

The Religious Intelligencer.

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

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"THAT GOD IN ALL THINGS

MAY BE GLORIFIED THROUGH JESUS CHRIST."—Peter.

[Editor and Proprietor.]

Vol. IX.—No. 34.

SAINT JOHN,

NEW BRUNSWICK, FRIDAY, AUGUST 22, 1862.

Whole No. 450.

THE INTELLIGENCER.

THE SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHERS' WORK.

IMPORTANCE OF TEACHERS' WORK.

If a person is to do anything well, he requires to feel that it deserves to be so performed; and a man's greatness and title to honor rests not so much upon the position he holds as upon the manner in which it is filled; but when high position and great performance are united, who can refuse the tribute of respect and admiration? Now, there are many considerations which make apparent the dignity and importance of your position as Teachers in our Sabbath-Schools.

The book you use is from God; the lessons you teach are from heaven. In the Bible you have the wisdom of God as adapted to the human intellect and heart. You have the beautiful and gradual unfolding of the plan of redemption.

If Moses wrote a history altogether unique, and the most ancient and intensely interesting in man's possession; if David composed psalms yet unsurpassed in sacred fervor and melody; if Solomon framed maxims which embody the best results of human wisdom, which are, indeed, laws from heaven; if Isaiah, Habakkuk and other prophets uttered rapturous prophetic odes which rise in grandeur and sublimity above the best efforts of uninspired intellect; if Paul has left us specimens of argumentation and eloquence which instruct our statesmen and senators; if John, in sublime apocalyptic visions sketched the future history of the church; and above all, if Jesus Christ has surpassed all the best lessons of man, and spoke as never man spoke; if, in one word, by Divine Inspiration such rich treasures as these are contained in the Bible—in your text-book—the importance of your work in presenting these riches to the youthful intellect and heart is very obvious.

But there is another consideration which greatly enhances the importance of your work,—you deal with immortal spirits,—you are workers upon that which is so costly that it could not be purchased by such corruptible things as silver and gold; nothing less valuable than the blood of God's Son bought these spirits you seek to instruct. These are gems set in the coronet of Divine love. God says of them, "Behold I have loved them with an everlasting love." In each of these "gay, guileless, sportive, little things" there is a soul of infinite possibilities,—destined to exist and enjoy, or suffer eternally. This is a noble part of human nature upon which you work.

Further, you are moulding these young minds for the service of the Church, of the nation, and of eternity. Here are the future Evangelists, Merchants, Legislators, and Rulers of our land. Here are agents, already most potent in society,—no man knows how much he is ruled by his child. Esau was asked for the secret of his success as an Advocate; and he answered truly, that he pleaded with power; because he felt, while urging his plea, his infant child pulling at his gown.

Teachers, be impressed with the importance of your work.

HOPEFULNESS OF THE TEACHER'S WORK.

2. Be impressed with the hopefulness of your work.—A physician may ply his books, and study his doings, but his is essentially a hopeless task. He may, indeed, brace up the tottering earthly frame for a season—he may afford much aid and ease for a time, but the fabric he supports is destined to break and fall to pieces in his hands. He works upon the mortal part, you upon the immortal part of human nature; his is an anxious, doubtful cause; yours is full of hope. You are engaged with a being of permanent existence, and capable of indefinite improvement,—a being, too, in a period of most rapidly increasing capabilities. The faculties of children are not benumbed by sin and old age. All their powers invite instruction. Their memories possess a power of retention by which they can treasure up the elements of our vernacular language in a few years,—their imaginations have an elasticity and boldness by which they form pictures unknown in riper years,—their consciences have a vitality and tenderness which render them most susceptible of moral impressions. These things render your task hopeful. Add to these the cheering assurance of Divine assistance, God's most striking and inspiring promises are addressed to children.—"Those that seek me early shall find me;" "Seek first," in point of time and by way of eminence, "the Kingdom of God and his righteousness." And Jesus says, "Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the Kingdom of Heaven." God has most clearly shown in the case of Samuel, who was a prophet in boyhood; in the case of John the Baptist, who was sanctified from the womb; and in the case of Timothy, who knew the truth from infancy, that children are capable of experiencing the deepest work of Divine grace; and there have not been lacking in later times instances and facts to establish the same truth. The sainted McCheyne speaks of such; and the gifted and godly Jonathan Edwards, in his "Narratives of Surprising Conversions," particularly delineates instances of remarkable conversions among children; and we know that such occurred during the latter revival in Ireland, England, and the South of Scotland. All these things make your work most hopeful. Be impressed with this.

3. Be impressed with the glory of your work.

God is your partner in this work. He is a Father and therefore a Teacher. Jesus was "a teacher sent from God." Every soul you effectually instruct by the aid of the Spirit in the knowledge of Salvation, adds new lustre to the Redeemer's diadem. Those are the pearls of great price for which he gave his blood and his life. Every child, so instructed, swells the joy and the song of Heaven. You influence the hearts of angels

and the high felicity of Eternity by your doings in the Sabbath School. Each soul you properly instruct becomes a new sinner in the body of Christ, which is the Church—becomes a burning light—becomes a living epistle. So Mr. Edwards tells us in the Narratives already mentioned, and so our own observation attests, that new converts, when in childhood, truly brought to Christ, become a vital and mighty power in the bosom of the Church.

HOW THE TEACHER IS TO BE PREPARED.

But, how, you will ask, are we to come to this work? I answer:

1. Come with renewed hearts.—If you would have comfort and success in the work of the Lord, have Christ in your heart. We do not say but that a croaking raven may feed a prophet; and the withered, cold hand of a dead man may hold up the lamp of life to others; but usually it is the vital warm heart through which the pulse of life flows, that acts favorably upon others; and always it is the cold, cruel, dead heart that speedily grows weary in well-doing, and in the end finds the tasks of the School and of the Sanctuary irksome and impossible. Come, then, with renewed hearts to God's holy work.

THE SABBATH SCHOOL TEACHERS MUST PREPARE.

2. With constant consideration and preparation. I mean that the appointed lesson is to be anxiously, carefully, prayerfully examined. The proper test of a man's knowledge lies in this, that he is able to communicate to others what he has learned. I have but little faith in that person's attainments who says, "I know this or that, but cannot tell you what I know." A man may affirm that he has read many books; ask him what they contain, and if unable to tell you bid him read them again. In teaching the Bible to children you need more than a general knowledge of its contents, you require to be able to simplify and adapt its sublime lessons to the capacity. You may know a passage sufficiently well for doctrinal and devotional purposes on your own part, but are you ready by clear analysis and arrangement, and by proper, chaste, and elevating illustrations to lodge its sacred meaning and practical lessons in the child's mind? A school-master may be deeply skilled in the science of numbers, but suppose a child should ask him why we begin to add at the right hand rather than at the left, and he should make this pompous answer, "because figures increase from right to left in a decimal ratio," how much wiser would his pupil become? The answer is true and undeniable, but it is a truth not expressed in proper form for the child's intellect. That none of your lessons may be so marred, conscientiously study how to present them.

REGULARITY IMPORTANT.

3. Come to your work with unfailing regularity.—This is a common and simple, but most important remark. I know of few greater misfortunes that can befall a school than to be filled with careless and irregular teachers; and how much, on the other hand, is the success of a school promoted by conscientious teachers who are in their places, not simply when the sun shines, but also when the clouds are black and breaking over their heads.

FAITH AND PRAYER NECESSARY.

4. Come to your work with faith and prayer.—Believe that God is with you, and that the latent influence of Divine truth shall, in due time, burst forth in power and glory. Aim and pray for the conversion of your pupils. You may not witness this in a few weeks or years, yet the prayer of faith shall not be unanswered, and the seed of God's word may, after many days, become fruitful. Thus it was in New England and Northampton during the revival of 1740. The doctrines of God's word were faithfully expounded in that town first by Mr. Mather, after him by Mr. Stoddard, for nearly sixty years, and then during the pastorate of Jonathan Edwards the seed began to spring up and a most gracious and memorable season was enjoyed. Pray and believe that similar fruits may more speedily appear from the truth you teach.

There is now no time left to speak to parents. Let me only say in a single sentence, seek to realize fully all your relations to the Sabbath-School. The children that are taught in its classes are in your hands, and with you it rests to send or bring them regularly to school. You can do much to cheer and encourage the hearts of Superintendents and Teachers by being frequently present to witness them engaged in their labour of love. You can do much by your wealth, your sympathy, and your prayers to carry forward this part of the work of God.—Rev. D. H. McVicar.

"ALMOST HOME."—This is one of the most joyous expressions in the English language. The heart of the absent husband, father, or son, not only homeward bound, but almost arrived, fills with rapturous joy as he is on the point of receiving the warm embrace and greetings of dear ones at home. So it is with the aged Christian, as in the far advance of his pilgrimage, he feels that he is approaching the boundary line, and will soon cross over to the land of promise. Many of his best friends have crossed over before him, and they have long been beckoning him onward and upward. They await his arrival with the joyful welcome of holy ones. As tokens multiply on either hand that the land of Beulah is near, he feels that he is almost home. The ripe fruit of a long Christian life is about to be gathered into a heavenly garner. Few sights on earth are more pleasing than aged, faithful Christians almost home.

UPON STRENGTH AND LENGTH IN PRAYER.

"When Cicero was asked which of Demosthenes' orations he thought best, he wittily replied, 'The longest.' But, if the question should be, 'Which of the prayers are the best?' the answer must not be the longest, but the strongest; not the prayer that exceeds in quantity. In moral actions, the manner of working is a swaying circumstance; a man may sin in doing good, but not in doing well. How few, then, are there which manage this duty of holy prayer aright? Some mistake the language of prayer, and think it consists of nothing else than the clothing of their meaning in apt expressions, with a tuneful delivery of it. Others presume, that if necessity has put an edge upon their requests, and stirred up some passions of self-love, that they cannot fail of acceptance. Others put much again in the length of their prayers, measuring them by the time which is spent, rather than by the intention which is exercised in them. But, alas! how wide are all such apprehensions from the truth! And how fruitless will such duties be to those that are no otherwise busied in them? The prayer which is as delightful music in God's ears, is not that which hath the quaint note of the nightingale, but that which hath the mournful tones of the dove. Broken sighs and groans are the best eloquence with God, and become prayer, as unexpected steps and rests (made by musicians) do grace the music with a kind of harmonical apostrophe or ellipsis. It is not the prayer that indigence and natural desires do sharpen, but which the Spirit doth enliven; that is prevalent with God. The one is as the cry of the young ravens, and the other is as the voice of the children who are taught to cry, Abba, Father. It is not the many words of a proud Pharisee that obtain the blessing, but the pithy and short confession of a penitent publican, who is sent away justified. 'Ah, Father!' may sometimes be more effectual with God, who searcheth the hearts and knoweth the mind of the Spirit, than a prayer that is stretched forth, like an evening shadow, to a wonderful length. The one, though it be short, may, like a small figure in a number, stand for much; and the other, though great, like a volume of orphans, may signify nothing.

Let, therefore, those who are frequent in the duty of prayer, especially young converts, who are apt to think about what is meet of their own enlargements, endeavour to turn their length into strength, and to remember that there is a wide difference between the gift and grace of prayer; and that it is one thing to have commerce with God in duties, and another to have communion with him. The one is such which strangers may have in their mutual traffic; but the other is proper to friends who are knit together in love.

THE RESURRECTION BODY.

There is a point to which I wish to lead your thoughts, but which lies outside the province of physical science, though this points to it; I mean the glorified body which shall enrobe the soul in heaven. That the soul shall have a personal identity and corporate manifestation, the Bible fully declares. "What its real nature will be, we know not. It will not be formed of the component elements of our present bodies, for St. Paul declares, 'Flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God.' It will not be fashioned of materials needing nutrition and reparation, for 'it shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more.' It shall not be subjected to the wearying processes of sickness and sorrow, for it shall never suffer pain, never weep a tear, and 'sorrow and sighing shall forever flee away.'"

It is not a body of dust to be again resolved into dust, for though "sown" in the grave "in corruption," it will be "raised in incorruption," and this "corruptible shall put on incorruption."

It is not a natural or a terrestrial, but a spiritual and celestial body, made like unto Christ's glorified body, the body of his resurrection, the body of his ascension, the body which he even now wears at the right hand of God. But who shall describe that body? Who shall analyze its elements? Who shall tell its functions? Who shall reveal its laws of being? Like the disciples on the Mount of Ascension, we can gaze up into heaven, looking intently after the ascending body of Him who has gone up thither, but a cloud receives him out of sight, and we come down from the mount with strained eyeballs and aching hearts.

Yet, we know this much, that our "bodies shall be fashioned like unto Jesus;" "our glorious body." That, though "it doth not yet appear what we shall be, we know that when Christ shall appear we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is." That this mortal shall put on immortality, and that planted with Jesus "in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection." Thus, as the simplest organism of animals, points, by its structure, upward to man, so man's earthly frame points to his heavenly frame, and his heavenly frame to Christ's spiritual body, and we see that all animated things on earth point onward to Christ's glorified humanity, as the grand archetype of all that has life.

The bodies which you now bear about with you must soon die. The healing art cannot destroy death; it can only prolong for a little while, a dying life. But the soul which inhabits your body shall not die; it shall return to God who gave it.

Would we, however, rise from the grave with a glorified body, made like unto Christ's body, it can only be by having our life hid with Christ, by having our hearts linked with his by a living faith, by having our natures renewed by the Holy Ghost, by having our sins washed away in atoning blood, by having our souls arrayed in Christ's spotless

righteousness, by having Christ "formed within us the hope of glory," and thus, pardoned, repentant, and believing, we shall rise to newness of life, and these vile bodies, these bodies of our fall, the bodies of dust and breath "shall be changed, and made like unto his own glorious body, according to the mighty working whereby he is able to subdue all things unto himself," and "so shall we ever be with the Lord."—Rev. W. B. Stevens.

EVIDENCE OF CONVERSION.—Dr. Pratt, speaking of the converts in Turkey, in the *Missionary Herald*, says, one of them, Matook, was a leading man in robbery, and many a Koord has mourned the loss of his sheep, stolen by this daring man, probably for the last time. His brother, the cripple, was asked if he thought Matook was renewed, and he answered by saying, "He found a basket and pick in a field some time since, and carried them to their owner; he would not have done it a year ago!"

A woman who went to hear Whitefield preach said, many years afterwards, that she could not remember that she went home and burned up her false half bushel.

"By their fruits ye shall know them," Jonathan Edwards regarded Christian practice as the most conclusive evidence of true conversion. "No circumstance furnishes proof so conclusive of the quality as its fruits." "Now the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance. And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts." Such an evidence is worth more than all the *sensations*, tests, imaginable. And he that lacketh these things is blind.

THE FATAL TREASURE.—It is related that once the city of Pleurs stood in the quiet valley of the Alps, beneath the shadow of the snow-crowned summits, a pleasant and prosperous town. Above it hung the avalanche, threatening destruction. One night a wakeful man heard the ominous sound breaking on the still air which heralds the descending mass of ice. Starting from his repose, he awoke his daughter, and with her listened towards the only gate. There she recollected that her basket of jewelry had been left in the house, and turned back to secure the treasure. In another moment, the overwhelming deluge of the avalanche fell, with the noise of thunder between father and daughter, burying the city beneath it. When the morning dawned, the spires of the churches alone rose above the cold, white grave of the just before busy town. The maiden perished with her idol, while he who sought to save her escaped.

We are reminded often in a revival of religion of this story. Not only does the charmed victim of worldly pleasure, with whom the eternal Father is striving, grasp a toy and seal the doom of the soul, but the unseen line of destiny runs between the abandoned sinner and the weeping friend, who, like the angels, when Lot was led from Sodom, had almost rescued, under God, the reluctant trifier with mercy.

How far may we go on in sin?

How long will God forbear?

Where does hope end, and where begin despair?

The confines of despair?

An answer from the skies is sent: *oh! sinner!*

Ye that from God depart, *oh! sinner!*

While it is called to day, repent,

And harden not your heart!

—Tract Journal.

ONE TRACT SAVED FIFTY HUNDRED SOULS.—A young mountaineer chief in Burnah, when 250 miles from his own home, was taught to read by a missionary's wife. The little tract she used in teaching him caused the scales of heathenism to fall from his eyes, and showed him the way to Jesus. He went back to his mountain home a converted man. A little tract saved him!

When he reached home he told the story of Jesus, which he had learned from the tract, to his people. Crowds flocked to hear him speak. The Holy Ghost was with him, and in one year, 1500 souls were hopefully saved,—saved as the result of one little tract. Scatter tracts, therefore, O my brother! Scatter tracts! Who can tell but your hand may give a tract that shall be the means of saving many a soul!

THE LIGHT-HOUSE KEEPER.

A distinguished traveller narrates the following incident: "Being at Calais, I climbed up into the light-house and conversed with the keeper. Suppose, said I, that one of these lights should go out? 'Never, impossible,' he cried, with a sort of consternation at the bare hypothesis. 'Sir,' said he pointing to the ocean, 'yonder where nothing can be seen, there are ships going by to every part of the world. If to night one of my burners were to go out, within six months would come a letter, perhaps from India, perhaps from some place I never heard of, saying, on such a night, at such an hour, the light at Calais burned dim, the watchman neglected his post, and vessels were in danger. Ah, sir, sometimes in the dark nights, in the stormy weather, I look out to sea, and feel as if the eye of the whole world were looking at my light. Go out! Burn dim! O never!'"

That keeper truly felt the responsibility of his position. His duty was to keep lights continually burning during the night for the guidance of vessels. The Christian is a light-house keeper. The world is enveloped in moral darkness. This is not merely an accident or attribute of its condition, but its essence and principal element. It is a darkness that pervades and overshadows all human society.

But over this darkness a light has shined. Christ has established light-houses to warn souls rushing to eternal shipwreck, of their danger,

The lives of Christians are to be living illustrations and positive proofs of the personal practicability of the religion of Christianity. These are to be absolute demonstrations of the practical worth of professed piety.

Each Christian has charge of a light-house in which is a lamp of many burners. By each burner some soul is guarded. If all are shining brightly many souls are illuminated; if any one should burn dim, some day he will learn that sad were the consequences of his neglect. A soul may be stranded upon the quicksands of perdition because his light was dim.

He should, therefore, feel the responsibilities that devolve upon him. Important is the position of the guardian of the French beacon, and terrible might be the consequences of his failure to do his duty; but of infinite importance is the duty of the Christian light-house keeper, and infinitely terrible the fruits of his neglect. He should feel that the eyes of the whole world are upon him, yea, that God sees his every thought, word and action. By his fruit will he be known on earth as well as rewarded in heaven. The world is watching him with scrutinizing glance. Some will be influenced by his example. Souls, not ships, are sailing by his light.

THE EXECUTION OF TAEPING PRISONERS, FEROCIOUS CRUELITIES.

The following account of the brutalities committed on the Taepings by the Imperialists is from the pen of an Englishman, who was present, in company with both English and French officers and soldiers, at the execution by disembowelling of Taeping prisoners.

"I went with the crowd to see the execution of the Taeping prisoners that had been given up for execution into the hands of the mandarins by the English and French authorities; or, what is the same thing, they took no measures to prevent the ruthless butchery of those they lent their aid to capture, when, horror of horrors, how am I to describe the dreadful scene, or will it ever leave my memory? Amongst those wretches were young and old, of both sexes, and of all ages and sizes, from the infant recently born to the man of eighty, tottering on his staff; from the enfeeble woman to the young maiden from ten to eighteen. The latter were pushed out by the guards among the crowd of ruffians assembled, and were taken into streets and by-paths and debauched, and again dragged back by the hair of the head to the Chinese guards to await their turn for execution. Some of them had fainted, and were pulled along the ground by the executioners, who threw them on their backs, tore off their clothes, and ripped them from the lower part of the abdomen to their breasts, which were cut off and dashed with a curse in their faces. The bowels, as a matter of course, gushed out; but the cut was made in such a way, and so skillfully and with such expertise, that the intestine was seldom injured. After a little time in this state of excessive torture, the executioner thrust his hand into the chest and tore out the reeking heart, his victim looking him in the face all the while. A young female, apparently about eight months pregnant, who never uttered a groan or sigh at all the previous cruelties she had endured from the surrounding mob, had her infant cut out of her womb, and held up in her sight by one of its little hands, bleeding and quivering; when, at the sight, she gave one heart-rending piercing shriek that would have awakened pity in a tiger, and after it had been in that state dashed on her breast, she, with a last superhuman effort, released her arms from those holding her down, and clasped her infant to her bleeding heart and died, holding it there with such force that they could not be separated, and were thus thrown together on the pile of other carcasses. Another young woman among the prisoners awaited her turn to be disembowelled, with a fine boy of ten months' old, cowering and jumping in her arms, had him snatched suddenly away from her, and flung to the executioner, who plunged the ruthless knife into his tender breast before his mother's eyes. Infants but recently born were torn from their mothers' breasts, and disembowelled before their faces. Young strong men were disembowelled, mutilated, and the parts cut off, thrust into their own mouths, or flung among the adjoining and laughing crowd of Chinamen. But no more, I can write no more of these scenes; I can now only regret for ever that I looked on the dreadful sight. I am no longer fit to be a soldier. I have been in many battles during the last 20 years, and in the thickest of the fight in most of them, where a rage and thirst for carnage is dreadful to reflection afterwards, but nothing heretofore that I have seen or heard of, or even read of, could be compared to the dreadful cruelty of the disembowelling execution. May God forgive England for the part she is taking in this war, and may the sin of the enormities she has assisted in perpetrating on the defenceless English women and children met with from the hands of the blacks in the Sepoy mutiny, it is truly wonderful that Englishmen should join in or countenance similar atrocities here. It is now ascertained for a certainty that B— and his companions, after having been tortured in every way that Chinese ingenuity and cruelty could devise, were afterwards mutilated and then disembowelled by the Imperialists; and for that reason the Chinese authorities would not produce their dead bodies. Poor F—, who came with me to see the execution, fell down in a fainting fit, and was in that state carried away, and is now a raging maniac from the effects the dreadful sight had on him.