

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.

"A GOOD MAN—A VERY GOOD MAN INDEED."

By J. DeLinde, of Amsterdam.

Continued.

The baker sells his bread in the opposition shop.

Thus Mr. G. would speak to his cousin, and his words were to our afflicted friend like golden apples on silver dishes. As the corn, knocked down by a succession of heavy rains, from its prostration under the fostering beams of the summer sun, thus the baker again lifted up his head under the consoling and quickening power of God's word. Soon he again opened his Sabbath school. True love is quick in invention and inexhaustible in its resources. For one hour every Sunday all the movable furniture of the little parlour was transferred into the bedroom, and by putting some boards across a few chairs, accommodation was made for about thirty children. To the baker's great joy nearly all his former young friends made their appearance, so that his school was crowded. The same process was for an hour gone through every Tuesday evening to accommodate a small Scripture-reading meeting. It is true, the little parlour was rather close, when containing upwards of twenty individuals sitting on the benches under the low ceiling, and nearly as many standing in the corners and in the doorway, and in the narrow passage outside; but the open windows, while letting in fresh air, at the same time caused the psalms and hymns to proclaim the praise of God all over the village.

The landlady and his companions were compelled to feel, that while they could deprive the Lord's people of their house and field, they could not deprive them of their joy in the God of their salvation. "Thus matters continued for a considerable time, during which, from our friend's parlour, many a fervent prayer was offered up to God for the conversion of his adversaries. The time was at hand when he was to experience that this prayer too was one of those which we are assured that they 'prevail much.' The Evil One had succeeded in damaging the good work of the baker through the instrumentality of his servant. It was to be measured to him again now by the same measure with which he had been meting. Diseases are creatures of the devil; he brought them into the world through sin; they are his servants, whom he employs in order to plague mankind, and to dig the graves of the children of Adam. But God, who is sovereign over all, also controls the evil which Satan creates. He now resolved to employ one of Satan's servants to destroy Satan's work. One day that terrible angel of destruction, called cholera, entered this village. Already hundreds of victims had fallen before him in the surrounding country. A general panic seized the population. The shouts and songs of the Golden Plover were silenced at once. But from the baker's little parlour the psalms of David sounded up to the louder.

"Amongst the individuals whom that swift messenger of perdition visited was Frederic. He was suddenly, in the midst of his business, he was attacked and cast down on his bed. The next day his servant sank down and was carried off to his bedroom. Frederic's wife and mother were in utter despair. Assistance was not to be obtained at any price. Every one shunned their house. Frederic's wife, leaving her four children to her mother-in-law's care, spent day and night in attending the sick ones. The business, of course, was brought to a stand still. Soon great inconvenience ensued, for the villagers' bread became scarce as in times of war or famine. A quantity was supplied from neighbouring villages, but not generally sufficient to meet the wants of the population.

"One evening the front door of Frederic's shop was softly opened, and a person entered, who found himself in an Egyptian darkness. "Is there nobody here in the house?" he called out.

"Yes, I am here!" shouted a voice from a back parlour; but I cannot go to you; I am alone with the cholera. Please step in here!"

The individual groping his way through the dark in the direction of the door where Frederic, soon found himself in the room where Frederic's mother was sitting, a sick baby on her lap, while at the same time she was trying to undress one of three children standing at her knee. A small piece of candle, nearly burning in the socket, was the only light that illumined this dismal scene.

"Good evening," said the person who entered the room. "Tell me, ma'am, how is your son?"

The old woman contracted her brow to sharper her sight, and looking keenly through the glittering of the candle, discovered that our friend the baker was standing before her.

"What is it you, sir?" exclaimed she, in a voice of surprise mixed with fear.

"Don't be put out, ma'am," said the baker in a kind tone. "I understand that you could expect me least of all. But I am told that circumstances are very distressing in your family at present, and I am come to ask if I can be of any service to you?"

"Yes, my good sir," said the old woman, while a stream of tears gushed down her cheeks. "Very distressing. God alone know how we are to get through it, and what the end of all this will be. My son happily has got over the attack of the cholera, but he is so thoroughly exhausted, that the doctor says it will at least take four weeks ere he will be able to leave his bed. John, the servant, is in a worse condition, poor fellow. We expect his death every hour. My daughter-in-law has attended both of them day and night, till she sank down from exhaustion. She is laid up now and confined to her bed by fever. So I am alone with three sick ones, while I take care of the children. But, oh! my good sir! my good sir! what a position we are in; we have not tasted a bit of warm food since yesterday week. To complete our misfortune, this baby here on my lap took ill last night. The doctor cannot tell what ails her; but she will not lie still, poor thing, unless I keep her just now. I scarcely can move my hands with this child continually on my knees. I see the candle is about to go out. I hardly know how to get down into the cellar to cut a fresh one off the bunch."

"Where is the cellar?" asked the baker; "I'll go and cut one."

"You are too kind, indeed," rejoined the woman. "Our good Lord has sent you, I'm sure!"

"She directed our friend how to go to the cellar with a smile, 'it is not so much to me as to him that you are indebted, for if he had refused to give me leave I should not have been able to serve you. So you may consider it in this way, that my master has lent me to you for a month, and I am glad that this loan has been of some service to you. And now, farewell. May God speed you and preserve your house from further calamities.'"

Frederic could not answer a word. He burst into tears, and ere he was able to control his emotions, the baker had withdrawn, leaving the open hop book and the piles of silver behind the silent and yet eloquent witnesses of his disinterested faithfulness and self-denying love."

(To be Continued.)

THE JOY OF HARVEST.

The Rev. John Caird, D.D., one of the Queen's chaplains for Scotland, has some beautiful reflections upon this subject—

"They joy before Thee," writes the prophet Isaiah when depicting the happiness of the Church at the advent of its great deliverer. "They joy before Thee according to the joy in harvest." And the image here employed is one which we must all recognise as a most graphic one. There are probably few who would not sympathize with the cheerful emotions congenial to such a season as the present, when nature, arrayed in all her loveliness, has again begun to pour the rich tribute of her bounty into the lap of man. As you pass through some fair and fertile district of our land, wherever a breeze is laden with fragrance, every field teeming with fertility, every tree covered with foliage or hangs heavy with fruit; or as you climb the hill that skirts some noble landscape, where for miles on miles the broad acres are waving a mimic sea of gold beneath you, and survey the busy tools of the reapers and listen to the merry shouts that rise, blended with the voices of birds and streams, now faintly echoing from the far hamlet, now more distinctly heard from the nearer homestead, and, as, moreover, the happy associations connected with such a scene as this come before your mind—visions of plenty and peace and comfort, of garner overflowing with goodly store, of homes and hearts made glad by nature's bounty—you cannot resist the universal sentiment of cheerfulness and gratitude, and as it steals over your mind, you feel yourself, before the great bestower of all blessings, "rejoicing with the joy in harvest." It is very obvious that the pleasure experienced from any happy or auspicious event will be more or less vivid in proportion to the degree of doubt and anxiety that preceded it. Regularity and certainty in our enjoyments in some measure diminish their intensity; rarity and suspense greatly heighten them. The longer you labour for a good thing, and the more numerous the conditions which render the result a dubious one, the greater will be your delight when all goes right at last and the matter is brought to a successful issue. Exciting all his skill and experience in the selection of the crop and the preparation of the soil, the husbandman has ploughed and sown and gone through all the processes of his husbandry, and then with anxious eye he has watched the course of the seasons and the progress of his work. Through the slowly rolling months, the fluctuations and uncertainties of weather and the remembrances of many past disappointments have kept him in much doubt and uncertainty as to the result. But as the season crept on, the genial influence of nature have come forth in unwonted benignity over the ripening fields; and at length, as he watches the busy reapers engaged in their rapid and peaceful conquests, his heart gladdens with the satisfaction of successful industry, and he "rejoices with the joy of harvest."

The joy of harvest may be regarded as typical of the Christian's joy in this respect, that it is a joy that is connected with active exertion. The mirth of the harvest-field is not a mere listless amusement. The shout that rings, or the song that rises cheerily from the reaper's lips, is the shout that inspires to effort, and the song that beguiles toil of its weariness and fatigue. When it catches your ear as you pass by the wayside, or is borne along and echoed from distant plain and valley and upland, it does not pain you like the vacant laugh of indolence, or the wild rill of reckless enjoyment, of wasted hours and wanton carousing, but of busy and strenuous toil, of profitable industry, and manly and honest exertion. It speaks not like the sluggard's or the drunkard's merriment, of squandered substance, and squalid homes, and beggared broken-hearted families; it is the symbol rather of plenty, and peace and contentment, of smiling faces and well-fed forms, of garner overflowing with corn, and homes where the sunshine of prosperity smiles. It conveys to us besides the tidings not merely of labouring success, but of labour that is pleasant, of toil that is pursued neither in grim silence like the work of the overtasked mechanic, nor amid groans and curses, like the work of the slave or the felon, but with the merry and light-hearted song and jest that tell how the labourer likes his work. And when it is avowed that the joy of a Christian resembles the harvest joy, may not the comparison remind us of that great law of man's nature which connects his true happiness and dignity with work? Religion has to do with everything that affects man's duty and happiness. It goes with you, or should go, to the shop, the plough, the anvil, and takes cognizance of what passes there; and the idle servant, the dawdling trifling workman, the man who wastes his time and hangs listlessly by his work, who neglects prayer or seldom opens his Bible. Constituted as human nature and human society are, there is something holy, something divine in work. "My Father worketh hitherto," said Jesus, "and I work." Angels are happy beings, for they are working beings. They continually "do God's commandments, hearkening to the voice of His word." Civilisation, progress, goodness, have sprung from work. The world has reached its present height of intellectual and social greatness because it is a busy and working world. And as with society at large, so with individuals. Nobody in the world is so contemptible, next to the profligate man, as the mere idler, and between profligacy and idleness there is a close connection. A man who has nothing to do and enjoy himself, will never know what real enjoyment is. No one who has tried it but must feel that in thorough and earnest occupation there is a buoyancy of spirit, a lightness of mind, an ease of conscience, a superiority to petty cares and troubles, an elasticity and animation diffused throughout a man's whole being, which the listless and idle man never knows. The world is but a

great field of duty in which they who labour the hardest may not only reap the richest results, but in their very labouring rejoice the most.

Here is a little company each at his own work and all cheering, encouraging, urging each other on. There is perhaps the farmer who superintends and watches the progress of the work; there are those who cut, and those who bind, and those who glean, and those who load the cart or lumbering wagon and bear away the result of the common toil. And as the reapers nimble ply the sickle, and each band or individual strains every nerve and pushes on that he may not be surpassed by others, and as the cheering word or shout, or merry song rises up in the clear bright air over the scene of blithe and busy toil, one perceives again a most striking proof of the increased power of common work and mutual helpfulness. Now so it is, or should be, in that noblest of all communities—the Church of Christ, the company of Christ's true soldiers and faithful workmen on earth. Religion is not a solitary thing, a thing with which each man has to do exclusively in the hidden solitude of his own heart. It must begin there, and in many of its deepest exercises it must be carried on there; and without the private intercourse of the soul with God, the private discipline and governance of a man's own secret heart, all other religion would be vain. But on the other hand, as little will it do to make religion altogether an individual and secret thing. In many of its highest privileges, exercises, and engagements it is social; and one of its most momentous duties is that of mutual sympathy, encouragement, and helpfulness. If you are sincere Christian, you ought to feel that all you have and all you are, your wealth, time, talents, power, influence, your penitence, faith, virtue, Christian experience and wisdom, all your blessings and privileges temporal and spiritual, have been bestowed upon you, not for your own use alone, but for the common benefit of that holy family, that household and brotherhood of God's redeemed to which you profess to belong. Your portion of meat God has given you not to hoard away to devour it like a greedy child in secret, but to share it with all your brethren in Christ. Your light was not kindled that it might be hidden for ever underground, illuminating only the walls of your own tomb-like solitude. You are to "let your light shine before men," and not only by your example, but by your active exertions and sympathies, you are bound to help on the work and the workmen in Christ's Church. No member of Christ's Church can do something to promote the cause of religion, and by his kindly aid, his visits of sympathy, his soothing charities, his cheering encouragements, his recital of his own experience, be of some use to his fellow Christians. What a happy state of things would it be if each parish in our land were as the dwelling-place of a band of brothers enlisted in some noble and heaven-blessed enterprise, fighting for home and country, in the cause of freedom, truth, and justice! What a happy scene would that be in which the wise and experienced were ever ready with their advice and aid to help the untold and ignorant, in which the powerful aided the weak, and the weak in turn were ready to bless, honour, and stand true to the strong; in which by the head or by the hand, by endurance, forbearance, courage, zeal, self-devotion, all were ready to act together in the work of putting down sin and winning the world to Christ! What a parish that in which the scene that is now enacted on many a bright summer field were but a symbol and representation of our work in the nobler field of Christ's Church, where from year to year all of us together, and each in his own place, were straining every nerve to be and to do good, to help and encourage each other in the work of the Lord, to prepare for the great harvest-home of eternity! Then, indeed, might our Sabbath song of praise be a prelude of that glorious song in which we all hope to join, in which the thousand times ten thousand voices, but one mighty heart of the redeemed in glory, shall celebrate the praises of the great husbandman, affording the noblest, most glorious fulfilment of that text, "They joy before Thee according to the joy in harvest."

These; they seem written on purpose for his admonition."

Quite right, Mr. G.—but not long since Mr. N.—was glancing over the third chapter of James, and he said to himself, "How I should like to cut out this page about the unruly tongue, and inclose it to Mr. G.— It is my opinion that he never looks at it; and yet, if it had been made for him, it could not have denounced his besetting sin more strongly."

Alas, Mr. G.—and Mr. N.—do read the Scriptures for yourselves, and not for each other. "Why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye?" "Whatsoever Christ saith unto you, do it."

A Christian friend remonstrated with a young tradesman about some objectionable practice which he pursued in his business; and he pointed out to him how plainly it was forbidden in God's Word. The young man admitted the truthfulness of the representation; but, said he, "It is only what a great many other people do. I am no worse than my neighbours. Why don't you go to Mr. T.—, for instance? he is the office-bearer of a church, and, therefore, more to blame than I am."

"Mr. T.—'s conduct is no excuse for yours. Each one of us must give an account, not of his neighbour, but of himself, to God. God has proclaimed to you his law, that you may try yourself by it, not that you may see whether your next-door neighbour comes up to its standard. Why not honestly carry out your convictions, and do what you know to be right? 'Whatsoever Christ saith unto you, do it.'"

Yes, there must be no evasion, no endeavour to push off our responsibility on to somebody else; we must hear what Christ says to us; we must apply his word to ourselves. I fear that with many of us there is a great want of this individual and personal attention to Christ's sayings. We do not listen to them; or if we listen, it is only to invent some excuse for our disregard of them.

The other day, an intelligent young person was urged to consecrate herself without delay to the service of the Saviour. "I wish to do so," she replied, "but there are a great many points respecting which I am still unsatisfied. The state of the heathen, for instance; do you think that a God of love can leave them all to perish?"

"My dear young friend," was the rejoinder, "whatever becomes of the heathen, your duty is plain. Attend to that first, and then it will be time enough to consider the condition of the heathen world."

This is a lesson we must all learn. Religion is a personal thing, something which concerns us just as much as if I were the only person in existence. What Christ says to me, that is my business; I must attend to it; no one else can do it for me; and the negligence of those around me cannot extenuate my disobedience. Oh, we are so prone to turn from ourselves to others, and to ask with Peter, 'Lord, and what shall this man do?'

And we need as he did the proof of our Master, 'What is that to thee? follow thou me.' But these words of Mary may also remind us that our obedience to Christ is to be impartial. 'Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it.'

We are not left to choose for ourselves: to obey one precept, and to disobey another; to do what we like, and to leave undone what we do not like. There must be no reserve, no holding back in his service. He expects from us implicit and unwavering submission. Now here it is that so many, like the amiable young ruler, come short. They are willing to do much that Christ tells them, but not all. There is something which they cannot give up, or something which they are reluctant to perform, and they go away from the Saviour, sorrowful perhaps, but yet unwilling to yield.

Mr. Romane was once addressed by a lady, who pressed the great pleasure she had enjoyed in his preaching; and added, that she could comply with his requirements with one exception. "And what is that, madam?" asked Mr. Romane.

"Cards, sir."

"You think you could not be happy without them?"

"No, sir, I know I could not."

"Then, madam, they are your god, and they must save you."

This pointed admonition led to serious reflection, and, finally, to the abandonment of such unworthy pleasures.

Now, my reader, is there any sinful preference, any unwelcome duty, which either makes you shrink from Christ's service, or bring dishonour upon it? Give up at once the wrong habit; take up at once the appointed cross. It will not do to hesitate—to halt between two opinions—to try to serve God and mammon. A half-hearted religion is no religion at all. Resolve then, that, like Caleb, you will follow the Lord "fully;" that whatever he says to you, you will do it. It may not seem any reason or necessity for the injunction; but his word alone should win your instant compliance with it. In your position as a servant, you are not to question, but to obey; not to demur respecting your work, but to do it.

A Karen woman presented herself to a Christian minister as a candidate for baptism. After the usual examination, he asked her whether she could give up her ornaments for Christ. It was an unexpected blow. He explained the spirit of the gospel, and appealed to her own consciousness of vanity. She looked again at her handsome necklaces, and then, with an air of modest decision, she took them off, saying, "I love Christ more than these." Ah, dear reader, she was willing to part with all for Christ, to do whatsoever he bade her with readiness and gladness. Are you like her?

How practical was the advice which the mother of Jesus gave!—'Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it.' Do it. Not merely think about it, or talk about it, but do it. It is very important to observe how much stress is laid in Scripture upon the deeds of men. Hearing the word is not enough; 'Be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves' (James i. 22). Knowledge is not enough; 'If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them' (John xiii. 17). Outward acts of worship are not enough; 'Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice' (1 Sam. xv. 22). Christian profession is not enough; 'Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven' (Matt. vii. 21).

It is evident, then, that prompt and heartfelt obedience to all requirements is what the Saviour demands from us. It is easy to echo the popular

praise, "Never man spake like this man," or to sing with the palm-branch strewers in the Messiah's path, "Hosanna to the Son of David," while we keep not his sayings, nor endeavour to act in accordance with his will. But such conduct will never rank us among his true disciples. To approve of his commands, to discuss their meaning, to wish that we could fashion our lives in unison with them, so far as it goes this is well; but the grand, the essential point to be ascertained is, are we doing what he bids us? For there are many now, as in Ezekiel's time, who speak one to another, saying, "Come, I pray you, and hear what is the word that cometh forth from the Lord;" who sit in God's sanctuary, as his people sit, and hear his words, but who will not do them. The preacher is "unto them as a very lovely song of one that hath a pleasant voice, and can play well on an instrument;" they hear his words, but they do them not (Ezek. xxxiii. 30-32).

Dear reader, whatsoever Christ saith unto thee, do it. Your oft-repeated petition is, "Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven;" let your daily practice harmonize with your daily prayer. As far as you know and understand God's will, strive to accomplish it. "I made haste," says the psalmist, "and delayed not to keep thy commandments" (Ps. cxix. 60).—*Life's Morning.*

HOME TRAINING.

"Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it."—Prov. xxii. 6.

The most common of all human complaints is parents' groaning under the vices of their children.—*R. Cecil.*

Good laws will not reform us, if reformation begin not at home. *Richard Baxter.*

No greater harm is done to Christendom than by the neglect of children; therefore, to advance the cause of Christ, we must begin with them.—*Martin Luther.*

I think I may say, that of all the men we meet with, nine parts of ten are what they are, good or evil, useful or not, by their education.—*Locke.*

The next important thing in this world, next to the soul's salvation, is the taking care of children; and yet there is no subject on which there is so much ignorance as on this.—*H. W. Beecher.*

The last thing forgotten in all the recklessness of dissolute profligacy, is the prayer or hymn taught by a mother's lips, or uttered at a father's knee; and where there seems to have been any pains bestowed, even by one parent, to train up a child aright, there is in general more than ordinary ground for hope.—*The Experience of a Prison Chaplain.*

I have long felt that until the fathers and mothers are better men and better women, our schools can accomplish comparatively little. I believe that any improvement that could be brought to bear on the mothers more especially, would effect a greater amount of good than anything that has yet been done.—*Earl of Shaftesbury.*

SHORT ARROWS.

No statue that the rich man places ostentatiously in his window is to be compared to the little expectant face pressed against the window-pane, watching for his father, when his day's labour is done.

If God suffers a faithful pastor not immediately to see the fruits of his labours, it is to convince him that the success of his labours belongs to God but he ought to humble himself, and pray much, lest some cause of unprofitableness should be in himself.

When (says Professor Woods) I began my duties of professor of theology, I feared that the frequency with which I should have to pass over the same portions of Scripture would abate the interest in my own mind in reading them; but, after more than fifty years of study, it is my experience that with every class my interest increases.

If you would add a lustre to all your accomplishments, study a modest behaviour. To excel in anything valuable is great, but to be above conceit on account of one's accomplishments is greater. Consider, if you have rich natural gifts, you owe them to the Divine Bounty; if you have improved your understanding, and advanced in knowledge, you have only done your duty; and thus there is no reason left why vanity, a sin which God abhors, should be indulged.

Death to the servants of God is not so much a penalty as it is a remedy. It delivers them up to such joys as eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath entered into the heart of man to conceive. Yes, a man may as well with a coal point out the sun in all its splendour, as with his pen or tongue express, or with his heart conceive, the fullness of those joys and the sweetness of those pleasures which the redeemed shall enjoy at God's right hand for evermore. For quality, they are pleasures; for quantity, fullness; for dignity, at God's right hand; for eternity; for evermore; and millions of years multiplied by millions make not up a minute to this eternity.

"THY SERVANT, THE DECEASED."—A few years ago, in the town of—C—, a neighbor suddenly died, whose character as an openly wicked man was well known. The Universalist preacher of the place officiated at the funeral. The Scripture read was that generally used on such occasions by those of his views, the fifteenth chapter of first Corinthians, selected from the fact that the word "all" is in it, which for a theory so hard pushed for proof-texts, is no light consideration, even though the connection and parallel passages are fatal to Universalism. Prayer followed, in which occurred a frequent repetition of the words, "Thy servant, the deceased." Knowing what the life of the poor man had been, and that no one pretended that he had met with a change of heart before his death, the language struck me as most inappropriate. Nor was I alone in this; for as I was returning home after the services, I overheard some boys talking together.

"Well, Bill," said one, addressing his companion, a shrewd-looking rustic youth, "what did you think of that?"

"Think it's pretty nice doctrine. Why we can do what we please, and then go right to heaven just as well as the biggest saint that ever lived. That's what I call first rate!"

"That's so," responded his interrogator.

"But," continued the other, "there was one thing that puzzled me, and that was, when the minister kept saying in his prayer, 'Thy servant, the deceased,' and I thought of what a cheating, lying, swearing, Sabbath-breaking ungodly man, Mr. N.—had been, I couldn't help wondering who the minister was praying to!"—*Watchman and Reflector.*