

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.

SERMON ON THE DEATH OF HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS PRINCE ALBERT.

BY THE REV. C. H. SPURGEON.

Late English papers give abstracts of a large number of sermons preached by distinguished clergymen on the death of Prince Albert. All contain high eulogies on the illustrious dead, and express the most profound sympathy, also, for Her Majesty and the other Royal mourners. The following abstract of Mr. Spurgeon's sermon on the occasion, is all we have room for.—[Ed. Intel.]

THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE.

Mr. Spurgeon's Tabernacle was crowded. The greater portion of the congregation were in mourning. During prayer when the Rev. gentleman, himself deeply affected, implored divine consolation for the Royal Widow, irrepressible sobs were to be heard here and there, and almost every female whom one could notice, was visibly affected. Mr. Spurgeon's text was Amos iii. 6—"Shall there be evil in a city, and the Lord hath not done it?" He said, we have nothing to do this morning with the question of moral evil. Nor, indeed, with the great question of the origin of moral evil have we anything to do at any time. There may be some persons like Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, who could walk unhurt in the midst of the fierce fire of controversy inquiring the origin of moral evil; but the most of men who have come near the mouth of this fiery question have been, like Nebuchadnezzar's servants, destroyed by the radiation of its scorching heat. What we have to do with is, not how moral evil was born—but how shall moral evil die? Not how it came into the world, but what it has done since its coming, and how it is to be driven out. The evil in the text does not involve the question of moral evil. In fact, it may be read, "Shall there be a calamity in the city and the Lord hath not done it?"—a question which seems to me to be exceedingly appropriate at the present time. There has been evil in this city, there has fallen upon us a terrible calamity, a calamity has fallen on this nation. We have, within the last few days, lost one who will find a thousand tongues to eulogize him, and who certainly does not stand in need of mine. We have lost a man whom it was our habit to respect as long as he lived. We could do little without raising our mistrust, and we most bitterly regret, now that he has departed, that we treated him as we did. Not for lack of homage to his rank could he complain; but it may be proper for us to confess that we have often suspected him without a reason. And while we honour him in his departure, we may indulge some degree of regret that we did not honour him more while living among us. I am much pleased with the remarks of the leading journal, which suggests that perhaps it might be that he was taken from us that we might see the unjust—perhaps unjust is too strong a word—the unfortunate, suspicious manner we were in the habit of treating him. He has deserved nothing but good at our hands. Standing in a most peculiar position, where the slightest interference in political questions might have brought down on his head a storm of animosity, he fortunately kept aloof, and left public affairs as much as possible alone. It is a calamity to lose such a husband of such a queen. We feel it, too, to be all the greater a calamity because we don't know what may come next. One great evil has fallen—what may fall next? We were looking forward to a war abroad, but not for such a calamity at home. We did look forward with some apprehension to a stroke abroad; but not to royal funerals at home. And now we feel that a corner-stone of the house has fallen, and now we wait, with doubts and fears, as to what may come next. We have great faith in our constitution; but if we had not greater faith in our constitution, we should fear the removal of some eminent minister—of some great man of the commonwealth—should yet leave us desolate. We feel the loss of the prince to be a calamity because it may be but the precursor to many others that may follow. We feel that this is an evil in the city, because it has taken away the parent from the children—children who are princes, and whom no man can venture to instruct as a father could; into whose ears wise counsels will not readily enter except through a father's voice—princes and princesses who required the aid and fatherly guidance through the various trials of their minority, and to cheer them through the early battles of life. He has been taken away who, in concert with the Queen, has so well trained them; and what the loss in this respect may ultimately be, time only will reveal. More than this, her Majesty has lost her husband—the only friend who was her equal—the only one with whom she could consult on her private affairs, and she is more a widow than the poorest widow in the land. The widow of the peasant has her friends and equals, but her Majesty in this great trial pays the penalties of the exalted isolation of her rank. Reverence for the Queen will restrain the full expression of what we feel for the widow. This is a calamity indeed for our Queen, and could only be fully mourned if some Robert Hall were to rise from the grave to give it expression. As for me, I am not accustomed to courtly praises, and am unacquainted with the solemn depths of such a feeling. I can only stammer and blunder in feeble tribute; but Thon God of Heaven knowest that there beate not anywhere a heart more tender, or an eye that has wept more tenderly in sincere sympathy with that royal lady

left alone and bereaved! From the council chamber he is removed—from the crown of honour he has been taken away, and it is an evil like of which has not befallen the nation in our day. There is but one death—and God grant that may be far removed—which could have caused greater sorrow in the land. In our bereavement, the text appeals to us with a solemn voice, since it is a question from the lips of the eternal God—"Shall there be evil in a city, and the Lord hath not done it?" The text admits of two divisions—first, God has done it; and, second, God has done it with a design, and we must endeavor to find what that design is. There is evil in the city then, and God hath done it. There are many doubtless curious to inquire into the cause of this evil—whence came the fever? We could not suppose it to be brought on as in our courts, and lanes, and nests of filth. The deceased had the highest advantages of any in the land; and this made people all the more curious to know whence came this fever—what its earliest symptoms—and what its progress, and how did it baffle the skill of the physicians? We may leave all these questions of detail to look to the first great cause. The Lord hath done it. He gave the breath a d he hath taken it away. He moulded the manly form, and he hath laid it prostrate in the dust. He sent the spirit, and he said unto it—return! God must have done this thing, or else we are driven to some other alternative. How came it about? Can we suppose that it was chance? There are some foolish enough to believe that events happen without Divine ordinance—without the direct sanction of God. Alas for you and for me if we are left to a capricious chance. We are like orphans without a father's care, and left to the fickleness and fallibility of mortal wisdom and power. What are all we see but some great and sudden strokes in the midst of a desert, blinding our eyes as we travel forward on the pathless waste where there are no roads to direct us. Thank God it is not so. We are not left to chance. Everything that happens is by the will of him who is our father and our friend. With this light we see order in the midst of confusion; we see purpose in apparent caprice. God rides on the whirlwind, directs the storm, and bows the heavens under his feet. Some, on the other hand, go to an opposite extreme, and deny the existence of chance, but think we are bound by an iron fate. Like the great car—the Juggernaut—dragged along by irresistible power, this blind fate crushes and mangles everything in its way. Man is bound hand and foot in its merciless course. Fate is blind, hard, irresistible, and doing everything without a purpose and without an end. Such is fate. It is because it must be. This is altogether different from scriptural predestination. Though it saith, things must be so, it is because such a dispensation is right, wisest, and just. It should be held not as man's destiny but God's will. It is not an irresistible fate that has snatched the Prince from us, but a kind and tender hand, finding that the good time had come, has led him gently away. These being disposed of, another possibility remains. If neither chance nor blind fate has done this evil, perhaps the Spirit of evil has done it. Perhaps Satan is the evil genius of the world and keeper of the keys of death? We scout the idea at once from our minds. Begone at once far hence, thou foul King of Terrors. Thou art the Prince of the Air, but not the King of Death! Not from thy black lips can come the summons, "Prepare to meet thy doom!" Not at thy feet are we driven from our houses and thrones; not to thy cruelty are we given up. Through Satan evil may come, but it is at God's bidding. The rod may fall, but Satan does not wield it. Like as a father chasteneth his children, so doth God chasten those he loves. But once more another thought arises in our mind. Perhaps everything that happens does so by the operation of the unalterable laws of nature. Now this is correct philosophically, but theology carries us a little further; and while admitting all the laws of matter, points us to the power which directs these laws. Law implies power. The notion of a great man in modern times seems to be that this world goes like a great clock—some believing in perpetual motion, go further, and insist that it winds itself up—but the more common notion is that once wound up, and set in motion, and a sufficient quantity of momentum put into it, it is left to itself. Everything is left to the laws of nature, there being sufficient vitality in the world to carry on its acts according to certain rules. Blessed be God! this is not true. We hold that it is our duty to see every means tried to remove the seeds of disease. We believe there are those who would fast and humiliate, while they should sweep the streets. We believe there are those who fall on their knees to pray, when they should be on their feet to work. They are wrong who go to prayer meetings, when they should exert themselves to have dilapidated buildings pulled down. But still, we hold that the Lord hath done everything, and it is His will that removes men, and by nothing else can they be removed. This world is not deserted by its God, and a Father's hand keeps all its rules in order. Blessed be God there can be no doubt on this question. If there is evil in the city, the Lord hath done it. If, then, the Lord hath done it, with what aim is our present calamity visited? Standing by the death-bed, I thought I saw a prince, but I am in the presence of God. It is Thy hand that has sealed up those eyes in darkness and stretched the manly form in death. We count it matter of interest if some departed worthy slept or stayed; in such a room, what shall we say when we remember that God has been here? When we bow our heads just now and shed tears of sympathy over this evil, he was here himself.

After some further general remarks, Mr. Spurgeon proceeded to his second head.

If God has done this evil, he has done it with some design. It is not always proper for us to ask why God has done something, for if God gives us no account we may not ask it. That frivolous affection, into which even professing Christians men are led, of calling every casualty a judgment, I detest from my very soul. The infidel lays hold of it as our weakest point. We have nothing to do with it. I was subjected to a good deal of abuse for daring to say that a railway accident on a Sunday was not a direct visitation of God's displeasure. We are not to look for the immediate cause of these calamities at hand. God's judgments are not shallow pools to be sounded by every fool's plummet. They are deeper and are farther reaching. There is a line, however, to be drawn between private and public calamities. Nations have no future and God must chastise them here. The sins of the individuals will be punished hereafter, but nations will not be punished. When a death, therefore, is a national calamity, it is fitting that we ask, if we do not pry too deeply, why God has done it. I think there are judgments to nations; and it would be wrong to pass this calamity without endeavouring to find God's design in it. Why has God taken away the Consort of the Queen? First, it preaches a most solemn lesson to all the kings and princes of the earth, from the lips of the King of kings. Thus speaks Jehovah: "Ye shall die like men; let not your crowns seem to you eternal; there is but one King immortal and invisible." Mr. Spurgeon then proceeded to say that this event told the princes of the earth that their purple must give place to the shroud; that the clay must be their bed, and that their most mighty and majestic heads must become low as the meanest of their subjects. To the mighty of the earth this lesson could not be read by the removal of an ordinary person. If there were not deaths among princes on their thrones, like the gods on Olympus, they might fancy themselves demi-gods, and demand the homage of inferior spirits. This was not, however, the only motive of God in bringing this evil on the city. Who could tell how many a heart among our countrymen would otherwise have been careless, and thoughtless among our nobles, might not suddenly be made to think? These men who had been dazzled by courtly brilliance and splendour, and deafened by the noise of its pomp, would hear a sermon from one they dared not despise. God's voice spake to them—"I have taken away your head from you, prepare ye also to meet your God." Knees might bow in prayer that had never bowed before; eyes might be awakened, and hearts opened to a sense of guilt as well as sorrow. God perhaps intended to bring out for this age some who should stand towards His Church as did Lady Huntingdon and Anne Erskine a hundred years ago—some woman who, like Ann of Bohemia, the friend of the Reformers, would become a lover of the Gospel of Christ, and those who might have been strangers would lend their influence and power to the promotion of godliness and the best interests of man. We, as a nation, are too apt to be proud of our strength, and now that we are chastened and girt with sackcloth and dusted with ashes, it is fit we should say, "God is God alone. The shield of the mighty is His, and to Him be glory for ever and for ever." Mr. Spurgeon concluded by an earnest application of the more general lesson which everybody ought to learn from this death so sudden and so prominent.

THE ACCURACY OF THE BIBLE.

An astonishing feature of the word of God is, notwithstanding the time at which its compositions were written, and the multitude of the topics to which it alludes, there is not one physical error—not one assertion or allusion disproved by the progress of modern science. None of the mistakes which the science of each succeeding age discovered in the books of the preceding; above all, none of those absurdities which modern astronomy indicates in such great numbers in the writings of the ancients; in their sacred codes, in their philosophy, and the finest pages of the fathers of the church; none of these errors are to be found in any of our books. Nothing there will ever contradict that which, after so many ages, the investigations of the learned world have been able to reveal to us on the state of our globe or that of the heavens. Peruse with care our Scriptures from one end to the other, to find there such spots, and whilst you apply yourselves to this examination, remember that it is a book which speaks of everything, which describes nature, which recites its creation, which tells us of the water, of the atmosphere, of the mountains, of the valleys, of the animals, and of the plants. It is a book which teaches us of the first revolutions of the world, and which foretells its last. It renounces them in the circumstantial language of history, it extols them in the sublimest strains of poetry, and it chants their charms in glowing song. It is a book which is full of oriental rapture, elevation, variety and boldness. It is a book which speaks of the heavenly and invisible world, whilst it also speaks of the earth and things invisible. It is a book which nearly fifty writers of every degree of cultivation, of every state, of every condition, and living through the course of fifteen hundred years, have concurred to make. It is a book which was written in the centre of Asia, in the sands of Arabia, and in the deserts of Judaea; in the court of the temple of the Jews, in the music school of the prophets of Bethel and Jericho, the sumptuous palaces of Babylon, and on the solitary banks of Chebar, and finally in the centre of western civilization, in the midst of poly-

theism and its idols, and in the bosom of pantheism and its sad philosophy. It is a book whose first writer had been for years a pupil of the magicians of Egypt; in whose opinion the sun, the stars, and the elements, were endowed with intelligence, perched on the elements, and governed the world by a perfect alchymy. It is a book whose first writer preceded by more than nine hundred years, the most ancient philosophers of ancient Greece and Asia; the Thaleses, and the Pythagorases, Zaleucuses, the Xenophons and the Confuciuses. It is a book which carries its narrations to the hierarchies of angels; even to the most distant epochs of the future, and the glorious scenes of the last day. Well, searching among its fifty authors, searching among its 66 books, its 1,189 chapters, and 31,713 verses, search for one of the thousand errors which the ancients and moderns committed when they speak of the heavens, of the earth, of their revolutions or their elements—search, but you will find none.

HOW AN AWAKENED SINNER DIED.

The following incident is taken from real life: the fact came under the observation of the author.

"What scenes of horror, and of dread, Await the dying sinner's bed."

A few years ago I was called to watch with a man who had all his life-time believed that all would finally be saved, and had as a natural consequence given loose to every desire of his carnal mind, and like the "foolish man," he ate, drank and was merry, forgetting that "to-morrow he must die." He was now on his death-bed. In the prime of life his cup of pleasure drained to the dregs, and exhausted nature refused to recruit his wasted energies.

Pale and wan, with an awful sense of an uncertain future, the horrors of remorse distracting his inmost soul, the bitter cup of despair persistently held to his lips by the unrelenting hand of an abused and now fully awakened conscience. Awakened to the folly of his past life, his mispent time, his neglect of God and the Sabbath, his hope that all would finally be well with him, was forever swept away. No hope; no trust in God; his bed was no bed of roses, although surrounded by every comfort wealth could furnish.

With the dread realities of eternity before his eyes, he cried, "O, I can't die, there is no mercy now for me; God can't forgive me now. O how I wish I had lived differently; if I could only live, I would lead a different life." I encouraged him to hope in the mercy of God in Christ Jesus, and earnestly besought him to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ with all his heart and he should be saved. "Do you think that God will forgive me for Christ's sake, such a sinner as I have been?" "Yes! O yes," said I, "he came to seek and save such ones as you; he is willing to have Him save you now just as you are." "O no," said he, "it is too late now," while the tears streamed down his young face, pallid with disease and suffering. I had never witnessed such a scene before, and I will never forget the awful expression of that dying sinner's face to his dying breath.

I told him I would pray for him, and that he must pray for himself, and left the room ere my senses forsook me. Horror-stricken almost, and with a feeling as if death's fingers were clutching at my own heart-strings, I could not bear to witness such fearful despair. I went down the stairs, and soon one of his spasms of pain came on, and unable to bear it, with no hope, no peace, no Jesus to sustain him, he gave way to the fiends as it seemed to me which possessed him.

With fearful curses, frightful imprecations and horrid oaths, he drove his faithful wife from the room, and he lay there alone to battle with the raging hand of disease, cursing God and screaming with rage and pain, so he could be heard in the neighboring houses. I could do nothing for him, and the curses and maledictions of that hour ring in my ears like the wail of the lost in the dark regions of despair. And soon I heard he was dead. Gone to the bar of God, to render up his account at the judgment.

God save us from such a passing away as that; torturing fiends instead of soothing angels round his dying couch. Black despair in lieu of the overshadowing wing of angelic hope. Death and judgment staring him in the face, instead of peace in believing and joy in the Holy Ghost. Horrid blasphemies instead of "O death, where is thy sting, O grave where is thy victory." A fearful looking forward to the future in lieu of "I know that my Redeemer liveth, and because He lives, I shall live also." Too late, too late, instead of "Come Lord Jesus, come quickly." Such is the fearful end of those who trust in the mercy of God out of Christ, for "God out of Christ is a consuming fire."

HOW THE BELIEVER DIED.

Round the dying couch of the young Christian gathered the loved ones to witness the triumph of faith over the "last enemy of man." Peacefully he laid him down as to sweet dreams and refreshing slumber, and death, the pale rider on his white horse, extended his icy arms to clasp in his dread embrace all that was mortal of that young Christian. Yet death had no terrors for that trusting heart; his eyes could not see the pale rider waiting to bear him to the silent kingdom of the tomb; he looked beyond and saw nought but the glimpse of glory breaking on his sight. He heard no voice save the "voice that Jesus sends to call him to his arms." Death, hell and the grave were left behind in the dark valley he had safely passed through. A radiance from glory encircled his brow, and his dim eye beamed anew with the glorious fullness of a Saviour's love. Strong in God and in the power of His might, he trusted

alone in the merits of his Saviour who loved him, and died that he might live. "I'm going home, he whispered; "Jesus calls, I must away." All the redeemed are waiting just out of sight, over on the other side of the river. I hear their songs of joy, and the enchanting music of their golden harps, a ravish my soul from earth away. Visions that are no visions, but a blessed reality of the better land, cheer and comfort my passage over the lone sea. I see the green fields and flowery meads of paradise restored; the city of light with its clear river of life winding peacefully through the sweet vales of Eden. I only wait the opening of the gate of pearl to see the messengers of love winging their way to bear my ransomed soul to realms of eternal felicity. Glory to God in the highest that he ever looked on me, and for the sake of his own well beloved Son, cleansed my spirit from the last and least remains of sin. Lost and swallowed up in my glad soul in the vast ocean of redeeming love. Hasten, ye bright-winged messengers of the love of Christ, my soul longeth for a draught of the pure water of the river of life that flows from the great white throne. No more sorrow, no more sighing, no blighting disappointments, but evermore the rest and peace that remains for those who have died in the Lord. Open wider, ye heavenly gates, for my freed spirit must surely enter to that which is within the veil; now is mine hour of parting gone. Farewell, dear mother, but not a sad farewell. "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord." And I indeed am blest with that eternal weight of glory that passeth all understanding. Farewell, I'm going home; and I triumphantly his freed spirit, borne on seraph wings, was gathered to its eternal rest.

Such is the true Christian's passing away. Peace, Trust and Hope, the three sisters of mercy, filled his soul. And so may our translation be like his; for if we live the life of the righteous, our last end shall be like his, to die in the triumph of the faith of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

THE CLOUD AT DEATH.—A weary labourer lay down in the bright sunlight and fell asleep. Of course his work was undone. A dark cloud suddenly rose and obscured the sun. The darkness awoke him, and set him with renewed energy at his work.

A pious minister and three sons whom he had endeavoured to train for God's service; but his labours seemed to be in vain. His sons grew up impatient and were a grief to him all his days. He was laid on his death-bed. His sons witnessed his departure from life. Darkness seemed to rest on the good man's soul. He died without any manifestations of joy in God.

His sons were sitting in the chamber around the corpse of their father. One of them said, "If such a devout man, such a servant of God as our father was, had no joy in death, how shall we meet it? What will become of us?"

The cloud that rested on their father's mind at death was the means of their conversion. It led them to reflection, and by the blessing of God, they were brought to repentance and to Christ.

AN ACRE FOR THE LORD.—The following may be a good suggestion to the Christian farmer:—

A correspondent of the *Evangelical Lutheran* is owner of 25 acres of land, all cleared, on which he still owes \$200. Feeling a strong desire to do all the good he can, he recently dedicated one acre to the service of God, and planted it in corn. In the fall he gathered the crop, amounting in all to forty-five bushels, which were found to be worth \$20. This was properly distributed among the several claims of benevolence, as the Lord's money.

"It is probable," he adds, "that if I had not determined beforehand to dedicate the products of that particular acre to God, I should not have given half so much."

One of his neighbors has adopted a similar course, with corresponding success. And both are resolved to persevere in it, in order to procure means to assist in building churches.

THE IRISH FAMINE.—Never were the Priests more cleverly caught. Men have learnt now to distrust their statements and look at facts with their own unprejudiced eyes. Archbishop McHale and many of his satellites raised a howl of horror a few weeks ago, at the fearful prospects before the Irish peasantry. The "faithful" were dying off like stricken sheep in Australia, and the winter was to find them without either food or fuel. Sir Robert Peel (the Irish Secretary) heard, but, bad man, he did not believe even the saintly McHale. The alleged famine was in the far west, where the meddlesome Saxon seldom shows his face, but Sir Robert actually had the presumption, not only to doubt the priestly dictum, but to travel out west to the smitten districts. No sooner did Archbishop Cullen hear of this movement, than he hurried a fierce pastoral letter after the Secretary, intending to hurry him back, or at least, to raise a storm about his ears; but he mistook Sir Robert's pluck, who not only visited the scene, but came back and declared before the *elite* of Belfast, in a crowded Town Hall, the results of his observation. He said:—

"In Sligo, in Donegal, I hear very different accounts from those which I had been led to believe, and from personal observation in Mayo and Galway, and from letters I have received, I am assured that nothing of the kind that was alleged exists. Of course, I am ready to admit with every gentleman in this room that there has been a comparative failure of the potato crop, and that food will be dear, but a scarcity of food is not necessarily a famine; and it is very easy to understand the interested motives of some parties who are anxious to gain public applause by a feigned zeal for the public in spreading about these exaggerated rumours. Now, I must say, as far as I myself am concerned, I do not find that those sympathizers in any way likely to be realized."