

The Religious Intelligencer.

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REV. E. McLEOD,

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

Peter.

[Editor and Proprietor.]

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THE INTELLIGENCER.

WHAT CIVILIZATION IS.
BY THE HON. W. E. GLADSTONE.

The following excellent article on Civilization is from an address delivered by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, at an entertainment in Chester, at which he presided.—Ed. Int.

And now let us consider, before we close, what that civilization is of which in these days we hear and say so much. When we speak of civilization we do not mean the command of man over matter, or his achievements in the world of speculation. We do not mean railways, or telegraphs, or machinery in any of its wonderful developments, or a cheap postage, or a cheap free press, or traversing the ocean with voyages so quick, safe, and punctual, that our steamers seem to serve the purpose of a bridge; or, again, that marvellous art—the most valuable art—which enables us to purchase a living portrait of our family and friends for a few shillings, or, for a few pence; we do not mean ingenuity or beauty in design, cheapness combined with durability of production; we do not mean splendid edifices, noble statuary, or paintings, or success of embodying what is beautiful—the great ornaments and delights of life in all or any of the branches of fine arts; we do not, in a word, mean industrial, commercial, or material progress, even if of the very best kind, or if carried to the highest degree that it has been or shall be given to man to reach. All these, in their several degrees, are among the tokens of some stage of civilization already reached. They are the fruit which, as a good healthy tree, it bears. They are helps also towards its future advancement. But they are not civilization itself. Civilization resides in man himself, and no where else. It lies in the strength of his faculties; it lies yet more in clearing and raising his affections; it lies in the refinement of his tastes; and most of all in the improvement of the practical habits of his life.

If you show me two mechanics; if one of them is gifted with abilities in his trade which make him during one part of the week the envy of his fellow-workmen, and the wonder of his employer, but is also cursed with a vice which for the rest of the week yields his body and soul to the brutal influence of drink, and makes his home a scene not of comfort but of desolation; and the other a fair average workman, capable of no high excellence with his hands and earning, perhaps, half the wages of his elder comrade, yet set constantly upon turning to the best account the moderate or slender gifts with which the Almighty has endowed him—keeping his heart humble, his body temperate, ever studying to be more and more faithful towards his God, and more and more helpful towards his family, ever anxious to make them, by precept if he can, or at any rate by the authority of his example, orderly, diligent, modest and affectionate, with a good conscience before God and man;—which, I ask, of these two, is the man really civilized? I think the first, with his great powers, is like a slave chained to the wheel of civilization, compelled to help forward with his own hands, but forbidden by his own obstinate and ruinous infirmity to partake of its refreshing influence. He serves at a banquet of which he cannot partake. He is like a torch of flaming pine, which is to light others, but devours and consumes itself. (Applause.)

But in the humble home of his, perhaps, despised companion, cleanliness and order reign. Husband and wife, parents and children, grow in mutual love from day to day; every good disposition to each member of the family finds a stay and bulwark, and every besetting weakness finds a rebuke in the right conduct and discipline of the rest. They learn, by respecting others, to respect also the handiwork of God in themselves. Good times are not dishonoured by excess, and bad times are cheered partly by the product of forethought in the good, partly also, and always effectually, by the knowledge that they are not chastened without a purpose, and that chastening is but a quickening of the fire for the better tempering of the metal of the man. (Cheers.) Leisure, such as he may have at hand, is employed by such a person to purify the soul and elevate the mind. With the outward freedom secured to us by the laws corresponds an inward freedom from every degrading tendency. In the house of that man, though it be floored with bricks and roofed with straw, the work of civilization is advancing, and he and his family are entitled to their place among both its promoters and its products.

If you ask, then, where civilization resides, I reply in man, in man only, and in all ranks of men; but sometimes more truly in the lowliest cottage than in the mansion of the wealthy. (Applause.) If you ask me in what it consists, I reply, that apart from religion its constituent parts are many—more than could easily be recounted; yet some of them may be named, and such are these:—The love of order in things mental and bodily, personal and domestic; the love of cleanliness; the love of the works of nature; the love of things beautiful produced by the art of man; the love of courtesy and kindly manners; the love of knowledge, and the sense that it guides us upwards; the love of our neighbors of every class, and respect of their rights as fellowmen, equal to our own; a respect, not for their rights only, but for the feelings, showing itself in small things fully as much as in great; a love of law, love of freedom, love of country, a love for the throne, and of her who sits upon it—(cheers)—and who, happily, is to us both the highest image of every social and civil blessing, and also the first among all human agents in procuring and sharing them. (Loud cheers.) No, my friends, civilization thus regarded means a great blessing, or rather an aggregate or collection of great blessings; but they are not blessings for which we are to wait with folded arms. They are not blessings like the rain and dew from heaven, which have done so much towards making our country rich and strong. They are gifts of Providence, and they belong to that class which are given through our exertions, which are in our power to attain, and which it is our own fault if we fail to possess. They are blessings in the work of civilization—a work, in the promotion of which we all, of all classes, have to bear our share. No station, however high, releases

from the obligation—no station, however humble, excludes from the pleasure and the privilege.

Those who travel from land to land well know that nothing is more readily observable than the difference between the mass of the people in one country and another as to the degrees of the civilization which the individuals possessing them have personally attained. Just as the national wealth is the sum total of all efforts of labor, skill, and intellect applied to production, and just as a hodman at 2s. or 2s. 6d. a day contributes to it no less in proportion than the man of property who owns an iron work, or the engineer who projects and executes a railway, or the capitalist who regulates the exchanges of the world, so as respects this higher treasure, it is a treasure made up by the joint efforts of the whole community, and every one of us is responsible for promoting in his measure and degree, the work of diffusing civilization. (Loud cheers.) Moreover, we live in times when the distribution of the shares of this work is gradually and sensibly altering. A thousand years ago, in the days of our English Alfred, or of our greater and more famous Charlemagne, the will of one man went far towards guiding the conduct and determining the destiny of all. Sometimes it would even happen that nations or tribes were brought to baptism in masses, and placed by baptism within all the civilizing and reforming influences of the Christian faith and Church.

A great French writer, Montesquieu, observes "that in the infancy of political society the prominent men make and mould the nation, in the maturity of it the nation makes and moulds the prominent men." If this was true in his day, it is much more largely true in ours; for more has been done within the last two or three generations towards placing popular rights on a secure basis; towards providing for their progressive extension; and towards allotting a real share in the management of public affairs to the different members of the community, than had been done for centuries before. In concurrence with this natural and beneficial change, it is highly needful that the members of classes formerly excluded from social power, but now coming to share in its possession, should recollect that society has much higher and more extended claims upon them than it had before. Where, unhappily, slavery prevails, it comes to be thought of very little consequence, so that the labourer performs a certain amount of work, whether in other respects he lives the life of a man or of a beast. But in proportion as we get further and further removed from slavery, in proportion as the personal rights of each individual are more and more jealously guarded by the laws, as he himself is, by liberal institutions, provided with an influence in the making of those laws by which he is to be governed—society is, on the other hand, more and more entitled to expect from him, along with such mental cultivation as he may be able to attain, an enlightened conscience, a cheerful, steady defence to lawful authority, an honourable sense of independence, an unwillingness to become a burden to others, and a clearer view in the performance of his duties as a husband, father, neighbour, parishioner, jurymen, a voter at elections, or whatever else he may be. (Applause.)

And all this is no light matter. Human life rationally viewed is serious and earnest, and when the image of our duty is placed before us we are sometimes afraid of it, and tempted to run away from it. It is not a wonder that the feeling is found which makes us think the day is no more than sufficient for the burdens laid upon it. That which is variously felt among every class is felt, and naturally felt, by the labouring class in its simplest form. When they rise in the morning labour faces them, and when the day closes, weariness, following upon toil, depresses them. Yet your presence here to-night, my friends, shows that this, though it may be true, is not the whole truth. Where there is a brave and gallant spirit in a man it commonly, and in the absence of extraordinary trials, manages to save something of time, of thought, of energy, from the urgent demands of his outer life and his bodily wants. There is the blessed rest of Sunday, a standing and a speaking witness of the everlasting truth that "man does not live by bread alone." And on every day the careful gathering of even small fragments of time, some of which well nigh every man, woman, and child has it in his power to gather, will, so to be but steadily and constantly continued and made a part of the daily habit of our lives, produce in the end not only considerable, but even surprising, results. Yet, after all, it must not be forgotten that one central effectual element in your efforts for civilization is to be found in Christianity. Individual men living under Christianity, and who will—perhaps caring little for Christianity—themselves see no direct connexion between the Gospel and many useful discoveries of prosperous industries, may think they can fashion for themselves civilization out of the materials which earth affords, without the trouble of taking into view our relations to the world unseen and him who rules in it. Far be it from me to bring a railing accusation against them; but I think they are mistaken. This world is God's world by right, ours only by gift and sufferance; and it cannot go well with us if we try to shut him out of it. (Applause.) But in truth what we have most to fear is not the prevalence of error of this kind, taking the form of philosophy or wisdom; it is our own faithlessness, our own selfishness, our own worldliness, ever drawing us downward in despite of affections which grow weaker by neglect, and which are at length wholly stifled by the thorns and briars of evil habit growing up into a tangled thicket around them and over them.

It is not erroneous belief that is the cause of widespread ruin. It is the fear, the discipline, the pleasure, the cares, the desires, the appetites which shut out from the mind of the creature the thought of the Creator. Many of us have read in this solemn season, in the service of the church, the account of the birth of our Lord at Bethlehem. In that we are told by the evangelist these simple words, "There was not room for them in the inn." What thoughts do these awaken in the mind? Perhaps the first may be this—that no wonder, in so great a concourse of people of all ranks, going up to be registered for taxes, there should be no room in the inn for the poor and unpretending mother of the Saviour for the delivery of her first-born child. But the second thought may be that the world is like that inn. That, amidst the pomp and magnificence, amidst the

whirl and hurry of its business, amidst the marble edifices of its gigantic triumphs, amidst its enterprises, amidst the crowd and pressure of even its neediest inhabitants, there is not room for the Saviour of mankind. Upon this thought another may follow—that that inn, in respect of its bustle and turmoil, is like to the world. Man crowds around man, giving himself up without reserve, whether to vicious indulgences, or selfish enjoyments, or to the schemes of advancement in this world, till he feels himself so full that there is not room in him for the thought that his food and raiment, his gifts and faculties, his hopes and prospects, all that he has, and all that he can ever be, come down to him from the Most High, and can be rendered up again to him from whom they come, in thanks, in praise, and in dutiful obedience.

(From the Revival.)

SINGULAR CONVERSION OF A SECLARIST.

Another of the results of the services held in Ebenezer Chapel is thus stated in a pamphlet, just published, of the reasons which led to the conversion of Mr. W. S. Ellison, the seclerist. He had returned from America, wanted employment, could not find it, was in distress of body and mind; he was unhappy and poor, a stranger and destitute. The events which led to his conversion he thus stated at a meeting in Ebenezer Chapel, Leeds, Oct. 8, 1862:—"My spirits, too, were greatly depressed, and I was indeed a most unhappy being. I was a perfect stranger, and I felt so physically and mentally prostrated that I did not care to move. 'The whole head was sick, and the whole heart faint.' Though in the very midst of this great social life—this busy emporium of industry and enterprise—I felt a chilling sense of desolation. The night grew on apace shutters were closed, and the streets were soon deserted by all except a reeling bacchanal or two, and here and there, perchance a 'frail thing of womankind,' painful evidences of vice. I began to drag myself, dreading through the maze of many streets, without aim or object, save that of 'wandering on the heavy loads.' Those silent sentinels, the gas-lamps, failed to cheer my desolate wanderings, and only served to discover my forlorn and solitary condition. The world was left to loneliness and me, and my remaining fortitude utterly forsook me, and left me a prey to despondency, and at last to despair. I was without God and without a hope in the world. My secular philosophy availed me nothing—it afforded me no consolation in dire extremity, when my mind was tortured into frenzy by racking doubts and fears as to the future. At this juncture I found myself upon Leeds Bridge, had never before thought of self-destruction, but at that moment the hellish idea suggested itself. The evil genius whispered: 'Death is nothing, and after death is nothing. That dark water below can at once and for ever rid thee of thy cares. Plunge into it and'—

"Swiftly he hurried
Anywhere! anywhere! out of the world."

An insane impulse urged me to the parapet over the centre of the arch; I looked nervously and apprehensively about to be certain that I was unobserved. No one was near. I thought I stood there and then annihilate my being. It would only be a momentary spasm, and all would be over. But a vague mistrust about the future still hovered in my delirious mind. As I gazed down into the turbid stream

"My doubts and fears
Start up alarmed, and o'er life's narrow verge
Look down on what? A fathomless abyss—
A dread eternity! how surely mine!"

A thousand memories rushed through my brain at that critical moment; reminiscences of early days brought again the pangs of remorse. Fool that I am, thought I, to suffer thus. End it at once! Half-consciously I drew my cap over my eyes, clenching my teeth, and was about to spring over the parapet. An invisible hand arrested me, and a voice seemed to echo through my very soul, "What wouldst thou do?" I was irresistibly impelled away from the spot, nor could I stop till I was out of the locality of that "bridge of sighs"—that horrible scene of temptation. I was seized with a trembling from head to foot. Every limb seemed paralyzed, and my brain began to swim from the effects of excitement, and I was obliged to sit down in a doorway and await composure. I gradually grew collected, and the terrible conflict of emotions subsided before morning dawned. I could not help thinking that something supernatural had interfered with my suicidal purpose of the preceding night, and yet I did not like the idea of being superstitious. However, I felt glad that I was still an inhabitant of earth.

The forenoon was occupied in seeking work, though I very believe, if I had obtained it then, I could not have set about it. I happened to be in the vicinity of Ebenezer Chapel between twelve and one o'clock at noon, but I had not the slightest idea of going to a place of worship, even if I had known there was one near; and had I been aware of its existence, I could not have dreamed it being open for religious purposes at that unusual hour of the day. I however felt an unaccountable inclination to go in the direction of this chapel—an involuntary tendency towards it. By mere accident, as I then considered it, I saw it, but certainly cared nothing about it, and should have passed on, had I not heard the sound of praise to God issuing therefrom. Noticing a small bill upon the door, I went up to read it. It began with the word 'Friend!' That word struck a sympathetic chord in my soul. It seemed to cheer and inspire me with hope. The bill informed that Revival services were held every night, and prayer-meeting every day in that place. One was then being held, and I was constrained to go in. My mind had been rendered very susceptible by the ordeal I had experienced, and I was much impressed with the fervour and earnestness with which all pleaded for the conversion of sinners, and especially of infidels like myself. I felt my conscience pricked, but when I got out reason began to assert itself to a sort of enthusiasm—a mere mental delusion. However I determined to go again in the evening, and I went up to read it. I did. Whilst the Rev. J. C. Melbourn was preaching I was awakened to a full sense of my perilous position. His text was Matt. xi. 28, 29, 'Lord, save us, we perish, etc.' I will not detail the points of the sermon, which was not an elaborate argument addressed to reason, but was a powerful, an awakening appeal to conscience, accompanied by an extraordinary influence evidently Divine. My conscience was awakened. It rose in ma-

jesty and asserted its imperial prerogative. Reason was humbled and reduced to its legitimate function and sphere. The moral revolution however was not effected without a terrific struggle within. It was indeed a mighty struggle! My whole nature was convulsed! Tongue cannot describe my sensation at that critical juncture. It was during prayer that the victory was won. The Saviour prevailed; my doubts and fears fled away. I believed on the Lord Jesus Christ as my Saviour. I did indeed believe on Him with all my heart; and that moment the talismanic words, 'Peace, be still,' were spoken to my inmost soul. The tempest subsided, and the Comforter whispered—

"Thy light is come,
Glorious light is risen on thee,
Thy wretched past, thy mourning's o'er;
Look up, for thou shalt weep no more."

The great moral incubus, scepticism, was effectually removed, and I awoke to newness of life. Faith had found her lamp, and hope her anchor, and a genial ray of love was shed abroad in my heart.

Up to this period, no one had spoken to me, nor did any one present know me, or anything respecting my state of mind. When I felt the full influence of Divine grace operating upon my soul, I was constrained by an impulse of ecstasy to rush from the box in which I sat to the communion, where Mr. Melbourn, Mr. Mackson, and others were engaged in prayer, and with them I knelt and 'owned my Saviour conqueror.' I then stood up, and before the meeting declared what the Lord had done for me. Yes, it was the Lord's work, and marvellous in my eyes. I saw clearly that through his inscrutable providence I had been snatched from perdition, and led to the rock of salvation.

For myself, I am perfectly satisfied with the choice I have made. My conscience and reason approve it. I can now say what I could never say before—'I am happy!' I have at last attained the great object of my being—the knowledge of salvation through faith. Here I rest with safety, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God."

GOODLY HOMES.

Stand with King Balak and the double-minded Balaam on the top of Pisgah, and view Israel dwelling in their tents according to their tribes. Six things make us say, with the seersayer, "How goodly are thy tents, O Jacob."

1st. The pillar of cloud was over them. This was a sign of the Divine presence, the Divine blessing, and the Divine guidance.

No army can secure the Divine presence; no wealth so real as the Divine blessing; no map or chart like the Divine guidance. How goodly were Israel's tabernacles! God took not away the pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night from before the people; neither King Balak, nor the elders of Moab, nor the elders of Midian, had seen anything like this. "Blessed are the people whose God is the Lord," yes, and they shall be blessed—thrice blessed.

In the second place we remember that manna fell daily round about their dwellings. Once on blessed Lord miraculously fed 5,000 in the wilderness. Here, day by day, He graciously feeds hundreds of thousands. We might a little pot of manna be preserved in the ark when all their wanderings had ceased. Favored Israel! What people hath the Lord so richly unto them? What a market of provisions is this! "Blessed are the people whose God is the Lord," yes, and they shall be blessed—thrice blessed.

In the third place the Israelites had God for their special guidance. It is no small thing to be kept in the hollow of God's hand! "Behold, He that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep." "He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty." Some sentinels have slept at their post, some have died at their post, but Israel's Keeper is the never-sleeping and undying Jehovah.

What foes could hope to pitch their tents in battle array against Israel's sons? Only the tents of Israel had the tabernacle of witness amongst them. They must prevail. No ensign like the ensign of the Lord. No shield, and no buckler like God. Moab had sought for unreason, Jericho for trembling. Alas for fainting, the Gibeonites for dismay. How shall man fight against God? What are glittering spears and two-edged swords to the God of battles? "To the Lord belongeth the shields of the earth." "He breaketh the bow, and cutteth the spear in sunder. He bursteth the chariots in the fire."

"He that hath God his Guardian made,
Shall under the almighty shade
Secure and undisturbed abide."

A fourth reason. The tents were pitched according to Divine direction. In Numbers ix. 17, we have a lesson full of instruction. Happy are the people who wait for Divine direction in all they do. In the absence of a visible cloud, we may ask, What saith the Scriptures? and, secondly, What saith the Providence of God? The book of the Scriptures and the book of Divine Providence, well read on the knees, will prove a leading pillar and a safe guide.

Let us desire to imitate the living creatures seen by Ezekiel. "They went every one straight forward, whither the Spirit was to go they went, and they turned not when they went."

A fifth reason. They were pitched towards Canaan. From Egypt's bondage came, they were Canaan bound. Wilderness life had its hardships, but every day brought the promised inheritance nearer. Those tents now pitched towards Canaan would be and by pitched in Canaan. "Who is this that cometh out of the wilderness, like pillars of smoke, perfumed with myrrh and frankincense, with all the powers of the merchant?" (Sol. Song iii. 6.)

When Lot pitched towards Sodom it well-nigh cost him soul and body. This pitching towards Sodom has slain its thousands. Reader, is thy face turned Zionward? Remember Lot; yes, and Lot's wife.

A sixth reason why Balaam might admire those far-sighted tents. They were readily taken up at the command of God. Those living in them knew they had not entered into rest. They knew they might have to move at any hour. They kept up a continual watchfulness. A goodly picture of the Christian waiting the Lord's time to quit this tabernacle. A readiness to depart. A sitting at the tent door watching the cloud. This was peculiar to

Israel. This gave a beauty to Israel's homes. This made the people a "peculiar people." Balaam was right; Israel's tabernacles were "goodly." Since Jahal, the father of such as dwell in tents, never was there a more glorious array. The shading and guiding cloud by day, the fiery pillar by night, gloriously proclaimed Jehovah-Shammah.

GOODLY HOMES NOW.

That which truly ennobles and beautifies a household is the Gospel of Salvation. This is the true ark of the Lord which brings a blessing to the house of Obed-edom.

The Sun of Righteousness glads the home in the evening as well as morning. Jesus knows no sunset. His blood-bought children shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life. Bethany's humble cottage is made all-glorious by the "Light of the world."

The name and Gospel of Jesus give a new atmosphere to the dwelling. His name is an ointment poured out. The very books you find in the Christian's home tell that the tent is pitched towards Canaan. The conversation takes a turn which breathes of Zion.

Family prayer and private prayer are the lamps which go not out. The oil of Olivet (sweet sweet oil!) lighted from above, makes a bright Goshen! In a dark Egypt. The Christian's home, like the gold mine, may have a poor exterior, but very precious within. The Christian's home may be but a fisherman's cabin, but there is the pearl of great price. The home with its inmates at peace with God through Jesus Christ, is no other than the palace of the great King. Look at St. John xiv. 24.

"O happy home! O home supremely blest!
Where thou, Lord Jesus Christ art entertained
As the most welcome and beloved Guest,
With true devotion and with love unfettered."

Reader, let the blood of the Lamb be visible to all who visit your dwelling. Be an Israelite indeed. In Egypt's darkest midnight hour Israel had no uncertain mark upon her houses.

Now, in this dark world there are many homes which may or may not be dedicated to the Lord. The token of true fellowship with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ are but dimly seen. But let us henceforth give the Lord His own place—God's word its right place—the things of heaven their right place. Like the half tribe of Manasseh, this side Jordan, let us show we are one with those on the other side. One banner, one song, one God. The Jordan separates us, but we are one. One for ever. Not two tribes, but one tribe. Not two families, but one family—one in Christ Jesus.

"Happy the home in which Christ comes,
Where oft He is a guest,
Whose every inmate He approves—
That home is ever blest."

Beloved, examine your home. Remove all leaven. See that no leprosy clings to your tent. Psalm cxviii. 15; Proverbs xiv. 11.

THE GOODLY HOME OF THE FUTURE, THE HOME BEYOND THE SUTURE.

"In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you." Yes, He has gone to prepare a place for us, and in the meantime He will prepare us for the place. He who laid down his life for our sakes, will make us meet for the inheritance of the Saints in light. "And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto myself; that where I am there ye may be also." A goodly home! "How amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts."

"City of the pearl bright portal,
City of the asper wall;
City of the golden pavement,
Seat of endless festival;
City of Jehovah, Salem,
City of eternity,
To thy bridal hall of gladness,
From this prison I would flee."

A goodly home! No more sorrows. No more dying. No more losses. No more weeping. No more hungering. No more thirsting. No more drearing. No more parting. No more doubting. No more fighting. No more struggling. No more unbelieving. No more worldliness. No more sin. No, no, no more sin. A goodly home! Abiding joy. Abiding glory. Abiding peace. Abiding love. Abiding union. Abiding holiness. Eternal salvation through Jesus Christ our Saviour.

In former days, when Jesus was here among men, two disciples said, "Rabbi, where dwellest Thou?" He answered, "Come and see." Now the question is again asked, "Where dwellest Thou?" We know the tomb could not hold Thee; we know Thou hast ascended up on high; we know all this, but we would ask more about Thy Home—its nature—the occupation of the saints—the amount of wisdom and knowledge they enjoy. We have many things to ask, O Lord, what wilt Thou answer? A still small voice seems to reach us from Zion's hill, "Come, come and see."

"Faith can never know the full salvation
Which Jesus for his people will prepare;
Then will I wait in peaceful expectation,
Till the third angel comes to take me there.
My Lord, My God, a blessed end I see,
Though now I know not what I yet shall be."

ONWARD AND UPWARD.

ETERNITY.—O Eternity, without all bounds! O eternity, that can be measured by no spaces of time! O eternity, that can be understood by no understanding of man; how much doest thou increase the punishments of the damned! After innumerable thousands of years, they shall always be constrained to think that this is to them only the beginning of torments! How grievous a thing is it to lie in a most soft bed of thirty years! What lake of fire and brimstone! O eternity! eternity! thou alone, beyond all measure, dost exaggerate the torments of the damned. Grievous of their punishment by reason of the sharpness of their torments; it is the more grievous by reason of the diversity of their torments; it is the most grievous for the eternity of their torments. There shall be death, without death, end without end, defect without defect because death ever liveth, and the end ever begetteth, and the defect knoweth not how to fail. They shall seek life, and shall not find it; they shall seek death, and death shall fly away from them; after an hundred thousand, thousand, thousand years, without any end, they shall return to renewed torments.—Gerhardt.

READING THE BIBLE.—I will answer for it, the longer you read the Bible, the more you will like it; it will grow sweeter and sweeter; and the more you get into the spirit of it, the more you will get into the spirit of Christ.—Romans.

RELIGIOUS EFFORTS IN LANCASHIRE.

None of the towns in Lancashire have suffered more from the depression in the cotton trade than Preston. By the calamities with which it has pleased Almighty God in his providence to afflict us, thousands of operatives have been reduced to the verge of starvation. Much has been done to alleviate their bodily wants, but much remains to be done to relieve their spiritual wants. As a means to this end, Bible-classes for male adults have been established in connexion with the parish church and other churches in the town. These classes are taught by persons interested in the spiritual welfare of the masses, the clergyman in each case taking an active part in the management.

In ordinary times such classes would have been impracticable, and the persons now attending them would have ridiculed the idea of coming together to read the Bible. It seems now as if the Spirit of God had specially disposed the hearts of these individuals to receive "with meekness the engrained word, which is able to save their souls." During the time of reading the utmost attention and interest is evinced; in many cases a profound reverence marks the deportment of the hearer, which it is impossible for a Christian to behold without exclaiming "What hath God wrought?" Numbers who for many long years have never bent the knee in prayer, now kneel as if conscious that they are present with Him "to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid."

All these meetings are begun with singing and prayer, then follows the reading, which continues for an hour. Afterwards an address, based upon the subject of the chapter, is delivered, and the meeting closed with singing and a short prayer or the benediction. It may be asked, What are the practical results? This question we would answer before stating merely the numbers that have been brought under the word.

Results! From personal intercourse, it has been discovered that drunkards have renounced their intemperance, and resolved upon an amendment of life. They are now regular in their attendance upon the means of grace. Sabbath-breakers, pigeon-dyers, dog-fighters, and frequenters of low company may be found to regulate their attendance at the class, but also in the courts of the Lord's house. Infidels have shaken off their infidelity, which has given occasion to their friends to sing with exceeding joy, and to bless God and the promoters and friends of so valuable an institution. A few days ago, in the parish church school, the men were asked by the superintendent giving the address, "Shall I proceed or not? tell me, are you tired? shall I go on or stop?" The response was, "We are not tired; go on for an hour if you like."

On a subsequent evening one of the teachers put the question to the whole class, "Have you derived any benefit from coming to these meetings?" One of the men immediately answered before all, "Yes, I have found Christ." "Would you like the class to be given up?" "No, we should not." The last time the class was assembled, the superintendent remarked in the closing address that many friends in the south and west of England were disposed to contribute to support the Bible-reading classes, providing they could thereby confer any spiritual advantage upon the distressed. It was asked, "Have you been benefited by your attendance at this class?" The whole class unanimously replied, "Yes, yes."

Since the opening of these classes, upwards of 18,000 souls, many of whom for years past had neither heard nor read the smallest portion of the word of life, have been brought in contact with its saving truths, and never until "the books are opened and the judgment is set" will it be known in how many instances it has proved "the saviour of life"—the beginning of a blessed immortality.

"THIS POOR WOMAN HATH CAST IN MORE THAN THEY ALL."

More in the sight of Him who looks not merely at the amount given, but at the ability of the giver, not merely at the quantity contributed, but at the motive and heart of the contributor.

There are few of our Lord's sayings so much overlooked as this. There are thousands who remember all his doctrinal discourses, and yet contrive to forget this little incident in his earthly ministry. The proof of this is to be seen in the meagre and sparing contributions which are yearly made by Christ's church to do good in the world. The proof is to be seen in the miserably small incomes of all the missionary societies, in proportion to the wealth of the churches. The proof is to be seen in the long annual lists of self-complacent guinea subscribers, of whom many could easily give hundreds of pounds. The stinginess of professing Christians in all matters which concern God and religion, is one of the crying sins of the day, and one of the worst signs of the times. The givers to Christ's cause are but a small section of the visible church. Not one baptized person in twenty, probably, knows anything of being "rich towards God" (Luke xii. 21). The vast majority spend upon themselves, and give not even a penny to Christ.

Let us mourn over this state of things, and pray God to amend it. Let us pray Him to open men's eyes, and awake men's hearts, and stir up a spirit of liberality. Above all, let us each do our own duty, and give liberally and gladly to every Christian object, while we can. There will be no giving when we are dead. Let us give as those who remember that the eyes of Christ are upon us. He still sees exactly what each gives, and knows exactly how much is left behind. Above all, let us give as the disciples of a crucified Saviour, who gave himself for us, body and soul on the cross. Freely we have received. Let us freely give.—Rev. J. C. Ryle.

It is probable, according to Arias Montano and Beza, that the words "all her living" mean "all her income," and not all her property. It may be well to remark in this connection, that nothing can be more absurd than to say, as some do, that they contribute "their mite" to an object, when they probably contribute some trifling sum which they do not miss, and which bears the most remote proportion to the widow's scale of liberality. A man contributes "his mite" when he contributes half his daily income, and so forth.

"EXCEPT YE ABIDE IN ME."—Follow not religion only for a display. Let Christ be sweet for himself. Never think to stand long if thou standest loose from Christ. He that hath no strength from Christ will prove too weak to bear burdens.—Jenkyne (1632).