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## Religious Intelligencer.

SAINT JOHN, N. B., FEBRUARY 7, 1862.

## THE ONE THING NEEDFUL.

Substance of a Sermon preached in the Free Baptist Meeting House, Fredericton, on Sabbath afternoon, February 2d, 1862. By Rev. E. McLeod.

TEXT.—"But one thing is needful."—LUKE X. 42.

No teacher ever enunciated such doctrines as Jesus—so singular, and yet so pure. They were well calculated to startle those who listened to them. But he spoke as one having authority, and none were able to gainsay his words of wisdom and power. What human teacher would ever have thought of enunciating such self-denying doctrines, as did the Son of God? Who but he would have had the wisdom or boldness to proclaim—*one thing is needful*? The judgment of the world says many things are needful, and the human heart is never satisfied, even with variety. We do not however understand that Christ intended to teach, or did teach, that one thing is needful to the exclusion of everything else. But rather that one thing is needful above all else—that every thing else must be subordinated to this; or, in other words, that to have this one thing, every thing else necessary follows of course—it carrying, as it were, within its bowels every thing else that is either necessary or desirable.

But with the fact established that one thing is needful, the world disagrees in relation to what that is. A great number say that money—riches—is desirable above all things else; and earnestly do they toil to obtain it. Others say honours, and a few brave even death itself to secure this gaudy bauble. Another class makes knowledge, and another power the object of their ambition. A much greater number believe that pleasure should be the real object of life. This is peculiarly true of the young. The world looks to them bright and fair, and to enjoy it is their first aim. But these are all sad mistakes.

The one thing needful is that which is capable of giving us the greatest happiness under all circumstances, and of perpetuating that happiness hereafter. And that is RELIGION. But an objection meets us in the onset. Men, judging from the examples of religion about them, deny its power to save or to satisfy. We reply, that in the middle of the nineteenth century no argument should be required of the preacher to convince of the power or value of the Christian faith. Arguments come up from millions of renewed lives all along the history of the church—from the death scenes of believers of every class, and from the funeral fires of thousands of witnesses for Jesus. These are the arguments we would adduce of the value of RELIGION. Are they not enough? But when we speak of religion—of Christian faith—we do not mean that superficial profession which many make without any vital change. We distinguish between the faith of the early Christians and of all real Christians now, and the merely outward profession so common in our day. True godliness embraces a change of heart, and a change of life necessarily follows; a crucifixion with Christ; a life of holiness and true consecration to the will and service of God, are the inseparable characteristics of that religion which is the one thing needful.

But while all may be willing to admit the necessity and value of the Christian's faith to some persons, and under some circumstances, they practically deny its necessity for others. The young too frequently say, religion is for the aged, the sick, the dying, but for us it is not necessary. They look out upon the world, and, unacquainted with its real character, they see nothing but brightness and joy. Temptations are hidden from them—the snares and dangers amidst which they tread are unseen. The necessity of a Keeper whose eye never slumbers nor sleeps is not considered by them. That which is their danger is often regarded by them as a source of pleasure—that which they most ardently seek after, and prize the highest, often proves their ruin. And how sad the ruin of a young man or a young woman. A noble steamer, filled with living freight, while on her voyage to a distant port, strikes some unseen rock, becomes a wreck, and sinks with all on board. As we read the sad tale, and think of the terrible loss of life, melancholy feelings are awakened within our hearts. But what is this to the wreck of a human soul! Many a child trained under pious care, the hope, the joy of fond parents, has started out on the voyage of life only to make an early wreck, and sink in dishonor, shame, and hopelessness for ever. With the ruin of that child have perished the fondest hopes of parents and friends. The dearest expectations of loving hearts have been dashed to the earth, or shut up within some prison walls, or been buried in some early and dishonored grave. Our police institutions—our prisons—and institutions of charity, bear testimony to these things. Would not the one thing needful have saved them? Ah, yes! RELIGION would have shielded them from temptation, and afforded them a source of joy and pleasure such as the world's votaries never knew. Amidst the snares and temptations so numerous now in our cities and throughout the entire land, what the young require is the fear and love of God to keep and save them. It is the one thing needful for them. And is it not necessary for the aged? If there be a night on earth over which angels might weep, it surely is the hoary-

headed sinner—the man of threescore years or more—

"Who has run his race,  
And got to grace—  
An awful sight indeed."

Contemplate for a moment an aged sinner. He has had his day—Sabbaths have been wasted—the gospel slighted—grace neglected—sin has hardened—the Spirit has been grieved, and now on the verge of the grave—on the brink of the eternal world—just about to confront his Maker and Judge, he is found with all his guilt and sin cleaving to his soul. He looks back on the past and it affords no joy, the future has no hope, and nothing but eternal hopelessness is his! O sad indeed is the case of the aged sinner. With what avidity and joy should he seize the one thing needful, and at the eleventh hour make his peace with God.

The rich may boast themselves in their wealth, and rejoice that their "mountain stands strong." But the rich must die. And to leave their wealth and ease, like one of their number of old, to lift up their eyes in hell without "a drop of water to cool their tongues," will be misery indeed. To escape this, with all their other possessions, they must possess the one thing needful.

To the poor it is invaluable—an antidote against murmuring and despondency—giving comfort and hope in the battle of life, and pointing to an inheritance and a home where the sons of toil and weariness will rest from fatigue forever.

We are not ignorant of the fact that there are some who believe that religion is not adapted to every relation and circumstance in life. Like a Sunday garment it is desirable on some occasions, but on others must be laid aside. Fatal delusion! At home—abroad—alone—in society—in business—in health—in sickness—and in death, it is the one thing needful. If there is a happy household on earth, it is that one where all the members love the house of prayer—where all can join with one heart in praise to God. What families require to make them happy is religion—the sad unhappiness of many arises from its absence in all, or a part of the members. And as we go abroad among strangers, whether for pleasure or business, how necessary to carry religious principle with us. It is a safeguard in the hour of danger, and a comfort in the hour of solitude. It is the highway to all true prosperity in business. In the merchant's store and the mechanic's shop—the lawyer in his office, and the physician with his patients, the politician and the soldier, every class and condition of men from the Prince to the peasant, have tested and proved its value. No profession perhaps exists in which it is more difficult to maintain and enjoy vital godliness than the military. But the life and death of a Havelock, the zeal and piety of a Hedley Vicars, the devotion of hundreds of men in the British army at home and abroad, illustrate the fact that it is adapted for even the tented field, and that it is the one thing needful even there. The history of a Wilberforce exhibits the beauty and power of a simple faith in God, and an intimate communion with the Saviour, even when engaged in laborious political life; while the death-bed words of his late Royal Highness show the estimate that he put upon "peace with Heaven."

In every circumstance—to every person—at all times—for life—for death—and for eternity, the Christian's faith—the grace of God in the heart—reconciliation through the blood of the cross—the forgiveness of sins, and adoption by grace into the family of Heaven, is the one thing needful. Have we obtained it? Whatever else we may possess and enjoy, without this we are miserable! And yet not so miserable now, as we shall be hereafter. To neglect the pearl of great price, to listen to the gospel as though it were only idle tales, is the extreme of madness and folly. Resolve this hour that you will no longer rest without an interest in Christ, and when you leave this place go to your closets and on your knees implore the mercy and grace of our Lord Jesus Christ to pardon and save you, that you may be partakers of that one thing needful, that will insure you true happiness in this world, and an eternal weight of glory at God's right hand forever.

Our readers will understand that as the law in Massachusetts now stands, every teacher is bound to read a portion of the Bible every day. The Senate it appears is disposed to relax this requirement, and as they profess to think, amend the law. The following paragraph from the *Boston Recorder* indicates that the amendment will meet with warm opposition both from the other branch of the Legislature and the people.

On Monday this bill was reconsidered, and is being modified. What shape it will yet assume, remains to be seen. It is believed that the House will take a firmer stand for the Word of God than the other branch of the Legislature has done. Remonstrances against the passing of the bill are beginning to come in. If the passage of this bill can be delayed a few days, so that the citizens of the Commonwealth can understand what their public servants are doing, the remonstrants will be counted by tens of thousands. Will not the Christians in every town bestir themselves, and forward their remonstrances?

It is truly remarkable that the Legislative body of any land should enact any law which would lead to the election from the Public Schools of the country, the only Book which contains their religion. Would the Hindu exclude the Shasters from the schools of Hindostan; the Turk the Koran from those of Turkey; or the Parsee the Zendavesta from the schools of Persia! It is for law makers in a Christian land—a land where the Word of God is the religion of the country—to shut the only volume which contains that religion out of the institutions for the instruction of their youth.

FREEWILL BAPTISTS OF THE STATES, AND FREE C. BAPTISTS OF NEW BRUNSWICK.

Although there is no ecclesiastical connection between these two religious bodies, there is nevertheless much belonging to both which is similar. The Freewill Baptist is much older than the Free C. Baptist. The origin of the former dates back about eighty years; that of the latter, scarcely thirty years. The founders of the Free Baptist denomination in New Brunswick were not Freewill Baptists. Our Conference for several years after its organization recognized no other appellation but "Christian," and no other "Treatise of Faith" but the BIBLE. Self protection in process of time forced upon the denomination the adoption of another name, with a brief declaration of Faith also. The numerous errors which were imported into the Province from the States, under the name of Bible doctrine, and the importures of men and sentiments upon our churches and the public under the abused name of *Christian*, rendered it necessary that more distinctive features of denominational character and faith should be adopted than were recognized at our first organization. Hence, in common with our brethren of Nova Scotia, the name of Free Christian Baptist was assumed, and a definite treatise of Faith adopted. Except an occasional delegation from the Freewill Baptists of the States to our Conference, with other occasional visits from some of their Ministers to the Province, no other denominational connection exists between us. We are ecclesiastically two distinct and separate bodies. And yet it is interesting to trace the similarity between us in many respects, notwithstanding our little intercourse with each other. In the first place, in doctrine, as enunciated in our respective treatises of Faith, we are one and the same; some slight differences exist in the order and polity of our District Meetings and Annual Conferences; but in individual church order and discipline we are very nearly the same. Indeed, so similar are the doctrines and practices of the two bodies, that some who are well acquainted with both believe that the interests of the cause of Christ would be promoted if the two Denominations were in reality—ONE.

Our object, however, in this article is not to discuss this idea, but to call attention to some facts in the history of the Freewill Baptists, with the design of throwing a little light in the pathway of some of our readers. The first volume of the History of the Denomination has recently been issued from their Printing Establishment in Dover, N. H. It has been prepared and written with great care, and gives the origin—the early struggles—the difficulties with which the Denomination had to contend—their uphill progress, and all the principal events connected with their growth and advancement for a considerable number of the first years of their existence. From a lengthy review of this work in *Zion's Herald*, published in Boston, and the organ of the New England Methodist Church, we copy a single sentence: "The history," says the *Herald*, "is written in an unadorned practical style, and is a valuable contribution to the ecclesiastical literature of America." It would be strange if this history did not bring out some things deserving the special notice of the Free Baptists of New Brunswick, and by which we might be profited. We think it does. They have attained their present influential and useful standing by struggling against and overcoming serious obstacles both within and outside of the Denomination. Many of the disadvantages under which they laboured are precisely the same as the Free C. Baptists in this Province labour under. These are summed up in the History referred to as follows:—

1. In a depressing, slenderous influence, prevalently exerted against them.  
2. In their not establishing themselves in large towns and cities. These centres of influence were neglected, while rural districts received attention; and thus was reversed the primitive order of things; for Neander says, "Christianity was diffused, for the most part, from the cities into the country."  
3. In not perfecting their system of *Itinerancy*. Each minister travelled wherever his own convictions of duty directed, and thus were many churches undesignated left with only occasional ministerial labor.  
4. In not calling to their aid the power of the Press. They published few books or tracts, and had no weekly organ for forty-five years.  
5. In not interesting themselves in Education. The heart was cared for, but the mind neglected, both in the ministry and the laity.  
6. In not enforcing the Scripture doctrine, that "the laborer is worthy of his hire."

We admit these are not all the causes which prevent our more rapid growth and enlargement. There are some additional obstacles which probably the Freewill Baptists did not have to contend with. There is not a single one of the above six, however, which has not been to our denomination a serious hindrance. The first is from without, all the rest are internal, and the removal of these would silence the former. Religious progress in the nineteenth century, among any people, must have order, system, education, scripture doctrine, and piety. The absence of any one of these will retard its advancement, and hinder what in other respects it may seek to promote. True, change is not always an evidence of advancement, but he who never changes, never advances.

of persons, to whom they gave the name of the "CHRISTIAN COMMISSION." The name of this Commission is thus set forth:—  
1. By furnishing to their religious tracts, periodicals and books.  
2. By aiding in the formation of religious associations in the several regiments.  
3. By putting such associations in correspondence with the Christian public.  
4. By cultivating as far as possible the religious sympathies and prayers of Christians in their behalf.  
5. By obtaining and directing such gratuitous personal labor among the soldiers and sailors as may be practicable.  
6. By improving such other opportunities and means as many in the providence of God be presented.  
7. By furnishing as far as possible, profitable reading, other than religious, and wherever there is a permanent military post, by establishing a general library of such works.  
8. By establishing a medium of speedy and safe intercommunication between the men in the army and navy and their friends and families, by which small packages of clothing, books and medicines, and mementos of social affection can be interchanged.  
When this plan was laid before President Lincoln, he made the following reply:—  
"Your Christian and benevolent undertaking for the benefit of the soldiers, is too obviously proper and praiseworthy to admit any difference of opinion. I sincerely hope your plan may be as successful in execution as it is just and generous in conception."

## AMERICAN AFFAIRS.

From the moment of the breaking out of the slaveholders' rebellion, the English nation—which, that is, the ruling classes of it, is essentially aristocratic in all its ideas—sympathized with the slaveholding traitors, hugged the idea that the Union was destroyed, and that a fatal blow had been struck at that growing and overshadowing democracy, which, from emancipating the black slaves of the American cotton-fields, might, by the moral suasion of its great example, proceed in due time to emancipate the white serfs of the English wheat-fields and the white slaves of the English cotton factories. Here is the secret, and the whole secret, of that course and that position of the English press, the English Government, and the English public which have taken us all so entirely by surprise.

We copy the above paragraph from the *N. Y. Independent* of last week. It is intended we suppose to apply to the people of England exclusively. But the same sentiments, seem from the tenor of the American press, to be entertained in relation to the people of these colonies. The North is determined to believe that the people of the Provinces are their enemies, and love the South, and wish it success. We are persuaded such is not the case. At the breaking out of the rebellion we think at least five out of every seven sympathized with the North, and ardently wished the rebellion suppressed. They regarded it as the uprising of the slaveholders and their friends to defend and perpetuate the slave system, which is the real cause of the war—and they supposed that the North would seize this opportunity to either proclaim freedom to the four millions of captives held by a free nation, or at least adopt a policy which would assure the friends of the slave everywhere that the peculiar institution should be destroyed at an early day by the action of the Government itself. They have been disappointed. The Federal Government—from the President down—seem to be as determined to maintain the institution of Slavery as do the Southern rebels themselves. Under the plea of maintaining the Constitution, the slaves are doomed to perpetual bondage. The people of the Provinces see this, and while it gives them no more sympathy or love for the South, it nevertheless diminishes these for the North, and begets a feeling of indifference in relation to what may be the final issue between the two parties. It may be, that commercial and political men, failing to see justice done to the slave, turn their thoughts to what would be likely to benefit the commercial and political interests of the colonies, and in this respect favour a Southern Confederacy.

We find that many sagacious men at the North fully believe that Slavery is the real cause of the rebellion, and that it can only be suppressed, and the nation saved by justice being done to the slave. In a lecture delivered by Wendell Phillips in Boston not long since, he said:—  
So far as we can learn, the Government proposes to reconstruct the nation on the basis of 1789—to put us back where we were in 1860—to save slavery. With a barbarity that was unparalleled, it had stopped up the harbor of Charleston, but a single slave the Government had not the courage to touch. Every man with his eyes open, from Sumter down, had said that there was not strength enough to save the Union and slavery; and Government to-day stood pledged to support slavery.

This is the cause of much of that alienation of sympathy with the North which has lately been felt in the Provinces. We step a little out of our ordinary course by referring to these things editorially, but justice to ourselves, and for the information of some of our readers, we are induced to make an occasional reference thereto.

We subjoin the following remarks by the *Montreal Witness*, an unwavering friend of the North, and a paper unsurpassed by any other in candor, high moral dignity, and independence:—  
President Lincoln's policy, which he has stuck to through all the mighty changes that have shaken the world since his election—has been to restore the South to the Union without meddling with slavery. He was brought up in a Slave State, and most of his own and his wife's relations are identified with the Southern cause. Little wonder, then, that he should cultivate the grace of loving his enemies. The day is past, however, for him honorably to win back the disaffected by manifestations of friendship either to them or their peculiar institution. As well might the compass seek to attract the North Pole. The vigorous war measures which now appear to be fairly inaugurated, may, probably, in the present disabled state of the South, if actively carried out, suffice to overrun the seceded States. When this is accomplished, however, the inhabitants will, from all appearances, have to be regarded as enemies. Instances are few in history of a people so thoroughly disaffected as those of the Southern States, being long held in subjection to any advantage; and those are only known under despotic power, where the conquered people are little worse off than the original citizens; or, as in the case of Ireland, by the appointment of a powerful aristocracy, whose interest it has been to support the new state of things. Such a course would be entirely at variance with American institutions, and there seems no likelihood of the Government ever using the expedient within its power of forming out of the slaves a large body of good citizens. We do not mean to prophesy concerning events, the appearance of which a single day may so thoroughly change, but it seems evident that the

South must either achieve their own independence, or else that being conquered, they should receive it as a free gift from the central government, the two States being formed on a new basis, and according to terms dictated by the old government. From the first alternative we could hope for nothing better than a second Mexico in the slaveholding region, while the remaining portion of the Union would possess much less stability than before—secession having been once successful. The second mode promises less revolution, and, consequently, more peace and prosperity all over the continent. The slavery question, although it is apparently not to be settled by those whose duty it is, having it in their power, will doubtless be solved soon. It is evident that slavery cannot long outlive, in any power, the present difficulty.

The following article from the *Morning Star* was in the hands of the printer last week, but, for want of room, did not appear. It may be appropriately appended to the foregoing:—  
The whole country is sick of this tampering, half-hearted mode of warfare, and tempests of complaints would roll up from every quarter, were it not from fear of weakening or hindering the Government in the work of suppression. How long shall this state of things continue? When will the work of chastisement thoroughly commence? Will the Government ever rise to the dignity of the occasion, and lead the people to a speedy victory?

There has been considerable progress in the spirit of the leaders. They speak more sharply, act more vigorously, and understand the intensity of hatred which burns in the hearts of the rebels more fully than they did. But we would have them lead in the conflict, and not be pushed along by the invincible march of events, and reluctantly take a position which they should have had the foresight to take at the outset. But the world moves; the God of heaven overrules the events of earth, and we have good assurance that he designs this civil strife to act as a refining fire upon us, and when we are prepared to come out of the heat, the wisdom, the opportunity and the man, will appear to bring us out.

Serious errors have yet to be corrected before it is possible to escape from our troubles. Many of our rulers have yet to learn the lesson that the restoration of the Union is impossible unless slavery is suppressed. The idea that the South will ever become loyal while that institution continues, is Utopian. The talk of finding a strong Union feeling at the South, is all a delusion. Where is the evidence of it? All indications favor the Southern claim, that since war actually commenced, their hatred to the North, and devotion to the Confederacy, is nearly unanimous. If we conquer them, will that make them love us? Is it the nature of the Anglo-American race to love their conquerors? Will proud Southerners cheerfully accept a government which is forced upon them? If they had no other reason for hating and loathing a union with the North, this would be sufficient in their minds. Can we expect them voluntarily to take their places in, and act freely as citizens of, this Republic, after we have forced them to submit by the sword? Those who expect it are ignorant of human nature, and especially of the South. The leaders will control the masses, and the leaders will never be friendly to the power which holds them under the yoke. And if they are not voluntarily loyal to the Constitution, they cannot be made to work in concord, nor work at all, as citizens, since the genius of our Government knows nothing of compulsory loyalty.

What then shall be done? The time, the hour for the answer of this question has come. If we conquer the South, then what? How are they to be pacified and made friendly? How can they be brought to resume an orderly walk in the Union? This is the great question of the year. Will public officers be as slow to arrive at a true answer to this question, as they have been to learn the lessons of the past year?

Shall we give up the Union? No, never! Shall we undertake to convert Southerners into friends by the sword? That is impossible. Shall we hold them by the strong arm of military power? That will certainly corrupt, demoralize and destroy the Republic. Is there any way that the South can be made loyal and friendly? There is. Remove the cause of the hatred; break every yoke; confiscate the property of those who bear arms, or take active part in the rebellion, and in a little time the work will be done.

In a word, our only escape from disunion or despotism is to revolutionize Southern society; introduce new elements, a new spirit, new life, new relations between capital and labor; and the more speedily, boldly, vigorously, our Government strikes for this result, the sooner we shall have peace, the darkness which now oppresses will be past, and the morning will break upon us.

## THE NEWS.

## BRITISH AND FOREIGN.

The steamer *Africa* arrived at New York on the 31st, with dates to the 18th.

There seems to be no disposition in England to withdraw the forces sent out to these colonies. The preparations for war are, in fact, to be continued. No more troops will, however, be sent out. All military defences will be erected at all prominent and exposed points. A well informed writer says:—

"Lord Palmerston is warmly applauded for his mainly policy. A complimentary address, very numerous signed, has been presented to the Government, to which Lord John Russell has replied. 'The Government,' says the *Times*, 'have acted with a rare courtesy and temper, but have displayed, together with dignified deliberation, firmness, promptitude, and courage.' It is, indeed, a rare triumph to grace the latter years of a life so happily prolonged, that Lord Palmerston has found, and has used, the opportunity to curb the arrogance of the only people which has in this generation entered systematically upon a course of offence toward England."

There is no relaxation in our efforts to put the Canadian defences on a proper footing. None of the troops lately sent out will be withdrawn until the internal American difficulty shall be settled. The organization of the local militia and volunteers will be proceeded with, and military commission will be sent out to devise means for the protection of the frontier by forts and works along the points most open to attack. This last will be a very expensive operation, of which we may fairly expect the Canadians themselves to take at least some share of the burden.

The cost incurred by the English Government in consequence of the *Trent* difficulty, has been put down at millions, but the *Morning Post*—a Government paper, states that it will not exceed two millions. A movement has been commenced in favor of a recognition of the Southern Confederacy. A number of journals and several influential members of Parliament urge it strongly. Public opinion appears to be in favor of the South.

The destruction of the Harbour of Charleston by the stone fleet is strongly condemned both in France and England. Earl Russell has sent a remonstrance to Washington, and it is rumored that France and other Governments are taking similar steps. The London *Observer* recommends the intervention of France and England in the contest between the North and South. It says that such an act will be approved of by the whole world and gladly accepted by both sides in the quarrel.

A case somewhat similar to the *Trent* has occurred. Two gentlemen—Messrs. Zacharie and Rodgers—supposed to be agents of the Confederate States,