

# 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. 15.

SAINT JOHN, NEW BRUNSWICK, FRIDAY, APRIL 11, 1862.

Whole No. 431.

## THE INTELLIGENCER.

### ABSENT FROM THE COMMUNION.

Those are indeed happy churches from whose communion seasons none of the members absent themselves. Most pastors, it is presumed, are compelled in sadness to see a few of the brethren leave the church when this solemn feast is to be celebrated. We have often witnessed the communion season so neglected by those whom we esteem pretty good Christians in the main. We suppose if pastors in such cases should institute an inquiry into the reason for absence and non-attendance, the different members would assign various reasons. In most cases it seems to us, the excuse would be, either they did not think themselves in a fit state to commune, or they had trials with some of the other communicants, and so retired for one or the other of these reasons. Let us then consider for a few moments whether either of these apologies are valid reasons why members in good standing should absent themselves from the communion of the body and blood of Christ. The plea that those who are unworthy are partakers, those even who have misused us, or whose lives are not all they should be, we think, ought not to prevail, for these two reasons; we are to examine ourselves, not examine others, and so partake; and this principle of action carried out as a general rule for all the members, would interrupt the regular sacrament which is a positive ordinance, and perhaps put it aside entirely. No! if erring or false brethren are there, that must not debar me those sacred elements. There will be a proper time in the next church meeting or some other reasonable opportunity to rectify what may be wrong in others. It is the Master's table, and he has bid all his disciples. Do this in remembrance of me. Peter nor John would absent themselves from that last supper, though they knew that Iscariot even thought on the betrayal at the moment they all sat together at that same table.

As for the other apology for absence from communion, the feeling that we are unworthy to partake of the sacred emblems, it must, we judge, be founded on some incorrect ideas of the nature and design of the Lord's supper. It is true, that it is a solemn and sacred place; and there is no other occasion in all the services of our holy religion, where the heart will feel more tender or more underserving of the Saviour's great love to us. But the ordinance is clearly simple, yet grandly sublime; and is designed to help our faith and cause us to remember our departed Lord.

Now these are just the results which the weak and unworthy Christian most of all needs. Then why refrain? Why be absent at this festival of the church? O, brethren, it should not once be. We entreat, if any of our readers are neglectors of the blessed communion service, for either of the above excuses, or for any other, that they resolve no longer to forsake this communion of the saints—this sacred and holy ordinance of the Lord Jesus.

Numbers of our churches celebrate the communion the first Lord's day of each month; others, every alternate month; others quarterly. We hope no church and no pastor will rest easy without communion, either quarterly or oftener. Monthly or alternate months is still better. If brethren or sisters absent themselves, the pastor and deacons perhaps may persuade them affectionately in the more excellent way.—*Morning Star*.

### GOD GAVE THE INCREASE.

A venerable minister lately remarked that this text had been his greatest encouragement through all his forty years' ministry. He then related an incident which impressed it deeply on his mind when a young pastor.

He was preparing to go into his pulpit one morning, when he observed two young gentlemen from the city drive up to attend church. At once his heart failed him. He was young in the ministry, and felt that he could not preach acceptably before his city acquaintances, accustomed as they were to hear distinguished preachers. He was much depressed all through the exercises, and felt at the close that the day's effort had been a failure.

A few weeks after, a lady called with a message for him. She came from one of the young men whose presence at church had so disturbed him. Her two friends had intended to take a drive along the river to view the beautiful scenery, but the lady had prevailed upon them to attend church. "And now A—wishes me to tell you that your sermon, under God, was the means of his conversion." Tears of gratitude were shed over that despised sermon.

Not long after, another grateful message came from the same young man. "I am rapidly sinking, but I am going to heaven. You, dear friend, have been God's instrument of bringing me there." "Oh, how often," said the gray-haired minister, "has this little circumstance cheered me. Here was the word sown in so much weakness; yet God raised it in power."

Let this thought cheer you, Christian, in all your labors. Speak a word for Jesus whenever you have an opportunity; and though you are the humblest of his flock, the increase, as you shall see it in eternity, will fill your soul with wonder and angelic joy.

Mother, talk much about the Bible and its teachings among your little ones. It will not hinder your working hands a moment, but will lighten their heaviest labors. It seems a little thing at the time. You think it will soon pass away from the mind; yet the memory may be "a shield and buckler" to your son in hours of

temptation. Of all seed-sowing, what has God more graciously prospered than that by the hand of a pious mother?—*American Messenger*.

### RELIGIOUS FEELING.

"Has young Strong been converted?" said one who was listening with interest to an account of a revival with which God had blessed his native place.

"He has not found peace in believing," was the reply, "and mainly, as I think, because he has sought peace without believing."

"That is to say, he has sought God's favor in his own way instead of following the Lord's way." "I think he fell into the mistake of striving to excite feeling, instead of asking what he must do to be saved. He seemed to think that a certain degree of pungent distress was necessary to repentance and faith."

"He was not far out of the way: there can be no repentance without feeling: it is proper that a man should seek to feel penitent—deeply penitent."

"Very true, but penitence is one thing and remorse is another. It is one thing to seek for true penitential feelings, and another thing to seek for distress with a vague idea that distress may do something towards atoning for sin, or, at least, in making him a fit subject for mercy."

This mistake, it is to be feared, is made by many. They strive by efforts of will or by exposing the mind to the influence of sympathy, to another intense feeling, as though that would contribute to their salvation. They would seek feeling only through the perception of Divine truth.

True feeling, such as is essential to repentance and faith, can be produced only by a perception of the truth. Admiration for a work of art, a fine painting for instance, can be produced only by a perception of the picture. Enjoyment of a piece of music requires the hearing of the music. To experience emotions of beauty which the picture or the music are adapted to produce without seeing the one and hearing the other, were not more unreasonable, than to expect to experience the feelings essential to repentance and confidence in God without a perception of God's truth. All true religious feeling must result from the perception of the truth.—*N. Y. Observer*.

### THE THREE BLASPHEMERS.

When I was pursuing my studies in the University of the city of New York, one of our Professors told the following story. It shows how remarkably God sometimes answers prayer, and deals with the boldest sinners:

At one time there were three noted young men students in the institution. They were remarkable for their talents, but more for their wickedness. Scarcely any of the ways of vice had been untrod by them. One of their favorite sins was blasphemy.

To gratify this, they hired an unoccupied room of the University, and once a week they held in it what they called a "religious service." The object was to ridicule religion and make a mock of the public service of Almighty God. They made a sort of pulpit at one end of the room, and arranged benches in the body of it.

They then invited the students to attend their weekly meetings. They also brought in many others not connected with the University, and sometimes the room would be crowded. Their mock service was conducted as follows:

One of their number would open the meeting by giving out a hymn, which he had previously altered and travestied so as to turn it into horrible blasphemy. This was sung to a sacred tune. The singing being over, they read a chapter from the Bible, which was altered and travestied in like manner. After this, one of them would take a text from the sacred volume and address the audience for about the time usually occupied in delivering a sermon, and would conclude with a benediction to match the other proceedings.

The whole affair was unparalleled in wickedness and blasphemy. As may be imagined, some who were induced to attend from curiosity, were horror-stricken and felt as though it would not have been strange if the curse of God had descended upon them and brought them at once before the judgment seat.

Pious students of the University knew of the proceedings, and made the authors of them the subject of special prayer. One evening they had assembled as usual, and had finished the "preliminary services," and the time had come for one of their number to "preach." He arose and gave out his text; it appeared to be trembling, and commenced as follows:

"My friends, I feel that every one of us is standing on the brink of hell." Here he was interrupted by mock groans and cries of "Hear, hear. That's good." He did not laugh, but with apparent fear continued: "Do not mock, I am in earnest. Were it not for the goodness of God we should all be struck down as we deserve. Let us all cry for mercy." They saw that he was sincere; every one was shaking with fear; they fell upon their knees, tears rolled down their cheeks, and one and another sent up a cry for mercy. The Lord had made his presence felt, and the remainder of the evening was spent in earnest prayer.

Years have passed, and now, while I write, three of those young men are working earnestly as ministers of the gospel. One is preaching in a foreign field, and the other two are pastors of churches in this country. Two years ago I heard one of them say that when he was in the University, a Christian student asked a friend to unite with him in prayer for him. The friend replied

that the young man was so abandoned to everything good it would be of no use. He insisted that Christ could save the worst sinner, and prayer was offered. Many were the supplications which went to heaven for them, and we have seen how abundantly they were answered.—*S. S. Times*.

### THE LIVING SPRING.

Near the town of S—, on the sands of Cape Cod, there is a spring of water, widely known to travellers in the region on account of its purity and coolness. It bubbles up on land owned by a kind-hearted Quaker lady, who erected a fountain on the spot with appurtenances for the use of the public. When she died, her will was found to contain a provision that the spring was to be guarded as a perpetual legacy to the traveller; furnished with a cup, with a place to keep it, and with every convenience for the weary and thirsty as they passed. And there for many years since then, the living water has welled up from its pebbly bed, cheering hundreds who never knew the name of her who secured for them the blessing. Being dead, she speaks on from year to year of Him who said, that whosoever should give a cup of cold water to a disciple in his name, would not lose his reward.

How easy a thing it is for you, my reader, to open a fountain of comfort and joy by life's toil-some way, or plant a flower of hope on its borders! And how easy, by a careless or unkind word, to strike out a stream of bitterness equally perennial, or blast for ever a blossom of beauty!

It is for this reason that the Father of mercies has said, on the one hand, "Be not weary in well doing;" and "Despise not the day of small things;" and on the other, "For every idle word which men shall speak they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment." That day of final reckoning will reveal many deeds of quiet and unrecorded usefulness; but alas, it is to be feared, will reveal as many of noiseful wrong, whose silent steps took hold on hell!

### ANSWERS TO PRAYER.

The letters received and read in the Fulton Street Meeting, giving account of answers to prayer, are numerous. Many of them cannot be published without betraying confidence in placing names and circumstances before the public from which there is a shrinking away. But this we can say—these answers to prayers are numerous and striking.

A gentleman stood in the meeting the other day, holding two letters in his hand, who said, These letters contain wonderful evidences that God answers prayer. One is from Scotland, and the other is from a station on the overland route to India, in Arabia. The one from Scotland, said he, is from my native town, from which I removed years ago, and when I came away, such were the circumstances of the churches, that no prayer meetings were held in them, not even a weekly prayer meeting. Such a thing was not known, though there was more than one Presbyterian church in the place. This letter now comes from a daily prayer meeting which has long been established and is well sustained, and whose very existence is an answer to prayer. I would give you many facts to illustrate this, but my time will not permit.

When I left Scotland and came to this city, I brought with me a youth, to try to do something for him in the New World. He was a gifted youth, but inclined to dissipation. I prayed for him, gave him all the good counsel I could, and labored hard for his salvation. But he became so bad I was obliged to put him away, with great sorrow of heart at the event. But we parted amid warnings and tears and prayers on my part that his soul might be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.

The young man floated around the world and was lost sight of. On the overland route from England to India there is a station in Arabia where this young man has employment. From that station comes this letter to tell me that the wayward youth, whom I was obliged to put away from me on account of his bad habits, has been converted. And he says it is in answer to the prayers which were made for him while he was a member of my family. He says those prayers were brought to his remembrance, and were made the means in the hand of the Spirit, of his awakening, conviction and conversion away in Arabia. This letter comes to express a heart full of gratitude for prayer offered and counsels given long ago in an humble dwelling in the city of New York. Surely God hears and answers prayer.

Ejaculations.—Ejaculations are short prayers darted up to God on emergent occasions. If no other artillery had been used this last seven years in England, I will not affirm more souls had been in heaven, but fewer corpses had been buried in earth. Oh, that with David we might have said, "My heart is fixed," being less busied about fixing of muskets! The principal use of ejaculations is against the "fiery darts" of the devil. Our adversary injects [how he doth it, God knows; that he doth it, we know] bad notions into our hearts, and that we may be as nimble with our antidotes as he with poison, such short prayers are proper and necessary. In hard havens so choked up with envious sands, that great ships drawing many feet of water cannot come near, lighter and lesser pinnaces may freely and safely arrive. When we are time-bound, place-bound or person-bound, so that we cannot compose ourselves to make a large, solemn prayer, this is the right instant for ejaculations, whether orally uttered, or only poured forth inwardly in the heart.

### DEATH OF THE WICKED.

How gloomy must be the feelings of the voluntary at the hour of death! The past a blank, the present wretchedness, the sable veil of the future, behind whose folds is the place of his inevitable and eternal retribution hanging before him; what desolate feelings and fearful forebodings must disquiet his soul! "My soul, as my body," said one, "lies in ruins. Remorse for the past throws my thought on the future. Worse dread of the future strikes it back on the past. I turn and turn, and find no ray." We often find such persons, on the eve of their departure from the world, longing for time. We read of some of old who wished *inducias usque ad mane*—for a truce until morning. "All my possessions for a moment of time," said the dying Queen Elizabeth. "Dr. I will give you half of what I am worth," said Voltaire, when dying, "if you will give me six months' life." "Sir, you cannot live six weeks," replied the physician. "Then I shall go to hell," said Voltaire, bitterly, and died. "Oh, time! time!" exclaimed one of rank, "it is fit thou shouldst strike thy murderer to the heart. How art thou fled for ever! Oh, for a single week! I ask not for years; though an age were too little for the much I have to do."

Alas! alas! no longings can bring back a day of a wasted life. At the hour of death we may look back upon the past wishfully, regretfully, but if we have made it a waste, our probation will close, the die will be cast, heaven will be lost, and wishes and regrets will be alike in vain. If our life has been a warfare with godliness, our portion will be that of the ungodly. As the tree falleth so it shall lie. We shall reap what we have sown.

"Let my example warn you of the fatal error into which I have fallen," said the gay Sir Francis Delaval, near the end of his life. "Pursue what is useful; pursue what is useful!" Reader, if you would not make your life a curse present and eternal, "pursue what is useful."

ENEMIES.—Go straight on, and don't mind them; if they get in your way, walk round them, regardless of their spite. A man who has no enemies is seldom good for anything; he is made of that kind of material which is so easily worked that every one has a hand in it. A sterling character is one who thinks for himself, and speaks what he thinks; he is always sure to have enemies. They are as necessary to him as fresh air. They keep him alive and active. A celebrated character, who was surrounded by enemies, used to remark: "They are sparks which, if you do not blow, will go out by themselves." "Live down prejudice," was the iron Duke's motto. Let this be your feeling while endeavoring to live down the scandal of those who are bitter against you. If you stop to dispute, you do but as they desire, and open the way for more abuse. Let the poor fellow talk. There will be a reaction if you perform but your duty, and hundreds who were once alienated from you will flock to you and acknowledge their error.

## Correspondence.

### LETTER FROM NEW YORK ON THE WAR.

Island Hospital, N. Y., March 29th, 1862.

An unfortunate shooting affray took place on Blackwell's Island, on Friday the 21st inst. One of the keepers in the Penitentiary, named Brophy, was punishing a convict for misconduct in the contract building. A general insurrection took place among the prisoners employed in the same shop, about two hundred in all, when the overseer drew his pistol in self-defence. His hand was seized by a person standing just behind, when the piece discharged its contents into the head of another prisoner, who was innocent in the present case, lacerating the brain and membranes so as to produce death in less than an hour after. A coroner's inquest was held upon the body of the deceased, when the jury returned a verdict of "Accidental homicide at the hands of the keeper while in the discharge of his duty." The young man shot was nineteen years of age, the son of a widow, and required but a few days to complete a two years term of imprisonment. The above keeper has since been arrested on the charge of manslaughter, and is now awaiting trial. He was doubtless in danger of being seriously injured by the exasperated convicts, but the question to be decided, is whether or not a subordinate officer is at liberty to correct any prisoner without the sanction of the superintendent. He did it upon his own responsibility, and in the very midst of those addicted to crime, thus affording a pretext for violent action on the part of the prisoners.

Since writing my last, important changes have taken place in military circles. Gen. McClellan has been relieved as Commander of the whole Union forces, and is now in the field himself. His head quarters are at Fairfax Court House in Virginia. The whole army has been divided into three departments, with a Major-General at the head of each. One, is in the Southwest under Gen. Halleck, who has nearly cleared Missouri of rebels, and is making considerable progress in both Kentucky and Tennessee.

McClellan now stands upon a level with him, and has command of the army of the Potomac alone. In a recent address he complimented his officers and men, and promised soon to bring them face to face with the enemy. Manassas and other rebel fortifications on the South bank of the Potomac, have been evacuated, and the Union troops are now encamped without fear of molestation, in the place which but a few days since was considered one of the greatest rebel strongholds.

Why they retreated so hastily has not been satisfactorily ascertained, but they probably had intimations of a proposed attack by Gen. McClellan. Between the Eastern and Western Departments is a third, which is styled the Mountain Department. The direction of this has been assigned to John C. Fremont, who is now a Major-General.

The result of the investigation of the charges preferred against him is not generally known, but that the matter has been satisfactorily arranged, may be inferred from the fact that he now occupies so important a station. The anti-Abolition leaders are much chagrined at his success, and are not able to conceal their disappointment. Their organs are loud in their invectives against him and his supporters, but finding no means to prevent his progress, have resorted to ridicule as a last weapon. He is now nearly ready to enter upon the active duties of his position. General Hunter has been assigned the command on the Southeast coast, having his head-quarters at Beaufort, South Carolina. The success which has attended the Federal arms within the past few weeks, has given a buoyancy to public feeling, such as had not been experienced for some months previous. Burnside, in North Carolina, has made several advances beyond Roanoke Island and the adjoining towns. A few days since, it was much feared that the retreating rebel army, so long at Manassas would precipitately and in full force, fall upon his small one, and annihilate it. But the general anxiety was soon relieved by his official announcement of the capture of Newbern on the Neuse river. Most of the inhabitants fled with the rebel soldiery, who attempted, though unsuccessfully, to fire the city, and thus prevent the Union army obtaining comfortable quarters.

An order from Gen. Burnside, made the properties of all loyal citizens secure, to be restored as soon as proven. On the following Sabbath the church bells were rung as usual, but as all the clergy had escaped, except one Protestant Episcopal minister, the pulpits were occupied by the chaplains of various regiments. A correspondent informs us, that the resident clergyman above mentioned politely refused to officiate, feeling that if he could not be permitted to pray for the "President of the Confederate States, and all in authority under him," he would not pray at all, publicly at least. One of the army chaplains officiated in his stead. The citizens are slowly returning to their homes and places of business, assured that the "Northern hordes" are not so avaricious and bloodthirsty as had been represented.

On the coasts of Georgia and Florida some of the old forts have been recaptured by Commodore Dupont. Beaufort in North Carolina is also in the possession of the Federal forces. The city was strongly fortified against any naval attack, but readily yielded when a land force was brought against it. The unfortunate affair in Hampton Roads a short time since, demonstrated the frailty of "wooden walls," compared with such engines of destruction as the rebel battery Merrimac. The frigate Cumberland was run into by her prow, and sank within a few hours. The Congress compelled to surrender, was afterwards burnt by the rebels, while two Union gun-boats suffered severely. But for the opportune arrival of the Monitor, a new iron clad battery from this city, others of the blockading squadron would probably have suffered a like fate. The two batteries had a five hours contest, resulting in the retreat of the Merrimac to Norfolk, where she still remains. From this circumstance, iron-clad vessels have acquired a reputation, which has never been accorded to wooden ones. Congress has voted fifteen millions of dollars for the construction of new ones, and for the completion of others which have been building for a length of time.

Commodore Foote is yet before Island Number Ten, in the Mississippi river, which place commands the approach to Memphis. The bombardment has continued ten days, and the resistance offered, shows it to be a position of uncommon strength. By a private letter from Fortress Monroe, just received, it is concluded that some important movement is soon to take place from that point, large bodies of troops are arriving daily, and Gen. McClellan is expected to take command. Exciting news is daily expected from New Orleans. The largest fleet yet fitted out by the North, had, some days since, entered the Mississippi, on its way to the city. The N. Y. *World* states the number of vessels, to be more than two hundred, beside Gen. Porter's mortar fleet. Hot work is expected, and preparations have been made accordingly. From this it would seem that the Administration does not intend to allow the Rebel lion to coil itself unmolested in the bosom of the cotton states.

By the latest advices from England information of the discussion in Parliament, of the American blockade, has been received. Mr. Gregory, member from Galway, Ireland, brought forward a motion for its abolition, upon the pretext of inefficiency. He was appropriately met by Mr. Forster and the Solicitor-General in behalf of the Government, showing that it is not only efficient, but established in accordance with the usages of International law, and must therefore be respected. Instead of the six hundred vessels which Mr. Gregory reported to have run the blockade, it was clearly shown that but nineteen had escaped, most of which were of light draft, and that the large list furnished by Southern delegates was a complete sham. "The Solicitor-General declared it sufficiently effective, and deprecated any interference between the contending parties. Mr. Yancey, the Southern commissioner, finding his efforts of no avail in Europe has returned to America, and was last heard of in New Orleans.

O. B. G.