

The Religious Intelligencer.

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Rev. F. McLEOD, {

That God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ—PETER.

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Religious Selections.

How it was Blotted Out.

The following very interesting letter was read in one of the daily prayer meetings of New York, by a merchant of that city.

"MY DEAR BROTHER: You know that for many years I had been a follower of strange gods, and a lover of this world and its vanities. Although not what the world calls a bad man, I was self-righteous, and thought I had religion enough of my own that was better than the Bible. I did not believe in the devil or hell. I believed that as God had created man, he was bound to save him. I knew I did not serve him, he did not know him, did not obey him. Prayer was forgotten, church was neglected, and worldly morality was the tree which brought forth its own deceptive fruit.

As time rolled on, God blessed me with children. As my boy grew up, our mutual love for him made us anxious about his welfare and future career. From time to time intelligence beamed from him. His mind turned over the little he had learned of God, and his nightly prayers, taught him by us, from habit and superstition, more than any conscientious feelings. His questions often puzzled me; and the sweet and earnest manner in which he inquired of his poor, sinful father to know more about his heavenly Father, and that 'happy land, far, far away,' which his nurse had taught him, proved to me that God had given me a great blessing in him.

"A greater distrust of myself and altogether sense of my inability to assure my boy of the truth of the faith contained in the simple little prayers I had learned from my mother, with my brothers and sisters, gradually began to grow over me, and made me often think. Still, I never went to church; had not even a Bible in the house. What was I to teach my boy, Christ and him crucified, or the doctrines I had tried to believe? Blessed be God, he, in his sovereign will, chose for me!

"One of his little friends died, then another, then his uncle. All these made an impression on the boy. He rebelled against it; wanted to know 'why God had done it?'—It was hard that God should just go and take his friends; he wished he would not do it. I, of course, had to explain the best I could.

"One evening he was lying on the bed, partly undressed; myself and my wife being seated by the fire. She had been telling me that T— had not been a good boy that day. She had been telling him for it. All was quiet; when, suddenly, he broke out in a loud crying and sobbing, which surprised us. I went to him and asked him what was the matter?

"I don't want it there, father; I don't want it there," said the child.

"What, my child, what is it?"

"Why, father, I don't want the angels to write down in God's book all the bad things I have done to-day. I don't want it there. I wish it could be wiped out." And his distress increased. What could I do? I did not believe; yet I had been taught the way. I had to console him, so I said:—

"Well, you need not cry; you can have it all wiped out in a minute, if you want."

"How, father, how?"

"Why, get down on your knees, and ask God for Christ's sake, to wipe it out, and he will do it."

"I did not have to speak twice. He jumped out of bed, saying,

"Father, won't you come and help me?"

"Now came the trial. The boy's distress was so great, and he pleaded so earnestly, that the big man, who had never bowed down before God in spirit and in truth, got down on his knees alongside of that dear boy, and asked God to wipe away his sins; and, perhaps, though my lips did not speak it, my heart included my own sins too. We then got up, and he lay down in his bed again. In a few moments he said:—

"Father, are you sure it is all wiped out?"

"Oh! how the acknowledgment greeted through my unbelieving heart, as the words came to my mouth.

"Why, yes, my son; the Bible says, if you ask God, from your heart, for Christ's sake, to do it, and if you are really sorry for what you have done, it shall be all blotted out."

"A smile of pleasure passed over his face, as he quietly asked,

"What did the angel blot it out with? With a sponge?"

"Again was my whole soul stirred within me, as I answered,

"No, but with the precious blood of Christ. The blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin."

"The fountain had at last burst forth. They could not be checked, and my cold heart was melted within me. I felt like a poor, guilty sinner, and turning away, said,

"My dear wife, we must find God, if we want to show him to our children. We can not show them the way unless we know it ourselves."

"After a little, the boy, with almost heaven looking out of his eye, came from his bed, and, leaning on my knee, turned up his face to mine, and said,

"Father, are you and mother sinners?"

"Why, yes, my son, we are."

"Why, said he, have you not a Saviour? Why are you sinners? God don't love sinners; why don't you love God?"

"I answered as best I could. And in the silent hours of the night I bent in prayer over that dear boy, and prayed, 'Lord, I believe, help mine unbelief.' My wife, too, united with me, and we prayed jointly for ourselves and our child. And God heard our prayers, and received us, as he always does those who seek him with a whole heart, for he has said unto such, they shall surely find me."

Such was the letter. Dear reader, how is it with you? Have your sins been blotted out in the precious blood of Jesus? This, with you, as with the little child here mentioned, is your great want. You may be moral or immoral; you may be a believer or an unbeliever; Protestant or Catholic; a professing Christian or a non-professor, but are, in either case, a sinner, and you can not get to heaven till your sin is blotted out. Has this been done for you?

There is but one way in which it can be effected. Even that infidel father knew this. Not by the blood of bulls and goats, not by works of righteousness which we have done; not by masses, penances, by tears or by prayers, but by "the precious blood of the Son of God, as of a lamb without spot or blemish."—"There is no other name under heaven, given among men, whereby we must be saved." Acts iv. 12.

Why should it remain unblotted out? That cleansing blood is free, it is abundant, it is offered to you. Why do you not accept it? Oh, hear the tender pleading of that dear child with his father and mother, and let it come to you: "Why have you not a Saviour? Why are you sinners? God don't love sinners; why don't you love God?"

The Man With No Heart.

The following is the substance of a conversation that recently took place in the neighborhood of the writer; and, thinking that there might be some among your many readers whom it might benefit, I have written it for the Intelligencer. For the sake of convenience, I have called the parties Christian All-Heart and Christian No-Heart:

All-Heart—How is it, Mr. —, that you talk so much about God's word, and Christ's work, and the assurance of pardon and heaven that his father and mother, and let it come to you: "Why have you not a Saviour? Why are you sinners? God don't love sinners; why don't you love God?"

No-Heart—My friend, I have got no heart to be troubled with in the manner you speak of. And thank God, I have got no heart.

All-Heart—You have got no heart! No heart! Why, you talk simple. What do you mean?

No-Heart—I mean what I say, friend. I have got no heart. The Lord asked it from me and I have it to him; and this is just the secret of the happiness I enjoy. While I had my heart in my own keeping I was always miserable. To take care of my heart, and take care of the world were two impossible things for me to do at once. But when I gave my heart to my Lord, he took it with all the curse and the care that there was in it; and I am fully assured that he is able to keep that which I have committed to his trust. While I had my own wretched heart in my own keeping, it was the most grievous burden on the Lord, and I never want to take it back again.

All-Heart—Then you must be pure, and perfectly holy.

No-Heart—If it is in the work and meditation of Christ you mean, I answer in the affirmative: "For he is my righteousness, and I am accepted in him." 1 Cor. 1:30; Eph. 1:5; Col. 1:10.

All-Heart—I mean that, if what you say is true your life on earth must be pure and sinless.

No-Heart—I answer, that "there is no man liveth in this world, and sinneth not." "In the flesh there dwelleth no good thing."

All-Heart—Well then, is there not some inconsistency in what you say? How is it possible for you to be happy, while knowing and acknowledging yourself to be a sinner, with no good thing in your flesh?

No-Heart—Sir, I believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and my faith in him hath made me a new creature in him; so that, even in full view of my daily sins and failings, my sadness is turned into joy, with the consciousness that I have no desire to sin against him, and with the assurance that there is no condemnation for me, and that sin shall have no dominion over me—that I shall yet have full dominion over sin.

All-Heart—I believe in the Christ as well as you; but I cannot say that I enjoy Christ as you seem to enjoy him. The truth is I see so much villainy in my heart, I am afraid to trust it, in these most solemn and important matters; and the more I search and examine it, it seems, the less comfort I have.

No-Heart—Ah! if you were to examine whether you be in the faith, I think you would soon find that you are more afraid to trust Christ than you are to trust your heart. Now, if you could but trust Christ, with your heart, he would search and examine it for you, and save you from all this trouble. When I took Christ's yoke he took my heart; and when I learned of him, he taught me to know what my heart was; and when he took it, he showed me where it was, and now I know so well that I never examine or search it for any comfort. I always get this by looking out, for the heart of Christ. When I examine Christ's heart, it seems to turn my heart in Christ's hand, inside out.

When I change, I see Christ's heart unchanged. When I grow cold, I see Christ's heart always warm. When I sin against him, I see his heart still pouring its love down upon me. Oh! what heart is it that this would not turn inside out? The glory of God's love appears in the plan of redemption in Christ Jesus; and no soul can come with open face to behold that glory of love, even as in a glass, without being changed into the same image of love, from glory to glory.

All-Heart—Oh! that I could but make such a surrender of my heart to Christ, and take such a look at his heart!

No-Heart—Believe! believe! Put true faith in his blood, and full confidence in his word. This is all. Do this and every good must follow. —[Christian Intelligencer.]

The Duty of Building up the Cause of God.

In reply to Nehemiah's delineations of the condition of Jerusalem, the people said, "Let us rise up and build." And they not only said this, but "they strengthened their hands for this good work." The circumstances, the means and the encouragement of the work suggest to our minds the how and the why, or the means and the encouragements in a corresponding work of building up the cause of God now.

I. The How. There is always a right way to do everything—a place and time to begin, and, appropriate means to be employed, until the work is consummated. We should learn the actual state of things, by an acquaintance with them—by inquiry and investigation as Nehemiah did. Inquiry is convenient and often gives a correct result, if pursued far enough. But it is not to be implicitly relied upon in important matters, without a thorough, critical investigation, lest there be a failure somewhere; lest we come off as the Irishman did when he thought sure he was going to meet one of his old familiar countrymen, but when he approached him he exclaimed with some expletives, "He is not the man I took him to be." So we find on close examination that many things are not what we took them to be, from cursory observation.

We are to learn our work—its theory and its practice. How can we do any thing intelligently unless we know first, what is to be done, and, second, how to do it. Every workman is obliged to do this, which requires a course of discipline and practice in order to make him a workman that needeth not to be ashamed.

Again, we must do our work. To acquire the necessary knowledge and to become a skilful artificer are not enough. These will never build a house, or a wall, or perform any other specific work; nor will they build up the cause of God. The children of Israel knew enough and were well able to go up and possess the good land, but that did not secure it to them, or prevent their dying in the wilderness. Knowledge and skill of workmen would not build the walls of Jerusalem, however indispensable they were to that result; but they must apply these attainments practically—they must perform the work. So in religion, theory, knowledge, accomplishments will not do the work. Neither will others do it for us. Each one must do his own work. All together must nerve themselves for the effort, and never give up until their work is done.

1. We must be decided, permanently decided to do the work. We do not know what we can do, until we try and try in earnest. Such a decision is half the work.

2. We must remove the rubbish. There is more or less in every church. It is very poor stuff to build upon. Burn it, confess it, get it out of the way. Dig deep and long the foundation on the rock.

3. We must resist the enemy. We have one. Be assured that as soon as we go to work we shall hear from him! His flattery, his snares or his threats, should not disturb us. If we resist him he will flee from us.

4. Heed not the counsels of the faint hearted. They will create a panic. They will not work or let others work. Their influence is always deleterious.

5. Rebuke the murmurers. They have no part in the work, but are laboring to arrest it.

6. Prosecute the work. Systematically, watchfully, unitedly, prayerfully and perseveringly. System is important in everything, but especially in it of inestimable utility in the church. Every one without an exception should have his individual work. There is no possible ground for being excused. You might as well talk of excusing the soldier in battle. Each part of it should be performed in its proper place and season. We should watch ourselves, our work, and at the same time guard against the enemy, by day and by night.

All classes should unite their efforts to secure the general result, just as the priests, rulers, goldsmiths, apothecaries, merchants and even the ladies, performed their respective parts in building the wall, each one over against his own house, and all together standing on the defence. Every effort should be permeated by the spirit of prayer, be proportioned to the difficulties to be overcome, and be persisted in until the final consummation.

The way to enlarge our numbers is for the numbers we have, every one, to come up to the work and do his part. If all will not, let all who can promptly and energetically take hold of the work.

The way to increase our money and our cheerfulness to use what we have faithfully and cheerfully. Money well invested will be sure to gain; and we know no better place of investment than the bank of heaven.

We need more interest, humility, faith, love, spirituality, or union, let us foster and carefully employ what we do possess, and it will very soon augment. The two will become four, and the five, ten. So it will be with every needed grace. There is no spiritual want but God is ready to supply, if we are ready to secure it. If we fail, the blame falls back upon ourselves.

II. The Why. The encouragements may be seen from a general or specific point of view. In the first case, we have the assurance of God's presence and benediction. This is sufficient, if there were no other reason, to inspire every other principle necessary to our efficient action. We also have the assurance that our labor shall not be in vain in the Lord. Our resources and prosperity will increase, as we increase our interest, our purposes and our efforts. Small beginnings, diligent application, and success follow each other in close proximity, so that we may receive encouragement at every step of our progress. The souls of others will be saved, and God will be honored.

In the second case, our personal circumstances the comforts of life, the means of grace, the conveniences for worship, public and social, and the many opportunities of friendly intercourse and enjoyment, should inspire every heart with gratitude and courage. We should glory in the privilege of meeting obstacles and dangers, and triumphing over them.

In this way we may build up. But sloth, inactivity and cowardice, will never accomplish anything, and they ought not to. They that feel their need, know their state and their work, and meet the obstacles, every one at his post, weeping, praying and laboring over against his own house; will be sure to overcome them. They may labor with confidence of success. With cooperation, system, care and perseverance, it is their privilege to prosecute their work until they realize their fondest expectations. —[Morning Star.]

"I Am a Lost Man."

The newspapers inform us that these were the last words of Bugeaud, Marshal of France and Duke of Fely. When he uttered them, he was just closing a brilliant, many would say a useful life. He had led vast armies to battle: he had governed extensive States: he had been conspicuous in the councils of nations. The President of France made anxious visits to his death-chamber. The stern Cavaignac wept as he looked upon the dissolving frame of his old comrade; and the Convention was profoundly affected when the news of his death was announced. With all his accumulation of honor, he was, by his own profession, "a lost man."

How mournful the contrast between the glory of his life and the deep gloom of its close!

From the same source we learn that Bugeaud had a pious mother. In the history of his eventful life, this seems to have been the only quarter in which good influence was exerted upon his heart. His mother's voice alone warned him of his danger, and spoke to him of eternity; all other influences led him astray. In the camp he heard of God only in blasphemy; in civil life he saw nothing but a desperate struggle for earthly place and power; in the saloons of Paris he heard wit mocking and philosophy denouncing the religion of his youth. The quiet voice that had warned him and prayed with him was, alas for him! over come and lost in the midst of these babbling voices of the world.

In the hour of death, however, these voices die away and are forgotten. The acclamation of a world could not have made the failing pulse of Bugeaud beat faster. Other tones were in his ears; for the accents we will not listen to when they accuse. The dying moments are often the time of resurrection for abused privileges and neglected gifts. They "stole forth from the burial-place of memory" to foreshadow our doom, and convince us of its undeniable justice.

Thus we explain that fearful expression that fell from the dying warrior. He heeded a voice which he had long neglected and forgotten. Across the waste of years, through the storm of battle, it comes clear and distinct upon his failing ear. It asks for early council; it seeks for pious care and zeal. One comprehensive glance over his life testifies the man that he has wasted it. His own conscience condemns him. In this he knows that he but anticipates the sentence of God, and he sinks into death, "a lost man."

The lesson of this sad incident is easily read.

It is only another instance of the ease with which carelessness can turn our best blessings into curses. A mother's love and a mother's pious care are inestimable gifts of God's mercy. Indifference and impenitence can make them causes of our deeper damnation, and so change the soft voice that sang our infancy to sleep, that it will haunt our dying pillow with accusations that we can neither gainsay nor resist. —Rev. M. B. Grier.

A Trifling Preacher.

A clergyman once preached a very awakening sermon. A young man in the congregation was much impressed, and finding that the clergyman was to walk some distance home, joined him, in the hope of having some conversation as to how to be saved. The clergyman was walking with several others, and instead of conversation turning on religious matters, it was light, and even indecorous. Some years afterward, the clergyman was called to see a dying man in an inn. As he entered the room, the dying man started. "Sir," said he, "I have heard you preach. Thank God for that! But sir," continued the man, "I have heard you talk, and your talking has ruined my soul. Yes, sir, do you remember the day I heard you preach? That sermon brought conviction to my heart. But I sought conversation with you, I walked home with you, hoping to hear something about my soul's peace; but you trifled—trifled—trifled! Yes, you did; and I went home believing that you knew all the solemn things you said in the morning were lies. For years I was an infidel; but now—I am dying—I am one no longer. But I am not saved! I will meet and accuse you before the bar of God!" And so the man died.

Two Universalists in Trouble.

We have recently met with two cases which illustrate the weakness of that hope which rests upon the theory of Universalism. One was a gentleman of more than ordinary intelligence, and a very moral man withal. He had always contended that all men would be saved, that none were in danger of eternal death; and through his influence many others were led to build upon the same foundation.

Last fall, he became satisfied that he must soon die. In the silence of the sick-room, he reviewed the foundation of his hope. With the reality of death and eternity before him, the arguments which before appeared conclusive, became altogether unsatisfactory, and afforded his soul no rest. One after another of them he reviewed and rejected, and finally concluded that there was no well-grounded hope without a personal consecration to Christ, and pardon of sin through his death. As his friends and relatives gathered around him, during his last days, he charged them not to trust to his former belief, assuring them that it would not stand in the trying hour; that there was no safety in it; that it was more specious than true; that the only safe retreat was in submission to Christ. Thus warning and entreating his friends to flee to the Saviour, and not delay to seek a full pardon of sin at the foot of the cross, he died.

The other case was that of a physician, a man of culture, of great medical skill, and possessed of a sharp, vigorous mind. His moral character was not above reproach. His opposition to christianian experience, and the doctrine of repentance as indispensable to salvation, was bitter and ceaseless. Few could stand before him in argument, and christians feared him, and sinners felt secure when they could enjoy his defence.

Months before he died, he became aware that his days were numbered. Then came reflection, and candid review. He had been a champion of Universalism, and all the pride of his nature was opposed to renunciation. But the logic of death and eternity, and the voice of reason and revelation, bore down upon him, filling him with great fear and distress, and finally, after a great struggle of soul, he renounced his old hope, and fled to Christ for refuge. The few weeks that he survived were devoted to the refutation of his former faith, and to warning his friends not to trust to so frail and fallacious a foundation.

These cases are but specimens of thousands which are constantly occurring. What is their lesson? Why these changes when death confronts them? Do these who have sought pardon through obedience to Christ ever renounce their hope at this trying hour? Why this difference? Where is the place of safety? —[Morning Star.]

A Willing Servant.

Dr. MORRISON was a distinguished missionary in China. As his labor was great, and almost too much for one man, for he translated the whole Bible into Chinese, he sent home to the society in England to send out a young missionary to help him. When they got his letter, they set to work to inquire among their friends for the right kind of a young man to go out to China as a missionary to help Dr. Morrison. After a while a young man from the country—a pious young man, who loved Jesus Christ—came and offered himself. He was poor; had poor clothes on, and looked like a countryman, rough and unpolished. He was introduced to the gentlemen of the

Society, and had a talk with them. They then said he might go out of the room, till they consulted with each other about him. When his back was turned, they said they were afraid the young man would never do to help Dr. Morrison; that it would not do to send him as a missionary as he was but a rough countryman. Finally, they said to one of their number, Dr. Phillips: "Doctor, you go out and tell the young man that the gentlemen do not think him fit to be a missionary; but if he would like to go out as a servant to a missionary, we will send him."

The doctor did not quite like to do it, but he told the young man they thought he had not education enough, and lacked a great many other things necessary to a missionary; but if he would go as a servant, they would send him out. "A great many young men would have said, 'I don't do any such thing; if I can't go as a missionary, I won't go at all; you don't catch me going out as anybody's servant.'—But no; he did not say so. He quietly said, 'Very well, sir, if they don't think me fit to be a missionary, I will go as a servant. I am willing to be a hewer of wood, or a drawer of water, or do anything to advance the cause of my heavenly Master.'"

He was sent as a servant. But he did not stay one. After a while, he got to do what he longed to do, to preach the gospel; and he became the Rev. Dr. Milne, one of the best and greatest missionaries that ever went to any country.

What a beautiful lesson of humility is this to children!

False Standards of Piety.

Professed christians have too often false criteria by which they try their piety. Instead of aiming at the "mark for the prize" in running the christianian race—instead of "looking to Jesus the author and finisher of our faith," "we measure ourselves by ourselves, and compare ourselves among ourselves;" and this to a more alarming extent than is generally imagined: A church member compares his own christianian character with that of other church members, or perhaps, with that of the pastor of the church, and then compares the piety of the church with the piety of other churches of the same or other denominations. And if the question arises whether his life corresponds with the requirements of God, he frankly confesses that there is a great deficiency, but solaces himself with the fact that he lives as well as other christians.

Nothing can be more fatal to that holiness which the christianian religion demands, than this wicked habit. Christian number one, compares his life with Christian number two, and number two compares his with number one. Each regards his character as christianian if it compares favorably with the life of his neighbor, and each, of course, is more ready to discover imperfections in the character of his neighbor than in his own.

Thus as the character of these two men degenerates, their standard of piety degenerates, and as the standard lowers, the life of each lowers correspondingly. This is one of Satan's most successful methods of deceiving men about their standing with their God, which, if it cannot be broken up, will send millions to perdition. If an acre of land, a yard of cloth, or a quart of milk is to be purchased, we want to know that the measure is such that we suffer no injustice. But, as if determined to be defrauded in our measure of piety, we lay aside the sealed measure with which God has furnished us, and use that of our neighbor, which we positively know to be far short of the true standard. —M. Star.

A Mother's Prayers.

Some few years since an East India trader was attacked while trading in the Indian Ocean by a piratical schooner, and the attack being sudden and unlooked for, the merchantman fell an easy prey into the hands of the pirates. The captain and several of the crew were slain during the conflict, and the rest being gagged and heavily ironed, were laid in the pirates' boats for removal to their own vessel, and the murderous gang proceeded to the ship's cabin, intending there to complete the work of destruction, and see of what treasure they could possess themselves.

As they descended the companion way they heard a soft voice, evidently engaged in supplication; and the chief, directing his followers to halt at the entrance, went noiselessly forward to ascertain whence the voice proceeded. Bending low to avoid observation, he peeped into a door that stood ajar, and there knelt a fair young woman, with a beautiful boy at her side, one arm clasped across by around the child, and the other raised in earnest supplication. "Oh God of all mercy," said the beseeching voice, as the face of fearful agony met the pirate's view, "save the life of my child, if such be thy holy will; but rather let him perish now by the assassin's knife, than fall a living prey into such hands to be trained up to a life of sin and infamy. Let him die now if such be thy decree; but Oh, let him not live to dishonor thee, and perish at last eternally." The voice ceased, choked with tears of agony, and there stood the pirate transfixed to the spot by the tumult of his own emotions. In imagination he was again a child; his own pious mother's prayers and instructions for long years forgotten, rose before him, and God's Spirit sent such an arrow of conviction to his heart, that instead of carrying out his mur-