

The Religious Intelligencer

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FOR NEW BRUNSWICK AND NOVA SCOTIA.

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An Evangelical Family Newspaper,
FOR NEW BRUNSWICK AND NOVA SCOTIA.
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Religious Intelligencer.

Startling Selections.

"Escape for thy life."

On ye who are escaped thither, abide in Him closely. Venture not forth from Zoar. There is a work of vengeance and of destruction to be accomplished on this evil world. Yourselves are living upon the brink of an eternal scene—your summons is on its way. Let the judge's advent, let eternity's morning, let death's summons, find you but in Zoar, and it finds you safe for ever.

But oh, that to despisers, to lingers, and to backsliders, we could speak in thrilling power as with a voice from the eternal world! A voice of danger, a voice of warning, a voice of mercy! "ESCAPE FOR THY LIFE!" for that soul which must live for ever! To each and all—no matter whether rich or poor, whether scholars or not scholars—to each and all who are yet living for the present world, who are not yet in Jesus, we do solemnly present urgent, tremendous danger! Thus speaking, we seem to come to mock, to be overdoing a fearful picture; to others, once apparently touched by the divine message of grace and warning, and with their feet and hands toward Zoar and Zion, have now looked back, and are entangled in the world's vanities, or corruptions, or friendship. Escape, ye despisers! Escape, ye lingers! Escape, ye backsliders, for your lives! Mock not our earnestness—we speak for souls! Bid us not speak coldly. We speak for eternity—to bring sinners to Jesus, to pluck sinners from hell! The Lord will destroy this place." Up! Get you forth! There is no resting-place, no safety, but in Zoar. It is a bright, gay world, full of riches, and honours, and pleasures; but it is doomed! All shall be as fuel to the fires. Was the remorse of Lot's sons-in-law terrible, as they sunk with the sinners of Sodom! What shall the first moment of your eternity be to you as it brings with it the retribution and the punishment of your unbelief? "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden!" "Seek ye the Lord while he may be found!"—invitations so full of mercy now, their remembrance then how terrible! Every warning, every promise, every winning word of love, as a scorpion sting of remorse, hopelessness and eternal! That remorse yet one degree more terrible, if, with Lot's wife, ye remember that ye had once turned your back on this evil world, your feet toward Zoar—that the angel's hand had been upon you, and ye had bid fair for heaven. I know full well that I am but feebly clothing in words thoughts of unutterable and overwhelming moment. Yet strive, men and women, to realize in some solemn manner, all feeble though it be, the first breaking of eternity upon your lost soul—once lost, lost for ever!—that moment when first, in all its crushing certainty, it shall thrill through your soul—"I AM A LOST SINNER!" When, without any of the false hopes' wherewith now ye buoy up your hearts and steel yourselves against the appeals and the warning cries of mercy—convenient seasons, to-morrows, death-beds, and the like—ye can find no refuge from the conviction, "IT IS OVER; HELL IS MY ETERNAL PORTION!" And this without remedy, without hope. Ages will roll on, but this worm will be still gnawing, this flame still burning; and as ages succeed to age I shall be here a LOST SINNER! Who shall conceive, who tell, that agony when such a soul first looks along its eternal prospect—one interminable waste of misery, the restless agony of a dismal eternity!

There are hearers who shrink from such

topics. Are these things false? If true where is the hearer who will have us hold them back? Who would silence the warning note of danger—"Escape for your lives!" But we love, ye say, the promises of the gospel—we would hear, not of hell, but of Christ. Oh, that these tremendous thoughts might be so fastened in your hearts and consciences that ye could find no rest, no peace, nor give sleep to your eyelids till you had seen your danger and your refuge! Because there is a refuge, therefore, do we warn. We love to tell of Zoar, its nearness, its beauty, its safety, its open gates. Yet must we often tell of Sodom—its sin, its danger, its doom. This, then, is our message: the world your destruction—Christ your Saviour. It is a voice of mercy; "Escape for thy life!" Your refuge is near—it is an open city, even Christ, a present waiting Saviour. But ye must be found in Zoar. Not only in Sodom—there Lot's sons-in-law perished—but neither between Sodom and Zoar: "Remember Lot's wife!" It is not enough that ye sin not to the world's foulest excesses. The betrothed husbands of the daughters of righteous Lot were not surely such sinners as the men of Sodom, yet with the men of Sodom they perished. Thus shall worldlings perish with the world. The moral, the refined, not so foul as the profligate and the criminal, but *unsaved*, if not in Christ. To Him, then, to the open arms of His mercy, to the riches of His promises, to a full and finished salvation, to an open heaven, ye are now invited. There is preached to you a Saviour. Say not, then, that we have told you too much of "the terrors of the Lord." In the allegory of Bunyan, familiar to you from your childhood, ye have read that Christian's first alarm was this, that he found himself an inhabitant of "THE CITY OF DESTRUCTION." In the parchment roll, given him by Evangelist, was there written "Fly from the wrath to come!" So we would reiterate the gracious warning: "Arise ye, and depart; for this is not your rest; because it is polluted, it shall destroy you, even with a sore destruction." (Micah ii. 10.) But as ye turn from a vain and polluted world, lest ye be destroyed in its iniquity, *whither* shall ye turn but to the heavenly city? As ye seek deliverance from your sins—their present burden, their eternal punishment—whither shall ye flee but to the gospel Zoar, even Jesus which delivereth "from the wrath to come?"

One taken and the other left.
Two young men, who were intimate friends, were pursuing an academical course of study together, when their attention, with several of their schoolmates, was called to the subject of religion. They continued for some time deeply and similarly impressed, and were brought apparently near to the kingdom of God. To all human appearance one was as likely to become a Christian as the other.

At length one of them yielded the controversy, accepted of salvation through grace, and was made partaker of the heavenly gift. He is now a beloved and devoted minister, near Lake Michigan, and from him this account is received. The other continued to resist, though the tears and entreaties of his friend were now added to other influences. He had been a votary of worldly pleasure, and he still looked with longing eyes to the ballroom. At length, as they walked one moonlight evening, and the powers of the world to come were set before him, they came to a large stone, upon which they sat. While Mr. K— pressed his friend to an immediate decision, he rose, and lifting up his hand to heaven, exclaimed, "I swear, I will have the pleasures of this world, come what may." "The door was shut," Mr. K— could do was to note the progress of his friend in silent anguish. He had deliberately rejected God and God rejected him. He cast off fear, and retained prayer—gave himself up to the riot and the dance with redoubled eagerness. But he was soon smitten with a disease, that crippled one of his limbs. He would hobble to the ballroom and dance upon his crutches. The Lord smote his other limb, and disabled them both. He would then beg to be carried to the room, that he might see the gay company, and be a spectator of their mirth. The Lord sent the same disease to his eyes and destroyed his sight, so that he was obliged to be confined in a dark room for several years, where every beam of light was like a lance piercing his head. There he lingered, a poor, blind cripple till he died, reckless about eternity—all his dissipated life having made no impression on his durable heart.

The same point was strikingly illustrated in the history of two brothers in Massachusetts. Together they were seeking salvation. They continued for several weeks, and often renewed a covenant, never to give over till they had obtained the religion of Jesus. Suddenly one of them neglected meetings, and shunned the company of his brother. Soon after he received an

invitation to a ball, and determined to accept it. His brother with tears endeavored to prevail on him to change his purpose and attend a prayer-meeting, which was to be held on the same evening. He still adhered to his determination to attend the ball, but expressed a decided resolution to make a business of seeking salvation as soon as it was over. The time came, and the brothers went; one to the prayer meeting—the other to the ball. Soon after the meeting commenced, the one who was present was brought to rejoice in the hope of pardoned sin. About the same time his brother was standing at the dance with the hand of a young lady; and while the musician was tuning his viol, without a moment's warning, he sallied back and fell dead on the floor! "The door was shut" to both—the one taken, and the other left.

Even the blooming and delicate young lady is not exempt from this peril. Emily—was a member of a Bible class in Philadelphia. Many of the class were awakened and hopefully converted while she was sometimes almost persuaded to be a Christian. For many weeks she continued serious; but, at length, she began to be remiss and absent herself from the class, and after much entreaty to be more attentive, she left the class entirely. She went into the company of giddy associates, became fond of dress and amusements, and hardened her heart against every serious consideration.

When about seventeen years of age, she was seized with a rapid consumption. She awoke to a consciousness of her condition, and found herself unprepared to die. The pastor called and found her pale and emaciated, in the last stages of consumption, which had made dreadful ravages upon her constitution. She was greatly affected at his visit, and exclaimed, "O, father S—, have you found me at last! I have often avoided seeing you, but I can fly no more—Here you find me dying. I have no expectation of recovery, and I have no hope. I have lived without God, and without hope, and now I must die the same. O, sir, what a dreadful condition I am in! Five years ago, I had pardon and salvation offered me. Five years ago, when Ann—and Eliza H— gave their hearts to God, the Spirit strove with me powerfully. I was almost persuaded to be a Christian; and O, what a blessed thing it would have been! But I left the class, went into wild company, and followed the fashions of the world. Thus I grieved away the Holy Spirit. But my heart has never been at rest: I have had no happiness in sin; and now what I feared has come upon me. My heart is so hard I cannot repent, and, (bursting into tears,) like Esau, I have sold my birthright. I am a reprobate. I must lie down in everlasting sorrow. I cannot pray; and if I could, I should not be heard."

When it was proposed to read the Bible, she said, "It will do no good." "Shall we pray with you?" "It will do no good." When conversed with, she replied, "It will do no good." The next day about noon she failed so fast, that her hands and feet began to grow cold, and when she felt the chill of death, she began to cry aloud, "O, I can't die; I am not fit to die; you must not let me die. If I die, I am lost for ever. O, send for the doctor; can't he save my life? O, must I die in my guilt!" Her cries were heard through the neighborhood. Her little brother burst into tears, and said, "O, Emily, why don't you pray to God? why don't you pray for mercy?" "O, there is no mercy for me: I have abused mercy. When God offered me mercy, I rejected it. Now there is no mercy for me. I have 'shut the door' of mercy against myself!" Thus she continued her cries, growing weaker and weaker, till her voice was hushed in death. —Am. Tract.

The Drunkard's Home.

It is a small cottage, thinly furnished, and the furniture, like the wife, seems wasting away.—Half of it is at the pawn-shop, and it is all gently sinking into the same vortex. He has a wife and only daughter—a fair child of 15 years, just budding into life. Cruelly and hard usage, together with starvation, have told their tale upon the mother's form and face; and when the lord and master of the house comes staggering home at midnight, he finds that they have stretched her, dying, on the tattered bed, the daughter's fearful face is hidden in her mother's bosom, and her thin white hand is clasped about her neck. The conscience-stricken son stands rooted on the threshold, and stays his staggering feet by grasping at the door-post, and as he stares with blood-shot eyes upon the death bed that his selfishness prepared, he hears his daughter's sobbing voice exclaim—"Thy will be done!" and then his gasping wife sighs forth the struggling prayer—"Lord, lay not this sin to his charge." And as the dying intercession floats from that broken heart to heaven, the spirit leaves its clay and follows it; and the father is alone with his orphan daughter. Bitterly did he weep as he looked upon the mortal remnant of that patient partner of his life—so still, so cold, marble white. He would have madly tried to warm the bosom back to life; but his child withdrew him from the bed, because she knew that bosom bore the mark of a foul, savage blow, and she did not want that blow to recoil upon her father's heart. The night rolled slowly by, and the morning sun

fell full upon the upturned face of death; and as the drunkard looked towards it then, he saw that the love-light had not faded from the glassy eye-balls even yet. Another day and night, and it is time to take a last fond look, before the coffin-lid shall shut out the vision for ever; and a sad look it was. A parting pressure of those marble lips, and a hot tear upon the cheeks; and then the daughter comes to place a lily in the bosom, and twine a sweet white rose within the raven hair; and then amidst the tolling of the passing bell, and the tramping of the black procession, the scene is closed. But oh! the weary, weary hours of remorse which prey upon the widower when left alone—his life insupportable—what shall he do—what cordial panacea can quell his fears, and soothe his torturing reflection? His child creeps softly to his side, lays an open book upon his knees, from which she whispers in his ears, "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble." The words seem to revive him for a moment as he again asks, "What shall I do?" Prayer is the best cordial for a wounded spirit, father, says the child, "my mother taught me that." Prayer!—what is prayer? "I'll try to pray at all events," he says, and he turns to fall upon his knees. But, all at once, a cold and nervous tremor chills his veins, and he turns round again, and says, "No—I'll pray to-morrow—I can't pray now. Give me my hat!" The door has swung upon its hinges, and he is in the street: the daughter follows to the door, and watches him as he goes down the pavement, till he turns into a house. She follows quickly after him, and gets there just in time to hear him call hoarsely for some brandy. Down on her knees she begs him, by the memory of the loved and lost—for pity's sake—to come away; but he thrusts her out, and tells her to be gone. Arrived at home, she kneels once more, not now before an earthly but a Heavenly Father. She prays for help to lead her only relative from ruin into peace. The clock strikes ten—eleven—twelve—one—two—and three, before the shuffling footsteps can be heard against the door; and then it is opened by the strong hand of some ruffian companion who has helped her father to get home. He gives his drunken charge into her care, with many a coarse and brutal jest, and leaves them alone. His glaring eye happens to rest upon the open Bible he had set aside; and as his child placed his trembling hand upon his breast, his tears once more gushed forth like the water from the rock beneath the prophet's rod. "But, oh, it is a too late repentance. Next day he dives down into his hell again, to drown his grief in streams of liquid fire. And while he is away, another shadow darkens the threshold of his house; and the poor orphaned girl is listening to the glib and slippery flatteries of some deceitful libertine, and the casket of her fame is in peril of being ransacked of its peerly jewel—virtue. Day after day the father rolls home with his legion of evil spirits revelling in his heart; and day after day the plastic visitor comes with the velvet touch of his dainty lips. Is it any wonder that she should in her unguarded and untended innocence, with the bleeding tendrils of her trusting heart trembling to twine around some true support, with every fibre of her woman's soul torn from the objects that should win her love—is it a wonder, I repeat, that she should fall beneath the wicked wizardry of the seducer's sorceries, and sink from innocence to be the prey of the libertine, and the toy of the destroyer? And on whose head, O drunkard—on whose head, O beast, misallied a man—shall her blood most heavily descend? Yes! let the thought torture thee—let it lash thee as with a whip of scorpions, and lacerate the very soul with its envenomed smart—your killed your wife with your own selfish, beastly appetites—and you have worse than killed your daughter! After a long, lone absence—when you have filled up by plying about your pretty Jane—she comes back to your roof—dishonoured and abandoned; and as you stretch your arms to fold her to your heart, she laughs a hoarse and gipsy laugh—a weird and hollow sound—in which you cannot recognize those tones that read the Bible in your ear, and called on you to pray. You look upon the face but it is not the same; the blushes—once so modest—have faded from the cheek like withered flowers; and brazen, stolid insolence is mantling in its place. What wonder—hell-babe—what wonder that upon some black and stormy night, she hurls herself from the parapet of the bridge, and seeks a refuge from the cold and sluggish earth, in the colder and more sluggish water! Drowned!—yes, drowned!—and gone into eternity before you—a ministering spirit to usher you to hell. Don't you remember when her trembling finger pointed you to heaven, and when it traced the lines that spoke of Him who was the way, the truth, the life? But you would not follow it, and you have not only turned away yourself, but have strewn blasting ashes on her flowery path. O! be not surprised to see, as you are hurried through the ebony corridors of the nether world, the pallid phantom of that child whose early love would, had you cherished it, lifted your hopes and thoughts to heaven, laughing to see you writhing in the lake of fire. O fathers! be tender to your children, and be jealous of your daughter's love. Guard her honour as you would guard your life. Never uplift a recreant hand against a woman's breast for that man is a monster who can bruise with a miscreant's blow that tender bosom, or torify with a coward's curse that angel presence.—Rev. A. Murrell.

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The three Silences.

On a beautiful summer day, a few years ago, I walked down from the little border town of Newcastleton, to the ancient burying ground of Ettrick, which I found overspread by the foliage of a venerable ash—index of its containing the sleeping dust of many generations. I had just heard of the recent death of three grown persons connected with a farm about a mile distant, and I looked for their graves, and was so struck with the appearance of the three newly-formed and perfectly contiguous graves, as they rose above a foot from the general level of the graveyard (giving the general impression that the inmates were lying in each other's arms), that I sat down under the ample shade of the tall leafy watcher, and penned the following lines. May they speak home to the hearts of all who read them, and make some thoughtless ones "wise to consider their latter end," and turn to Him "who hath destroyed death, and brought life and immortality to light by the gospel!"

Stranger to Jesus, pause, and look on these three graves before you:
Reflect on death, death, heaven and hell, and God's "curse" hanging o'er you.
Three of one family lie there, two sisters and a brother;
Death laid them low in three short months, the one beside the other.
I cannot tell—I knew them not—whether they were prepared—
Whether they had received the grace through God's dear Son declared;
But this I know, they had all to go, when He the word had spoken.
"Return to dust"—the dim eye closed, and the cord of life was broken.
In health they lived, and scarce believed in aught like pain or weakness,
Till, like a flood, they were swept away, by one dread course of sickness!
Healthy and strong, you may now move along, eat, drink, sleep, and smile at sorrow,
But pale disease is tracking your steps, and may cut you down ere the morrow.
These graves to you, in symbols few, speak forth this exhortation,
"The time is short!" "Believe now and live—neglect not the great salvation."
Thrice do they tell your danger of hell, rejecting Jesus the Saviour;
And thrice they beseech you now to be pure in heart, speech and behaviour.
They chime a doleful dirge—three silences combine to form a chord;
The solemn harmony they make is this, "Flee sin, be found in Christ, and serve the Lord!"
Dear reader, there is but a step between you and death! The three persons we refer to were all their life long healthful and robust, until they were seized with the fever, which cut them off. However healthful you may be, a single fever or "bad cold" may lay you, in a few weeks, in the gloomy grave. Then, considering that life is so very uncertain, death so near, judgment so strict, hell so awful, it is only reasonable that I should urge upon you the necessity of now seeking the Lord while He may be found, and of preparing for a happy eternity. You will not drop into Heaven by accident, and without any care or effort; but you may reach hell without giving it a thought, or making the slightest exertion! Then "awake thou that sleepest," for eternity is at hand! You think of it as far away—as separated from time by some immeasurable distance or stupendous wall—but such a thought is not in accordance with fact or Scripture. Eternity is very near! It is only a step distant! You are separated from it only by a curtain of the finest texture! You walk along this side of it; Death walks along that; and he is ready at any moment to thrust his grisly hand through the gossamer veil, that he may grasp you firmly, and drag you with him into the great Unseen! Every pang that shoots through your frame, every pain you feel, is a touch of his icy hand, with only the tiny veil between! How many intimations you have had from him of his proximity! How many intimations you have had during the past to prepare for the final step!—And with the uncertainty of living another hour continually hanging over you, will you occupy your mind supremely with the things of time, and defer giving attention to the one thing needful—preparation for eternity? When you reflect on a past year of precious opportunity mispent, as those years that preceded it had been, and the momentous and eternal issues of your present conduct in the world to come, can you begin another year without fleeing from the wrath to come, repenting and confessing your sins, and washing in the fountain opened in Christ Jesus, for cleansing from all sin, that you may be prepared to meet your God? "After so long a time," will you not "consider your ways," turn your back upon "the city of destruction," and run with your face directed Zionward, crying "Life, life, eternal life." "Strive to enter in at the strait gate," that you may walk in "the narrow way," till you reach that "city that hath foundations, whose builder and Maker is God?"

THE REFORMERS.—It is worth our consideration whether we should, on every call and sophism of men not so taught, not so employed, not so tried, not so owned of God as they were, [the Reformers] and in whose writings there do not appear such characters of wisdom, sound judgment, and deep experience as in theirs, easily part with that doctrine of truth, wherein alone they found peace to their own souls, and whereby they were instrumental to give liberty and peace with God to the souls and consciences of others innumerable, accompanied with the visible effects of holiness of life, and fruitfulness in the works of righteousness, the praise of God by Jesus Christ.—Owen.

Preach Christ.

A young man had been preaching in the presence of a venerable divine, and after he had done, he went to the old minister, and said, "What do you think of my sermon?" "A very poor sermon indeed," said he, "A poor sermon!" said the young man: "It took me a long time to study it." "Ay, no doubt of it." "Why, did you not think my explanation of the text a very good one?" "O yes," said the old preacher "very good indeed." "Well, then, why do you say it is a poor sermon? Didn't you think the metaphors were appropriate, and the arguments conclusive?" "Yes, they were very good, as far as that goes; but still it was a very poor sermon." "Will you tell me why you think it a poor sermon?" "Because," said he, "there was no Christ in it." "Well," said the young man, "Christ was not in the text: we are not to be preaching Christ always; we must preach what is in the text." So the old man said, "Don't you know, young man, that from every town, and every village, and every little hamlet in England, wherever it may be, 'there is a road to London?' "Yes," said the young man. "Ah? said the old divine, 'and so from every text in Scripture, there is a road to the metropolis of the Scriptures, that is, Christ. And, my dear brother, your business is, when you get a text, to say, 'Now, what is the road to Christ?' and then preach a sermon, running along the road towards the great metropolis—Christ. And," said he, "I have never yet found a text that has not got a road to Christ in it; and if I ever do find one that has not a road to Christ in it, I will make one; I will go over hedge and ditch, but I would get to my Master for the sermon cannot do any good unless there is a savor of Christ in it."

The Pulpit and Religious Press.

A poor sermon and a poor religious newspaper are two of the poorest things ever imposed upon the poor people of this poor world. A sermon without thought and without study, without earnestness and without spiritual power, without the vitality of Gospel truth and without the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, such a sermon is a poor sermon. A religious newspaper loosely, lazily, lamely edited, without judgment, taste and appropriateness in the selections, without ability, point, spirit, and readableness in the contributions, without power, beauty, and popular sympathy in the editorials, without a judicious degree of important current intelligence, without beauty of typography and taste in arrangement, such a religious newspaper, if such a thing can be called religious, is a poor one.

The Rambling Hearer.

He belongs to no Christian Church. One minister, however excellent, he thinks, cannot be sufficient. "A variety, a variety, you know," he says, "is always best." From place to place he wanders, and justly he is called "the strolling professor." "O," says he, "I have found such an excellent man! I never heard his equal! If you could hear him, you would be charmed indeed!" But this rambling hearer cannot be a fixed one! Mr. M. is come to town. Such a preacher! My gees! his favorite preacher is deserted for a time; but he returns, and now his favorite minister is rather flat, wordy, uninteresting. In short, this man is everywhere. There is no preacher but he knows; no church or chapel but he is there for a time. Ah! but where is the benefit from all this? A rolling stone gather no moss.

The Theatre.

The theatre tends to corrupt those whom the community should always be most solicitous to preserve—the inexperienced and the young. It does this by the character of its plays by the nature of its accessories; by the morals of its professional corps,—honorable exceptions to the contrary notwithstanding; by the character of the accessories which the young are likely to meet there. We do not believe the theatre to be of benefit any.—Exchange Paper.

—Our information upon the effects of the theatres has been gathered from boys made wild and ungovernable; from clerks made untrustworthy; from apprentices made discontented and idle; from young men initiated into vice, and men not young fatally tainted or broken down by causes which in part, were planted or developed and nourished by the theatre.—Henry W. Beecher.

LOVE.—All things are driven by their own weight, and tend to their own center; my weight is my love; by that I am driven whithersoever I am driven.—S. August, Lib. iii. Confess.

GOD.—God is a light that is never darkened; an unwearied life that cannot die; a fountain always flowing; a garden of life; a seminary of wisdom; a racial beginning of all goodness.—Alanus, de Cong. Nat.

HOW TO USE THE FLESH.—If we give more to the flesh than we ought we nourish an enemy; if we give not to her necessity what we ought we destroy a citizen; the flesh is to be satisfied as far as suffices to our good; whosoever alloweth so much to her as to make her proud, knoweth not how to be satisfied: to be satisfied is a great art; lest, by the satiety of the flesh, we break forth into the iniquity of her folly.—S. Greg., Hom. iii. secund. Parte Beech.