

Religious Intelligence

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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[From the N. Y. Independent.

How to be a Christian.

The following is the "twenty-minute address" delivered by Rev. Henry Ward Beecher, in Burton's Old Theatre, in Chambers street, at the noon prayer-meeting.]

I do not propose to make you a speech. I propose to converse with you as I would if you sat by my side and you and I were the only cat upon a mat of the same quiet room.

I have a strong impression that there ought not to be generally half so much personal labor with people as there is on the subject of religion. I can understand clearly how it would be if the Gospel were preached for the first time on heathen ground, and how the missionaries would find it necessary to take candidate by candidate, and carry them through weeks and months of catechetical instruction, before they could allow themselves to believe that those persons had a well-founded hope in Christ Jesus; but in a Christian country where you have literally known almost nothing else than the truths of the Gospel, presented not alone in the didactic and logical form, but presented evermore in that most blessed form in which the true Gospel is preached, namely, in the example of a praying father, a praying mother, a praying brother or sister, a consistent friend, wife or child, for that is the best sermon that ever was in the world—it shines out of a man's face and comes out in his daily life—how men that have been taught in the household and in the church, by example as well as by precept, how they should fall into the mistake of supposing that whenever they begin to be inquirers they need now to go through another and special course of training, I cannot understand. I do not think there is an intelligent man in this congregation that is not abundantly qualified to-day, before the sun goes down, to become a true Christian in the spiritual and experimental sense of the term. I think that no man who has been brought up under religious instruction should come in here with this impression, "Now I suppose I must be three or four days serious, and then I suppose there is about a week's time in which I shall be very anxious, and then I shall go through hell-gate and come out into a safe anchorage, having a Christian hope"—it is a shame that any man should lay out such a course as that for the work that ought to be done in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye.

More than that, there is an impression that unless there has been some kind of an official touch, a man's conversion is scarcely complete; that unless some appointed class-leader, some elder, some deacon, above all some minister, some eminent minister—stands such men have talked with him, explained it to him, upheld him in this hour, encouraged his hope and brought him clear out, he does not feel as though he were born again; whatever may be the hope he enjoys, there is still the impression that the work of grace requires the interposition of some official instruction. What I wish to say is; I wish you to get rid of this impression, and try to leave the impression upon your mind, upon the mind of every youth, of every old man, that the work of salvation is a matter between his own heart and the Lord Jesus Christ; that there is no need of any interference, so plain there is no need of any interference. You may become a Christian now and go home to your household and be enabled to ask a blessing at your table to-day; you may stretch forth your hands, to the amazement of your wife and children, and like a Christian man, ask a blessing on your dinner, though it be the first time in your life; you may go home to-night and begin family prayers where the sound of your voice in prayer was never heard. I am going to urge you to take that course, and to take it at once.

But what does being a Christian mean? Does it guarantee a man that he shall never sin again or desire to sin? Not at all. It is not a guarantee of sinlessness, in other words. Well, what is it to be a Christian? I don't know any way to define it better than by that law of love in which Christ declares, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and soul, and strength, and thy neighbor as thyself;" and the man who can come into this large state of true love, love upward and love collateral, love to God and to man, I understand that he has become a Christian. Now is that a voluntary state? Can any man love who wishes to love? Can any man become a Christian simply by wish-

ing to become a Christian? Can I stand on the steps of the City Hall by merely wishing to stand there? Yes, in one sense I can do it, but not in one step. I must take those intermediate steps which stand connected with the accomplishment of volition in the end. But I say without any hesitation, that if any man is so far moved as to have a desire, he can love God and come into that state in which he loves his fellow men. Any one that can do that to-day has begun to day to become a Christian.

Then why do you call him a Christian, and not a religious man? For this very reason—religion is the offspring of conscience and awe; to be a Christian requires the worship through love. A man may worship through awe or through a sense of duty, and I think there are hundreds of men in the churches now who are only religious men and not Christians. They love by conscience, they love by a bond, bound by a tie, by fear. Their life is literally one of service; they are fatally servants of God, not in the sense in which the words are largely used in the scriptures, meaning simply disciples of Christ, but they are in a literally God's hired men, or worse—God's bondmen. So that I have been accustomed to say to my church from other churches, that the first work I had to do was to turn them out of religion into Christianity, to make those who were before only religious men now truly Christ's men. Men must learn no longer to fear God, no longer to tremble as before the tyrannical master of a despotic government; but come unto him through Jesus Christ, who draws his affections toward him, and say, "Lord, I love thee, I trust thee, and I will serve thee because I love thee."

Any man who knows enough to love his children, his father, mother, brother, or sister, has theological knowledge enough to love the Lord Jesus Christ. Now the question is this: Do you choose to do it? If we were to put this question to any one of you, Do you really choose to love the Lord Jesus Christ? I suppose every man of you would say, "I do." But stop; there is a great distinction between desiring a thing and choosing a thing; a man may desire without choosing. Do you suppose there is a man in the Tombs who does not desire to be a honest man? But he does not choose to be; there are other things which he desires more than that; he desires money more than he does honesty; he desires the means of debauchery and revelry more than he does honesty. There is not probably a man given to his cups in the city of New York, who, if you should ask him, Do you not desire to become a reformed and temperate man?—I suppose there is scarcely a man who would not say Yes. He desires it, but does not choose it; there are other things he desires most, and which stand nearest to him.

Take any man who is a poor, ragged vagabond, and ask him, Do you not desire riches, and by industry too? Of course, he says he does. But he does not choose it, and you cannot make him choose it; he does desire to be rich, but he desires to be lazy much more than that;—therefore he is a vagabond. A man desires to be a scholar, but he does not choose it, because he likes his leisure much better than application. Almost every man desires something which he does not choose. We are full of desires, but we only choose those things that we are willing to give ourselves for. We go forward by the proper instrumentalities and take it, and that man who is willing to destroy everything that stands in the way of the object he desires, that man can be said to have chosen it.

Now, I put the question to you, do you desire the love of Christ? Do you desire it more than your business, more than pleasure, more than ambition, more than selfish indulgences, so that you are willing to say before God, I desire it more than all the things in the world? Do you choose it so? If you do, I know not why you should not take it at once. You are competent to choose your business; you don't need to ask any lawyers, doctors, or ministers in order to do that. You are competent to choose your own pleasures, and you never think of asking any other man to tell you how to secure them. Why do you not stand upon your own power, or upon God's power, which will work with your power, and become a Christian by your own volition, just as you become a lawyer, a physician, a merchant, a traveller, a scholar?

Why do you not take three minutes of power and of choice, by choosing to become a Christian? Suppose a man should say, "I desire to make that choice to-day," the things he ought to put into that choice are these: First—I do, in the presence of Almighty God, with all my soul determine, (God is my witness, I do determine) that I will make His will, through the love of Him, the supreme law of life within and without. I will do that. Secondly—I do here, in the presence of God, solemnly determine, and record my determination, "I will serve God and love my fellow men, and in obedience to God will make that rule the law of my life." Now, how many of you can take that step? Look at it all around and decide. Who can say, not that he will not be imperfect in carrying it out, but who can say, "That is to be my ideal of life, that is to be my model, after which I am this day and henceforth to strive?" Is there a man who can take that step? But you say, "A man may take that

step, and may become by mere choice a Christian in that way, but there is no love springs up—there is no grace in his heart or soul, and how is he to have that peace, that joy, that rest, that we hear Christians tell about? In other words, how has a man in his soul the sense that his power is not in himself, but of Christ?

If you can tell me how a man on the deck of his ship steers along his course aright by the north star, and how he is to know how to direct his course without the star compass; suppose he is told to look at the star and steer by that and should say, "By looking at it how can I know when I am steering by it? he would be told to keep the star straight before him on his course, and look at it; and the way to look at it is to hold up your head and look. I know of no other way than to say, "Behold the Lamb of God?" See what terms Christ offers: he says substantially this; whenever any man desires to love Christ, then the sympathy of Christ, help from Christ, shall be his; and God declares substantially, that he reigns to give that help. Jesus Christ sits on the throne of the universe for the very purpose of giving sympathy, and effectually to help every man who says, "Lord, I am needy, Lord, I am beset and out of my course, and I come to thee for sympathy and assistance;" and now he does look to Christ to save him if he chooses him in this way. Upon that ground we are to look to Christ; we have the power to choose Him, and if we do we shall feel that mighty love, that conscious sympathy and presence, that touching of God upon the heart of every man, that gives him vital power, and that gives him peace and joy. If you doubt, come unto Christ and you shall know whether it does not make you blessed. This willingness on your part, this faith in Christ, is the element that shall bring you in the right direction, to a consciousness of peace in Jesus Christ. But the great trouble is, I think you don't wish to be Christians so much as you wish not to be.

One of the most memorable things that took place last winter was the opening of a place as an eating-house, free to the hungry, in one of the streets of this city, by some person who ought to be called an eccentric man in New York, where men spend their money for so many other things than that. But he concluded he had no better way for his money to go than to feed the hungry and the poor; so he opened a room and made this declaration: "Many were hungry, here was food for them; let them come and eat." Now, there was no trouble about it: the man who was in the ditch, and so low that he knew he was a miserable, degraded creature, he would scramble up quickly when he heard of this place, run to it, betake himself to the food with almost indecent haste. And the man who had been dodging around from one expedient to another, till now he was nearly famished, and did not know where to go to keep from starvation; he hears that there were great, bountiful rounds of beef and glorious loaves of bread, with any quantity of provision, and away he runs, right down there, to see if it were really so; he would not talk much, or preach much, but he would practice a great deal; for, let me tell you that your hungry men care very little for the theory of such things—they must eat to live.

But here comes a man who has been more respectable; he has lived in genteel society and given dinner parties, positively; the times have been rather hard upon him just now, and he expects that the spring will set him up all right again; he has been home with everybody's house but his own, for there was nothing to eat there; he has borrowed all the money he could, but now no one asks him to dine, and he can borrow no more. He has gone to bed hungry at night, and oh! what dreams he has had out of that gnawing stomach; he wakes up in the morning and says to himself, "I wonder where I can get any breakfast?" He thinks to be sure of that dining-saloon just opened, where there is plenty of food to be had for nothing, but he says, "I cannot go down there, I cannot humble myself to that; I, who have been able, and in the habit of giving charity, to go down there and get my food, and become a beggar? I can't do that!" So he wanders about till noon, and though the hunger gnaws at his stomach, and he feels faint and weary, he can't go in yet, so he wanders on till about sundown.

But at sundown he says to himself—and let me tell you that hunger is an excellent logician—"After all, am I not acting foolishly? I am so weak I can hardly stand, and it does seem to me I can't sleep any to-night for the gnawings of hunger. O, how I want this food; I think I will just go down the street." So away he goes, like a great many men who have come in here to-day, saying that they just came in to see what was going on, but they knew that down deep in their own hearts there is something else beside curiosity, which they cannot resist. Well, away he goes down the street and looks in to see who is there; then he looks to see if anybody is looking at him, or if anybody knows him; he looks at him, and he feels better come back again. This time he walks right by the door and looks in askance to see if anybody is in there; he hears the cheerful noise of the knives and forks, smells the wholesome food, hears the laughter of joyful men, hungry men doing work meet for hunger. Now suppose, as he stands there, he should see, among those going down, the butcher and baker loaded with great piles of meat and bread,

and should stop them to say, "I am almost dead with hunger, I have been invited here to take something to eat, but before I go down I should like to know the precise process by which flour is made into bread;" just as I have heard many poor sinners under conviction come to me to want me to explain to them the doctrines of justification, sovereignty, atonement, and this, that, and the other, when they were dying to go to Jesus Christ and be blessed with his love. So this man stops the baker to ask him how his bread is made, but the butcher and baker step in with their loads.

He listens again to the cheerful music of the rattling dishes, and there is no such music to a hungry man's ear, and he says, "I can't go in yet; I am not satisfied as to the way these things are made." So he walks away, but hunger gives him another turn, and back he goes and looks in again, and says, "If it wasn't for—, if it wasn't for—," then he looks up the street to see if anybody is looking at him, and says, "I will just go down the street." He steps down, and the attraction is so great that he goes in; nobody seems to know him, nobody seems surprised; he reaches out his hand and takes hold of a dry crust, and the tears come into his eyes as he puts it into his mouth. Oh, how sweet it is! With that he sits right down and makes a feast, and as he rises up again, he says to himself, "Oh, what a fool I was, that I did not come right down at once." Are there not just such fools in this congregation? You go up and down, back and forth; before Christ's table, when there is bread that will cause your hunger to cease for ever, and water drawn from the river that comes from before God's throne; and yet you have gone back, thinking what your wife would say, what your father would say, what your partner would say, what your gay companions would say. But you feel the gnawings of hunger, and as you look at the spread table, you say, "Oh, how we want to feed, but we dare not come and take the food." "Oh! it is shame, pride, and friends, that keep you thus back. Oh, if there was only hunger enough to bring you to the right point; and having once tasted, you would rise up from that feast with the blessed assurance that yet once again you should sit down at a still nobler table, at the marriage-supper of the Lamb.

Now, if there are any in this congregation that have seen the bounty spread forth in the love of Christ, that they can have "without money and without price," as promised by Jesus Christ, don't let them wait for somebody to explain it any more. Try it yourselves to-day!

A Visit in Surrey Gardens.

The London Correspondent to the New York Observer gives the following description of a Sabbath visit to Surrey Gardens where Mr. Spurgeon preaches.

I cannot soon forget the impressions of the morning on which I first worshipped in Surrey Hall. This, as you are aware, is an immense saloon in the midst of a place of public amusement, similar in its character to Niblo's Garden in New York in former times, though on a much larger scale. The building is in the general style of an opera house, with three ranges of galleries, and it is lofty, light and airy. It is said that ten thousand people can be seated within it, and that when crowded to its capacity in standing room, it will contain two thousand in addition. The safety of life and limb has long required that admission to Mr. Spurgeon's preaching in this place should be by ticket under a strong force of policemen. The doors are open to ticket holders an hour and a quarter before the commencement of the services, but not to the public in general till the last fifteen minutes of this time. As soon as the house is filled they are again inexorably closed, and often thousands without are turned away.

Notwithstanding that I was provided with a ticket, I was advised, if I wished to secure a good seat, to be at the Gardens by nine o'clock, though the gates would not be opened till half past nine, and the service not commence till quarter before eleven. It was not nine when I reached the street in which the entrance is, yet a thousand persons, men, women, and children, were already standing three abreast in a long line upon the sidewalk, as arranged on their arrival by the police. Crowds were hanging on foot and in carriages, from various directions, to the same spot, all of whom, without distinction of rank or sex, were obliged to take position in the rear, in the order in which they had come. By the time the gates were opened the numbers had swelled to many thousands, reaching in *queue* far down the street. The restraints of the police in guarding against everything like a rush at the opening of the gates, extend through the avenues of the Gardens to the doors of the Hall itself; I had little difficulty in securing a seat in the front range of the first gallery immediately opposite the temporary pulpit at the other end of the hall, commanding a full view of the audience when assembled. It was, however, one of the farthest points from the speaker, and I feared at first that I might not hear him distinctly; but such is the power and clearness of his voice and such the distinctness of his enunciation, that I did not lose a word.

It was yet one hour before admittance would be granted to any but ticket holders, still the house seemed already to be filled.—The simple spectacle presented by such an audience waiting patiently for the commencement

ment of the service so long a time, was impressive. There was the low murmuring of subdued conversation in some parts, but in general great quietude; while on every side hundreds were seen occupied in reading the pocket Bibles and hymn-books brought with them. It is not my intention, however, to enter into details. I wish merely to attempt conveying some general idea of the scene within; especially after free access to any unoccupied room to be found was given to those without, and when the surging throng which then rolled in like a strong tide, so filled the area below as to present to the eye little else than a mass of heads, and in the galleries above to the farthest walls, equal numbers clustering like bees in a swarm.

The immense multitude embraced not only ordinary citizens in the various grades of life, and working people, both men and women, but persons of distinction of both sexes in the higher classes of society: lords and ladies by title, members of Parliament, ministers of State, lawyers of celebrity, officers of rank in the army, clergymen, and even, as I was told—a mirrored bishop of the established Church. Lord Palmerston himself might have been on the platform beneath the pulpit, as he had been repeatedly before, and the Duchess of Sutherland in her accustomed seat in a side gallery near by.

The sight was most striking, and to the Christian not the less affecting; not from a belief that all, or even a majority of those thus brought together came for the simple object of hearing the Word of God; but from the fact that such would be the result. For, however open to just criticism and objection, style, manner and in some instances the matter of Mr. Spurgeon's sermons may be few, few who have heard him will deny that the Gospel is faithfully and earnestly preached by him both to saints and to sinners.

Hub Me.

Passing along Broadway some time ago, the vehicle was arrested by some slight obstruction, and the horses were not quite able to start it; the driver saw at once that but a very little aid was needed, and, turning to another Jehu who was coming behind him, said, "Hub me, shipmate." The other saw as instantly what was required, and without a moment's hesitation or stop, so guided his own horses as to make the hub of his own carriage strike lightly against that of the other, and each giving his own animal's touch of the whip, both carriages moved on almost as easily as if nothing had happened.

How many times in the great Broadway of life might men "hub" one another without incommencing themselves! A friendly act done, an obligation incurred, some future act of kindness provoked, at the expense of a word, or only a single moment's time.

The most of us regard omnibus drivers as rather rude specimens of humanity; but ever since the incident just related, we have seen a moral beauty in the odd expression, "Hub me, shipmate."

When a man takes a newspaper or a periodical, he usually becomes attached to it, begins to feel that its editor is his friend; and as often as the publication comes, he derives from the work of its editor some interesting item of news, some amusing statement, or some profitable idea or suggestion. This is repeated a dozen, fifty, or hundreds of times a year, for which the dollar or two, or five of subscription price is not the shadow of a compensation singly. Under the circumstances, then, we appeal to each reader of this article, in behalf of any publication which he receives, to help it to a new subscriber, as often as an opportunity is afforded, by a single word of approbation or solicitation. There are many persons who have so much of the milk of human kindness in them, that they would take a paper rather than refuse; and for that courtesy you have chances of doing them a service, just in proportion to the real worth of the publication commended. To each present subscriber of our Journal we venture the appeal, with some confidence.

"HUB ME, SHIPMATE!"
—Hall's Journal of Health.

Where are They?

The literary men of France, who were young a quarter of a century ago? The Paris correspondent of the Boston Traveller writes:—

"De Balzac is dead! Coffee killed him. "Frederic Soule is dead; the victim of coffee and licentiousness."

"Eugene Briffaut died a madman in the Charenton Lunatic Asylum. "Granville became insane, and breathed his last in a private madhouse."

"Lassally died a raving lunatic. "Lowe Weimars died from licentiousness and opium eating."

"Charles de Bernard died from coffee and licentiousness."

"Henri Boyle died from coffee and women."

"Hippolite Royal Collard died from tobacco and coffee."

"Gerard de Nerval, after oscillating between plenty and want, abstinence and licentiousness, went mad, and hung himself."

"Rabbe, after suffering a thousand deaths from a loathsome disease, took poison to end his prolonged torture."

"Alfred de Musset died a victim to the bottle and cigar."

"Count Alfred D'Orsay was killed by the cigar and licentiousness."

"Eugene Sue: coffee and women were his ruin. "All mowed down in the prime of life, in the meridian of their intellect and fame!"

La Belle Paris! the synonym of all that is beautiful; the city of gayety and revelry, of music and of mirth, where pleasure lures, dazles, intoxicates, and then destroys! is this the sad end to which your young men of culture and intellect arrive, in a short quarter of a century? Then let it be a loud warning to the youth of our own time and nation, that a better path is marked out for them in that *Book of all books*, which counsels to be temperate in all things, to take hold of wisdom, whose ways are ways of pleasantness—whose paths are peace.—*Hall's Journal of Health.*

David's Weapons.

"There is none like that; give it me!"—1 Sam. xxi. 9. David with a sling and a stone fought Goliath and conquered. This time he wanted no other weapon, for God had appointed him no other. But when on a future occasion he was sore pressed by his enemies, he went into the temple of the Lord, and demanded the sword of that same Goliath. Why should he choose a weapon which he had seen fall powerless from the hand of the uncircumcised Philistine?—Because he knew that in the grasp of the circumcised David it would do goodly service. The hand, not the weapon, had been in fault. Thus may we, if called by the leadings of Providence, avail ourselves of human means, and meet our adversaries hand to hand with their own weapons. Only let us use David's caution. Let us not take the sword of the Philistine, till it has been consecrated in the temple of the Lord.—*Miss M. J. Graham.*

Whosoever.

A sailor, who had been piously trained in early life, but for many years had been the victim of all manner of profligacy, at length, while at sea in the Pacific Ocean, was thoroughly awakened and convicted by the Spirit of God. One night, after turning in, his terror rose to such a pitch, that he dared not shut his eyes, lest he should awake in hell; but at length he was overcome with fatigue and weakness, and fell asleep. While in this condition he dreamed of being in India (he had been formerly), and hearing a missionary preach on the solemn words, "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great a salvation?" he was so moved by the words, that he tried to run away, and in the effort awoke.

Then, as he says, "the perspiration was pouring from my forehead, and as I was in the greatest agitation, I opened again God's Word for I had no other comforter. I read the third chapter of John, and there I saw what I needed. I must be born again."

I read on and came to the sixteenth verse, "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." I was struck by these beautiful words. Does that include me? Yes, I thought, "whosoever" means me; I will venture on his love. I tried to give God my heart, and there, in that midnight hour, far away on the billows, I cast my poor guilty soul on his mercy; and while pleading this precious word, I felt peace and comfort with me."

The Soul Winner must be Sober.

He who would win souls must avoid all light, trifling, flirty, loose, or carnal conversation. He must shun it as he would a deadly and contagious disease. His motto must be,

"No room for mirth or trifling here!" and this motto must be sacredly observed on all occasions. Let no one think of success in personal effort who is not consistent in his daily conversation. This must be sure and blameless, or the most gigantic efforts will be worse than vanity. A professor may exhort like an apostle at a prayer meeting, or at a private interview with a sinner; he may speak of the love of God till the heart of the hearer melts into water, and then be seen gay as the gayest at a social party; or laughing with the trifler about the day; or talking with the interest of the worldling about his gains and losses; and what will be the worth of his labour for souls? His failing here, like those chemical substances that neutralize the properties of other bodies, will render all the rest abortive. He will harden the hearts of sinners, be a curse to the church, and become the agent of the sinner's damnation.—*Wise.*

A Tender Reproof.

A very little boy had one day done wrong, and was sent, after parental correction, to ask in secret the forgiveness of his heavenly Father. His offence had been passion.—Anxious to hear what he would say, his mother followed to the door of his room.—In flippant accents she heard him ask to be made better, never to be angry again; and then, with childlike simplicity, he added, "Lord, make ma's temper better, too!"