

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

VOL. V—NO. 16.

ST. JOHN, NEW BRUNSWICK, FRIDAY, APRIL 16 1858.

WHOLE NO. 224

THE RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCER.

Is published in St. John, N. B., every FRIDAY, for the Free O. Baptist General Conference, (Incorporated by Law) under the direction of a Board of Managers, chosen annually by the Conference.
B. J. UNDERHILL, Agent.
OFFICE.—No. 26, GERMANS STREET.
All letters on business connected with the paper, should be directed to the Agent.

ONE DOLLAR A YEAR IN ADVANCE;
if not paid till after three months Seven Shillings and Six Pence.

Persons remitting money for this paper should be particular in stating for whom it pays; and great care should be taken to state the Post or Way Office, at which the paper is received.

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The Sinner Believing.

Towards the close of a summer Sabbath, my younger brother came into my room, and with every expression of confidence and love, the tear trembling in his eye, said, "I want you to pray for me." It was a moment of surpassing interest, and emotions never to be expressed or forgotten were awakened during the scene that followed.

The youth now begging an interest in my prayers had never been distinguished for his wickedness; on the contrary his past life had been marked by strict morality, and the observance of many external duties of religion had adorned his character. His countenance, his tears, his words discovered that he was in deep distress, and I desired him to sit down for a moment, and tell me the nature of his anxiety, to open his heart freely, and I would then comply with his request.

"Last evening," said he, "I was in the prayer-meeting, and when you closed your remarks with these words, 'Chose ye this day whom you will serve,' I resolved to seek the Saviour now, and never give it up till I found him. When I arose this morning, I was not conscious of any unusual anxiety; but through the day I have been more and more troubled; the preaching seemed to reach my case; and since I have been at home this afternoon, I have been more deeply distressed, and now I feel that I am a sinner, a very great sinner, sinking into hell, and I want you to pray for me."

We knelt, and I prayed for him while he wept in bitterness by my side. I then said to him, "What is the immediate cause of your present distress? Have you a dread of God's wrath, which you so richly deserve on account of your past neglect of him, and the present enmity of your heart to all that is holy?"

He replied, "I have been, during the day, particularly anxious lest I should sink into hell. It seemed to be open before me, and every step I took was bringing me nearer to it. But that idea does not now distress me so much as a sense of my sins; they are so many and so great, that I know not what to do or where to look. What shall I do to be saved from my sins?"

"There are reasons," I said, "why you ought to feel deeply the greatness of your guilt. You have lived in the midst of gospel privileges; you have had religious instruction from your childhood upwards; you have heard the offers of salvation a thousand times; and have slighted these privileges, forgotten these instructions, rejected these offers of life, and you do well to weep that these sins are set in order before you."

"I know it, I know it," said he, "I deserve to be made miserable, I have been such a sinner against God."

"But do you feel that you deserve to be eternally miserable; that God would be just in shutting you out of heaven, and shutting you up in hell?"

"Oh yes," I cannot suffer more than I deserve to suffer, if I sink under the everlasting wrath of God. And yet it is not hell, so much as sin, that now fills me with distress. I would suffer any thing, every thing, to be delivered from this dreadful load of sin."

I then spoke to him of the divine character and told him that he might contemplate the contrast between the holiness of God and the pollution of the sinner's heart. "Think of that infinite purity that cannot look upon sin; of that justice that has sworn to punish it; that spared not the rebel angels, and that will not spare you: think of the integrity of God, that can make no compromise with sin, nor relax a particle from the severity with which he must punish the finally impenitent."

To all this and more that I urged, he answered, "I feel all the attributes of God are against me, conspiring to punish me; it is all right; I deserve it; I must perish; O, there is no way to escape!"

"God is just, but God is merciful too. He has prolonged your life, given you space to repent, and is now ready to deliver you from hell and fit you for heaven."

"No, no," said he, "I have sinned too much. I must perish in my sins." And sinking under this despairing thought, he gave utterance to his grief in sobs and tears.

It was an awful moment. He seemed ready to perish. I feared he would perish. Again and again I prayed, that in the hour of his extremity he might find mercy. He tried to pray—and out of the depths of his distress, cried out to God. But his cry was

ed to be unheard. He did not believe. I then said unto him,

"My dear brother, I have been striving to set before you those sins which now fill your soul with so much distress, and I doubt not that the Holy Spirit has opened your eyes to see your guilt and just desert of punishment. But you must not despair. Have you forgotten that the blessed Saviour, who came into the world and died for the chief of sinners, came with me to the cross on Calvary. Why did the Son of God there hang and bleed, and die? If he died to save the sinner, is he not willing to do that for which he died? Here is the crowning evidence that God can save and longs to save those who deserve to perish. And then listen to the invitations and promises of the gospel; how many, how precious, and how strong. 'I have come from the heart that bled on the cross; and how can you refuse to believe? 'Come upon me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.' 'If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink.' 'Whoso cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out.' The gospel is full of such promises; they are made to sinners; they are made to you. Were you the only sinner on earth, the promises of Christ could not be more clearly addressed to you than they now are. And can you doubt; will you despair? You see the plan of salvation revealed for just such sinners as you are; and now will you not, under the power of the Holy Spirit, that has awakened you to a sense of your condition, commit your immortal interest to Him who gave himself for you?"

The solemnity of eternity seemed to rest on his soul, as he poured out his heart in prayer and yielded himself into the hands of Him who is mighty to save. From that blessed hour my brother has found the Saviour precious to his soul.

In this record there are a few points on which I would fasten the readers attention.

There was a determination to seek the Lord Jesus Christ. He came to this determination calmly, deliberately, and with fixity of purpose. This is the first step in the path that leads the sinner back to God. Will you now, relying on the grace of God, without which your resolution will be vain, resolve to make the salvation of your soul the first great object of pursuit, and with singleness of purpose seek the Lord?

He saw his danger. He hung by the thread of life over the burning lake, and liable every moment to fall into the bottomless gulf. There you are suspended, O impenitent reader. An instant hence the brittle thread may break, and then where are you?

He felt his guilt. And the more clearly he saw how long his heart had been at enmity with God, the deeper became the sense of his just desert of punishment. He knew that it would be right for God to cut him off in his sins, cast him for ever from his presence.

He believed on the Lord Jesus Christ as just the Saviour he needed. With a heart broken for sin, he found that, trusting implicitly in the promises of Christ, there was peace for his soul. Here all his anguish was allayed; joy broke in upon his despairing mind, and the sweet assurance came that his sins were forgiven.

These are simple steps, but they lead to heaven. "Repent; and believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." You may be desperate, abandoned profligate; an outcast, forsaken and forgotten of men; a child of infamy and crime, lost to yourself and friends, and lost to hope; but "it is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners"—the chief of sinners—O save you.

Like him whose story is here told, you may not have stained your character by crime, or wandered far into the paths of the wicked; still, you have an evil heart of unbelief to depart from the living God; you never loved the Lord with all your soul; nay, you have hardened your heart against him, and refused to yield yourself into his hands. But the Saviour waits to be gracious. He died for you; will you not live for him? He calls you by his word, and by his Spirit; he pleads with you by his dying love, to repent, believe, and live.

Episcopal Papers on the Revival.

We give below some extracts from Episcopal papers on the subject of the Revival which is now prevailing the land with its blessed showers of mercy.

The Christian Witness and Church Advocate, of Boston, says:

For the last two weeks we have made allusion to the widely extended interests in religion which is now attracting so much attention. It has awaked on in a broad, mighty wave till there is every probability that it will pervade the land,—perhaps the world. The topic is so absorbing that it has largely occupied even the secular press, and we desire to look out from the standpoint of our own Church, for our duty in connection with it.

We devoutly believe in such a thing as a true revival, in its fullest sense. Literally, the word signifies a living again,—an infusion and development of life;—it symbolizes precisely the same thing in the Church and in the individual soul of man as the coming forth of Lazarus from the tomb, or the bursting of the bud under the genial sun of spring. The spiritual history of the Church

from the beginning, through periods of death and life, of winter and summer, of growth and decline, of barrenness and fruitfulness, tells significantly of this, and so does the experience of every Christian who has learned the plague of his own heart.

As a church, we have suffered in the opinion of many excellent Christian brethren from the impression that we are opposers of, and unbelievers in, periods of awakening and revival. We are neither. But in common with persons of almost every name, we have no faith in a great many of the agencies which have been identified with them in the minds of many, nor in the way in which legitimate agencies have sometimes been perverted. We have seen a vast deal of permanent injury done under cover of their names. Strange fires have often been kindled, which have scorched and consumed rather than warmed into genial, vigorous, fruitful life. From all that we learn, however, and so far as our own observations have extended, we are rejoiced to say that there are fewer of these features attending the present interest, than we have ever known before. It is characterized, for the most part thus far, by a spirit of wise caution and earnest prayer, and we trust that these will continue to be its characteristics. A great responsibility rests upon Christians at such a time. They need the wisdom that cometh from above, that their zeal may be tempered with prudence and humility, and that they do not encourage men to take up with a piety that is short of the scriptural standard. But while we are anxiously alive to this necessity and conservative in all our tendencies, we are in theory a Church that eminently recognizes the necessity of revivals. The most desirable state is that in which the Christian path is one of light that shineth more and more unto the perfect day, and the word is continually effective; but, knowing well the many hindrances which exist, and the dominion which the powers of darkness are apt to gain over even renewed nature, we call every year, during a protracted period of fasting and prayer and self-examination, on all, in language and in service filled with the deepest contrition, to return unto God in penitence and faith and holy obedience. If it be too often a mere outward semblance, it is the fault of the minister and the people not of the Church.

The Episcopal Recorder, of Philadelphia, says:

That it is agreeable to the divine purposes that the Spirit should be poured out in extraordinary measure at particular times, no one who believes and examines the Bible can doubt. Such a time there was when Moses led forth the Israelites from Egypt, and again in the days of Joshua, in the times of Elijah and Elisha, of King Josiah, of Ezra and Nehemiah, of John the Baptist, and of our Lord. Above all, there was such a visitation, when the Holy Ghost according to the promise, descended on the apostles on the day of the first Pentecost after our Lord's ascension.

This extended to almost every place where the Gospel was preached during the life-time of the apostles, as, beyond Jerusalem, to Samaria, Antioch, Corinth, Ephesus and Rome. In the time of Augustine (A. D. 400) there was a revival attention to the Word of God; again, through the preaching of Wickliffe in England, (A. D. 1375) of Huss in Bohemia, (A. D. 1410); and very remarkably afterwards, through Luther's preaching in Germany, and that of other reformers in Switzerland, in France, and still more in Great Britain. There was a wonderful revival in England during the last century, in the body of the National Church and almost among multitudes outside, who, were, till then, for the most part neglected and without means of religious improvement. And there is evidently a like revival in progress just now. The conversion whether of multitudes in one day, as on the Pentecost, when the Spirit came down on the apostles, and three thousand souls were added to the Church; or of an individual, as when the jailor at Philippi received St. Paul's instructions as the way of salvation and believed, with all his household, in the work of the Holy Ghost. There was a plentiful "pouring out of the Spirit" on the whole population when through Philip's "preaching of Christ" in Samaria, "there was great joy in that city;" and when Paul and Barnabas, having begun to preach in Antioch in Pisidia, "the next Sabbath day came almost the whole city together to hear the Word of God."

As to the present "religious awakening," we would have all proper advantage made of it. The attention of many minds is quickened. This is a great point. Whatever awakens men from sleep, as to this great subject, breaks up their slumber, calls them out from the deadening service of Mammon, brings them to the place of prayer, and opens their ears to the Word of God, by all suitable means to be countenanced. If men are ready to leave the temples of Mammon at the chosen hour of high noon, and go to the place where God is called upon, and there join in the service of God and in hearing of God's Word, with sobriety and eagerness, as if seeking the way of life, we say, Amen and Amen. God forbid that in the midst of this age's devotion to Mammon, of its love of the world and its things, and of its secularism, men who show a readiness to step aside from the counting, house, the shop and the street, to listen to the call to repent and seek the kingdom of God, should be sent back or discouraged. We ask that they be properly instructed and directed out of the Word of God, and that the judgment we give

of the whole present movement, and by no other rule than that one of heavenly wisdom, "By their fruits ye shall know them."

A Man of Business who thought on his Ways.

During the last winter, a work of divine grace was in progress in—. It was deep and solemn; and the blessed influence seemed to pervade the whole town.

A gentleman largely engaged in business saw the necessity of becoming a Christian. Special religious services had been appointed to begin on a certain day, and he began to feel that it would be a favorable opportunity for him to attend to his soul's affairs. He said within himself, I have neglected religion a long time—longer than I had intended. God has greatly blessed me in my family and in my worldly business; he has given me a loving and praying wife, who longs to see me a Christian man; and here is my darling little daughter, now old enough to be a Christian; and I am now in the meridian of life; if I am ever to do any thing for God and religion, for my family, for my own soul, now is the time to begin. So he thought, and then resolved to seek an interest in Christ.

But no sooner was the resolution formed, than he felt himself fettered and bound by his worldly engagements. These were numerous, and widely extended. He felt that it was impossible for him to attend to the great subject of religion, while carrying on so complicated a business, which taxed all his energies. One or the other must be relinquished. Which shall it be? the soul and its claims, or the world and its claims? On that moment of decision his salvation might turn. His soul struggled hard for its immortal interests, and by the grace of God conquered. He decided to renounce the world as a chief good; at once to curtail his business operations; and when the meeting began he was comparatively free. He placed himself under the means of grace, and resolved to comply with the instructions he should receive. He was always in his place in the church began to read his Bible with new interest, and he tried to pray.

He soon became deeply concerned for his soul, and I saw he felt his guilt and condemned state. "Why, sir," said he to the writer, "this is the 'hardest work' I have ever undertaken. Once I thought that I knew something about the Bible and religion, but the more I read, and think, and pray, the more ignorant I am; and the more I strive the more sinful I see myself to be. Why sir I can't even pray; my prayers are so weak and sinful, God, a holy God, cannot hear me. You see I am in a bad way, and shut up in it."

He was told his "way" was bad, but might be worse. "Worse" said he; "how is that possible?" It might be far worse. You might be now in perdition, shut up in hell. But "God is long-suffering," not willing "that any should perish." Jesus Christ, your long neglected and insulted Savior, pleads for you, saying, Spare him this year also. He has sent his Holy Spirit to lead your mind in this way of solemn thought and purposes: and he is now convincing you of sin, cutting you off from self-dependence, and from all creature help, and this moment speaks to you in a voice of tenderest love, saying, Come unto me; I will give you life. Your case is bad indeed, but may be infinitely worse, if you come not when He calls.

"What," said he, "come to Christ the holy Jesus, just as I am, all blinded, hardened, guilty?"

"Yes just as you are. Take the language of this hymn and make it your own:

"Just as I am, without one plea,
But that thy blood, was shed for me,
And that thou bid'st me come to thee,
O Lamb of God, I come."

Just as I am, and waiting not
To rid my soul of one dark blot—
To thee whose blood can cleanse each spot,
O Lamb of God, I come."

With melting heart, and streaming eyes he said, "I come, O Lamb of God, I come."

"O simple, beautiful faith. This man thought on his ways, and made haste and delayed not to keep God's testimonies. He framed his doings to turn unto his God," and is now an active Christian.

How man, like him, are so deeply immersed in worldly cares as to be unable to attend to the great concerns of religion? Like him, they are regular in the means of grace, are orthodox in their belief, are surrounded by pious relatives who long to see them Christians, and yet there they stand unsaved. It is no wonder. How can they serve God and mammon? They cling to their worldly engagements, and perhaps are extending them wider and wider, though aware that even now there is scarcely a nook or corner in their souls where a religious thought could find entertainment. Ye "will not frame your doings to turn to your God."

Oh, busy man of the world, stop, and think! You have been an earnest, laborious worker all your life, and now you are near or past life's meridian; and what have you to show for a life's work? What have you in hand that can cheer you as you approach the grave and the judgment.—*Amer. Mess.*

A TRIUMPH OF INFIDELITY.—A bill has been passed by the Parliament of Holland, after a nine years' struggle, proscribing the Bible and its teaching, and even the utterance of the name of Jesus in all the public schools.

London Correspondence.

LONDON, March 26th, 1858.

THE WEATHER.

It may be said that the weather is a popular topic of conversation in all weathers; and who has not reflected with a smile on the apparent nonsense of the scene, in which every grown up person has taken part thousands of times, where two persons follow the customary salutation with statements about the weather, which cannot claim to be news to either speaker or hearer. Perhaps the usage might be defended on the grounds that in opening a conversation some neutral and harmonious subject is desirable, and what more available than the state of the weather, cold or hot, moist or dry, breezy or close? Even here, however, it is possible that differences of opinion may arise—as they often do, for the thin and nervous system of one is no index to those of another. Terms of sensation like those of perception and consciousness have only an approximation to the identity of meaning in the mouths of various men. Between you and us, again, rolls an ocean powerfully affecting the climate of both hemispheres, and therefore in noticing our weather, I cannot be charged with telling your readers what they know by experience already. Now we have been subject to remarkable weather—continuous easterly winds lashing every uncovered part of the face and exposed parts, and this for about two months; but since the eclipse a change has been observable. That phenomenon, which was seen to little advantage in any part of these isles, is credited with some accountability for the termination. Be that as it may, we have had two mid-summer days this week, and though yesterday and to-day were cooler, the sun's beams are ardent where they strike, and every thing in field and garden is awakening to a sudden and beautiful resurrection. Agricultural operations have been facilitated by the dryness of the season,—March dust, which the old proverb counts so costly, is beginning to supersound; and unless April has its tears in reserve,—tears of joy, as they may be considered, in anticipation of nature's requiescences—we shall be reduced to a state of drought rather pitiable to undergo. Even as it is, in some inland districts—as at Oldham, a manufacturing town in Lancashire—the people have been put on short commons of water, and the cleanly housewives have been driven half-dishonoured.

Lord Rosse, the great astronomer, is erecting large sheds for his cattle, predicating a summer of unexampled heat, and though some may think him better read in celestial than terrestrial signs, there is no doubt a scientific astrology, yet imperfectly developed, by which the course of things earthly may be deduced from the courses of the heavenly bodies. Indeed, viewed from another standpoint than our little orb, we should see it to be as much a celestial body as the rest, and subject to those mystic influences, which sustain in the subordination and concord of their parts and members, the entire Kosmos, (the well ordered universe) of the Almighty. This may seem an irregular and erratic sort of preamble, but I have succeeded in making it the vehicle of some information on points which are of special interest and importance in our eyes.

FRENCH AFFAIRS.

Politically, we are not in a spasmodic condition. The Emperor of the French is still on the throne, an announcement which some day may have to be negated in a certain sense, as in another sense it certainly will, whatever his imperial security and triumphs. Many are wishing for a crisis—an explosion every week; the state of public opinion and general dread is getting unequally worse, but the French have been used to this kind of thing for many years, and it would be unsafe to say when the steam will be strong enough to burst the iron bands which imprison it, till the catastrophe is "un fait accompli." Napoleon III. must be secretly mortified at the checks given to his foreign policy; Austria and Portugal have not conformed, and Sardinia profiting by the English example promises to rebuke her favourite Premier in his desire to conciliate the sovereign of France. For the Duke of Malakoff (General Pelissier) has been kept as a *bonne mouche*, and our leading writers are hardly satisfied whether this selection of an Ambassador is intent as a martial defiance (as much as to say "My army has insulted you, I send the chief of the army as my representative,") or whether it is a compliment to the union of the two nations against Russia in the Crimea. The Emperor may be amusing himself with the double construction the act will bear, and it is perhaps not quite clear in his own mind how he would have it construed. There has been a departure from etiquette I understand in appointing a bachelor to the court of a Queen Regnant; but Victoria is not a lady to stand on trifles.

The case of Bernard is yet undecided, and it rests with the Government to have him tried for the higher or lesser crime. They will probably decide to go before a jury with an indictment which they can sustain without fail, and to ask for a verdict which a jury will not refuse. To lose the case by

asking for a verdict of felony, would be a mutilation hard to swallow by some persons at home and abroad. Two other prosecutions are under weigh for publishing incentives to assassination. This is enough; more trials just now would be, I fear, more of a trial than the public temper would mildly bear. No one believes that any printed tract in favour of rigidity will excite to the overt act; the prosecutions have been entered on as a proof of good will to the ruler of France (who in Mr. Walter Savage Landor's estimation is a Republican Monarch and no tyrant, —as though any nation had the moral right to abrogate its own loftiest functions) and he is not at present in the best graces of the British nation.

Baron Brunnow, the Russian Ambassador, has returned to his old quarters, not without a complimentary passage of speech with the corporation of Dover. He is an agreeable man, and was friendly to the alliance which Nicholas broke off in a fit of despotic pride and ambition.

ITALY.

We have much to be grateful for, that in the conjuncture of eastern difficulty, no European embroilment is going forward.—The King of Naples has sent one of the English prisoners of the *Cagliari* steamer affair home, and released the other. Whether this is the result of a bolder tone on the part of our Government, or whether the Neapolitan Government is afraid that the seizure of the *Cagliari* was illegal and therefore a crime against the laws of nations, I do not presume to say; under any circumstances a difficulty with Naples and its bigotted King would reckon for nothing of itself in the equilibrium of European interests.

ITALIAN AFFAIRS.

The Italian conspirators died by the guillotine, Orsini in a dignified manner;—what effect Italy will experience from the appeals made to the French Emperor's feelings by Orsini and others, is uncertain. Italian unity is yet a dream, and our own immediate connection with it has been the remarkable hoax practised on several of the principal daily papers, the *Times* included, by the insertion of reports (paid for) in those journals, of an Italian Conference said to have been held in London, but which had no other existence than the regions of romance. Considerable accounts appeared in the papers for several days, and without the least suspicion, till the *Times*, *Standard*, and other daily papers had referred in glowing language to this noble assembly of nonentities! The public prints do occasionally get "let in," but this is by far the most comprehensive and to their expense hoax which has been palmed upon them within my recollection. The *Star* is bent on prosecuting the reporter, who is now said to be an Irishman with an Italian name.

SCANDAL.

A scandalous run-away affair between a married nobleman well known, and the oldest daughter of a rich commoner is mentioned, but the names we at present withhold. But this is nothing to the prospect of an enquiry being entered upon with regard to the legitimacy of the late Duke of Devonshire. A person has derived his titles and estates as the son of a secret marriage entered into between that nobleman and a Roman Catholic lady. It is affirmed on the other hand that the ostensible father of the late Duke was not the real one, that he was substituted for a girl, and that other members of the family consented to conceal the substitution on condition that the Duke never married. If he violated the condition, the heirs at law will have to prove their case—and in doing so will furnish material for a chapter of scandal and gossip as pregnant as any which history contains.

PARLIAMENT.

Parliament has been keeping short time and early closing hours of late. Not till tonight does the Ministry make a show of its own policy. The Jew discussion resulted in a vote of 297 against 144—a majority of 155 in favour of Lord John Russell's measure—taken on the exemption clause. If the Lord's refuse to pass it, the House will most likely give Baron Rothschild a seat by its own discretionary power, and pronounce any persecution of him to be a breach of its own privileges. Viscount Bury, M. P. has succeeded by a vote of 105 against 62 in getting his Bill legalizing the marriage with a deceased wife's sister read a first time. Should he carry it through the Commons, the Lord's are almost certain to throw it out. There is no need of any Act of Parliament if, as asserted in some quarters, there is no Act which distinctly renders such unions illegal. The latest Act upon the subject, one of Henry Eighth's, pronounces all marriages legal except such as are enumerated and as Holy Scripture forbids. The effort of some persons to give a kind of criminal aspect to this species of matrimony is most censurable, so far as kinship goes, marriage with a deceased brother's wife would be equally objectionable, or the marriage of a son with his step-mother's sister. On physiological grounds, the marriage of first cousins has opposing motives, compared with which those advanced against marrying a deceased wife's sister and who is no blood relation are light as straw and unsubstantial as a shadow.

INDIAN AFFAIRS.

Much curiosity is felt as to the revisions made in the late Governments' India Bill by their successors in office. The Court of Directors when it recalled Lord Ellenborough never anticipated that he would occupy his