

The Religious Intelligencer.

AN EVANGELICAL FAMILY NEWSPAPER FOR NEW BRUNSWICK AND NOVA SCOTIA.

REV. E. McLEOD.

"THAT GOD IN ALL THINGS MAY BE GLORIFIED THROUGH JESUS CHRIST."

Peter.

[Editor and Proprietor.]

Vol. X.—No. 46.

SAINT JOHN, NEW BRUNSWICK, FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 13, 1863.

Whole No. 514.

The Intelligencer.

THE SAVING WIFE.

By J. De Liefde, of Amsterdam.

CHAPTER IV.

(Continued.)

HOW THE SHOEMAKER'S WIFE SUCCEEDED IN CHANGING HER HUSBAND'S HEART, AND HOW THEREAFTER HIS LIBRARY CHANGED ALSO.

The state of things in Mr. R.'s household now became most alarming. It was next to an open war. He began systematically shunning his wife's presence; would often order his breakfast to be served up in his counting-house, apart from the family; took his dinner at the club, and came home late at night. Matters thus went on for some weeks, during which Mrs. R. spent many a sleepless night, wetting her pillow with her tears. Her only consolation was prayer and her Bible. Her state of mind, however, was often such as to refuse to be consoled. It was in those days that my predecessor, the Rev. Mr. W., received and accepted a call to the Hague, as a minister. Of course he did not know Mrs. R.; but she soon heard of him, and became one of his constant hearers. Every Sunday she was sitting under the word of the gospel he was preaching; but he did not know that there was one among his audience which bore such a heavy cross.

One day Mrs. R. received a lesson from a very strange preacher. It was a poor, wretched Jew, who certainly was not aware that he was imparting a precious treasure to a poor suffering soul. She was returning from a visit to a neighbouring village, when, at half a mile's distance from the city, she saw a poor Israelite driving a young heifer towards the town. He was leading the animal by a rope attached to its horns, but the beast seemed rather indisposed to follow him. Every now and then it would bound backward, and turning round, enter away in the opposite direction. The Jew firmly kept hold of the rope, and allowed himself to be drawn along with the stubborn animal, scamping backward till it kept standing. Then he would tap it on its back, speak a few kind words to it, and prevail upon it gently to turn again and to follow him a few steps. Suddenly again the beast began roaring and jumping about, and the patient leader again saw himself compelled to follow its irregular caprices. What ever happened, however, he never allowed the rope to slip out of his hands. He seemed to have made up his mind to keep hold of the animal, even if it would run away with him to the other end of the world. It was a most ridiculous sight, and Mrs. R. could not help laughing heartily at the queer, out-of-the-way capers which the poor fellow was compelled to cut every now and then. But, when she saw the animal was dragged back and forward, sometimes galloping in full speed, sometimes standing still, while the beast stared at him with stupid, malicious looks, as only stubborn heifers can cast at wretched cattle-drivers. Still, she observed that the man, with his indulgent, almost fatherly, and tapping it on its neck, and pulling it gently along, he got the better of it, and at length succeeded in leading it into the city, where the stupid beast seemed to feel that now it was among fashionable people, and ought to behave politely.

Now, when the ludicrous impression had subsided, Mrs. R., having returned to her usual mood of earnestness, could not forbear reflecting upon what she had witnessed. "Indeed," she said to herself, "my unbelieving husband is very much like that stubborn heifer, and tapping it on its neck, and pulling it gently along, he got the better of it, and at length succeeded in leading it into the city, where the stupid beast seemed to feel that now it was among fashionable people, and ought to behave politely. And she did not close the day without fervently imploring the Lord to make her a bait unto salvation for her unhappy husband.

The next morning after breakfast, while her husband was at his business, the first couple of work she took up was going into his counting-house and cleaning it from the ceiling down to the floor. His library too got a share of the purifying process. She brushed the books, and put them in tidy order on the shelves. It was almost an Arabian stable, for she had not put a hand to it for months. The appearance of the place was quite changed from that of a lumber-room into a comfortable little parlour. Mr. R. came home in the afternoon. He was much astonished. "Who has done this?" asked he.

"I have done it," answered she kindly. "I thought it was time to prevent your from being buried alive in the dust." For the first time Mrs. R. observed a smile of contentment on her husband's face. The next morning, while Mr. R. was yet in his bedroom, she sent up her boy to tell him that breakfast was ready, and that mother hoped he would come down to unite them. He came quite surprised. Everything was most comfortably arranged, and with a smile on her face she said, "Come now, sit down and let us have a cheerful home together." So she put her arm-chair before him, and he sat down like a happy king on his throne. Silent prayer was offered up as formerly, to which he made no objection. The conversation then went over topics of business, customers, and other indifferent subjects, in which Mrs. R. took part with as much liveliness as himself. He was so pleased that he kissed her and their daughter before he went to his shop.

sharp, and would hurt me; and besides, you would pull me up and draw me out of my element into another world in which I am a perfect stranger, and for which I have got no organs to live and to breathe." Now, what is the angle to do? He wants the fish, and cordially desires to get it out. He takes a piece of bread or a little wine, and puts it round the hook, so as to conceal it entirely, and the fish thinking that it is a real dainty. Yet the hook is within, mark ye; but the fish does not know it till it has bitten. Up he pulls, and the animal is at once transplanted from one world into another. Now, observe what the angler teaches you. Of course there is a great disparity between his fishing and yours. His object is the destruction of the fish; yours is salvation. He likes the fish from a principle of selfishness; your principle is love. He transplants the fish from life into death; your desire is to transplace the lost sinner from eternal death into eternal life, through the medium of the gospel tackle. But there is, on the other hand, a great similarity between the skillful natural and the able spiritual fisher, as to the *way and manner* of fishing. There are many truths in the gospel which are hard and sharp, like an angler's hook, to the feeling and understanding of the unconverted. There are other truths, too, which, being of a softer and tenderer kind, are more congenial to the taste and wants of the natural man. They are just like a soft piece of dough, or a supple worm. Now, when dealing with unconverted people, pray the Lord to give you wisdom ably to put the truth before them. Observe that there are two chances of losing the fish. You may put the bait hook before him, without any dough or worm. Or you may put a piece of dough and a worm before him, without a hook. In both cases you'll be sure to catch no fish. Some Christians, when dealing with unconverted people, only tell them that they are lost and wicked, and that they go to hell if they don't repent. Now, this is sinking the hook without the dough. Others only speak of the goodness of God and the mercifulness of the saviour, avoiding any allusion whatever to God's justice and man's condemnable state. This is sinking the dough without the hook. But both together, and you will do your work well. But then, mark ye, put them so together as to hold the dough foremost, and the hook behind. Lead the unconverted man to a loving, merciful Saviour, and get him to understand from the wounds of the crucified One, and from the blood which flows for the remission of sins, what a wicked, lost, and damnable sinner he must be. Above all, keep in mind that you yourselves—that is to say, your own conduct and behaviour—are the bait which ought to entice the fish to bite. If you constantly expect him to believe that your Master can smile with the smile of love? If you always look at him as a lost and condemned one, how can you expect him to believe that he is saveable? If you, from a stern sort of home-made sanctity, refuse to eat and to drink in his presence, can you wonder that he thinks your master is John the Baptist and not Christ? Observe that the sharpness of the hook is in the *gospel*, but that it ought not to be in *you*. Be kindly affectioned to your fellow-sinner, though not yet your fellow-believer, even though he should commit great follies in your presence. Rebuke his sin; show him that you love him as Christ loved for him, but show him that you love him as Christ loved for him when you were yet a sinner.

Thus spoke the evangelist in his simplicity, and it was quite sufficient for Mrs. R. She went home in tears. She now perfectly understood her fault. And she did not close the day without fervently imploring the Lord to make her a bait unto salvation for her unhappy husband.

The next morning after breakfast, while her husband was at his business, the first couple of work she took up was going into his counting-house and cleaning it from the ceiling down to the floor. His library too got a share of the purifying process. She brushed the books, and put them in tidy order on the shelves. It was almost an Arabian stable, for she had not put a hand to it for months. The appearance of the place was quite changed from that of a lumber-room into a comfortable little parlour. Mr. R. came home in the afternoon. He was much astonished. "Who has done this?" asked he.

"I have done it," answered she kindly. "I thought it was time to prevent your from being buried alive in the dust." For the first time Mrs. R. observed a smile of contentment on her husband's face. The next morning, while Mr. R. was yet in his bedroom, she sent up her boy to tell him that breakfast was ready, and that mother hoped he would come down to unite them. He came quite surprised. Everything was most comfortably arranged, and with a smile on her face she said, "Come now, sit down and let us have a cheerful home together." So she put her arm-chair before him, and he sat down like a happy king on his throne. Silent prayer was offered up as formerly, to which he made no objection. The conversation then went over topics of business, customers, and other indifferent subjects, in which Mrs. R. took part with as much liveliness as himself. He was so pleased that he kissed her and their daughter before he went to his shop.

The next day he sat in his counting-house playing his flute. She happened to pass by, and kept standing to listen to his performance. He saw her through the window and stopped playing, thinking that she wanted to speak to him.

"Go on," said she with a smile while opening the door. "That's a beautiful tune indeed. I like it very much. Please play it to me again." She seated herself on a chair, and he, not a little satisfied with this unexpected audience, put his best foot foremost, and blew his highest tune.

"Now," said she, when he had finished his debut and she had applauded accordingly, "now, could you not give us a treat to-night after tea, my dear. Jane will accompany you with the piano. That would be delightful."

church in the morning, and I to mine in the evening." "But, my dear," she once said, "do you really mean to say that the theatre is a kind of church?" "Yes, surely I do," answered he. "There is very little difference between the one and the other. Both in the pulpit and on the stage the persons who speak are actors. Preaching is but playing a comedy in a serious kind of performance. Your parsons ascend their pulpits, and try, by the means of intonation and frightening impressions upon the people, As to the matter they treat, I am sure most of them don't believe a bit of it, and they do believe it are either fools or silly fellows. Their chief object is creating effect through eloquence, in order to draw crowded audiences and to be admired. You only need observe how beautifully they choose their words, and how elegantly they move their eyes and hands. It is all perfectly conformable to art. But art is not nature. Now, the same is the case on the stage. Only the matter is different, and, to my taste, more worthy. If stage-playing is to be performed at all, I think it is more securely to apply it to subjects which everybody knows to be fictions, than to things which the people suppose to be true and holy. Most people go to church to be edified, and to the theatre to amuse themselves. I do the reverse. I sometimes go to church to amuse myself with the skillful eloquence of the orator, but I go to the theatre to be edified. Great moral truths are taught on the stage which have a bearing on practical life."

Mrs. R. was silent. She could not help acknowledging that there was some truth in his reasoning. She was fully convinced that the great bulk of the theologian and rationalistic preachers denied the greater portion of that same Bible they were preaching from, and that their paramount care was not about *what* to say, but *how* to say it. You know, madam, that now-a-days the pulpit is too much degraded into a platform for exhibiting rhetorical and oratorical talent. It cannot be otherwise where eloquence takes the place of the gospel. A theologian preacher cannot but preach himself instead of Christ, for the Christ he believes in is too poor to make his mouth eloquent at all. Mrs. R. was fully aware that this was the condition of our pulpits. She herself refused to hear the great bulk of the ministers for that same reason. She knew, however, that there were a few preachers who formed an exception to that distressing rule, and of these she liked my predecessor, the late Mr. W., most. He was a man who with all his heart believed the work of God from its first page to its last. Though not an orator in the scientific sense of the word, yet he was a fine speaker. His was the natural eloquence of a warm, loving heart, which sometimes sacrificed a little of the *form* to get more room for the *contents*, and exhibits less *flowers*, because they have ripened into *fruits*. This made him particularly attractive to the unlearned and simple people who flocked round his pulpit in crowded audiences. But few of the higher and wealthy class were to be found among them. It was not deemed fashionable to be a regular attendant at his services. And this accounted for Mr. R.'s never having heard him, though he sometimes would take a fancy to spend time on a Sunday morning in walking to the different churches, and stopping a few minutes in each of them.

"You are right," said Mrs. R.; "there is, alas! too much of stage-playing in the pulpit. But there are also some faithful preachers of the truth, about whom I am sure you would not pronounce such a verdict if hearing them. I wish you would go with me some Sunday to hear Mr. W. I assure you you would at least esteem that good man."

"Mr. W.?" exclaimed the shoemaker. "That Methodist preacher! Never! I would rather go to the market-place to look at the political puppets show."

"Dear, dear!" answered Mrs. R. with a mixed expression of sadness and kindness in her face. "Don't speak so; you don't know the man, but if you knew him I'm sure you would love him. But," added she, gently stroking his hair from his forehead, "I hope you will go and hear him sometime. Won't you?"

"Well, we'll see," answered he, taking up his flute; and while Mrs. R. returned to her parlour he said to himself, "At any rate he must be a clever fellow if it is he who has turned you round so admirably well."

You perceive, that now the domestic intercourse in Mr. R.'s house was restored, the conversation between him and his wife sometimes touched religious topics. She avoided it as much as she could, but often she could not; when, for instance, he would utter dangerous opinions before his children, which she, for conscience sake, could not allow to pass without protest on her part. These were very painful moments for her, in which she would fervently ejaculate to her Saviour for proper direction. She then contented herself with stating in a meek but earnest way that she could not believe that his views of the matter were correct, since the Bible told the contrary; but that she hoped that papa would sometime soon acknowledge his mistake, and come to an agreement with the word of the Lord. He sometimes would allow the discussion to be settled there, but sometimes too he would get animated and attack the Bible in his usual way. She then, however, kept silent, avoiding anything like controversy, but showing by an expression of patient distress how much she suffered in her heart because of the blindness of his. Now, there is something irresistible in the passive resistance of love. Mr. R. could not long continue his animosity when he observed the dignity of her solemn silence. He could not help feeling that she was nobler than he, and, to extricate himself out of his humiliating position, would quickly retreat by turning the conversation to some topic of less controversial kind.

One day, when being alone with him in his counting-house (a little unpleasant controversy had taken place that morning at breakfast)—she gently laid her hand on his shoulder while he was smoking a cigar in a *dolce far niente*, and looking into his eyes with a supplicating smile, she said, "Pray, my dear, don't you agree with me we had better avoid discussions of that sort in the presence of our children? They are so young. Their tender hearts are so liable to receive wrong impressions when witnessing difference between parents. There is a serious difference of opinion

between you and me, but I hope and trust the Lord will bring us to unity again. I am willing to converse with you about your opinions as often as you desire, but pray let it be in private between ourselves. It is such a painful position for our dear children to stand between their father and mother, not knowing which to choose."

"Well, I think you are right," answered he; "I don't like it either; but we have not always our thoughts and words at our command, and often I am in the midst of the controversy before I am aware of it. Still, I will try to keep aloof from such matters when they are present. But as to the unity you referred to, I am afraid we shall never come to that unless you turn round to my side. But you will not, for you often refuse to listen to my reasoning the most striking passages from my books to you."

"Well, my dear," answered she, "I will listen to them, but then will you also read my Bible with me?"

"Yes, I will. In fact, I thought the other day I must read it; for I must acknowledge there are some very beautiful, poetical, sublime passages in the Scriptures which you favour us with every now and then."

The first evening Mrs. R. was sitting down with her husband to listen to his reading a passage from one of the French encyclopaedists, she remembered the Jew allowing himself to be drawn backward from the town by a stubborn heifer. "I'll go along with my husband a little now," thought she, "but, Lord, grant that he may come to a stand still, that I may speak gently to him, and lead him on again to my gates!"

"Now what do you say to that?" asked Mr. R., when he had finished his reading. "I must say," answered she, "that it is a clever piece of human dialectic, and written in very beautiful language. I can perceive how you can admire it. But what a pity it is that such excellent talents should be in the service of a spirit which denies the most incontestable truths of history and religion. There are many reasonings in it, though, which surpass my brains. I am but a simple woman, and not learned enough to follow all those subtle deductions. But this much I understand, that if that writer's theory is true, we are without God and without hope in the world. He leaves us no other prospect but to be resolved in some indefinite power, a drop melts away in the ocean. But such a prospect is most horrible to me. Every member of my body, and every throb of my heart tells me that I am wonderfully framed by a wise and loving Creator, who must have destined me for something better than to be absorbed like a vapour. God's word, on the contrary, and my own daily experience of the kindness and tender mercies of his love, tell me that I, his redeemed child, in Christ, am on the way towards a new, glorious world, which will appear on that great day of the resurrection, when a loving Father and Saviour will receive me with unspeakable joy. And this joyful hope of mine rests not on human reasonings merely, or subtle deductions, but on facts, which have taken place on this very earth of ours, by the light of that same sun, which is shining upon us now. Now can you expect me to give up all that for the objections of a mortal man, who tries to persuade me that I am born as a living and loving person in order to end as a dead lifeless thing? I am assured, my dear, you yourself will not be able to console your heart, with this hopeless doctrine, when lying on your death-bed, and about to part with all you loved and were like her. But let us not enter into controversy about such a matter now. The next time we shall have a bit of my Bible—shall we not? And so after having read your and my books for some time, let us see what the effect will be upon our minds."

In this way Mrs. R. spoke to her husband, and he willingly agreed to her proposal. She expected everything from her husband's prayers for his conversion and from God's word. "I am sure," she said to herself, that some day soon "that single Book will sweep away his whole shell."

And that so fervently-longed for day came soon even than she had expected. Mr. R. had already for some time been deeply struck by the lovely change in his wife's conduct. This all he could not help experiencing its beneficial softening effect upon his own mind. The constant spirit of love, humility, meekness, and dignity she manifested during the day, involuntarily compelled his esteem and admiration. He saw her always happy, quiet, calm, and contented, tracing all the good she did to her Saviour's love, and all that was amiss to her own deficiency. He could not help secretly acknowledging that she was happier than he, and he would sometimes wish that he were like her. He thought there must be something worth inquiring about at least in a doctrine which produced such wonderful results. This all the more led him to agree with her upon reading the Bible. Of course, his objections to many of its stories were numerous but he found that many of her explanations were more satisfactory than he had expected they would be. At least the more she read to him, the more frequently the thought would rise in his heart, "If all this were true indeed, it would be very beautiful and satisfactory doctrine." There were many passages, however, which she acknowledged she was not able to explain, though she confessed her strongest conviction that they must be fully explained. "I wish," she then used to say, "you would hear Mr. W. He puts it all so clear before us. I am sure, if he were here, he would answer all my questions to your perfect satisfaction. Indeed, I wish you would go and hear him."

Now while Mrs. R.—in this way was preaching to her husband, another preacher turned up, certainly sent by the Lord, in order to bring more forcibly home to his heart what his wife could not carry further than to his ears and understanding. That preacher's name was *Death*. One day he showed himself to Mr. R.—at a distance, and the poor man, diverted under the thrilling sermon he preached to him, with a prayer in her heart, and the medicine in her hand, day and night wrestled for his recovery. The Lord heard her prayers, and blessed the medicine. He was restored to health, but never to his former strength. A weakness of the lungs remained, which kept the solemn sermon he had been hearing from death's pulpit in remembrance.

Still he again took up his usual infidel opinions, but he took them up now with a restless heart. His wife was exceedingly sad to find that he continued the same as he ever was, but she knew not that inwardly he had already broken with all he had been before. She knew not that every Sunday morning ten minutes after she had left the house to go to Mr. W.'s church, he likewise walked out, and taking the same direction, would put himself among the standing crowd, next to the entrance. Yes, there he stood, attentively listening to the same gospel word which she was enjoying seated on her chair not far from the pulpit. As he was a tall man, he could, peering over the heads of the crowd, sometimes see her bonnet, but she never saw him, not permitting that he was standing far behind her, uniting with her in prayer and psalm. Being near to the door, he of course always could leave the church before she could come out, and so she always found him at home when she came in. This state of things continued for several weeks. The fish had bitten the hook, but his pride and false shame still kept him refusing to be pulled out. Mrs. R., however, sometimes seemed to discover a little of it. It was obvious that some unaccountable change had taken place with him. His spirit of controversy seemed to have entirely left him. He sometimes would cast in some feeble doubts or objections, but he would allow them to be removed as quickly as he had introduced them. He also ceased to insist upon her reading his books with him; in fact, it seemed that he did not read them any more himself, for he never found any of them on his table; they seemed immovably to keep their place on the shelf. On the other hand, he gladly continued reading the Bible with her, and he took one for himself into his counting-house, which she often found open on his table. All this struck Mrs. R.—with joyful surprise. She could not make out how it came, but her loving and praying soul exultantly indulged the secret hope that something from the Lord was going on in her husband's heart.

Soon the day came when the riddle was to be solved. It was a cold Sunday morning. Mrs. R. went to church as usual, and her husband at a distance. She seated herself on her chair, and the pew-keeper, as usual, put a fire-stove under her feet, in which a large glowing peat-coal was contained. No sooner, however, had the minister commenced his sermon than she took ill. It was a bad sulphuric peat-coal she had got, the vapour of which threatened to make her faint away. She felt that she was sick; and to prevent disturbance, she rose quickly, and, as pale as a corpse, made her way to the door, staggering through the receding crowd. Picture to yourself her surprise when, on reaching the door, she saw her husband, who, on noticing her, at once took her arm and led her out. The fresh open air immediately caused her blood to flow briskly again, and when entering their house, she felt, a little headache excepted, quite recovered.

"But you at Mr. W.'s exclaimed she in a voice of joyful surprise.

"Yes," answered he with a smile, while a slight blush flushed up his face. "He is an admirable preacher, a worthy man; indeed, one can see that all he says comes from the heart. He himself is as true as the truth he proclaims."

"But then, my dear, have you heard him before?" "Surely I have. I have heard him regularly every Sunday for upwards of six months."

You perceive that Mr. R. could not keep his secret any longer now. He told his wife all that had been going on within him during the last time. "And now," he concluded, "I feel as I must give myself up to a living Jesus. I believe in him. He is the living Son of the living God. He is the only Saviour of lost sinners, whose sins he has borne, whose penalty he has suffered, and whom he will raise from the dead on his great glorious day. Oh, I am fully assured there is no salvation for me but in him alone. But my poor, disobedient, rebellious heart would ever tell me that I am too great a sinner to be permitted to go to him. You know, and who knows it better than you, my poor beloved wife, you know how much from my wickedness, you know how shamefully and stubbornly I have dishonoured and reviled Him. Oh, I scarcely have the courage to hope that there is room in his grace, even for such a wicked malefactor as I am."

Tears came into Mr. R.'s eyes, and covering his face with his hands, he sat down in the full distress of a contrite spirit. His wife was speechless, both from joy and affection.

"Oh, praised be God," she burst out, "praised be my beloved Saviour, who has opened your eyes to see the truth, and now your heart to crave his love. Let him come in now, my beloved husband, and open your heart as widely as you can, for he desires to fill it with all the fullness of his grace. Throw away those doubts; you distress him by them. He is your Saviour, and he loved you even at the moment you were his greatest enemy. He knew all about you, and he had mercy upon you. So he has led you by the cords of his unspeakable love; and here you are now at his feet, vanquished by the power of his almighty word. You were strong in your strength, but his love is stronger still. Come, it is all forgotten and forgiven. Come, he lengthens for you. He standeth with outstretched arms to receive you to his bosom."

In this way Mrs. R. spoke to her husband, and her words were like the balm of Gilead in a sore wound. What a Sunday it was they now were spending! It was a feast in Mr. R.'s house, and a feast it was in heaven. That same evening, a priest, who for a long time had been seared by the leeches of the evil one, were found side by side kneeling at the footstool of Him who is the only source of salvation, and of true imperishable love.

Mr. R.'s house, henceforth was turned from a wilderness into a paradise. Peace, and joy, and goodness filled it with their sweet fragrance. The next day, after the above mentioned Sunday, Mr. R.—called his wife into his counting-house. The window which showed into a backyard, was raised. The shelf containing his library was lying with one end upon the window-frame, and with the other upon the back of a chair. Outside, on the floor of the yard just under the window, stood a large empty box.

"Come away," said he, beckoning his wife. "Now, do your work. Take this end of the shelf, and shove that wicked stuff out of the window; and," added he, kissing her while a tear mingled with a smile on his face, "don't be afraid; you'll not go after them now."

Mrs. R.—lifted up the shelf, and down rushed the books into the box.

"We'll get a poor fellow to tear them to pieces,"

said he, "and what he can get for the waste-paper let him have a Bible for it."

The next day the shelf again was filled with books, but of a very different kind. The first was a Bible, and the last a neatly bound copy of the *Pilgrim's Progress*. An additional shelf was put on, filled with parcels of tracts, of which Mr. R.—often slipped a copy into the hand of a customer, who, in the course of conversation, showed no disinclination to read something that might perhaps "do him good."

And now, madam,—thus finished the Rev. D.—his conversation with Mrs. R.—I have told you how a pious, godly woman was instrumental in saving her unbelieving husband. I shall be happy if this story has imparted to you some instruction and consolation. Nobody can tell what true love is able to effect, if combined with a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price. There is great power often in speaking when everybody is silent. But there is often greater power still in being silent when everybody would have spoken. The great secret how to bring sinners to Christ, lies not always in speaking of the Saviour, but in manifesting in our own persons what it is to be saved by him indeed.

THEY SAY—

Well, what if they do! It may not be true. A great many false reports are circulated, and the reputation of a good man may be easily sullied by a baseless rumor. Have you any reason to believe that what they say concerning your brother is true? If not, why should you permit your name to be included among the "they" who circulate a scandal?

They say—Who says? Is any person responsible for the assertion? Such phrases are frequently used to conceal the point of an enemy's poignant, who thus meanly strikes one whom he dare not openly assail. If "they" means nobody, then regard the rumor as nothing.

They say—Why do they say so? Is any good purpose secured by the circulation of the report? Will it benefit the person to have it known? or will any interests of society be promoted by whispering it about? If not, you had better employ time and speech to some more worthy purpose.

They say—To whom do they say it? To those who have no business with the affair? To those who cannot help it or mend it or prevent any unpleasant results? That certainly shows a tattling, scandal-loving spirit that ought to be rebuked.

They say—Well, do they say it to him? Or are they very careful to whisper it in places where he cannot hear, and to persons who are known not to be his friends? Would they dare to say it to him, as well as about him? No one has a right to say that concerning another which he is not ready to speak in his own ear.

They say—Well, suppose it is true. Are you sorry for it? or do you rejoice that a brother has been discovered erring? O pity him if he has fallen into sin, and pray for him that he may be forgiven and restored.

If it should be true, do not bruit it abroad to his injury. It will not benefit him, nor him, nor society, to publish his faults. You are as liable to be slandered, or err, as your brother, and as ye would that he should defend, or excuse, or forgive you, do ye even so to him.

Remember thy follies, thy sins, and thy crimes; How vast is that infinite debt! Yet mercy hath saved us by seventy times seven, swift to forgive and forget!

Watchman and Reflector.

BE PLEASANT.—Be pleasant; it costs nothing, and yet it is of priceless value. A pleasant wife and children is a well-spring of pleasure to any man, and should be offset by a pleasant husband and father. In this, more than almost anything else, is the secret of domestic happiness. There is a power in it to make everything pleasant. Just try it. It is contagious. A pleasant husband, as a general rule, makes the wife pleasant; and both together make pleasant children. A neighborhood of such families makes pleasant society, and the same principles carried out in the church, as the gospel requires, make a pleasant church. Try it.

It soothes sorrow, drives away the "blues," makes darkness light and hatred love, and scatters far and wide the golden sunbeams of joy. It is the relief of poverty, the compensation of deformity, the charm of beauty, the glory of man and the angelic loveliness of woman. Therefore, *Be Pleasant*.—*Morning Star*.

GOD'S DIARY.—Carlyle has a striking criticism on the fastidiousness of those persons who object to works like Boswell's Johnson, because it reports private conversation: "Truly, if we can permit God Almighty to know our conversation, thinking it good enough for him—any poor Boswell need not scruple to work his will of it." His words suggest a solemn admonition to all careless and hasty speech. The Presbyterian Banner remarks:—Some men are very careful not to put on paper anything which may prove injurious to them. The caution is a wise one, and ought to be practised by all. An injurious sentence committed to paper may remain and do harm, long after the hand that penned it is mouldering in the dust. Some men keep a diary. They make a daily record of their actions, and to some extent of their thoughts. No man ever kept a full diary. The complete one ever made recorded only a small portion of the acts of the subject. Very important classes of acts are omitted altogether. A great many thoughts pass through men's minds which they would not like to see expressed on paper. They would not like to see them spread out before the eyes of their fellow-men. How miserable it would make one to have a complete diary of his life published! No created hand can record such a diary. It is beyond the power of man; but it is not beyond the power of God. Such a diary is kept in the memory of God. Every action of our lives is, as it were, photographed in heaven the instant it is performed. Most secret thought is registered in the diary of God. What folly for men to attempt to sin in secret! Their acts are not only seen but recorded on the adamantine pages of the book of God's remembrance! Are they recorded in vain? or shall the record things shall be brought into judgment, shall they not be made publicly manifest, that the grounds of the sentence may be seen?—*British Alexander*.