

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.]

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"A GOOD MAN—A VERY GOOD MAN INDEED."

By J. DeLiefde, of Amsterdam.

CHAPTER III.

An opposition baker's shop is got up.

"The landlord of the 'Golden Plough' was quite alarmed by this state of things. He was a man of considerable property, most of which he had earned by his ability at the bar. Having no family to support, he might easily have retired from business without danger of coming short for the future, but money making had become a cherished employment with him, that he felt quite miserable at the discovery, that he could not turn grain and bear into silver and gold as quickly as he used to do. His conscience, however, would sometimes tell him that he ought to rejoice at this fact, if he truly loved his neighbours. But the love of money silenced this faithful inward voice, and he hardened his heart against the warnings of a better feeling. His friends, of course, would greatly confirm him in his indignation at the unchristianlike baker, whose person and conduct usually formed the chief topic of their slanderous and scornful taproom talk. The question was often broached, whether nothing could be done to put a stop to the influence of the fanatic, and at length it came to a firm resolution in the landlord's heart, not to rest until he had removed the baker from the village."

"Now, just opposite the baker's there was a house which belonged to the landlord, and was inhabited by a widow, whose eldest son was the baker's foreman. He was a fine young man of six and twenty, who scarcely found his match in the art of baking bread. It was well known that the baker used to call him his 'right hand,' and young Frederic felt that his master loved him as a man loves his right hand. Nor had the master's word and example altogether failed to influence the servant. It could not be said that Frederic was a converted Christian, but he appeared to be under serious impressions, and the baker had good hope that ere long the young man would yield to the power of God and Spirit. The baker's mind was even fraught with the secret plan of raising Frederic to the rank of his partner, and of giving him a share in the business, as soon as he might have given sufficient proof of a settled Christian character. The young man then would be able to marry the worthy girl he was engaged to, for his income would be sufficient to support both his mother and his family."

"Of this plan Frederic, however, knew nothing. The baker wisely kept it hid from him, not to mar the tender process of his spiritual growth by the stimulus of earthly calculations. Still less could he have guessed the mother anything of this purpose of the baker. On the contrary, she was not at all contented with the way in which the baker was dealing with her son. She was a selfish, greedy woman, who often, when alone with her son, would wag her tongue against his master, abusing him as a miser and ungrateful 'Turk,' because he kept such a clever, able, and zealous servant as Frederic at so low wages. Frederic would always defend his master, and show that his wages were higher than those of any servant in the village; but the old widow called him a fool, who did not understand his own interest, and could have married long since, if he only would speak more boldly and require higher remuneration. This Frederic refused most decidedly, however, and the old woman knew no better way of giving vent to her indignation than by occasionally complaining to her neighbours of the baker's stinginess and her son's want of spirit. I need not tell you that the neighbours did not keep these confidential communications to themselves. They were soon a matter of conversation in the tap-room of the 'Golden Plough.'"

"One day the landlord paid a visit to Frederic's mother. She had requested him to come to look after some repairs which were urgently required. After having examined the indicated places, he turned to the front parlour, and looking up to the ceiling as if to measure its height, and across to the walls as if to calculate their length and breadth, he said in a soft voice, as if speaking to himself, 'Why, this would do very well for a baker's shop.'"

"For a baker's shop?" repeated the widow in a tone of amazement and alarm. "I hope, sir, you don't think of turning me out. Is the baker thinking of removing to this house?"

"No, not at all," replied the landlord. "Even if he offered me double the rent I should not let it to him."

"Ah, very well," said the widow, drawing her breath as if a heavy burden had fallen from her shoulders. "I only asked so, sir, because you were speaking of a baker's shop."

"Yes, I did. I thought the other day that getting up a baker's business in this house would not be a bad speculation. The population has considerably increased during the last year or two. There would be plenty of work for an additional baker. If I had a son who was a baker I should not for a moment hesitate settling him here. I think I shall some day engage a baker to take the house for the purpose. But of course I'll let you know in time, that you may pack your things at your convenience. Our contract is with a half year's notice at any rate."

"With these words the landlord left the house, but their impression remained with the widow."

"Frederic," said she, when her son came in, "the landlord will turn our house into a baker's shop, and engage a baker to carry on the business. What do you say to that?"

"Impossible!" exclaimed Frederic, gazing at his mother as at a ghost.

"Yes, to be sure," rejoined she; "he told me so just now."

"And whom is he to engage?" asked Frederic uneasily.

"Well, nobody particular as yet. But, I say, if you don't go to him at once and apply for the situation, you are the biggest fool that ever kneaded the dough in a baker's shop."

"I?" exclaimed Frederic. "I to set up a business opposite my master? No, never, mother."

"O you stupid boy," cried the widow, "tramp! take it, another day will run off with the fat bone, you fool. And, added she, covering her face with her apron, and lowering her voice to a plaintive tone, 'your old mother will be turned out of this house, in which your dear father, now in heaven, died, and in which I have been living for upwards

of thirty-six years; and you will be the cause of it. Yes, you will knock the first nail into my coffin."

"Frederic could not sleep that night. Not until daybreak a slight slumber stole over his eyes, and in his dream he saw himself as his own master, settled in the new baker's business, his wife happy by his side, his shop crammed with customers, and his mother blessing him as the comforter of her widowhood."

"The next day he went to the landlord and settled the matter. A sufficient capital was allowed him, at an interest of only two per cent., to begin business with. The house was to be rebuilt into a baker's shop, and no increase of rent would be required."

"A series of most painful experiences now commenced for that child of God. It pleased his heavenly Father to give him a bitter cup to drink, to make him all the more crave the sweet fruits of the heavenly paradise; and Christ while giving him a portion of his cross to bear, drew him by it on and upward to the mountain of his holiness. The sharpest thorn which at the outset pierced his soul, was the unfaithfulness and treacherous demeanour of Frederic. For an honest, tenderly feeling mind, no experience is more bitter than that of the apostasy of a servant whom we confided in as a friend, loved as a son, and benefited as a brother. All other trials strike the flesh; this wounds the very heart. It was a hard struggle for our baker in patient silence to bear the sight of that splendid shop opposite his, obviously got up to damage him, and kept by a person whom he had taken into service as a poor, ignorant lad, and who was indebted to him for all the knowledge and business ability he was possessed of."

"My dear," he said to his wife, on the day when the new shop was opened, 'we must pray twice as urgently as we have prayed hitherto lest the devil catch us in his snares. We are in great danger now of hating our neighbour because he hates us.'"

"But isn't it hateful indeed?" replied his wife looking through the window at the new shop, and shaking her head indignantly at it.

"Yes, the shop is, rejoined the baker; 'and so is the whole plan of which that shop is the issue.'"

"And so is Frederic, that ungrateful, treacherous fellow," interrupted she; 'he is a hateful scoundrel, whom—'

"Hush!" said the baker, laying his hand upon her lips. "It is written, 'Bless them that curse you; and pray for them that despitefully use you.' The time has come for us now to carry that commandment of our Lord into practice; but I feel it is a heavy one indeed. We ought never to mind that shop, nor to take thought questioning what damage it may do to us. We should only consider the great damage which poor Frederic has suffered."

"He!" exclaimed the bakeress in a voice of surprise. "What damage do you mean? Just look at him, standing this moment in his door-way, his young wife by his side. He appears as little aware of any damage as a conqueror who is returning from the field of battle."

"Alas! that's the worst of it," replied the baker. "He seems not to feel that his soul has suffered greater damage than the income of all the baker's shops in the world can make up to him. The Evil One has caught him in the snare of covetousness, and seduced him by the lust of the eyes and the pride of life, so that he is trying now to build his house upon the ruins of that of his friend and master; for he knows as well as I that two bakers cannot well find bread for their wives and families in this small village of ours. Now, such a disposition of heart may be the very thing required to succeed in the kingdom of this world, but it is equally certain that it shuts one out from the kingdom of God. The damage which he may do us can only consist in the loss of some temporal property; but the damage which he has done to himself, I have every ground to fear, consists in the loss of his soul. I think, my dear, we should consider this, and pity our poor neighbour. I think we should pray for him, that the Lord may open his eyes, to make him see that he allowed himself to be a tool of that spirit which caused Cain to kill his brother, and Judas to betray his Master."

"In this way the baker spoke to his wife, and in this way he found he had every day to speak to himself, to keep down his flesh which every now and then tried to rouse him into hatred and hostility. Having continually every day that malicious shop before his eyes, he felt that it was given to him as a thorn in the flesh, and that his former servant and friend now had become a messenger of Satan to buffet him. And sometimes his flesh would get the better of him, and cause him to speak words which he afterwards would heartily repent. This, however, brought him all the deeper down into his knees at the feet of that Saviour who said to him, 'My grace is sufficient for thee. And thus struggling and wrestling in many prayers and supplications he at length succeeded in arriving at peace with himself and his Master's dealings. He now could see Frederic's shop without the slightest frown on his brow. He could now cordially pray for Frederic. He perceived that the shop was nothing, and that Frederic was nothing, but that there was an invisible enemy behind, who used both Frederic and his shop as a means to cause him to sin, and to charge God foolishly. He perceived that he, as it were, was running a holy race, compassed about with a great cloud of invisible witnesses, who were anxious to know whether he would stand the trial and gain the prize."

"All we have to suffer is permitted by the Lord," he would often say to his wife, 'in order that we should show that we are richer with Christ in a desert than with a devil in a paradise.'"

"And, indeed, the day came at last on which our good baker found himself in a desert. Frederic, powerfully backed by the landlord of the Golden Plough, succeeded in drawing the greater portion of the population to his shop. The landlord, who used to purchase his corn at a price below what the baker could obtain it for. Thus Frederic could sell his bread cheaper than his former master. In short, after some years our friend was compelled to quit his business, and, reduced to poverty, to enter service with the miller of the village, who engaged him at a weekly salary scarcely sufficient for the support of himself and his family."

"Dark clouds now gathered above the head of this good man, while there was feasting in the houses of the wicked, and especially in the tap-room of the 'Golden Plough.' Indeed, it seemed as if the Evil One had gained the victory, and, one blow, swept away all the good which this servant of God had established during a succession of years. Our friend, obliged to live in a small cottage near the mill, was from want of a suitable locality, compelled to stop his meetings for Bible-reading and prayer, and to give up his Sabbath-school. The small company of seriously minded people who used to consider him as their leader, were scattered like sheep which have no shepherd, and many a one who already had commenced to spend his evenings in the tap-room, fell asleep again from want of further exhortation. This apparent destruction of his labour in the Lord's vineyard struck our friend even more painfully than the ruin of his temporal concerns. He used not to tell you that Mr. G., especially in these circumstances, often would come down, to strengthen his poor afflicted friend and brother by his prayerful sympathy, and to administer to him all the comfort his loving heart could derive from the word of God. His visits now were like refreshing rains reached down from the heavenly paradise. He even succeeded in restoring his downcast brother to his former energy and cheerfulness in Christ."

"My dear cousin," he would say to him, 'remember what the Lord has commanded us. When we fast, he said, anoint your head and wash your face. You are in a time of fasting now; you are deprived of nearly every comfort of life; you are former glory before men is turned into scorn, and your good work among them, at least it seems so, is burnt to ashes. This is a sad state of things indeed, and we have full reason for humbling ourselves in our closets before our God in tears and supplication, for all this mischief and misery is the effect of sin, and if the Lord does not come between his heart-renewing and guilt-pardoning grace, this whole village will be lost like Sodom and Gomorrah. But while we are in secret pleading for Christ's righteousness in behalf of these people, we must, at the same time, in public denounce the cause of our low estate. We must show them that his grace is sufficient for us indeed; and that men, under the agency of the arch fiend, may rob us of everything dear and desirable in this life, but that they cannot deprive us of our peace and happiness in Christ. Remember how the Prophet Habakkuk honoured his God in the day of great affliction. Although the fig-tree shall not blossom, he exclaimed, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labour of the olive shall fail and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls, yet—mark ye what a glorious yet this is—I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation. Now I think the prophet of the old covenant ought not to put to shame the children of the new. If the wicked, while in prosperity, rejoice in their good, we ought to show that our God causes us to rejoice even in tribulation. So, my dear cousin and brother, anoint your head and wash your face, conscious that Christ, who was crucified by men, but raised from the dead by God, stands by your side. Awake cheerfully, and put your hand to the plough again. If anything is lost, it is on the part of your adversaries. You have lost nothing. On the contrary, you have gained a great deal. For it is not a small matter, indeed, to be counted worthy to suffer shame for the Lord's name's sake. Remember what the Lord says to such cross-bearers, 'Rejoice and be exceeding glad, for great is your reward in heaven.'"

(To be Continued.)

"SON, REMEMBER"

LUKE XVI. 25.

Who can fathom the dreadful import of these emphatic words, addressed to the lost spirit of him, who, but a little while previous, was clothed in gay attire, fared sumptuously every day—living entirely unconcerned for his soul—wholly absorbed in the passing pleasures of the hour without regard to the requirements of him who holds the destinies of all in his hands?

Oh, all ye careless neglectors of God's commands, remember! Ye who are living in gaiety, finding your own pleasures, and doing according to your own devices, without regard to mercy's calls, or Heaven's broken laws, remember! Ye who are neglecting your souls' undying interests, to gather a few sticks and straws, while the angel of mercy is holding an incorruptible crown over your head, remember! Ye who are striving for the honors and pleasures of this world, or coveting riches, ease, or renown, as if they were the only good, remember! Ye who are rolling in splendid equipages, or adorning lordly mansions, as if there were no eternity for you to shortly enter upon, remember! Ye who have closed your eyes against the light of gospel truths—against heaven and humanity's calls, remember! Ye who are dealing out the intoxicating draught, and under a double curse, remember! Ye who oppress the poor, and neglect the needy, remember! Ye who on the Sabbath buy or sell and devote its hallowed hours, or take God's name in vain, remember! Ye who are at ease in Zion, or, like the foolish virgins, whose lamps are gone out, remember! Ye who are living only for yourselves, without God and without hope in the world, crying, 'Peace and safety,' while sudden destruction cometh, remember!

Oh, remember that the present passing moment only is yours, and if you will now resolve to turn from your evil ways, and seek the Lord with all your heart, then he will be found of you, to your rejoicing; but if you forsake him, and turn aside from his holy commands, you will soon, ah, very soon, be with the eternally lost! and then in anguish you will remember, that 'you knew your duty, but did it not.' You will then remember that your duty was not a hard, unpleasant task. It was only to obey God, by turning from sin to holiness, to Christ, to heaven, to 'read and pray,' and run the Christian race."

You will then remember how you preferred to be absorbed in worldly affairs, and how little you esteemed God's service, and Christ's atoning sacrifice. You will then remember how you slighted the means of grace, and all the invitations of his love, and, for a few fleeting vanities, gave up heaven. You will then remember your long rejecting the whisperings of that blessed Spirit, urging you to prepare for eternal scenes. You will then remember with how little concern you let your precious moments of probation pass unheeded until they had all passed away for ever. You will then remember that those precious moments of time will return again no more. You will then remember those years, months, weeks, days, and hours, with regret for their loss that no pen or language can describe. You will remember that during their continuance was the time for you to do the will of God—and then heaven's eternal joys would have been secured. You will remember that then was your opportunity and privilege to accept the offers of life eternal—yes, that even at the very time while reading this personal admonition you might have secured the salvation of your soul, by resolving thus: 'I will (in the strength of the Lord) now turn from sin and Satan's delusive snare, and from henceforth I will be a faithful servant of the ever living God.'

THE BIBLE AND THE BIBLE SOCIETY.

The Bible! our precious Bible! Ah, beloved friends, how I wish that we did more thoroughly understand, appreciate, and know what that book really is; and that we did more fully value, more prize, more love, more study it, more strive that the movements of our minds should conform to its holy spirit. I would put the Bible into the witness-box, and put to it this single question—I would say, 'Tell me, what is your origin? Tell me, what is your purpose?' In a moment I have the reply, 'My origin is not of the earth, or earthly; I am from heaven, and heavenly. My purpose is nothing less than this: to promote the glory of God in the highest, in the salvation of man.' Do not its pages tell us 'All Scripture is given by inspiration of God?' It is not earthly. Hold fast that truth; 'all Scripture.' From the first chapter to the last, from the first verse to the last, is given by inspiration. Its purpose is salvation to all who 'receive with meekness the engrained Word.' Well, then, is the key-note for you. But perhaps you will say, 'Has not the society existed long?'—'Yes, but I believe it is now in its sixtieth year'—and in that space of time has it not effected its great, grand, and glorious work? It has. I believe, since the foundation of the society, 74 million copies of God's Word have been issued. You may say, 'Surely, then, the world is replenished, and the whole earth is grided with a zone of Bibles.' But the more you want from us? Rush not so hastily to that conclusion. These pages are perishing, though the Word is eternal. The population is increasing, and thereby the need of the Bible is as great as it was even when the society commenced its labour of love. Of the 74 million Bibles which had been issued, Great Britain, in the languages spoken in these islands, had had 28 millions, Europe had 24 millions, and America 19, so that there remains, in the sixty years, only four million copies to supply all the needs of Africa, Asia, India, China, Australia, Madagascar, and the Islands of the Pacific. Surely, then, you must feel that this work is as yet scarcely commenced—that never was there a time when greater help was needed, greater opportunity opened. The whole world, so to speak, is crying out to send them this blessed book.—*Dean Lau.*

"I AM A CHRISTIAN."

Early one Sunday morning the whole station at Kainiao was thrown into dismay. Tawai, a fierce and terrible chief, had suddenly arrived. His presence hitherto had been everywhere the precursor of bloodshed and misery.

Not knowing what to augur from his unexpected arrival, the missionary went in person to inquire. To his amazement, the answer was, 'I am a Christian!'

No sooner had Tawai been brought to the foot of the cross, than he hastened to the missionary settlement, to be more fully instructed in the way to heaven. The account he gave was this. Like Naaman of old, he had, in one of his many battles, brought away a little maid, and she too, waited upon her master's wife. But, though a slave this girl, who was a Christian, did not forget the God whom she had been taught by the missionary to love. Day by day she offered up her prayer, not only for herself, but for her captor and his wife. She was one day discovered on her knees, praying. The chief was enraged, and positively forbade her praying again; but she persisted. He then threatened to shoot her; but she said she would not be without prayer. The chief's anger was now changed into pity. What could induce the child to endure threats and punishment rather than cease to pray? He made her repeat the prayer and texts in his presence. The life-giving word came with power to his soul. He was awakened and converted.

One of his first acts, after his baptism, was to visit his old enemies, and entreat them to seek the Saviour who had made him so happy; and this was the chief cause of his unexpected visit to Kainiao.

A few words from the lips of this little maid, through the mighty power of the Holy Spirit, so affected his heart that the lion became a lamb, and no longer delighted in savage deeds, but in acts of love.—*Foreign Missionary.*

DYING WORDS OF WILBERFORCE.

"Come and sit near me; let me lean on you," said Wilberforce to a friend, a few minutes before that friend, he said, "God bless you, my dear!" He became agitated somewhat, and then ceased speaking. Presently, however, he said, "I must leave you my fond friend; we shall walk no further through this world together, but I hope we shall meet in heaven. Do not weep for me. I am very happy. Think of me and let the thought press you forward. I never knew happiness till I found Christ a Saviour. Read the Bible—read the Bible! Let no religious book take its place. Through all my perplexities and distresses, I never read any other books, and I never felt the want of any other. It has been my hourly study, and all my knowledge of the doctrines, and all my acquaintance with the experiences and realities of religion, have been drawn from the Bible only. I think religious people do not read the Bible enough. Books about religion may be useful

enough, but they will not do instead of the simple truth of the Bible." He afterwards spoke of the regret of parting with his friends. "Nothing," said he, "convince me more of the reality of the change within me, than the feelings with which I can contemplate a separation from my family. I now feel so much weaned from the world, my affections so much in heaven, that I can leave you all without a regret. I do not love you less, but God more."

Such were the last words of one of the greatest and most gifted men the world has ever known. How strong his faith; with what a deep and trusting confidence he relied upon God. With what earnestness he turns to the Bible, as the only fountain whence true and sufficient comfort can be drawn in that dark hour.

MR. SPURGEON ON MARRIAGE.

The Rev. C. H. Spurgeon performed the marriage ceremony between Mr. Charles Blackshaw and Miss Hannah Edwards at Henegast-street Chapel, Birmingham, on Tuesday morning. Although the weather was wet, the chapel was crowded by persons who were anxious to be witnesses of the interesting ceremony, and to hear what Mr. Spurgeon had to say about marriage. Before commencing the ceremony Mr. Spurgeon observed that, although marriage was a civil contract, it was the most solemn engagement which human beings could make, and it was, therefore, right that it should never be entered into without an invocation of the blessing of God.

Marriage was instituted at the time of man's perfection in Eden, and was, therefore, consistent with the utmost purity of life and the greatest piety and perfection of character. The miracle wrought by Christ at the marriage feast was full of meaning. He turned the water into wine; and a happy marriage turned the water of life into wine. A prayer was then offered and the marriage ceremony was performed, Mr. Spurgeon observing, as the ring was placed upon the finger of the bride, that the ring was an ancient and most fitting emblem of love. The gold of which it was made was emblematic of purity, and its form was significant of endless love. At the conclusion of the ceremony, he said he should venture to say a few words for the benefit of the young people in the congregation who might, one of these days, be married themselves. Holy Scripture was a book so full and complete that it never left out anything that was necessary to make a perfect Christian. For instance as Christians entered upon the relationships of masters and servants, there was advice given to them in those capacities; and since men and women would become husbands and wives, the Holy Ghost, speaking through the Apostle Paul and the Apostle Peter, had given excellent advice for the guidance of persons in those relationships. First, he said to husbands, in Ephesians, 'Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the Church and gave himself for it.' Love was the point in which husbands were most likely to fail; and, therefore, love was the duty that was especially insisted upon with respect to them. It was not often that the wife failed in love. She might in obedience, but not often in love; and hence it was the husband who was exhorted to love his wife 'even as Christ also loved the Church.' Christ loved the Church infinitely; and, therefore, as husbands were to love their wives as Christ loved the Church, they could not love their wives too well, if they were wise in their love. 'Even as Christ also loved the Church.' He loved it to cleanse it and purify it—to make it holy and without blemish; and it was in the same way that husbands should love their wives. The purest and best love was that which sought the holiness of its object. That was no love, which led its object astray; but that was true, deep, and hallowed love which always sought to promote the highest interests of its object. Christ loved his Church not to leave her in sin, but to cleanse her from it—not to lead her into folly, but to take her away from it. Husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. No man hated his own flesh, but cherished it and cherished it. We read indeed of one demoniac who cut his own flesh with knives. A man must be very nearly a demoniac who will flit from his own wife. He must be very far fallen indeed from the dignity of manhood. The very first marriage was a lesson of love to us. The woman was taken out of the man, but not from his feet, for he must not trample on her; not from his head, for she was not to govern him; but from his side, near his heart, for he must love her—from under his arm, for he ought to protect her. She was to be to him a help-meet to share his troubles, and to increase his joys. As Christ identified himself with his people—'I and my people are one'—so should husband and wife be identical in everything—having no divided ends, no separate objects, and neither sorrows nor joys that were not common to each. With reference to the duties of wives, Peter was very explicit upon this subject in the third chapter of his first epistle. 'Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your husbands; that if any obey not the Word, they also may without the Word be won by the conversation of the wives; while they behold your chaste conversation coupled with fear, whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair and of wearing of gold or of putting on of apparel. But let it be the hidden ornament of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price.' Upon special occasions a goodly woman might lawfully put on her adornments as well as other women; but upon ordinary occasions it would be better for her to wear nothing but the 'ornament of a meek and quiet spirit.' Ornaments were valued for their cost, and 'a meek and quiet spirit' was 'of great price in the sight of God.' Those foolish women who were pleased with having an evil report to spread, had nothing of such price as a meek and quiet spirit. 'For after this manner in the old time the holy women, being as you are trusted in God, adorned themselves, being in subjection unto their own husbands, even as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord.' That word 'lord' was the only good word in the sentence spoken by Sarah; and the one good word was noticed, as Christ always noticed what was good in his creatures. In the same way a husband ought to notice what was good in his wife. Should he see something to blame in her, or be suspicious of anything deserving blame, he had better be silent, unless he could mend it. Mr. Spurgeon said that if he ended the marriage ceremony there, it might be said that it was like the Church Service—beginning with 'dearly beloved'

and ending with 'amazement,' which he feared many marriages did. He should conclude it with a hymn, in which every one might join; for the occasion was one of rejoicing, and he was glad that the bride did not indulge in the silly whim of crying, as if she were at a funeral. A hymn was then sung; after which Mr. Spurgeon pronounced a blessing on the newly-wedded couple, and prayed that their joys might be like the grapes of Eschcol—so many that less than two could not carry them.

THE BACKSLIDER.

Who was he? His name was Demas. 'Demas,' says the Apostle Paul, 'hath forsaken me, having loved this present world.'

There was a time when it was otherwise with Demas. When, Anno Domini, sixty-four, Paul wrote his Epistle to the Colossians, he said 'Luke, the beloved physician, and Demas, greet you.' And again, the same year writing to Philemon, he says: 'Demas and Lucas, my fellow laborers, salute thee.' But now, alas! two years later writing to Timothy, he says: 'Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world.' What a change two short years had made!—Time works changes; often melancholy changes. Two years are sufficient to do this. But there are no changes more sad and disastrous than a change in the Christian religion for the world, for it is a change of salvation for ruin; and this change, lamentable, awful as it is, is not unfrequently effected in as brief a space of time as two years.

Perhaps some of our readers may know this from personal experience. Two years ago, they might, to human view, have been exemplary Christians; but now, alas! are carnal and worldly. Two years ago, their pastor speaking of them, might have spoken of them as promising, engaged disciples of Christ. Now, referring to them, he may be forced to say 'they have forsaken Jesus, having loved the world.' Too often do the hopelessly converted turn out thus. The tree is barren; at the most, there are 'but leaves only.'

And how is this sad and ruinous change brought about? How does the believer backslide? Usual is this way:—

He begins to neglect his closet. 'Backsliding,' says Matthew Henry, 'commences at the closet door.' Secret devotions are suspended or performed in a heartless manner. He does not daily, as formerly, 'enter his closet, shut the door, and pray to his father in secret.' He is not drawn thither by a sense of spiritual want, nor 'lingers, loth to depart,' from satisfaction in the exercise, from the pleasure found in communion with God.

'Prayer is the Christian's vital breath,' and the first symptom of spiritual decline is, the breathing of the soul growing shorter and more difficult.

Next the inspired volume is neglected. There is less meaning and beauty in its pages than before. Once, the words of the Lord's mouth were more esteemed than necessary food, and this 'bread of life,' was daily gathered as was this manna by the children of Israel. But now this bread is called 'light food,' as that heaven-descended manna was, when Israel had begun to degenerate. It is not daily gathered, or keenly relished. Other books are preferred to the 'Book of books.' Newspapers and novels take precedence of it, and cast collects on it.

Neglect of secret prayer, and study of the Bible are followed by a diminished appreciation of the Sabbath and the sanctuary. The Sabbath is not accounted the day of all the best; and whereas, when the pulse of spiritual life in the believer's soul beats quick and high, he could not fail to join the worshipping assembly whenever opportunity offered, and in his warm attachment to the public Christian ordinances exclaimed—'I am glad when they said unto me, let us go into the house of the Lord!' How amiable are thy tabernacles, 'O Lord of hosts!' He now can absent himself from the Lord's temple on the Sabbath, at least part of the day and often does; and while thus absent 'thinks his own thoughts, and speaks his own words.'

Moreover, if he is the head of a family, the family altar has not the morning and evening sacrifices laid upon it; the messages of truth which his faithful pastor presents from the pulpit are capriciously criticised in presence of the household; these messages are too plain and pungent, or they are personal, or they are not sufficiently elaborate with human rhetoric. Those enterprises of Christian philanthropy, which are the glory of the age, are not valued and cherished; the purse and the hand not generously opened in their behalf; there is conformity to the world in its views, principles, customs and follies, and he is sailing on the same track with it, and steering for the same point. And thus does it occur, that the person who once set out fair for heaven has stopped, retrograded, become a Demas, a backslider believer and has forsaken Christ.

If we have a reader concerning whom this is true, may that living God from whom he has departed, rouse him to self-examination, repentance and performance of the first works.—*New York Evangelist.*

THE VALUE OF NEWSPAPERS.

Many persons so regard the money expended upon newspapers as money thrown away; but this is not the case, for it is a well-known fact, without exception, that those scholars of both sexes and all ages who have had access to newspapers at home, when compared with those who have not, are—

1st. Better readers, excelling in pronunciation and emphasis, and consequently read more understandingly.

2d. They are better spellers, and define words with greater ease and accuracy.

3d. They acquire a practical knowledge of geography in almost half the time it requires others, as the newspaper has made them familiar with all the important places, nations, their governments and doings, and the globe.

4th. They are better grammarians; for, having become familiar with every variety of style in the newspaper, from the common-place advertisement to the finished and classical oration of the statesman, they more readily comprehend the meaning of the text, and consequently analyze its construction with greater accuracy.

5th. They write better composition, use better language, containing more thoughts, more clearly and connectedly expressed.

6th. Those young men who have for years been readers of the newspapers are always found taking the lead in debating societies, exhibiting a more