. Beresford Hope and some of the rich Puseyites place a smart sum for his disposal at their Bankers? The Liturgical service is omitted, and by this change the Committee of Management believe they evade an infraction of the law. A case of an opposite kind is giving rise to much discussion,—in which a curate has been dismissed by his incumbent for preaching strong "conversion sermons," and both the bishop and archbishop support the incumbent, and advise the young man to submit. Mr. Poole may regard this as a set-off to the revocation of his license as Curate of St. Barnabas. Too much zeal for conversion, or curricular confession, subjects, it would seem, the inferior clergy of the establishment to the penalties of the canon law. The new college dispute is not adjusted. The Council have requested the consent of the student who advances such heavy charges, to the publication of certain minutes made in May, (his permission being required as a fence against the libel law), but this he has not given. The publisher of the *British Standard* has apologised to Rev. J. H. Goodwin for the insinuations against his orthodoxy—and so the affair rests, if rest is ever allowed to things of so peculiar a nature as this and others of the class.

Dr. Stearne and Mr. Hinton have returned from Sweden, and made their report. There are several thousands of Baptists in that Kingdom, and the kind reception given to the deputation by the Archbishop of Upsala and the chief men of the Kingdom, argues well for a relaxation of the existing laws against freedom of religious worship. How pitiable, that law, which has so often antagonism to the gospel, should so often be opposed to its precepts and spirit; and even to its own avowed office of promoting justice among men. All persecution for conscience sake is evidence of the one, and of the other, examples are continually recurring. We have one case now before the public. N. W. Swinford died wealthy, leaving the bulk of his property to his wife. The validity of the will was disputed, and on the trial the widow's counsel, Sir F. Thesiger, made a compromise with the plaintiffs counsel, which left her, I think, only a moderate annuity. She demurred, on the ground that she had not consented to the compromise, and a law question which has been solemnly decided by the Lord Justices to the effect that the action of counsel without consent of their client is not valid.