

# The Religious Intelligencer.

AN EVANGELICAL FAMILY NEWS PAPER FOR NEW BRUNSWICK AND NOVA SCOTIA.

REV. E. McLEOD.]

"THAT GOD IN ALL THINGS

MAY BE GLORIFIED THROUGH JESUS CHRIST."--Peter.

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## THE INTELLIGENCER.

### WHO SANK AND WHO SWAM:

A DREAM AND ITS INTERPRETATION.

I stood on the brink of a very great river. The current was rapid, and the bed was deep, and it was so broad, that by straining, I could but dimly see the other side. Although the farther bank was scarcely visible, I readily discovered where it lay by the sheen of royal palaces that stood upon it, and glittered in the morning sun.

That river flowed right athwart the path of the human race, between their time and their eternity; over it, accordingly, all must go. Men and women, old and young, rich and poor, were marching forward, in numbers so vast, that they constituted a stream almost as broad and continuous as the river into which they flowed. After I had gazed a while upon this passing throng, I began to perceive that though the variety of condition and character among them seemed all but infinite, they consisted, in the main, of two classes, and of two only. I soon saw that among all these multitudes, only two ways of crossing the stream were tried.

One portion of the travellers entered the river so heavily laden, that from the first it was evident they had no chance of reaching the other side. The load, with some varieties in detail, generally consisted of provisions and clothing, and implements of labour, with the addition, in some cases, of a great quantity of toys, and in other cases of heavy bags of gold. Those who carried much gold, in addition to the burdens which were common to all, seemed sorely broken by its weight, as well as kept in constant alarm by the fear of letting it fall. They moved painfully and slowly in the stream; and none of them made any considerable progress. But I saw also that those who carried burdens of toys, although not so much crushed by dead weight, were equally impeded in their march. The toys, though light, occupied much room, and when their great but feeble bulk was caught by wind or water, they sometimes did as much as the bags of gold could do to make the bearer sink. But I observed that the load which did most to crush and hamper all this company, was a boat which every one of them carried on his head. It was damp and dripping, as if it had lain long in the water, and besides its absolute weight, it blinded the bearer's eyes, and cramped all his movements. Here and there one of the multitude might be seen tossing the boat off his shoulders into the stream; these walked easier afterwards than their neighbours, but none, either of those who threw it off or of those who kept it on, succeeded in reaching the other side. One by one, and at different stages of the passage, all without exception, dropped down, and were carried away by the stream.

In the other portion of this great company, I observed that every one carried burdens too, consisting for the most part of the very same articles. There were food and clothing and implements of labour, and in a few cases also considerable quantities of gold. If any toys were tied up with other articles in the bundles, they must have been smaller in number and bulk, for I did not see any painted arms protruding. Strange to say, every one of this company had also a boat, of size and shape very like those which the other company carried; but here the likeness stops and the difference begins. Every one of this company as he approaches the river's brim lays his boat gently on its flood, steps into it himself, lays all his burdens down in it at his feet, and busies himself only in guiding the vessel across the stream. The grand difference between the two companies lay in this—those attempted to carry their boats across the river in addition to all their other burdens; these used their boats to bear over both their burdens and themselves, and accordingly got all safely over to the other side.

The voyage across that great river is the course of human life on earth. There is no standing still; all must enter the lip of the mighty tide and try. All bear burdens, some of them necessary and some of them not. The love of riches unnecessarily increases the burdens of some pilgrims, and the love of vain show increases the burdens of others. But the heaviest load that any traveller bears is his religion, as long as it is a load which he takes up and bears. Those who take it up and add it to their burdens, blindly miss its meaning, as much as those who carry their boat on their shoulders across the deep river. The boat was made for carrying you, and not for being carried by you. So, religion is intended, not to be borne by the man, but to bear him and his burden too. Happy is he who understands its design, and turns it to good account. If you take up your religion as a load it will crush you; if you throw it away, you may walk more lightly for the moment, but will sink as surely and as soon; if you lay yourself and your load on it, you will be borne sweetly over life's stream, and set down safely on the heavenly shore. "Thy faith hath saved thee."

One man tries his own righteousness. He dreads the just God; he has no love of holiness; but he knows that holiness will be demanded in the judgment, and he strives hard to possess some. He prays, gives alms, attends worship. With no love to God, and no pardon, and no reconciliation, and no spirit of adoption, he strives in the spirit of a slave to bring as many performances at the judge, as may suffice to stop the sentence of condemnation in the great day. He fails. His very righteousness becomes the load under which he sinks. The prodigal remaining among the swine tries to be fed, and cleansed, and clothed, so that he may be ready to stand with

But he grows more lean, more filthy, more naked, more frightened, until at last he dies despairing. Another man, conscious that his heart is evil, and that all his righteousnesses are as filthy rags, from which he must be cleansed, lets go himself and all his own, and flees to Jesus. He trusts to the blood of the Lamb to take all his sins away, and leans on the righteousness of the Redeemer as his plea before the Judge. He lays himself and all his burdens on Him who is able to save to the uttermost. In Christ as in the ark, he is borne safely through the flood, and set down in a new world where the righteous dwell. This prodigal, as worthless and as distant as the other at the first, knows and laments his distance and worthlessness. Having nothing, and not able to amend his condition, he goes as he is—wretched and miserable, and poor, and blind and naked—he goes as he is to God's covenant-mercy in Christ. He is accepted in the Beloved. He lives in faith, departs in peace, and joins the whole family of God in the many mansions of the Father's house.

Reader, beware lest you miss Christ's meaning. He does not lay a galling yoke upon your neck in this life, as the price which you must pay for heaven. He rather invites the weary and heavy-laden to cast their burden on Himself. He has paid the price, and will bestow the pardon. He calls us unto liberty now, and gives us eternal life at length.

### THE FIRST PRAYER.

In a village prayer meeting, one evening in autumn, there was a full attendance; an unusual solemnity was apparent in the assembly; and one impenitent man was suddenly affected with a deep impression of his sinful state. He was a man in mid-life, with a wife and children. None of them were Christians. He had not been an open opposer of Christian truth and Christian institutions. He had been accustomed to attend somewhat upon public worship, on the Sabbath, and occasionally upon the neighborhood prayer meetings. But he had been irreligious and profane, and had always lived in careless neglect of the "one thing needful." He had never prayed. Now, his condition as a sinner against God, burst upon his view, and for several days he continued in distress of mind. There was no peace that he found.

The thought preyed upon his mind that he never prayed, and filled him with a sense of guilt. One day he sat revolving this thought, and abruptly he proposed to his wife that they should both pray together. Her mind had also become awakened somewhat on the subject of her soul's salvation, and she readily agreed to his proposal. They knelt down before God, and she first offered prayer. Then he commenced, and uttered these words—"Our Father in heaven, I want to give myself away, and my wife and children to thee." He could go no further. He did not need to go further to find peace. Light broke in upon his mind, where no sun nor star of Christian hope had shone. He was a new man. That prayer was the beginning of a new life in his soul.

The heart-cry of that prayer is coming to the point of unconditional submission to God. Encouraged by the invitations of the gospel, and by the assurances of God's mercy through the atonement of Christ, the sinner yields himself to God to do his will, to submit to his disposal, and to follow Christ, repenting of sin, and trusting only in his free grace for pardon and salvation. He sincerely desires to give himself away, and all that he holds dear, to God. He prays that he may do it. His prayer recognizes his dependence and his own weakness and insufficiency for the work. He wants the divine Spirit to help him in doing it. There is no reservation—there is nothing kept back—there is no cross but what he is willing to take up at the call of Christ—there is no pet sin to which he clings with unrelenting grasp. But in that moment of conflict and glorious triumph, he breaks off his sins. He commits all to him who is able to keep it unto the great day. The new principle of spiritual life, which takes its rise in the soul in this act of submission to God, prompts the prayer thereafter, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do."

Nothing short of this entire surrender to God will bring peace. The point at issue, on which the sinner's great conflict turns, is often a small thing. With one person, the whole matter may be involved in the simple question, whether he shall commence family prayer,—with another it may be the question, whether he shall go and talk with his minister on the subject of salvation,—with another, it may be, whether he will break off a practice which his conscience condemns, or separate from an ungodly associate. The prayer which stops short of giving away all to God, is like that of the Pharisee in the Temple, trusting in himself, and thanking God that he is not a condemned creature, like other men. The only valid plea of the sinner is *mercy, mere mercy*.

This plea of the sinner never fails of success. "Him that cometh unto me," said Christ, "I will in no wise cast out." The records of human experience may be challenged to furnish an instance of a sinner, who has really cast himself on the mercy of God through Christ, and given all away to him, without meeting a gracious reception. Never did a miserable sufferer, blind, sick, leprous, or palsied, apply in vain to Jesus on the earth with the imploring cry, "Lord, help!" Sooner or later, the relief came. So it is always when sinners come and ask to be spiritually treated and saved, the young, the old, the pharisee, the publican, the chief of sinners. Come in faith, asking help of God. This is the way,—the way of holiness,—the redeemed of the Lord walk in it.

When the sinner is really willing to give all

away to God, religion is easy. When his heart can say, "I want to come to Christ," he finds rest.

### SALVATION AS A FREE GIFT.

Colored preachers often have a rare facility in homely and pithy illustrations, which more cultivated ministers might imitate with the best results. The simple style of the following extract, which we find in *Challen's Monthly*, may be suggestive to some of our clerical readers, who wish to reach the hearts of the people:

I once found myself in company with a party of friends in the gallery of a small village church, listening to a discourse from a colored minister, or rather exhorter. After some preliminary exercises, a gray-headed man, evidently quite a patriarchal personage, arose, and announced as his subject, "The History of Dives and Lazarus," which he proceeded to explain and enforce.

One illustration he used was so full of quaint simplicity, and at the same time so adapted to express the idea he meant to convey, that it struck me forcibly. He was trying to show how a sinner should accept the Gospel offers of salvation.

"Suppose," said he, "any of you wanted a coat, and should go to a white gentleman to purchase one. Well, he has one that exactly fits you, and in all respects is just what you need. You ask the price, but, when told, find you have not enough money, and shake your head.

"No massa, I am too poor, must go without," and turn away.

"But he says, 'I know you cannot pay me, and I have concluded to give it to you—will you have it?'"

"What would you do in that case?—stop to hem and haw, and say, 'O, he's just laughing at me, he don't mean it!'" No such thing. There is not one of you who would not take the coat, and say,

"Yes, massa, and thank you too."

"Now, my dear friends, God's salvation is offered you as freely as that; why don't you take it as freely? You are lost, undone sinners, and feel that you need a covering from His wrath. If you would keep his holy law blameless, you might purchase it by good works; but ah! you are all full of sin, and that continually. Prayer and tears are worthless. You are poor indeed, and if this is all your dependence, I don't wonder that you are turning off in despair. But stop—look here—God speaks now, and offers you the perfect robe of Christ's righteousness, that will cover all your sins, and fit all your wants, and says that you may have it 'without money and without price.' O, brethren, my dear brethren, do take God's word for it, and thankfully accept His free gift."

What impression the words had on the old man's colored auditors, I cannot tell; but as our group left the church, one of the ladies remarked to another,

"What a strange idea that was about the coat!"

"My dear friend," was the reply, "It suited my state of mind, rough and unpolished as it was, better than all Dr. —'s elaborate and eloquent arguments this morning. I am so glad that I came here. This is the way that I have been despairingly seeking for years. How simple! How plain! Free grace alone! I will take God at His word—"

'Nothing in my hands I bring,  
Simply to thy cross I cling.'

### THE FATAL VISION.

Many of the ablest writers on questions of moral reform, have employed their pens in portraying the evils of intemperance, and the guilt of those engaged in the traffic of intoxicating drinks. There is one point that has been seldom discussed. I mean, the influence which the guilty traffic has upon the *rumseller and his family*. Upon examination, this subject will be found to furnish the most abundant proof that the curse of God follows, immediately or remotely, those who, in the midst of light and knowledge, persist in "putting the bottle to their neighbor," and for base gains, are willing to incur the fearful "woe" which a righteous God has pronounced against all such evil doers.

The following sketch of the last days of one who for many years had been engaged in the business of dealing out what the eloquent Robert Hall so graphically described as "liquid death and distilled damnation," is given by way of illustration, that "the way of the transgressor is hard."

Thomas B. was the proprietor of a hotel in the beautiful and quiet town of —, in New Jersey, and by his ready tact, his bland and obliging manner, was well calculated to allure the gay and pleasure-loving to his society, and to win custom to the bar of his house, on whose shelves the decanters were sparkling and bright, and the ruby wine, which giveth its color in the cup, tempted many to taste and handle to their ruin. The landlord was destitute of moral principle, and knowingly and wilfully persisted in his demoralizing business, spreading thereby around him poverty, ignorance, disease, and crime, and rendering children worse than orphans, and wives worse than widows. His wife was a member of one of the churches in the town, and was believed to be a pious woman, and who did all that she could to persuade her husband to abandon his unholy calling; but she labored in vain.

After a time, the wife was taken sick, and soon it became evident that she could not recover. Calling her husband to her bedside, in the presence of her children, she besought him, by all the solemnities of the dying hour, to abandon the business of rum-selling; and then and there he

deliberately and solemnly promised his *dying wife* that he would do as she requested. She died calmly and peacefully, and the smitten husband, with streaming eyes, led his motherless children to the grave where all that was mortal of the wife and mother, was laid—and, then returned to his house, and the very same day opened his bar and recommenced the work of death, unmindful of the vow he had made to his dying companion.

Time passes, and he marries again. His chosen companion is one who was engaged in the same unholy calling with himself. Now, certainly, he thought, he will be free from all annoyance at home on the subject of temperance; but "man proposes, God disposes." A revival of religion was in progress in one of the churches of the place, and the landlord and his new wife were induced to attend. Soon, both were among the number of "seekers," and faithfully were they dealt with by the minister of that church—but so far as the husband was concerned, all his labor was in vain. He fought against his convictions, and would not submit himself to the Lord. His mind was powerfully wrought upon, and his appetite left him; his sleep departed from him; he became a mere skeleton in appearance; his eye became vacant and wandering; a mighty struggle was going on in his soul, and the broken promise burned upon his conscience like molten lead. At times he was almost ready to yield to the conviction of duty—to shut up his bar, and to yield his heart to God without reserve; but, alas! the aversion of his heart prevailed, and he resolved to persevere in the way of sin.

Soon after this, in consequence of physical weakness, and the derangement of his nervous system (without any apparent cause), he fancied, as he was walking in the shades of the evening, he saw a *vision of departed spirits*—among whom he beheld his departed wife, who solemnly reproved him for his broken promise, and warned him that he would die within a short time, naming a particular day. The effect of this fancied vision on the conscience-stricken man, was terrible to behold. The idea of his early death, with the weight of guilt upon him, haunted his imagination like a horrid spectre, whispering in his ear, "Thou shalt die—thou shalt die!"

It soon became evident that the mind of the miserable man was disordered; and not long after, he attempted suicide, by cutting his throat, but was discovered in time to prevent a fatal result. Before the wound was healed, he made a second attempt, and succeeded in tearing open the wound. He was then removed to the State Lunatic Asylum, and in six weeks he passed to his final account, before the bar of a righteous God, who makes inquisition for blood—there to meet the victims of his traffic, and to answer for his broken vow. His death occurred within a few weeks of the time that he fancied the vision had made known to him.

"Woe to him that coveteth an evil covetousness to his house." "Woe to him that buildeth a town with blood, and establisheth a city by iniquity; for the stone shall cry out of the wall, and the beam out of the timber shall answer it." "Woe unto him that giveth his neighbor drink, that putteth his bottle to him, and maketh him drunken also." "Vengeance is mine, saith the Lord, I will repay."—*Tract Journal*.

### THE PRISONS OF ROME.

Every one remembers the impression produced in the civilized world by Silvio Pellico's book upon the Austrian prisons. Mr. Gladstone's pamphlet upon prisons of Naples was read also by numbers throughout Europe, and helped to overthrow the dynasty of the Bourbons in Naples. A French writer, Mr. Charles Paya, has just published a work upon the Papal prisons, in which he spent several months. This work is also exciting much attention.

It is well that these things are being made public. These Romish and absolutist governments, which boast of being the best protectors of religion, morality and civilization, are most barbarous and inhuman! No mercy for the accused; no humanity for prisoners. Arbitrary incarcerations, tortures, captivity in the most loathsome and infected dungeons; and these infamous punishments inflicted often upon the most respectable men: such are the acts of those princes who pretend to uphold the cause of God! Ah! the time has come at last to unmask their hypocrisy, to reveal their cruelty, and to show to the world that those who are termed *revolutionists*, have much more respect for man's dignity, and more humanity than these self-styled protectors of the Christian Church.

I might speak of the Spanish prisons, where servants of God, who have committed no other crime than calling upon the Lord according to their conscience, languish. Queen Isabella—Isabella the Catholic, as she is called,—is more and more governed and hardened by the priests and fanatical nuns, who throng her court. This young woman, whose private life has been a shame to her sex, imagines now to appease her remorse of conscience, and to be reconciled with the Sovereign Judge, by pitilessly executing the cruel plans of the Popish clergy. Twelve sentences of death were pronounced, by a military tribunal against the insurgents of Loja, and five have already been executed. Isabella signed, herself, these death warrants! Hundreds of other victims have been shipped to the galleys in the Spanish possessions of Africa. What an example on the part of a government which boasts the honor of having in all time been exempt from Protestantism and heresy!

It would seem as if the Pope and cardinals,—the representative of Jesus Christ and his apostles upon the earth,—ought at least to set the example

of some wise reforms in regard to the treatment of prisoners. But not so. The reports of Mr. Charles Paya and other travellers, testify that the prisons of Rome are more awful than those of any other country in Europe. Those of Austria and the Kingdom of Naples are even better.

The history of Mr. Charles Paya is interesting and instructive in more than one particular. He went to Rome, in order to correspond for the political journals of Paris. He was safe according to the laws of nations, and respected the laws, of the Pontifical States, carefully avoiding any interference in the internal affairs of Popery. But he committed the unpardonable crime of publishing in the French press the true state of the Roman government.

One morning, without any previous warning Mr. Paya received a visit from some of the pontifical police, who told him that they had received orders to arrest him. Mr. Paya immediately asked the reason of this act. The officers only answered him by jeers and insults. They looked over all his papers, laid hands on what they regarded as suspicious, and conducted him to the prison of *San Michele*, the best prison, he observed, in Rome,—the house of detention which serves as a model to the rest.

Would you like a description of this model prison? The following is the account of Mr. Chas. Paya: "I was thrown into the narrowest dungeon. No air or light could penetrate it directly; and never since the prison of San Michele was built has the sun shed a single ray into this hole. Although my cell was situated on the third story, the pavement was always damp. I had not been there five minutes before I was penetrated with a cold moisture which never left me. The atmosphere, night and day, was infected and corrupt. Sometimes, the jailors even close one of the small openings which lets in a little air, thus exposing the unfortunate prisoner to suffocation!"

Mr. Paya gives a minute account of the various kinds of torture which still exists in Rome. The torture was abolished in Europe more than half a century ago. Statesmen agree in regarding this method of extorting truth as inhuman and unreliable. But Rome carefully preserves this barbarous custom.

The instruments of torture, such as the *balse, braga, cavelette, collara, mordacchia*, &c., are too awful to relate. I will only say that the last mentioned is an iron pincers by which the tongue of the patient is seized and drawn out of the mouth as long a time as the judge decides. The tongue swells, and the prisoner cannot articulate a word. The mordacchia is the punishment reserved for blasphemers, that is to say those who have spoken against the Virgin, the Saints, or the Pope! and these barbarities are practised in Europe, and in the nineteenth century! But what do the priests care for public opinion? They only desire to gratify their thirst of vengeance.

Mr. Paya confirms a remark made by M. Edmond About, in his book upon the *Roman Question*—that, in the Pontifical States, the gradation of crimes and offences is entirely different from what it is elsewhere. A thief, an assassin, an incendiary, has a lighter punishment than a blasphemer or a heretic. The most wretched criminals may hope to be set free after a certain time. Noted robbers, who are stained with human blood, are even incorporated in the Roman police. But if any one fails in the ordinances of the church in regard to periodical facts and other similar points; if he speaks ill of the government of the priests; if he distributes the Bible; if he is suspected of spreading political opinions opposed to clerical tyranny, woe to that man! No favor, no extenuation of punishment to him. "I am not a robber," said an accused man to his judge. "You are worse than a robber," answered the Roman magistrate, coldly; "for you are an enemy of the Holy See!" What a disregard of all the principles of justice! Theocracy, applied to judicial matter, is detestable.

To return to Mr. Charles Paya, he remained a long time in the dungeons of the Holy Father. In vain he appealed to his title of French citizen, and claimed the interference of our Ambassador. His letters were intercepted, and his complaints disregarded. The prisoner was not legally interrogated; he is ignorant still of the offences for which he was imprisoned. At last, one morning, the superintendent of the prison informed him that he was free, but did not inform him of the reason of his long and cruel confinement. Mr. Paya was taken by the police to the boundaries of the Pontifical domain, and sent back to France, with the injunction never again to set foot on the territory of the successors of St. Peter.—*French Cor. N. Y. Observer*.

### SUPPRESSION OF MONASTERIES IN NAPLES.

The *Times* correspondent at Naples supplies the good news that the project of law for the suppression of monasteries has been signed. The country is by this act delivered from an army of locusts, and a great social progress is inaugurated, which, perhaps, may supply an example worthy of the attentive consideration of England, and all other Protestant, not to say, civilized countries. The institutions of Popery we see are abhorred and rejected in a Catholic country, where their dead weight and crushing powers have been long felt; while England, in the excess of her liberality or indifference, and forgetful of her Protestant ancestry and obligations, tolerates convents and nunneries—wretched offshoots from the same parent stem. On these valuable auxiliaries of Popery we do not need to pronounce a judgment. It is enough to refer to one of the first acts of a country emerging from semi-barbarism, and the galling yoke of priestly intolerance, into political