

The Religious Intelligencer

AN EVANGELICAL FAMILY NEWSPAPER,

FOR NEW BRUNSWICK AND NOVA SCOTIA.

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THE RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCER

An Evangelical Family Newspaper.

FOR NEW BRUNSWICK AND NOVA SCOTIA.

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Fact, not Fiction.

TIME, MORE THAN TWELVE YEARS AGO.

When I first began, when a young man, to speak to sinners about the necessity of repenting and believing in the Lord Jesus Christ that they might be saved, I was much surprised, one day, by hearing an elderly minister complain of a young man of my acquaintance that he preached for effect.

"He preached for effect, did you say, Dr. Line?" inquired I. "What do you mean by that?" I have always thought that it was expected of every converted and faithful minister of Christ that he should preach for effect.

The Dr. explained, and averred that he did not think of my friend's "elementary preaching" would be of much use in building up believers; and he finished by unwisely asking me, a mere youth at College, to say what I thought of the preaching he was objecting to, which I did, by telling the effect it had upon myself and others. I told him something like this:

"I was awakened last year to think seriously about my soul's salvation. I have been in a very anxious, inquiring state, for six months. When at college, I was providentially led to hear an excellent minister whose preaching I greatly rejoiced. He was a faithful, as well as a very able man; and his preaching was a manifestation of the truth to the conscience, had produced such a powerful effect upon me, that, on my returning home for the Summer vacation, I felt as if my father's minister was preaching a most dreary, cloudy, uninteresting and tolerably stupid way, as if he did not feel what he was saying, but was merely filling up the hour with the careless utterance of theological common-places. I bore with it for a time, and thought I might be to blame, and was willing to set it down to my having been so deeply interested in the awakening preaching I had been hearing when at college; but as it seemed to grow no better, and my soul was longing for God in a dry and thirsty land, where there was no water, I began to wander occasionally into other churches in search of a living Gospel, and I had gone over all the places of worship in the town, both in the Established Church, and out of it, and only in one place did I find a minister able to give me anything like a satisfactory morsel of Gospel truth. They all seemed to be talking to others, and not to me. God's Spirit was dealing with me. My spirit was deeply awakened, my soul was longing to know the truth about Jesus, and the way to be saved—my conscience was keen and restless, and my heart was tender and impassioned; but these ministers, although they were roughly educated and able men, were speaking away from my case, and as if they never anticipated the possibility of having awakened souls in their congregations. I felt as if they were preaching in the clouds. Week after week they kept up an impersonal, unimpassioned talk about certain automata, which they termed 'the believer,' and 'the sinner,' which was very uninteresting, and terribly hardening; but although I was longing and waiting for it, they never spoke a sentence to me. I always felt colder and less impressed with the reality and importance of salvation for hearing their discourses, which you must admit was most perilous for one in my condition. I do not believe that they intended to preach for that particular effect, but certainly that was the only effect which their preaching produced, so far as I was concerned. They were all perfectly orthodox, and thoroughly evangelical, but they seemed a dead orthodoxy, and their evangelism a Christless and soulless nonentity.

"When in this earnest, inquiring, and dissatisfied state of mind, a young friend said to me, 'I heard an admirable preacher last Lord's day. You must come and hear him; and I think you will find he is the very man you are in search of.' I went and heard, and felt at once that my friend was right, and that the half had not been told me." Mr. Heartspoke's whole bearing impressed me favourably, even before he uttered a word. And then the solemn way he read the opening psalm—the reverence and holy boldness with which he approached the throne of grace—the fervor and home-speaking style in which he preached—all assured me that he was thoroughly in earnest, one who would be likely to show me the way of salvation; and I continued to attend on his ministrations with unspeakable satisfaction, and, I believe, with a good deal of spiritual profit. And if he preaches for such an effect as that," said I, "it is surely a most useful and desirable one."

Dr. Line heard me with some interest, and some confusion, and looked as if he wished he had not asked me to give my opinion of Mr. H.'s preaching. But as he had interrogated me, he continued to ask if what I had described was the general impression.

I said that I believed it was. "There are some, of course," I added, "who regard ministers only for the amount of eloquence, or intellectual ability they can display, who characterize his preaching by very contemptuous epithets, and consider it to be no preaching at all; but the general impression is that Mr. H. is more of a minister than the majority of those we have been accustomed to hear."

"His manifestation of the truth to every one's conscience is the most remarkable feature of his preaching. As an instance, I may mention that I took my sister to hear him, and at the close of the service, as soon as we got clear of the crowd at the door of the place of worship, she said, 'Who could have told Mr. H. all about us already?' My young friend who was instrumental in making me go there at the first, came up at this moment, and on asking how we enjoyed the service, I said, 'Very well indeed; but my sister says, 'Somebody must have been telling Mr. H. all about us. Do you know,' I continued, in a way he perfectly understood, 'who could have been guilty of such meanness?' 'Well, I believe,' he replied, 'that man knows all about me too, and the whole of us, for he preaches in the Holy Ghost; and the Word, so preached, is always quick and powerful—a discernment of the thoughts and the intents of the heart.'"

"Really," said Dr. Line, "that is most extraordinary. I had received, I assure you, a very different account of Mr. H.'s preaching."

"Well, I continued, 'whoever your informants may have been, I am sure of one thing, their spiritual condition must have been very different from mine. There are four kinds of Gospel-hearers mentioned by our Lord, and one only is represented by him as hearing the word with 'an honest and good heart,' and such understand it, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience; but to all others the glorious Gospel will ever be preached in vain, for paltry criticism, and not for personal salvation.'

Dr. Line rejoined, 'I must say in justice to your informants, that they never heard Mr. H.; they were merely relating what they had heard others saying of him who had been to hear him.'

"Did not Mr. H. once preach to your people?"

If you had inquired of some of them, they might have told you how they were edified," continued I. —British Messenger.

Witnessing for Jesus.

"Never fear!—Stand up for Jesus!"

Speak to all of His sweet name.

Tell them of His great Salvation.

All his wondrous love proclaim!

Peace and pardon, grace and glory.

Through the PRECIOUS DYING LAMB!"

"Ye are my witnesses."

READER, do you witness for Christ? not only by a holy walk and Godly conversation, but by word of mouth? But, says brother C., "if we live as humble, devoted Christians, we shall not need to inform the world that we have attained sanctification! Furthermore, he more than intimates, that definite, personal testimony of God's dealings with our souls, tends to pride, self-exaltation, self-glorying. Is this so? Where does our brother gain this information? from the Bible? Let us look at this question a moment. Proud is he? the sanctified soul proud? puffed up? egotistical? What makes him proud? because he declares publicly what God has done for his soul, humbly, meekly, God-fearingly? Is he proud, because he testifies before his brethren of God's special goodness in delivering him from the bondage of sin and death? because the Lord had inclined his ear unto him, heard his cry; brought him up out of a horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set his feet upon a rock, established his goings, put a new song in his mouth, even praise to God? filled him with love, all the fullness of God? Is the brother proud for testifying thus to God's special mercy? Then David, the Psalmist, was a very proud man, for who testified more frequently and definitely to his personal salvation? "Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul." Ps. 66, 13.—"Whole psalms are filled, overflowing, with personal gratulations to God for his redeeming, sanctifying grace. He calls upon all heaven, all earth, all nature—things animate and inanimate, to bow the listening ear to the voice of his thanksgivings to God, for his superabounding mercy in his personal salvation and sanctification. See Psalms 18, 23, 27, 30, 34, 116. "I will pay my vows," says he, "unto the Lord, now, in the presence of all his people." Ps. 116, 14. If referring publicly to God's special merciful dealings to our own soul's welfare, be indicative of pride, self-conceit, self-seeking, then the holy prophets were among the proud ones—for which of God's most faithful prophets did not witness publicly to his own personal deliverances through the strength and wisdom of the Most High? Take a single instance in Isaiah 12. This whole chapter is made up exclusively of personal testimony.

Was Paul the apostle proud, puffed up with self-conceit, or self-glorying, because he testified that he knew in whom he believed—that he was dead to sin and alive to God—that the blood of Jesus Christ, God's dear son, cleanseth from all sin? In every epistle the apostles testified more or less to God's saving, sanctifying grace in their own special deliverance. Did those personal testimonies make them proud? The primitive disciples, filled with joy and peace in believing, must have been among the proudest, for who testified more frequently and definitely of God's goodness to them? They went everywhere declaring what God had done for their souls. This personal testimony was the great burden of their message—the sum and substance of their preaching. And marvelously did God bless these witnessings for Christ in the salvation of multitudes. On every suitable occasion Paul made special reference to God's merciful, all-coopering grace in his own salvation.

When brought before the enemies, a persecuting Sanhedrin, what his plea, his defence? God's dealings with his own soul, his conviction, conversion, justification and sanctification. Turn to Acts 22—how readest thou? See also his defence before King Agrippa, in Acts 26.—Mark, moreover, the tenor of his epistles, how frequently, pointedly, and definitely he alludes to his own experience, his firm faith, his entire consecratedness to God and his cause, his deadness and crucifixion to the world, his temperance in all things, his example of purity and consistency, the bright, seraphic, glorious manifestations of God to his soul, his translation to the third heaven, hearing and seeing things unspeakable. Surely, Paul, in accordance with the reasonings of our opposers, must have been a very proud man! filled with vain boasting and self-conceit.

What especially kindled a continued flame of holy love in the souls of Wesley, Fletcher, Bramwell, Lady Maxwell, Lady Huntingdon, Hester A. Rodgers, Carver, James B. Taylor, President Edwards, and a host of worthies, whose bright example of holy living and usefulness cause angels to rejoice? One special cause of the increased and perpetual kindlings of this holy fire was their meek and humble testimony, their frequent allusions to the cleansing, purifying efficacy of Christ's blood, in their own redemption and sanctification. The beloved, Godly, courteous, modest, refined, para-mend Fletcher, last the blessing of perfect love four times successively, by yielding to the tempter, the promulgators of the evil one to close his lips, hush the question of personal, definite testimony.

Look abroad, behold numerous cases, heart-rendingly grievous! Churches, institutions and individuals, once on the mount, enjoying the inner life, the baptism pentecostal, the redeeming, purifying, sanctifying grace, where are they now? O where? with harps on the willows? the light in their darkness? What the cause of this beginning in the Spirit, and now being made perfect in the flesh? They yielded to temptation, the awful stratagem of the devil. They neglected or refused to witness for Christ, "stand for Jesus," obey the positive precept. "Open thy mouth wide and I will fill it!" Christ says, "Ye are my witnesses." How? by our Godly walk?—our meek, modest, humility? By keeping a conscience void of offence towards men? By doing justly, loving mercy, walking humbly, providing things honest in the sight of all men? Is this all? "With the heart men believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation."

"Whoso offereth praise glorifieth me."

Beloved, will you suffer Satan to rob you of this jewel of jewels, by holding your peace?

The special benefits, the happy, glorious results of this definite, personal testifying to the efficacious power of Jesus' blood to save to the uttermost are numerous. We specify a few.

1. It's a fatal thrust at the head of the serpent. Nothing tends more directly to thwart the machinations of the devil, than the humble testimony of the sanctified soul. Satan is resisted, defeated, and God's grace magnified.

2. It strengthens the heart, spiritually; increases faith, hope, and love. Every time we witness for Christ, publicly, meekly, and humbly, we gain renewed spiritual strength.

3. Instead of puffing up with pride or self-glorying, the relating what great things God has done for us, tends to self-abasement, the grace of humility, humble adoration, and praise.

4. It's a great blessing to others, encourages and strengthens the weak disciple, the doubting and hesitating. The Psalmist says, "My soul shall make her boast in the Lord, the humble shall hear thereof and be glad."

Again, this witnessing for Christ, testifying to his redeeming, sanctifying grace, is a positive duty, God commands it: "Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering."—Mark, "the profession of our faith." We omit this duty at our peril. Beloved brother, sister, will you suffer the cry of egotism, pride, self-conceit, self-glorying, or any other cry, to rob you of this privilege? So long as you walk softly, keep a conscience void of offence, abstain from all appearance of evil, aim to please God in all things?—The holy prophets ceased not this personal definite testimony—David did not—the early disciples did not hold their peace—Paul did not—He positively declared that no man should close his lips in publicly witnessing to God's superabounding mercy to his soul. It was a blessing to him, a blessing to others. Even the wicked King Agrippa was almost persuaded to be a Christian, by hearing Paul testify to the efficacy of Jesus' blood to save to the uttermost.—Brother, sister, go forward in God's strength, wisdom and grace; open your mouth wide in praise; tell to all around what great things God has done for your soul; be definite; publish it;—sound it out—let heaven's arches ring! Give God the glory—and many shall see it, and fear, and shall trust in the Lord.

"Never be ashamed of Jesus—'Glory ever in His Cross; Count it most exalted honor To advance His blessed cause—Hallowed honors, untold blessings Cluster round the Saviour's cross!" D. F. N.

The Eye of the Needle.

A recent traveller in the Holy Land informs us that there is at the side of the principal gate of Jerusalem a small one, which, upon occasions of great urgency, was opened for the admission of persons after the great gates of the city was all closed for the night. This gate, from its small size, was called the Eye of the Needle; and to get a camel through it at all was no small task—for a loaded camel to pass was an utter impossibility. With the above fact before the mind, one can see that the words of our Saviour when speaking of the "straight gate" and the "rich man," were more literal than many suppose. And we see how the rich man passes into the narrow way, the sides and the low top of the straight gate scrape everything from him in which he had before trusted. No one can take anything but himself through. Far easier is it to strip the camel of its burden than to divest a rich man of his trust in riches.—Advent Herald.

The Blessings of Poverty.

You wear out your old clothes. You are not troubled with many visitors. You are exonerated from making calls. Bored do not bore you. Spongers can not haunt your tables. Itinerant bands do not play opposite your window. You avoid the nuisance of serving on juries. No one thinks of presenting you with a testimonial. No tradesman irritates you by asking, "Is there any other little article to-day, sir?" Begging letter writers leave you alone. Impostors know it is useless to bleed you. You practice temperance. You swallow infinitely less poison than others. You are saved many a deception, many a headache. And lastly, if you have a true friend in the world, you are sure, in a very short space of time, to learn it.

On Benevolence.

If there is one trait of character more to be admired than another, and one which commands itself to every individual, it is a benevolent disposition. Who can describe the power of benevolence, or define its limits? It is this spirit which influences its possessor to relieve (so far as in him lies) the wants of his fellow men, causes him to shed the sympathetic tear over suffering humanity, seeks to administer to the necessities of those by whom he is surrounded, and "strive in offices of love how he may lighten other people's burdens." Man is an influential being, and every person, however poor and humble in life, is capable of exerting an influence, either for good or evil. Hence that individual, in whose breast heaves a noble and generous heart, will, by his good deeds and benevolent actions, not only relieve the recipients of those favours from their embarrassments, but will produce in their hearts incalculable good, carrying with them a power which will be felt and realized by them through time, and can never be effaced from the tablet of the memory. But that man, whatever may be his fame—fortune or intelligence—who can treat lightly another's woe—who is not bound to his fellow man by the magic tie of sympathy, deserves and will obtain the contempt of human kind. Upon him all the gifts of fortune are lavished in vain. He is a stranger to happiness. His life is a mere lethargy, without a single throb of human emotion; and he descends to the grave *unwept, unhonored, and unused*. Such a fate is not to be envied; and let those who would leave behind them a monument of virtue that the storms of time can never destroy, be benevolent—write their names in benevolence, love and mercy on the hearts of those with whom they come in contact from time to time, and they will never be forgotten; but their names and deeds will be indelibly impressed on the hearts of those they leave behind.

M. J. Coy.

The Theatre.

Rousseau, in defending the Stage, makes the honest acknowledgment, "You have nothing to do with morality here; this is not the place in which to learn it." And we presume that our readers will agree with us in saying that the proceedings during the past week of the Theatrical Company now performing in this City, is sufficiently demonstrative of the truth of the proposition that the Theatre has nothing to do with morality. Some, even in our very midst, have maintained that the Theatre is a great moral Teacher. What say they now about their favorite theory, when a Dramatic Company, recommended by most of our City Press, and coming

here with showers of fulsome laudations from the same source, hold up to the admiration of the youth of our City, "Jack Shepherd,—a play which even the advocates of the Stage acknowledge to be well calculated to train up a generation of thieves; and whose influence has already brought many to the gallows. We take up this subject in no spirit of prejudice. We frankly acknowledge that we are firmly of the belief that Theatres have been a curse to every nation that has fostered them. But in the present instance we do not appeal merely to those opposed to the stage. We consider it our duty to ask those of our respectable citizens who attend the Theatre, Are you prepared to countenance the bringing before the youth of our city scenes whose baleful influence may cling to them to their dying day? Is it to go forth to the world that the moral feelings of the citizens of the chosen Capital of Canada are so low that a drama which has been prohibited for its immoral tendencies by the voice of public opinion in England, will pass here unrebuked if not applauded? —Ottawa Banner.

God a Rock.

"Who is a Rock save our God?"—David.

God is a rock to his people in three distinct figurative senses.

1. In a military sense, rocks were natural fortresses, places of defence and strength against an invading foe. David sung, "The Lord is my rock and my fortress, and my deliverer." Rocks in Palestine were lofty, steep, precipitous; and hence in those stages of the science of war, they gave the party that held them immense advantage over their assailants. So God was to his people a great fortress—his very name a tower of strength. Embosomed in him, they were entirely safe.

2. The Rock in Palestine, cleft by nature's convulsions, had huge fissures in which men hid themselves; or, upheaved by the earth's internal forces, it had caverns within which men sought shelter, and sometimes places of abode. Hence we so often read of those who dwell in the clefts of the rock, or in caves of the mountains.

Thus again, God is a rock in whose cleft we hide and are safe from the storm. Orient's storms are sometimes terrific. Then, when the elements seem maddened to fury, happy is he who finds the cleft of a great rock for his shelter! If such tornadoes as have left terrific traces of their sweep in the prostrate forests of northern Ohio were to come down on any such land as Palestine, the few safe men, sheltered in the clefts of her great rocks, would comprehend this beautiful and expressive figure.

3. Rocks afford the only absolutely solid foundation for vast colossal structures. He who finds solid rock for the four corners of his palace counts himself safe from one formidable class of dangers. In Palestine—that land of sands, rocks, and floods—there was force in the figure which gave us the foolish man, building his house on the sands, but the wise man building his upon a rock.

God is the Rock of his people in this instructive sense: they may build on him the temple of their future interests and destinies. Making him their foundation, rest on him alone and wholly. Such a foundation can never "settle." No storms can ever wash it; no earthquakes shake it; no lightnings rend it. Happy he who can truthfully say, "My flesh and my heart fail; but God is the rock of my heart and my portion for ever."

The Empire of God.

Professor Mitchell, in closing his series of lectures on astronomy, said:—"Now, my friends, I must close this long course of lectures. We've passed from planet to planet, from sun to sun, from system to system. We have found the island universes swinging through space. The great unfinished problem still remains: Whence came this universe? Have all these stars which glitter in the heavens been shining from all eternity? Has our globe been rolling around the sun for countless ages? Whence, whence this magnificent architecture, whose architraves rise in splendour before us in every direction? Is it all the work of chance? Who shall reveal to us the true cosmography of the universe by which we are surrounded? Is it the work of the Omnipotent? If so, who is this august Being? Go with me to-night, in imagination, and stand with Paul, the great apostle, upon Mars' Hill, and there look around you as he did. Here rises that magnificent building, the Parthenon, sacred to Minerva the Goddess of Wisdom. There towers her colossal statue, rising in its majesty above the city of which she was the guardian—the object to catch the first rays of the rising, and the last to be kissed by the rays of the setting sun. There are the temples of all the gods; and there are the shrines of every divinity. And yet I tell you these gods and these divinities, though created under the inspiring fire of poetic fancy and Greek imagination, never reared this stupendous structure by which we are surrounded. The Olympic Jove never built the heavens. The wisdom of Minerva never organised the magnificent systems. I will say with St. Paul—"Ye men of Athens, I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious. For as I passed by and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription: 'To the Unknown God.' Whom

therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you. God that made the world, and things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands." No, here is the temple of our divinity. Around us and above us rise the sun and system, cluster, and universe. And I doubt not that in every region of the vast empire of God, hymns of praise and anthems of glory are rising and reverberating from sun to sun, and from system to system—heard by Omnipotence above, across immensity, and through eternity."

The Process of Hardening the Moral Feeling.

In the first place, then, I think that it is in respect to our moral susceptibilities as it is in regard to all our senses; they become blunted by repeated perversion. A man can treat his eye in such a way that he shall become blind. He can blunt his hearing so that he may become deaf. He can injure his tongue so as to have no appreciation of flavours. He can conduct himself so that his whole body may be broken down and destroyed before he is fifty years old. What then? Is there any change in the world after that? Not at all! There are floods of light in the sky, and all things are illuminated by the sun; the only change is that the man is blind. The air is full of sweet sounds, and the only change is, that he is deaf. So in respect to a man's moral nature. A man's moral susceptibilities may be so dull that, by the time he is fifty years old, these approaches no longer affect him in this world. And the effect is, the gradual diminution of moral susceptibility; so that the conjunction of circumstances, by which the man shall appear to himself to be surrounded, are less and less frequent, because their effect is less and less apparent.

I have heard men boasting of the very thing which was their shame, that when they were young, in childhood, they did not go long without being awakened, and that it was an annoyance to them; that when they began to be boys, it troubled them at times, still not so often; but that by the time they became men, they were not affected more than once a year.

"Ah, yes," say they, "I recollect—five or ten years, was it? Ten years ago when Nettleton was here, I was subject to a visitation. It was the last time I was so affected. I shed a few tears then, but it has been full ten years since I had such a feeling. I see other men going through the same thing that I went through; but I am not subject to these feelings any more!"

What would you think of a man who should talk so in respect to other moral feelings? Suppose a man should say;

"When I was very young, I must confess that I remember to have had some unpleasant scruples if I cheated my friend. When I got along into boyhood, I was a good deal troubled when I committed any little dishonesty. But as I came into manhood, I began to do these things without hesitation. Still however, I felt a great many scruples; yet I have since got over these things without hesitation. I have overcome all these little unpleasant feelings. It is now—how long is it, partner; fifteen years? Yes; I have got over all those things now."

What would you think of a man measuring back the time to see how long it was since he had a single honest feeling? What would you think of a man measuring back the chronology and writing the biography of his own defunct veracity? What would you think of a man that should talk about his chastity, or his moral virtue of any kind, and say:

"I recollect when I blossomed; I recollect when I had freshness and gentleness; but it is all gone past; I am too much of a man now to have any such freshness of feeling, or any such innocence of motive?"

AN OLD TREE.

An old, gaunt tree, that for ten years has been undermined from the root, that has lost its bark and most of its boughs, and every leaf, and for ten years has stood up in the pasture bleached white, a landmark in every direction—an old gaunt tree, seasoned tree stands communing with itself, and says pointing to the younger growths of the forest around it, that are waving their boughs and flapping their leaves:

"Foolish tree! I have got bravely over all that! I am not troubled with searching the ground for moisture for my roots. I am never troubled with any moisture flowing through those channels where the sap used to flow, when I was like you twenty years ago. Cattle never come now and repose beneath my shade. Birds never now, in the spring time, build their nests in my bosom. Here I stand tall and gaunt! The winds of winter whistle through my boughs, but as they go sweeping past, I don't feel their cold! I don't have any trouble about the ice. I never am annoyed by any warmth of summer. I am nothing but a dead tree and a landmark!"

There are men here who stand up like just such a tree, having perverted all the moral influences that came upon them! Little by little has the fruit dropped off; little by little their bark has peeled off, little by little their foliage has been stripped away. And now in looking back upon their moral conduct, they positively boast how long it is since they had anything green since they had any of those aspirations and longings that they were once as foliage and beauty