

The Religious Intelligencer.

AN EVANGELICAL FAMILY NEWSPAPER, FOR NEW BRUNSWICK AND NOVA SCOTIA.

Rev. F. McLEOD, {

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

{ Editor and Proprietor

VOL 8.---NO. 5

SAINT JOHN NEW BRUNSWICK, FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 1. 1861.

WHOLE NO. 369

Religious Intelligencer.

BIBLE SOCIETY MEETING.

(Continued.)

The Rev. G. A. Hartley moved the second resolution, and spoke as follows:—

MR. PRESIDENT, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN—

It is a source of pleasure to me that this, my first appearance on this platform as a public speaker, is in connection with the noblest and purest Society ever organized among men on the earth, for the circulation of Divine Truth. If there is an organization in existence which is anti-secular in its character, pure in its motives, and has just claim upon the sympathies and co-operation of all men, especially of all Christian men, it is the British and Foreign Bible Society. Its aim is nothing less than to give the unadulterated truth, the Holy Scriptures, without note or comment, to all the nations and tribes of the earth, in their own language. As the resolution that I have just read, sir, refers to success in the circulation of the word of God, it naturally leads us to think of the many and mighty forms of evil that have opposed the truth and the circulation of the truth of our holy Christianity. The Bible and its teachings have always been opposed. The authority upon which the church of Christ acts, and the obligation under which she is placed to give the knowledge of God to the whole world, is found in the commission given to the infant Church by our Divine Lord and Master himself, "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature." But no sooner did the Apostles and the Early Christians go forth in this holy work of preaching the doctrines of the Cross and establishing the new religion, than the benign influences of Christianity began to be seen. The whole Roman Empire soon felt the electric shock and turned her mighty forces to the work of overthrowing the Church of Christ, and destroying the Holy Scriptures. Yes, sir, the great foe with which the Gospel had to contend for the first five centuries was Pagan idolatry. Severe and heavy was the conflict between light and darkness. Very many of the Apostles and early Christians were cruelly persecuted and put to death. But the Word of God was not hindered. Truth went on its heavenly mission, spreading light and undermining the very temples of Paganism, until, at about the close of the fifth century, we find Christianity making mighty strides through the earth, and Pagan idolatry, like a poor, crippled, bleeding thing, lying at the foot of the cross. In the sixth century another foe appeared—one even more cruel and bloody than Paganism itself. The Arabian prophet comes forth, differing from the priests of Paganism in that he admitted that all should worship one God but was equally bitter against the truths and principles of Christianity. While Mahomet admitted the claims of God, he declared that the religion of the Christians and later Jews was false and corrupt, and that he had been visited by the angel Gabriel and appointed an apostle to re-establish the old and true religion, the religion of Abraham, Moses and the Prophets; and in opposition to the inspired word of God, gave the people the Koran. Long and cruel, sir, as you well know, were the bloody battles that followed his attempts to establish his religion by the sword. Thousands of God's true worshippers fell and bled on his altars. As the Christian looks on the field of carnage, he is sometimes excited with hope and at others cast down with fear. At one moment the crescent is seen lifting itself above the cross; again the cross rises the highest, and in a moment more the crescent is seen floating full length above the cross. But, sir, blessed be the name of God who hath given us the victory, to-day Bible Societies are increasing by thousands, Bibles are multiplying by millions, and Bible lovers and readers are filling the whole earth, while the Koran is becoming unknown, and the Moslem religion lies, in almost a dying condition, on the banks of the Bosphorus. Another cold, cruel and wicked foe with which the Bible has met, is blind infidelity. It comes forth assuming different forms in different countries. In Germany it takes the form of a kind of Rationalistic Theology, talking loudly and eloquently in the language of poor, perverted human reason, and spreading itself like a black scurf through the length and breadth of that country. In France it appeals to the lower passions of the mob, and goes forth exciting a revolution, and uniting in the blasphemous expression of Voltaire when the name of our Holy Saviour is mentioned, crying, "Crush the wretch!" The voice is heard in the streets of Paris, crying, "No God! no God!" and on their tombstones is written, "Death is an eternal sleep!" Annihilation is promulgated. But Christianity still continues to spread. In other countries it is extending its holy influences and taking a deep hold of the nations. Voltaire, weary of hearing how twelve men established Christianity, impudently declared that he would show the world how that with one hand he would overthrow it. He brought against it all his wit, his relentless hate, and his sarcasm; he wrote and declaimed, and philosophized against the Bible, and brought to bear every opposition in his power. But how complete his failure! Voltaire is dead. The Word of God continues to increase. The very press on which was printed, at Terney, the blasphemous boast of this infidel, was for years afterwards used at Geneva for

printing the Bible. On it were struck off thousands of copies of the Word of God. Hume, it cannot be denied, had a skeptic's heart, and wrote and laboured to overthrow Christianity. But, sir, David Hume died, and in a short time, in the very room where he expired, a Bible Society is formed, and on his tombstone is written by his own children passages of God's Word. Gibbon, although more scholarly and gentlemanly than those just mentioned, also had a skeptic's heart, and sneered at the doctrines of the Cross. He too died, and the very property made by that skeptic falls into the hands of one who contributes largely to the funds of the British and Foreign Bible Society. Thus God makes the wrath of man to praise Him. In the year 1802, in the city of New York, Tom Paine—whose name is but too familiar, and whose poisonous works I hope have not been, and still fear they have been too much, read by some even in this audience—made his impious boast that in five years he would drive the Bible from America, and cause Christianity to become an obsolete thing. This infidel also died, as the enemies of God always die, in a most miserable condition—attended by a poor fallen woman, and in horror crying out, "Lord Jesus have mercy on me!" You, Mr. President, have seen, sir, I presume, with many others present, the noble Bible houses of that city, one in Astor place, the other in Nassau street, where thousands and millions of copies of the Holy Scriptures are kept, and whence they are being sent out by the American Bible Society to bless that entire country, as well as many foreign nations. These things are being enjoyed instead of the threats of Paine. But, sir, after all this, perhaps the most relentless foe with which the Bible has ever met, is Popery. The Church of Rome both hates and fears the Bible. She fears to let her people come in contact with the pure truth. It is a well known fact that her Popes have declared it to be an unspeakable and that to circulate it indiscriminately would be productive of great injury. Her popes, abbots, priors, bishops and priests, wherever found, always oppose the circulation of the Scriptures. Rejecting the infallible truth they teach men to trust to the fallible testimony of a fellow mortal. Perhaps, sir, in this particular the spirit of that whole Church cannot be better expressed than it was by a Popish doctor when in conversation with Tyndal. Their subject was the authority of God and of the Pope, when the Papist said, "We had better be without God's law than without the Pope's law," to which the intrepid Tyndal replied, "I defy the Pope and all his laws, and if God spares my life in a few years the ploughboys of England will know more of the Scriptures than you do." This is the spirit of the Romish Church, but we bless God that the saying of Tyndal has been even more than realized. As I mention the name of England's worthy translator, a scene and a fact often read of by many in this audience, is freshly presented to our minds. The scene is in St. Paul's Church, in London, on 11th of February, 1526. There sits Cardinal Wolsey, in his lordly appearance, clothed in purple, surrounded by many mitred heads of the Romish Church. In the pulpit is one Fisher, Bishop of Rochester, preaching against Tyndal, Luther and the Bible. At a little distance is a fire. There sit a number of baskets filled with books, principally Tyndal's New Testament. A number of threatened recanting Bible readers are there, and compelled, at the close of the service, with fagots on their backs, to walk around this fire, and as they go to cast one after another of the books into the flames, until all are consumed. This was a time of triumph to the wicked Wolsey, when he no doubt thought he had for a long time, if not for ever, shut out from England the light of the glorious Gospel.

But wait awhile. Let a little more than three centuries pass away, and what do we see? On the very spot where then the ashes of the New Testament were lying, now stands the noble edifice of the Religious Tract Society, which is the repository of millions of copies of the Holy Scriptures and other religious books; and more, sir, with the very money with which Tyndal's New Testament were bought for the fire—as he and his friends consented for them to be sold—a far larger edition was printed and sent forth to bless the country. And furthermore, on the fiftieth or jubilee anniversary of the British and Foreign Bible Society, the highest dignitary of Great Britain, the Archbishop of Canterbury, preached from the same pulpit from which Fisher had denounced the Bible, and preached to thousands of anxious listeners, about the perpetuity and the truthfulness of God's Word. The history of the Bible is one of complete triumph. Although Bible Societies in their organized capacity are of modern date, and my resolution leads me to speak of the success of this Society, yet I may be permitted to say, that the work of giving the Scriptures, in their own languages, to the nations of the earth was felt, acknowledged and acted upon, long before the dark ages and the breaking out of the glorious Protestant reformation that has proved such a blessing to Europe, and, indeed, to the world.

As long ago as in the time of the golden mouthed Grecian orator Chrysostom, in the year 390, about three centuries after the death of the Apostle John, in the then Christian city of Constantinople, we read of that eloquent Christian declaring that he believed the giving of the Scriptures in their languages, must be the first

important and successful step toward their evangelization; and also declaring—and we will now remember that at this time they had to be laboriously written out with a pen—that the "Sythians, Thracians, Moors and Indians have the Scriptures in their own languages," and further, that "the Gospel had reached to the ocean, even to the island of the British Barbarians." Little did Chrysostom then think that little island would ever become the brightest and most honorable nation of the earth; that it should be the most mighty repository of light, and the Bible in the world, and send forth more copies of the Holy Scriptures to bless the world than all the world beside. His expression, "British barbarians," doubtless falls strangely on the ears of some present. If strange it was true. The Britons at that time were clad in the skins of beasts, with their brawny limbs painted blue, and bowing down to their idols. What a change! "What hath God wrought?" England is now the acknowledged pride and crown of nations, and stands unrivalled for her zeal in the cause of Bible dissemination.

Of the need that was felt for giving the Bible to those who did not possess it, and of the attempts that were made, my limited time will not allow me to speak. Suffice it to say, that at the suggestion of the Rev. Mr. Charles, of Bala, A. D. 1804, in the London Tavern was formed, by a noble band of 300 Bible lovers, our noble institution—the British and Foreign Bible Society. These noble-hearted men have now all passed away. In 1859 the last, Dr. Steinkopf was gathered to his fellow laborers. How beautifully appropriate may it be said of these men, as the Revelation saith of the pious dead,—"Blessed are the dead, who die in the Lord, from henceforth. Yea saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours and their works do follow them." May their mantles be worn by worthy successors! Like the 300 men of Gideon's army who went forth in the valley of Jezreel, with their lighted torches, and overthrew the mighty army of the Midianites, so have these 300 men, with their coadjutors and successors, gone forth with the blazing lamp of God's eternal truth into the dark valleys of the earth, overthrowing mighty despots, quenching the violence of their foes and planting upon the towers and walls of mighty nations the Cross of Christ, and the blood stained banner of the Prince of Peace. This Society, like the Church of Christ itself, in the time of its infancy met with strong opposition from able and influential persons, whose co-operation it should have enjoyed. Nevertheless it prospered, showing that God was on its side. It is the Society of God's Book, and God is at its head, and as it has done, so it ever must prosper. I think, Sir, that in 1810 the fifth auxiliary was organized. In six years there had only been six auxiliaries organized. Now we can number them by thousands. The abundant success of this Society, as stated in my resolution, is especially shown in the fact, that during the five years of its existence the number of copies of the Scriptures circulated did not amount to 160,000; whereas during the last five years it has amounted to more than 8,000,000. I believe it has exceeded that number by 138,000. And even in the last year the number amounted to 1,900,000 copies, to which if we add those of the India auxiliaries, it swells the number to more than 2,000,000 of copies of God's precious Word circulated in a single year. It is conveying the Lamp of Life into almost all the nations. Even in China and Italy, although not as rapidly as might be and as is desired, yet, in those populous empires the Bible is finding its way. Of this we will not doubt hear more from gentlemen whose resolutions will lead them to speak more particularly of these countries. Spain and Portugal remain barred against the Bible, but we trust that ere long it will do its work in these nations.

My resolution also leads me to call upon all present and all Bible lovers to offer thanksgiving to Almighty God for the abundant success vouchsafed to the operations of this Society. I need not expend time in showing the binding obligations under which we are, to thus offer thanksgiving. To the Bible we owe our present exalted position, and when vast numbers of others who have long been in ignorance and sin are receiving the same blessing, do we not feel thankful? Shall we not all humble ourselves in the very dust at the foot of the cross, and offer grateful, heartfelt thanksgiving to our Heavenly Father for the great work He is accomplishing throughout the world? With these remarks, Sir, I have pleasure in moving the resolution I have read, leaving it in the hands of the gentlemen who may be pleased next to call upon.

THE CITY OF REFUGE.

There were six Cities of refuge in the land of Israel. Three of them stood on one side of Jordan and three on the other. All of them stood on plains. What were they built for? Attend to what follows, and you will be able to answer. They were built for affording protection to those Jews who had accidentally killed one of their neighbors. The laws of the Jewish country were not like our laws in such cases. If such an accident occurs among us, the policemen takes the man before a judge, and when it is proved that the death was caused by a pure accident, the man is set at liberty without any punishment; but in the Jews' country, where the man saw he had unfortunately, and without intention, killed another man, the nearest relation of the dead man might, if he could catch the man that did it, kill him for having caused the death of the other. To prevent this, the man that killed his neighbor runs off with fastest speed to the nearest of the six cities appointed to afford him protection. The roads to it were kept in good order, and where there were two roads in different directions a finger-post was put up with a board pointing out the right road, on which was painted in large letters.

"TO THE CITY OF REFUGE."

Along the road ran the man, with, perhaps, some one hastening to overtake him, to kill him, till he reached the city, where he was received, and was safe. He had, however, to prove to the judges and before the people that he was not a murderer, and that the death was the result of pure accident. If this was proved, he was allowed to live in the city till the death of the High Priest. If he left the city, and was caught by the friends of the man he killed, they might safely slay him; but dare not do so after the death of the High Priest. The names of the six Cities of Refuge were Bezer, Ramoth, Golan, Kedesh, Shechem, and Hebron: all of which may be easily found on a map of Palestine.

These cities were to be of easy access; the width of the roads was to be at least 48 feet. Every year, on the 15th of Aclat (which corresponds with our February), the magistrates inspected the roads to see if they were in good condition. The Cities of Refuge all stood in plains, therefore the manslayer had no uphill race to run for deliverance. Near each city stood a hill which could be seen at a distance, so that he might not mistake the place.

Sometimes the people who lived near these cities saw strange sights. Perhaps in the cool of the evening they would be up on the flat tops of their houses, talking of the Lord's goodness, and singing to him the evening psalm. Suddenly, fearful cries are heard from the valley below—cries of fear, and of rage and fury. People stop and looking down, there is a pale murderer, with horror in his face, rushing at full speed, making for the gate. Behind him is the avenger of blood, with dagger in hand, in hot pursuit, threatening vengeance and death. Will the man get in, or will he fall a victim? On he rushes pale and gasping, and at length, with one desperate bound, he gets within the blessed refuge. Oh how he thanks the God of mercy for his deliverance! But hark there is another cry! Away down in the next valley there is a man making for the other refuge. For a long way he rushes on at full speed, leaving his pursuer far behind; at last, thinking he was near his refuge and therefore safe, weary and breathless, he incautiously sits down to rest. Forgetting to watch, the avenger springs upon him suddenly, and plunges the dagger into his heart! Oh, the agonizing look he gives at the city he can never reach now, as he closes his eyes in death!

Sometimes, too, the people would see another man come close up to the gate; but he hesitated to go in; stood doubting and trembling until, ere he was aware, the avenger smote him to the earth, and he died with his bleeding head resting on the very threshold.

These events in the land of Israel were intended as a type of what takes place in the kingdom of God on earth. The manslayer is the type of a sinner—of yourself, reader. "The wages of sin is death." The avenger represents God's holy law, which says: "The soul that sinneth it shall die." And the City of Refuge is the salvation provided for the sinner in the Lord Jesus, and bestowed without money and without price.

Reader, if you are not yet saved—make haste for the city. The avenger of blood—God's broken law—is pursuing you, Jesus is your city. No river rolls between you and him. No hills rise to hinder you. The way is plain and open it is broad and level. Up, then, and flee. Up

and run speedily. Thousands have got in already. There is room yet for you. And even with the red stains of guilt upon your soul, you will be sure of a kindly welcome, for Jesus says, "Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out."

AN IMPRESSIVE NARRATIVE.

A few years ago I was travelling in South America. As I approached the base of a mountain which lay in my route, I found it covered with what I supposed to be an undergrowth of weeds. But I pressed my way onward, and climbed up its sides, till I reached the summit. When I had gained the top, I gazed around me with delight, and happened to look back on the winding path in which I had ascended, and lo! my whole path was clearly marked out, to the very foot of the mountain. I found it was caused by my having walked through a growth of the sensitive plant, as it is familiarly known to us, which grows indigenous there. It had left all my way plain before me, so that I could trace my footsteps in all their curves and deviations, as I had struggled up the sides of that beautiful mountain.

A few months after that, as I was reposing in my tent in California at twelve o'clock at night, a man came to the door of an adjoining tent, and called out:

"Are there any Christians here, gentlemen?"

One man sprang from his bed.

"I love my Saviour," said he.

"Come with me, then," said the stranger.

"There's a man dying out here, just beyond the walls of Captain—'s fort; and he says he wants to talk with a Christian."

They ran out together, although the rain poured down in torrents, until they came to where the dying man lay. He was stretched on a couch, I was going to say, but I hardly know what to call it; for it was made up of broken branches. On these he lay, while a few bed-spreads were thrown over him. He was dying. Let us hear his testimony.

He said to my Christian friends who gathered around him:

"I have now reached a point at which the whole scene of my life seems to lie visibly before me. Every action that I have committed, every sin, every crime that I have perpetrated before God, seems to stare me right in the face. I can see my way clear back to my youth; and as I look, the scenes of iniquity and guilt in which I have engaged pass one and another before me in terrible review."

They sang with him, and prayed with him, and endeavored to console him, and point him to Jesus; but he said:

"It's all over now—all over! I have rejected Christ, and there is no salvation for me."

He ceased speaking. They sang and prayed with him again; and whilst thus engaged, he closed his eyes in death. His immortal spirit passed into the presence of the God whom he acknowledged to have sinned against and rejected all his life.

Unconverted friend, you will reach that point by and by, when every scene of your life, like the life of this dying man, or like my path up the mountain, will pass in terrible review before you. Then your anguish and your agony will be terrible to witness, when you reflect that you have rejected Jesus Christ, and that he is about to leave you to perish in your sins!

THE VAIN REQUEST—OR UNCONSCIOUS INFLUENCE.

Gather up my influence, and bury it with me!" exclaimed a youth, whose unforgotten spirit was sinking into the invisible world. Idle request? Had he begged his friends to bind the free winds, to chain the wild waves, to grasp the fierce lightning or to make a path for the sand-blast, his wish would have been more feasible; for past influence is unchangeable.

The sceptical thought, that fell as a seed of evil from the lip, and grew in the heart of the listener into defiant infidelity, the light word that pierced the Spirit like a poisoned dart, the angry passion which stirred the soul to anguish and made tears flow at the midnight hour, are alike beyond our reach. The mind thus wounded sighs on, and after we are dead, the chords vibrate which our fingers touched. Influence is immutable and eternal.

Such are the fearful sentiments contained in a fugitive poem which once met my eye. They are thoughts peculiarly adapted to the consideration of a young lady; for, whatever may be her grade in society, her talents or opportunities, it is a necessary condition of her existence that she must exert this potential thing we call influence. It is not a matter of choice. From every glance of her eye, every word of her lips, every act of her life, there goes forth in a greater or less degree, an invisible power, which produces an effect upon the minds around her. It is a gift of Heaven to every human being. Whether it shall be productive of evil or good, is for each possessor to determine. It may be a harp of sweetest melody making glad the heart of the world; or it may be a discordant trumpet, rousing the passions of mankind to angry and tempestuous strife, as its owner may determine.

By a proper use of this more than fairy gift of influence, you can call into existence emotions of pure delight, capable of infinite self-multiplication in the multitude of human spirits which will come within your sphere, during your lifetime. Can you refuse a few moments of grave thoughtfulness to so weighty a point? What if