

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.

ANointed WITH FRESH OIL.

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The work of the Holy Spirit in the heart is of the greatest importance. Until we experience it, we are dead in sin. Having once enjoyed it, we often need its renewal. It is variously represented in God's word, and is compared to a variety of things. In one place, to the reviving and refreshing influence of the dew. In another, to the quickening and fruitifying effect of the shower. Again, the psalmist sings, "I shall be anointed with oil." (Ps. xci. 10.) Here is,

A PRIVILEGE ANTICIPATED. Oil is a common emblem of the Spirit, who is called "an unction from the Holy One," "the anointing which ye have received." This anointing represents his renewing, sanctifying, and saving operations, as received and enjoyed by all God's people. This consecrates them as God's kings, and they become the Lord's anointed. It qualifies them as God's priests, and they become a royal priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God, through Jesus Christ. This beautifies them as God's sons, causing their faces to shine, and filling them with joy and peace. This perfumes them as God's favourites, and all their garments smell of myrrh, aloes, and cassia. Without this anointing, we cannot reign as kings, officiate as priests, approach God as sons, or rejoice before him as his favourites. The effects of this anointing are many, and very precious. It gives us fresh views of Christ, and every sight of him endears him more and more to our hearts. It gives us a deeper experience of the truth, and we know more of its power, sweetness, and savour. It gives us more power in prayer, and we plead with God and prevail. It gives us a sweeter enjoyment of ordinances, for we see more of Christ in them, get nearer to God by them, and are mightily refreshed through them. It gives us stronger confidence in God, so that we conquer our doubts and fears, and can trust God in the dark or in the light, on the mount or in the valley. It gives a delightful savour to our conversation, so that we not only speak of Christ with freedom, and of our experience with pleasure, but there is a savour and a power in what we say, which produces a good impression on those that hear. It preserves us from falling into temptation; nothing will raise us above the world, give us power over the flesh, or make us a match for Satan, like being anointed with fresh oil. Oh to receive this unction more frequently and more plentifully in the future, than ever I have done in the past! Gracious God, anoint me with fresh oil! David was assured of this, which leads me to,

THE CONFIDENCE EXPRESSED. "I shall be anointed with fresh oil." I have been anointed before, I am not a stranger to the presence and power of the Spirit in past times. God has promised to give more grace, and his Holy Spirit, to them that ask him. I realise the value, and feel my need of it. I ardently and heartily desire it. I daily and fervently plead for it. God is faithful to his own word. It will honour him and serve his cause to bestow it. In such a case, how can one be too confident? how can one make too sure, though the blessing is great, and I am unworthy. It may be much for me to receive, but it is not much for an infinite God to give. I will therefore endeavour, as I feel my need of the blessing, to believe the promise, plead it with God, trust the divine faithfulness, and then, looking forward to the times of drought, difficulty, or danger, say, "I shall be anointed with fresh oil."

See, where many are deficient, they have no oil, like the foolish virgins, who took no oil in their vessels with their lamps. A religion, without oil, is dry, harsh, and unsavoury. A professor, without oil, is a stranger to the joys of salvation, heart-melting fellowship with God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost. Such an one may talk of doctrines or duties, of ordinances or histories, but cannot enter into heart work. God's people feel no knitting of soul to him, no delight in his conversation, no sanctifying influence in his company. But the man that is anointed with fresh oil spreads a sweet fragrance in every company, produces an impression on every Christian's mind, and though he may say but little, in that little there is power, and substance, and sweetness. Where there is no oil, the lamp will go out—the profession will become wearisome, and will most probably be given up.

See, where many fail, they do not expect fresh oil. We are regenerated but once, but we may receive the renewings of the Holy Spirit often, and except we receive these renewings, we shall become dry, barren, lifeless, and cold. There will be no delight in prayer, little pleasure in ordinances, and the Bible itself will become unsavoury. We cannot go on long, or go on happily without fresh oil.

See then, what we all need, "fresh oil." We need daily to be renewed in the spirit of our minds. The earth may as well be expected to be fruitful without sun, rain, or dew, as for our souls to prosper, without frequent communications of the Holy Spirit. Nor will our need of the Spirit ever cease, or be less, while we are below. Indeed, the longer we live, the more deeply do we feel our need of the Spirit, to work in us both to will and to do, and to help our infirmities. As we want him in health, we shall want him more in sickness; and as we want him in life, we shall want him more in death, when heart and flesh fail.

See then, what we should do, we should realize our need of the Spirit. The more deeply we feel this the better. The more constantly we feel it the better. We should ardently desire the Spirit.

It is as necessary to our souls, as the vital air is to our bodies. Our natural lives could as easily be sustained without breath, as our spiritual life without the Holy Ghost.

We should earnestly pray for the Spirit. That we have him in measure should only stimulate us to seek to "be filled with the Spirit," that we may "live in the Spirit," and "walk in the Spirit."

Every Christian is one of God's anointed ones. He has been separated for God, set apart for the service of God, and consecrated by the Spirit of God. We sometimes say, Beware of a religion without Christ; but it is of quite as much importance to say, Beware of a religion without the Holy Spirit. Whatever begins with nature ends with nature, hence so many professors fall away; but what begins with the Spirit of God will be perfected in the glorious presence of God. If we have been anointed once, we shall desire and seek to be anointed again; and the longer we live the more deeply and painfully shall we feel our need of that anointing.

Reader, are you one of God's anointed ones? Have you received an unction from the Holy One? Does the Spirit of God dwell in you? Beware, oh beware, of a religion without the Holy Spirit! If the Holy Spirit is in you, He will daily teach you your need of Christ, bring you to Christ, make Christ precious to you, and lead you to glory in him, and in him alone.

THE GRAVE AND BEYOND IT.

Two kinds of children, and two homes for them, on the other side of death. Yet how close they lie here! goat to sheep—tare to wheat—husk to grain; how close! None but he can part them, no other can be quite sure which is which. Only his eye reads the writing over some nursery beds, and under the group of faces hanging on the wall these dark words, *One shall be taken and another left.* Jesus is on his way to part them. His fan is in his hand. He did not let it go even on the cross. His fan made it be seen which thief was taken and which thief was left. And He will bring that fan to the floor where the wheat and chaff lie mixed, where the child that loves him, and the child that hates him, grow, and work, and play side by side. And his fan will wave, and its wind will search, so that the vile light chaff will fly away, and the wheat will fall all in one shining heap. And while he parts them, all will get a sight of Jesus.

Away into the outer darkness your eye will carry, and keep for evermore, one vivid image fixed, the Son of Mary on the throne of God. On, on, and on, in that home of woe, you will think, "He might have been mine, but I thrust away his hand of love." That everlasting regret will be your "worm that dieth not," and the heat of the fire God's hand has prepared. "Their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched." The fire is God's. The worm will be your own.

How you will mourn as you are forced to confess, "I chose it, instead of the pearl of great price, to lie in my bosom for ever. The choice between the two lasted while life lasted; my will carried it for this worm that never dies. All my days they lay before me to choose, either THE PRICELESS PEARL, OR THE UNDYING WORM, And I chose this worm that never dies. More than once my hand was stretching out to lift the pearl, but Satan slid in always sweet sin between my lips, that my hand let go. And, at the last, the pearl shone whiter than ever before my dying eye, but my heart only froze to feel the choice was past."

And you, CHILD OF THE KINGDOM, will then be in your Father's house—that vast and happy home where myriads crowd the city. John speaks as if it were fifteen hundred miles long, and wide, and high, up to the summits filled with worshippers, and in the midst our Lamb as it had been slain. You will know all about its true size and glory then, and take the golden reed from the angel's hand to count the measure of the jasper wall. No man can number the saved who dwell there. It does not add much to any great sight in this world when we get past a certain number of thousands in the crowd. When the crowd meets on a plain the eye takes little of it in. If you sat on the green floor of the Colosseum, whither old Rome used to pour her thousands out to see lion fights, or the gladiator fights of man with man; and if you looked up, by the galleries that rise all round it, from the grass to the blue sky, you could think better about John's words, "The city lieth four-square, and the length is as large as the breadth. The length, and the height, and the breadth of it are equal." You can fancy, if air were pure enough and the light strong, that an eagle eye could see up through all the street of the great city, away to the harpers on the sea of glass and fire. Each eye could take it all in, and still be resting on the Lamb—our light in the temple of our God. As to glory, think what our own poor moon can do when she walks through the dark heavens, and gives a white robe to each cloud that meets her. See the aurora, with her pale northern lights, how she casts her net work on the autumn skies, and brightens them till they glow into pink fields of glory. We do not speak of the sun, for who ever saw him go down in his yellow blaze behind the purple hills, without seeming to see heaven's gate opening? And how fair is the bow he leaves, even on the rain-drops, when he goes to hide behind the storm-cloud!

Fritz and Johanna's summer home stood on the greenest slope of a beautiful valley. Half way up a steep ascent it lay, like a nest among the wooded mountains. The valley was lonely. Only one other dwelling could be seen from any point.

On the rocks breasting the high hill over against the children's home there was a cottage. It was so placed that its chimney smoke by day, and its window lamp at eve, told them where they were if they wandered on the hills. The bleat of the sheep, the dog's bark, and at times the shepherd's own voice, they could plainly hear. They saw the milk-pails carried in the yarn spread out to whiten, and all the other goings on at the cottage door.

But the cottage they could not reach. A rushing torrent river lay between them. The boat they tried to keep there, went to pieces. A quarter of a mile, as the pigeon flew, would carry them from the one window to the other. But to go there and back by the road might be fourteen miles. Fritz and Johanna often sat by the river's brink, and said the autumn ferns of the other side were of a brighter yellow; and that the heather, as it caught the last rays of each sunset, seemed redder than their own. Years had passed, yet the journey to the other side still lay before them.

The first use of their ponies was to reach it. And this was their first day together, after years apart in other lands. They passed two bridges over two rivers; reapers on all sides they passed, that clear autumn day. Through woods of fir, and underwood of hazel, juniper, and heath, past the roaring waterfall, they slowly climbed the dangerous road of surpassing, ever-changing beauty.

"What a view it will be, brother; how strange to see it only for the first time now!" There stood the old cottage, the rocks above it, the foaming stream far, far below; but the centre beauty of the prospect was, what they had least thought of, their own home. Like a single jewel in the bosom of a robe of green it lay alone; every way so changed, from the new setting in which they now saw it, and yet the same.

The sight caused an overturn of all the old childish fancies. "Have we lived in it so long, and not known that our home was the only thing to look at from the other side?" they said. Was it a whisper of the guardian Angel about a brief future? Or was it all the solemn thought of a childhood past, and earnest youth begun? The brother and the sister knelt on that sacred spot and prayed. Fritz never was there again. That was the mid-day of his course. He worked as long again; and died far, far away among the heathen, whose souls he went to seek.

How often, weary of sin and change, we cast longing looks from home here, to the NEW HOME on the other side. When we get there, heaven will perhaps seem less strange to us, than the new aspect which earth will wear. Earth with her opportunities, earth with the lost sheep to seek, the bright crown to gain, will spread itself out before us in a new light. Earth giving songs to heaven, earth full of his glory, earth with her Bible story, her awful passage-ways to hell and heaven, we shall know all her value then.—*The Child of the Kingdom.*

THE APOSTLE JOHN.

We do not know the particulars of John's dying hours. Early church history tells us that it was a peaceful death. He did not die a martyr, as his own brother did. No Herod spilled his blood. We do not know the place. Like Moses' grave, no man knows for certain where he is buried to this day. Nor are we told who surrounded his dying bed. There is only one friend who we know for certain was there. And, reader if you be a disciple, Jesus will be at your bedside when you come to die. It may be in a Palm-tree—a land of distance or exile; or an Ephesus—a place where Christian friends will come to see you, and where the congregation in which you were wont to worship will remember you when it meets to pray. It may be in a quiet chamber, where loving relatives stand by, or in a lonely, unpleased room, where a kind neighbour looks in now and then to see if you are wanting any thing. Salome and James may have gone before; your mother and your brethren may no longer be with you; but, whoever dies, the Lord Jesus lives; and if you be his disciple you will not depart in solitude. Jesus will be with you. And once you have fallen asleep, your very dust will not be neglected nor forgotten. The Saviour will watch over it till that bright morning when he shall draw the blue curtain of these skies, and, revealing a sun which never sets, shall arouse you all recruited for the sleepless services of eternity.

There were many fishermen on the Lake of Galilee, and many young men in the village of Bethsaida, who never became Christ's disciples. And there was once a time when nothing was further from the thoughts of John. When Salome dandled him on his knee—when, with his older brother and the neighbour children, he played up and down the steep street of Bethsaida—when, in the winter months, he left the village to look at the swellings of Jordan, as in volumes of foaming ochre, it rolled and tumbled into the flooded lake—and when, a lumber lad, he shoved aloft the boat of Zebedee, grating along the gravel, and then leaped in and dealt out the net, and laid him down to be rocked asleep on the swinging waves, amongst all his dreams he never dreamed of a day which would see him a fisher of men, and one of the dearest of friends of Messiah. But that same Saviour who said to John, "Arise, follow me," invites you, dear young reader, to become his disciple. Be you as ingenuous, as obedient, as prompt, and as loving, and you too will become as lovely, as beloved. It is a wonderful invitation, but it is real. It comes from that Saviour who is "the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever," and it is an invitation which is echoed in the last words of this happy evangelist, who closes the canon of Scripture intreating all to come and

share the blessedness which he had never wholly lacked since the day that he first beheld "the Lamb of God." The Saviour invites you to arise and follow him; and, amidst all the possibilities opened to you in that high calling, do you pray and aspire to become "a beloved disciple." Like John who, amidst the confidential communings of the guest-chamber, the affectionate homages of the seven churches, the transporting revelations of Patmos, could remember the day when the scaly palms of a fishing-boat were his bed, and a coil of dripping ropes was his pillow, and when he had few hopes or aspirations beyond his native village, you know not what great things you are yet to see. But of all spectacles the greatest is Jesus himself. That sight, dwelt upon by John's adoring and absorbing eyes, filled his mind for the rest of life with a beatific vision of "God manifest," and it came out again in a character so elevated and beautiful that the whole church is now of the same mind with the Master—it loves the disciple whom Jesus loved, and recognizes, as the most Christ-like of all Christ's friends, John the divine.—*Lessons from the Great Biography, by Dr. Hamilton.*

REAPING IN DUE SEASON.

Nothing refreshes the heart of a Christian more thoroughly or confirms his faith more positively, than to meet an unexpected result of spiritual labours, long since forgotten. It is as when some day you find a rare blossom in your garden, whose seed you planted long ago, but it failed to appear in its season, and at length you forgot to look for it and forgot it was ever planted; but the sunshine at length brought the tardy flower, to render now a double pleasure.

In the summer of 1860 I visited my Eastern home for the first time since my appointment at the West, a period of four years. One principal point of interest on this tour was the town of N—, where I first entered the field as a minister. I stopped there over Sabbath to revive its pleasant old associations. To my great regret I found that the prosperity of the church had greatly declined, and that the whole town was widely infected with the infidelity of Universalism.

"The young people have gone with a rush after the new preacher," said one of my former members. "He is young and popular in his ways, and does everything to attract them. They make special efforts to get in the young folks; their road is broad and they readily walk in it. You remember Widow S—," continued he; "she is living in New York with her daughter. But James, her son is here, and he is the very head and front of this apostasy, a decided leader; and a more violent, unreasonable young man you could not easily find. He seems to hate all his mother's orthodox friends, and speaks nothing but bitterness continually against them. He lives over at the hotel very sick just now. A few weeks ago he suffered a hemorrhage of the lungs, and has been on the very verge of the grave. Several of us tried to talk with him about the future; he resented it with so much excitement that the doctor forbade it. If he dies a hopeless infidel, it will almost kill his mother!"

I did not doubt this. She had been one of our warmest friends in times past, and when her husband was living, their hospitable fireside and real sympathy often made glad the pastor's heart. But by his death she had become comparatively poor. Her son James was just the age of our eldest boy, and we used to promise them that they should prepare for the ministry together. My son I had just left comfortably fixed in his rooms at M— College, his heart all alive with youthful devotion and eagerness to serve the Master in the open field. The contrast presented by his old companion, lying feeble and suffering, unprepared for death and judgment, impressed me so painfully, that I determined to add my effort to bring him back. "Who knoweth which shall prosper, whether this or that?" said I.

I mentioned my determination to Brother T—.

"The most useless thing in the world," said he; "he will only rail at you."

At all events I would try. The next day being Sabbath, towards sunset I walked over to the hotel and inquired for young S—. I was shown to his room, where I found him very feeble and emaciated—the settled pallor of consumption on his face. As I entered the door, he was leaning on his elbow and looking towards the window, the evening sun straying through his yellow hair and flushing his thin face—a sad picture of beautiful decay. He at first seemed glad to see me. I talked about his mother, and revived the old times when her children went to school with mine, to get hold of his feelings. He inquired with interest after Robert, and I gave him a detailed account of his studies and plans, and dwelt with special force on his conversion. Thus opening the way, I asked him if he felt a readiness to meet death, in case he was soon called to die. He coldly replied he "was not disturbed by the prospect of death; he was ready, but should like to live longer!"

I asked him if he had made the preparation required by the Gospel, and felt his sins forgiven.

"I don't know much about Gospel rules for getting to heaven," said he, satirically; "but I trust in a merciful God. I believe he will reject none!"

"No, certainly he will not reject any who believe on his Son."

"What nonsense," cried he, "is all this talk about faith in the Son! Why will men try to believe what they can never understand? It is enough for me to know that God is a merciful Father, and pardons all."

"Then what did Christ die for?"

"Because sinful Jews hated him and his principles, just as thousands of martyrs have died."

"My young friend," said I, "Christ Jesus died to atone for your life of sin, which you could never have repented; and if you do not believe this, and love him for his love, God must condemn you in the judgment."

"Sir," he replied angrily, "I don't want to hear any of your cruel orthodoxy. If you believe in a monstrous power that creates to condemn, be satisfied; but don't urge any such wicked belief on my sick ears."

I saw that he was losing his self control; I urged him to be calm, and, appealing to my age and long experience, asked him if my convictions upon such an all important subject were not worthy of his respect. I thus gained him once more, and continued to represent and explain the love of God through Christ Jesus. He did not want to hear me; would not reason, but grew angry and abusive, as I had been told he would. At length, not to excite him too much, I rose to leave.

"James," said I, "would you like to have me pray with you?"

"You may if you wish," said he, coldly.

Oh, no, my friend, I will not force you to listen to my prayer," said I. I can pray for you at home, but I will not pray with you unless you wish it. That would be intrusive."

"No, sir, no," he answered quickly, as if mortified at his reply. "You are my mother's friend; you don't intrude. I should like to have you pray if you wish to."

With this tardy invitation I gladly complied, and poured out to a pardoning Redeemer my whole heart. I had learned that he was poor, and on leaving him I managed to slip a bank bill into his hand as I offered mine, which he grasped with a real cordiality that told me I had not lost ground at least. I left the next day, and heard from him no more. A week ago I received a letter from N— from his mother, telling me of his recent death. He died a Christian!

She said that after my visit he seemed thoughtful, and grew less bitter and talkative about the orthodox Christians. He was proud and obstinate, but seemed disinclined to talk on any side. After about three weeks he asked to see me again. His friends sent for me, but I had left for the West. They hailed this evidence that his former beliefs were shaking, and ventured to bring to his bedside an excellent Christian man, celebrated for his sickbed ministry. He patiently listened to him, and then confessed that some words of the prayer I offered took hold upon him, and would not be shaken off, and that he sent for me to explain them.

His questions were explained and the visit repeated. All this time, as winter approached, he was perceptibly failing, and this fact no doubt increased his readiness to hear the truth. The happy result was, that by midwinter he had completely given himself up to seek forgiveness and a change of heart, and he did not seek in vain. For many months before his death he felt an assured faith in Christ and a hope of heaven. As far as his feebleness would permit, he tried to convince his friends of their error. He died a peaceful Christian, and sent a dying message of gratitude to me.

This news was indeed good news to me. It was like finding an unsought treasure to have this reward brought back, which I had entirely ceased to expect. I sowed my seed, and I forgot to look for the harvest; but the God of harvests did not forget, and in due season I reaped precious fruit.—*Graham in Independent.*

THE DYING NOBLEMAN.

A certain nobleman, as the story goes, had a rude wit in his employ, called a fool. Amused with a remark of his one day, the nobleman gave him his walking-cane, with this injunction:—"Take this walking-cane, and keep it until you meet with a greater fool than yourself, and then give it to him. The man kept the walking-cane for a length of time, not meeting with any one whom he deemed a greater fool than himself. In process of time, however, his lordship was laid upon a dying-bed, and sending for the rude wit, addressed him thus:—"Farewell!" "Where is your lordship going?" said the man. "I am going to my long home," replied the nobleman. "Your long home?" "How long is your lordship going to stay there?" "O," said the dying nobleman, "I am never to return!" "Never to return!" exclaimed the man, "never to return!" "No," said the nobleman, "I am going to eternity, and am never to return." "Has your lordship made any preparation for that long home?" "No," said he, "I have not." "Then," replied the man, "your lordship will please to take the walking-cane; you are certainly a greater fool than I am—please to take the walking-cane."

If this be deemed a quaint illustration, sure I am it is forcible, and much to the point. Only think! the sinner is going to an eternal world! In that eternal world there is a heaven of unspeakable and everlasting happiness for those who have made preparation for it; and for those who have made no preparation, there is a world of woe, which must be their dwelling-place to all eternity. And yet the sinner makes no preparation! Regardless of his eternal interests, he is trifling with his undying soul. Is this acting the part of a wise man? Is it not rather acting the part of a madman and a fool? O ye who, carried away by the things of this world, forget that you have undying souls, that you must soon be in eternity, and must soon be in heaven or in hell! O! think about your need of preparation, before the season for it be over and gone forever.—*The Prayer Meeting.*

Pardoning mercy shall cover those defects which assisting grace did not fully conquer.