

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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THE RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCER.

An Evangelical Family Newspaper.

FOR NEW BRUNSWICK AND NOVA SCOTIA.

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Proprietor's office, but the Editor's or

Proprietor's office, where they wish to receive their

papers, that we want.

JOINING CHURCH.

That Jesus Christ, or the apostles under his

direction, did establish a visible organization

called a church, distinct from, though not in-

dependent of, or contrary to, his spiritual kingdom

is, we think, susceptible of the highest kind of

proof. This position is now so generally conceded

by the Christian world, that it would seem

a superfluous work to attempt to prove it.

We have the offices of this church, so distinctly

specified in the Scripture, that the ingenious mind

cannot evade the conclusion. There is the

bishop, the presbyter, the elder, the deacon,

&c. What do these offices mean? and how

were they created? No man is made a bishop,

or a presbyter, or a deacon, by virtue of his

conversion. Piety of the highest grade and

longest standing entitles no man to the appella-

tions, or invests him with power to discharge

the duties of these offices. No spiritual attain-

ments can create such an office. They are of-

ficers constituted by, and in God's visible church.

We do not now enquire what these offices

mean—what are the respective privileges and

powers belonging to them. We do not enquire

what dominion or society of believers is the

true church. But we hold that no man can show

an elder was made such, but by supposing an

organized body, having rules and regulations for

her government.

The manner in which this organization has

been blessed, and her labours owned to the good

of millions, is strongly presumptive that she is

of God. All the great religious enterprises, too,

have been, and still are, carried on through her

instrumentality. Let all the church forces be

withdrawn from the great battle field in Amer-

ica and elsewhere, and the devil and his legions

will exult in an easy triumph. The church has

the missionary cause in hand, the Sabbath School

cause, the Bible cause, the tract cause, pushing

through these means, the conquests of immen-

tal to the ends of the earth. What would be

doing this day in any of those fields of use-

fulness were it not for the church? But for whom

is this church intended? For Christians, and

Christians only? We most unhesitatingly an-

swer, her immunities and holy exercises are no

more intended for one class of sinners than for

another. To bring a sinner into the church un-

der the pretence of placing him more immedi-

ately under the means of grace, is but to lull

him into a deeper slumber, and contaminate the

pure portion of the flock, who are ever too

susceptible of moral contagion. The line of de-

marcation must be drawn somewhere, for it will

not do to bring the drunkard, and the liar, and

the blasphemous, into the holy brotherhood. The

only place that that line can be drawn is between

the saint and the sinner, and that line will keep

every sinner out of the church. But, then, if it

be so that every sinner is to be excluded from

church membership, every saint is under serious

obligations to be inside of this God's own or-

ganization. It seems to me to be entirely irre-

levant for the saint to ask for proof that he should

join the church. The fact that God has estab-

lished such an organization is sufficient to guide

the honest enquirer for duty, and he should set

it down as a fixed obligation, unless God should give

him a specific dispensation to the contrary. The

honest man will not enquire for reasons why he

should join a church, but why he should not.

We find that the great mass of Christians have

fallen in with this arrangement of the Father; and

relations. Convenience of place of worship,

house without debt, plainness of dress, neigh-

bourhood religionists, &c., should all be made

subordinate to principles. And when you are

looking out for a church-house, enquire not whether

I shall have a good house to worship in,

whether preaching will be convenient to me,

and whether my neighbors belong there, but, is

that church right on the great principles of the

Scriptures, and the great reform questions of the

day; the forgiveness of all sin; the renewal of

the heart; the witness of the Spirit; the tem-

pearance, anti-slavery, &c., reforms? These,

and others of like magnitude, should be held

paramount to all other considerations. It is

very pleasant, it is true, to have a church con-

venient; it is pleasant to go to worship with our

neighbors, and every-day associates, but it is

doubly pleasant to cling to the right, and to have

the consciousness of having stood to our prin-

ciples, thought it should be a sacrifice.

I would have no Christian connect himself

with a congregation of worshippers who do not

go in for revival measures. Not a revival, when

the cry for mercy is hushed by the mandate of

the priest. Not a revival when new-born souls,

and others who may catch the holy flame, may

not "walk and leap, and praise God;" but the

churches, nearly all, go in for revivals now; but

there is a wide difference in the meaning affixed

to that term.

The Protestant churches may be divided into

three classes, with respect to revival measures.

1st. There is the formal church, who have

what they call revivals, because some of their

people will have it so. They are bitterly hostile

to new measures. They talk loudly of wild-fire,

fanaticism, and disorder; and they manage to

talk their own converts through so nicely and so

quietly that they do not even find it out when it

is done. For your life don't join that church.

2d. There are the mixed churches. In some

charges they are strongly revival; in others, just

as strongly the reverse. When two or more

congregations belong to the same charge, it is

sometimes the case that one congregation is in

favor of "new measures," and the other opposed,

the minister becoming "all things to all men,"

and, by a wonderful power of transformation,

quite pretty well all around. In a denomination

of this kind you will not unfrequently have the

following difficulties to encounter: First, in

changing ministers, you sometimes have a re-

vivalist, and sometimes an anti-revivalist. Second

you will often find two parties in the same con-

gregation, one clamoring for revivals, and the

other railing out against them. Third, you will

often see, to your heart's sorrow, a genuine work

checked in the bud by the cry of animal excite-

ment, Methodism, &c. Fourth, in changing your

place of residence, you will be put to the unplea-

sant necessity of either changing your church

relations, or of fulfilling in a society where

opposition to revivals and new measures has an

overwhelming predominance. It seems to me

you ought to hesitate long before joining here.

3d. There are the churches whose doctrines,

principles and measures, are uniform throughout

their entire borders. They have no two classes

of ministers, no two systems of measures. They

may sometimes have extravagancies that more

sober-minded men cannot endorse; they may

have little peculiarities that Christianity could

well dispense with; but, wherever you find them

they are in the great essentials of experimental

and practical piety alike. They have no two

sets of ministers, no two sets of measures, over

at war with each other. You are safe in joining

here; you know what you are doing; you will

not be deceived, for if you can get along with

them where you are, you can get along with

them anywhere. They may be few in number;

they may be poor; they may be shunned and

despised by the world; but they are right. You

believe they are right, and you ought to be

thankful for the privilege of casting in your lot

amongst them.—Exchange Paper.

Christianity in India.

On Saturday, a deputation of gentlemen con-

necting with various societies carrying on mis-

sionary operations in India, waited upon Lord

Stanley, President of the Board of Control, at

the offices in Cannon-row, for the purpose of

eliciting from his lordship an explanation of his

views and intentions in reference to the future

policy of the Indian Government in relation to

regard to non-interference with native customs

than the Government felt sure they would be en-

abled under the circumstances to perform. Great

stress had been laid on the fact that the Gov-

ernment had in various instances come into col-

lision with the native observances, so that the

neutrality which they professed had not in reality

been observed. He apprehended that what the

Indian Government had always intended was to

act upon the principle of holding itself aloof

from all questions involving merely difference

of opinion in matters of theology. Of course it

did not mean that if native ideas came into col-

lision with the universal, and he might say the

overlating rules of justice, those ideas should

be respected. There were certain principles

which were probably older than any form of be-

lief now existing in the world; such, for example

as the principle that equality of punishment should

attend equality of crime; and such principles

were bound to carry out, in opposition to

any native prejudices or feelings which might

be opposed to them, restrained only by the re-

collection that all innovations must be slowly and

gradually made. As regarded the expression

"religious neutrality," the Government con-

struction of which the deputation expressed them-

selves anxious to ascertain, he apprehended that

what was meant was, that no steps should

be taken, directly or indirectly, to give to the

opinions of Europe an apparent preference over

those which were found existing in the country.

No doubt it had been thought necessary to lay

that principle down more emphatically, because,

whatever might be said theoretically in reference

to the rejection of Government aid by Christi-

anity, they knew that practically Christians had

availed themselves of Government assistance and

interference. It was not enough for the Govern-

ment to establish an equality between persons of

all religions; but care must be taken that in the

spirit of the law was administered by those in

authority; and he would say that on the part

of those in authority there should be no exercise

of any official power or influence which they might

possess in favour of their own opinions and

against those of the native population. With

respect to past changes of Indian laws, he would

observe that, if they were made simply in de-

fence to the external and immutable principles of

justice, they were properly made, and the prin-

ciple of neutrality was not evaded; while on the

other hand, if they were made for the purpose of

propagating Christian opinions and overthrowing

those which existed in the country, they were

not justifiable. There was great difficulty in

discussing a question of this kind on general

principles, but what the Government intended to

assert on the subject—and perhaps there were

many present who would not dissent from the

doctrine—was that the sphere of Government and

the sphere of theological belief were absolutely

and entirely separate. He was afraid he could

hardly say that that was the recognised doctrine

of modern Europe; but it was a doctrine that

was making progress in modern Europe; it was

a doctrine which prevailed in England at the

present day; it was a doctrine which had been

carried out in the colonial possessions of England,

and it was a doctrine which it seemed to him

especially necessary to assert in a country like

India. What the Government meant by "neu-

trality" in the matter of religion was neutrality

as regarded the action of the Government; neu-

trality as between the theological tenets of a

Christian nation, and the theological tenets of the

natives. They did not mean to say that in mat-

ters of justice as between man and man, or in

matters in which scientific truth was brought in-

to contrast with ideas previously existing in the

country, they were to sacrifice their own prin-

ciples and opinions, except so far as prudence might

dictate.

Several members of the deputation again ad-

ressed his lordship with the view of eliciting

further explanations of his views, but nothing fell

from him deviating materially from what we have

given above.—[Times.]

A German's Experience.

Religion is the same in all ages and all the

world over; and there is nothing like it, and no-

thing equal to it. Let every cold hearted profes-

sor, let every backslider and every sinner read

the following fresh experience, related in a New

York prayer-meeting, a few mornings since by a