

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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THE WRONG TEXT.

BY J. DE LIEPDE.

Chapter III.

Concluded.

"Miss R— departed with the countess. I received two or three letters from her. The last was dated from Paris, nearly two years after she had left me. It told me a great deal about what her eyes had seen and her ears had heard, but scarcely anything of what her heart had felt. I began to fear that my anxiety about her had been too well founded; and in this sad suspicion I was confirmed when years elapsed during which I heard not a word of her.

"Thus ten years had passed, when, on a certain occasion, I was called to the city of — in which, madam, I learn you are residing. I had to look there after some business, that defined me for a fortnight. On turning, one morning, round the corner of a street that led into the main thoroughfare, I nearly came into collision with a simply dressed lady. Picture to yourself my astonishment upon finding myself face to face with Miss R—. She became pale as a sheet, and taking my hand, which I, in my surprise, held out to her, she burst into tears.

"Oh, you have found me at length!" cried she. "Who told you I was living here? I thought nobody knew it!"

"Nor did I," said I. "But the Lord knew it, dear; and he certainly has directed my steps to you."

"Oh, don't speak of that," cried she, while again a stream of tears gushed from her eyes. "The Lord knows me no more. But let us not continue our conversation here, added she, 'Come to my room at seven. I must leave you now.'"

"She gave me her address; and that same evening we found ourselves together in a small apartment on the third story of a house in one of the back streets. It was pretty well furnished, but nothing betokened abundance or comfort.

"She now told me her history. The promise of the countess's relatives that she never would take her to her father's house, was strictly fulfilled. The countess was a haughty, proud, imperious person, who treated her just like a servant. During the two years she travelled with her through Italy, Switzerland, and the south of Germany, Miss R— was only in her company during the day, to assist her when seeing sights, or driving about in the country. During the evening she was left alone in the hotel, while the countess pursued her amusements. This solitude, it is true, on one hand shut her out from the temptations which I had dreaded she would have to encounter. On the other hand, however, it had a draining effect upon the springs of her heart's life. Finding herself mostly in Roman Catholic society, surrounded by servants and waiters who talked about nothing but frivolous and carnal things, her mind gradually became like a garden after long dry weather. All became dull, and spiritless, and lingering within her. She experienced the loss of the fellowship of the saints; and often when she was sitting lonely in her room, with no business at all, she would remember how sweet the evening had been when she had spent at my house, or at the meetings of the Christian friends. This solitary life, however, was on a sudden changed into its very opposite, when the countess took her to Paris. The first person who there waited upon the countess was her nephew, Mr. S—, who thereafter kept her company, and was an inmate of her house. Mr. S— was as kind and affable to Miss R— as he had been two years before. Upon learning how the countess had treated her, he was greatly displeased. He even in a kind way remonstrated with his aunt about her conduct, and promised Miss R— that he would make up for all she had suffered. Indeed, he fulfilled his promise too well. He took her with him to all the places of recreation with which gay city teems, where she, by her beauty and charming manners, did not fail to make an impression. To enable her to appear in those companies, he presented her with every article of dress and apparel required for such a society. You perceive, madam, what effect such a kindness must make upon the young girl's heart. Boundless gratitude, of course, was the first feeling; but in this gratitudo state, she was like a child, full of feelings, and full of love. Nor was this feeling of love unrequited on the part of Mr. S—. Not a year had elapsed when he confessed to her that he could not live without her. She gave him her heart, and he promised to marry her the next summer. You perceive, at the same time, that no room for the Lord was left in a heart which now was so entirely occupied by the pleasures of this world. The Bible became an over-closed book. Prayer was altogether neglected. This chapter of her life's history might justly be inscribed with the motto, 'Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die.'"

"Nobody in Paris was surprised when it became publicly known that the handsome nephew of the countess had betrothed himself to the fair girl; but at the same time none of their numerous friends believed he was in earnest about the marriage. You know, madam, how the gay Parisian world considers such matters. The countess, however, knew too well that her nephew was not a man of that stamp, and that he rather would lose his life than prove a deceiver. She was quite enraged about it, and upon finding that nothing could turn his mind, she resolved to leave no stone unturned, till she had broken their union. Perceiving that she could do nothing in the matter by force, she took to dissimulation and cunning. Gradually she feigned to agree with their plan, and began to show Miss R— much kindness, as if she really were her aunt already.

"And now, madam, an infernal machinery of calumny, deception, slander, and temptation was set up against the happy couple, which I shall not try to describe to you in details. The countess knew that nothing could be attempted to bring the virtuous girl to a fall, but she knew her nephew's weak side. Through a crafty process of slanderous tale-bearing, she succeeded in raising doubt in her nephew's mind about Miss R—'s sincerity and faithfulness. At the same time she managed to bring him into contact with an actress, who outshone Miss R— by her beauty, and enchanted the whole Parisian world by her talent. She even often would invite that person to a soiree in her hotel, to enable her bet-

ter to spin the web round the young man. In short, madam, the devilish plan was crowned with the utmost success. One morning the report was spread all through Paris, that Mr. S— had left the town with an actress. Miss R—, thunder-struck and broken-hearted, fell into a serious illness, which brought her to the brink of the grave. She recovered, but found herself quite alone in that great Babel. The countess had left the town, and nobody knew where she was.

"She found herself brought down to the very depths of misery. Not only was she without protection in a city so full of temptation, but she found that all her former friends treated her with contempt. Even her good name was gone. But the bitterest drop of this bitter cup was the remorse of her awakening conscience. She felt that she had caused her own ruin, by abandoning her Saviour. She tried to pray; but heaven seemed to her like brass, and the earth burning under her knees. She was thoroughly wretched. She felt without God and Christ in the world, forsaken by men, and without any hope for time and eternity. She sometimes would resolve to put an end to her life. She even once went to the Seine on purpose. But the thought of the future, and the thought of her father's name, made her shrink back, and she returned home in utter despondency.

"She had kept enough of her salary and of Mr. S—'s presents, to be able to live comfortably for a year or two. She thought about returning to her country, but supposed that the evil reports spread about her must certainly have reached us. Thus she kept her abroad, and she retired to some remote place in Germany. At length, however, the sources of her livelihood began to dry up. She had an old aunt living in the city of her residence, madam, who kept a small milliner's shop in one of the quietest streets. This relative of hers in former days had often invited her to live with her, and to become her partner. She resolved to accept the invitation now, however late. Thus she removed to your town; but alas, she found that her aunt had died long since. The milliner's shop, however, was still in existence. Its present owner knew her not, nor did she tell the lady who she was. She offered her services, however, and was engaged as an out-door assistant.

"And now, my dear friend," she said to me after she had told her sad story, "you find me here in this little humble parlor, earning a scanty livelihood. I often thought of you, but I never had the courage to write to you. Alas, alas," added she, covering her face with her hands, and giving free course to her tears, "why did I not take your advice?"

"Never mind that, dear friend," said I, scarcely able to control my emotion; "only keep courage. Jesus is your friend still, and nothing is lost, if you only trust in him."

"Oh, no," cried she, "do not speak of that. All is lost to me. I cannot trust in him now. He has so shamefully deceived and dishonoured me."

"I tried to appease her grief, and to revive her faith in a merciful Saviour.

"No, no," said she, leaning her head upon her hand, and looking down in sad despair; "he is not a Saviour any more to me. He is my Judge, and I tremble when thinking of him. Had I never known him there would be hope for me. But I once professed to be his, and I have gone away from him, to give my heart to the world again. All is lost to me. There is no grace for me."

"Thus, with sobs and groanings, she showed the utter misery into which her soul was plunged by the remorse of her conscience.

"But, dear, I ventured once more to observe, 'if once the Lord began a work in you, he will not forsake the work of his own hands. You once were a child of God, and you are so now, though you may have acted for a while as an enemy. And God, you know, is plentiful in mercy. The blood of Christ has a cleansing power, which cannot be exhausted by your sins, however great.'"

"No, no," cried she, "not for me! not for me! I never was a child of God; nor was there ever a work of God performed in me. It was altogether fiction. I never was truly converted. I have deceived you, and God, and everybody. I am lost, and there is no grace or hope for me."

"I found that in this way I gained no ground with her. I offered to pray with her, but she refused. 'I am not worthy to approach to God any more,' said she, 'nor do I pray for me, for it will all be in vain.'"

"Do you go to church? I asked I, hoping to find a new weapon to attack the enemy who, I found, was keeping her in his snare.

"To church? I asked she in a voice of amazement, as if I had put the most absurd question to her.

"I offered to go with her to church on the next Sunday, but she stubbornly declined. I found that I could do no more this time, but the next evening I visited her again, and by means of gentle persuasion, prevailed upon her to give me her consent. 'Only go with me for once,' said I, 'it will do you no harm, at least.'"

"The next Sunday morning I found myself by her side on our way to Church. Not knowing the minister who was to officiate, I took the first church on our way. Upon entering it we found that the Lord's Supper was to be administered.

"Oh dear, let us go at once," said she, pulling me out of the building. 'This is not a place for me.'"

"We went to the next church, but there, also, the table was spread for the guests of the Lord. These, then, who were standing at the entrance, told me that this was the case in all the churches this day."

"Let us go home," said she; "you see the Lord will not have me in his sanctuary."

"I was silent, and sent up an ejaculation to the Lord.

"Then we took our way home. Upon passing a street, however, the sound of a psalm sung by a numerous audience struck our attention. It came out of the window of a large house which had not the appearance of a church at all.

"Is that a church?" I asked a boy who was passing by.

"Yes," answered he; "that is Mr. B—'s chapel, the Methodists."

"We entered. There was no place for us except in one of the aisles, where we remained standing. The minister had just given out his text. I forgot what it was, but he spoke about the infinite mercy of Christ even to backsliders, who—"

"Permit me to ask," said Mrs. B—, who-

terly struck by this portion of the lady's story, "was it that text, 'Ye are brought with a price'?"

"Exactly, madam, that was it," answered the lady. "How do you know it?"

"I think I was at present at that service," said Mrs. B—. "I always attend Mr. B—'s services," added she with a smile.

"Well, then, madam, you will remember that it was a most thrilling, heart-touching discourse, and you can imagine what its impression must have been on the soul of Miss R—, when the minister addressed a backslider, whom he supposed to be present. It was so great that Miss R— burst into tears.

"O God! O God of mercy!" she said, "is it possible! That is for me! That is for me alone!"

"I was afraid she would cry out in the full congregation, and no sooner had the minister finished his discourse than I took her home.

"Dear," said she, while we were proceeding to her house, "did you speak to the minister about me?"

"What a question!" exclaimed I; "you know as well as I that we went into two other churches first."

"True," said she. "That is from God. That is from my Saviour. Oh, Jesus, Jesus! are thou really mine still?"

"I shall not venture to picture to you, madam, how we spent that Sunday in my friend's little parlour. Miss R— fell down on her knees, and broke out in one burst of praise and thanks. How she embraced her Saviour! How she kissed his pierced feet with the kisses of her mouth!"

"I myself bathed in tears. Then she rose, and falling on my bosom, whispered with a sobbing voice, 'Is it true, Jesus? say, is it true, indeed! Is it not a dream? Is Jesus mine still?'"

"In short, madam, it was a day of unspeakable joy. Miss R—'s little parlour was richer now than a king's palace. It echoed our hymns all the day."

"I now urged my friend to follow me to the metropolis, and to stay with me. I trusted the Lord would soon enable me to find some useful occupation for her. In this confidence I was not disappointed. She found plenty of work as a maker of artificial flowers, in which art she was particularly clever.

"Thus we lived for four years together in undisturbed peace and happiness, serving the Lord and enjoying the fellowship of the saints, when one morning a message came from one of the most respectable notaries requesting her to favour him with a call in the course of the day, as he had to communicate important intelligence to her. It was the intelligence that Mr. S— had died at Naples, and had bequeathed the whole of his immense property to her. At the same time the notary handed to her a letter from Mr. S—, in which he told her that, after his death, found in his secretaries. It contents fully confirmed the story which Miss R— had told me. He declared her to be completely innocent, and the dupe of his aunt's ignominious perfidy. He entreated her forgiveness, and assured her that she should not show her pardon better than by adopting the whole of his bequest. 'You were before God to have been my true wife,' thus concluded he, 'and none but you has the right of being my heir.'"

"And now, madam," thus the lady closed her story. "You know all the rest. The works which proceeded from Miss R— tell better than I am able to do what she makes of the wealth which was bought with a price, now that such an extraordinary opportunity is afforded to her to glorify God both in her body and spirit."

"One hardly can imagine the minister's joyful surprise when his wife told him the story that same evening.

"Now, do you still contented that it was a wrong text?" asked she triumphantly.

"Ah, well," answered he, "the text was right enough indeed. It was the very thing the Lord required at that moment. Malice indeed would not have done half so well. The Lord is wonderful in his ways. How he knows to avail himself even of his children's defects, to carry out his purposes! But, dear," added he with a smile, "we are rightly punished by being so long kept ignorant of the blessing. We otherwise might have boasted of our cleverness, and thought late rising and a prayerless morning a tolerable preparation for a sermon."

PRAYER-MEETINGS.

BY REV. JOEL PARKER, D. D.

How to make the prayer meeting interesting to one's self.

Did you ever hear it said by a professed Christian, 'I do not go to the meeting for prayer, they are so dull?' Let me tell you, in few words, how to take away that dullness—how to render the meetings for prayer interesting.

1. Go to the meeting always yourself, and take your family with you, and induce as many of your friends as possible to be present. A large meeting for prayer is scarcely ever dull. Among a large number of Christian people there is almost always somebody to offer edifying prayers, and to make stirring exhortations. Did you ever know the Fulton Street Prayer-meeting dull when the room was crowded? There is more that is animating, it is true, at one time than at another, but it is never dull.

2. Carry with you a proper sense of the object of the meeting, and you will not be dull. If you were to go to the sanctuary on the Lord's day merely to enjoy artistic music, or if you thought you were going to sit at opera, and if you had a relief for nothing else at the time, you would find simple songs of praise, and a clear, plain unfolding of the plan of salvation exceedingly dull; while if you had gone to the house of God thirsting for the water of life, the service would have been full of interest. So if you go to the meeting for prayer to hear eloquent discourses or gifted prayers, you may be disappointed; the meeting may be dull to you. But if you go in a spiritual frame of mind, desiring communion with God and fellowship with His people, you will find it good to be there; you will be edified and cheered by simple applications and thanksgivings, though they be breathed forth from unlearned lips; and if there be a great want of fervour manifested, before God the low state of the Church, in its spiritual condition, will be a great interest. If you are not permitted to rejoice over the animation and life of the Church, yet with no small interest, you will drop a tear over the sadness of her condition.

3. But if you will pray in faith for the reviving of religion in your own heart, and in the hearts of your Christian brethren, the meetings for prayer will not lack animation. There will be a joyous life in them. They will be characterised by fervent desires and vigorous faith, and exultant praise, and by the testimony of many that God has heard and answered their prayers.

Suffer the word of exhortation, then, my Christian friend. If the meeting for prayer is dull, it is by our own fault. Do you think St. Paul ever complained that a meeting for prayer was dull? No. 'I all around him was animation,' he exclaimed. 'I thank ye unto God, who caneth us always to triumph in every place.' If he was amid abounding joy at Athens, 'his spirit was stirred within him when he saw the city wholly given to idolatry.'"

If you, like St. Paul, are full of the Holy Ghost, and of faith, every place will be to you a temple of worship, and every assemblage of God's people for prayer will cheer and animate you. Let Christ be formed in you the hope of glory, and the prayer-meeting will not be dull.

I adjure you, then, by that Saviour who has bought you with His blood, and of whom it has been said,

"God mountains and the midnight air, Witnessed the fervour of this prayer," never say it again—I do not go to the meetings for prayer, they are so dull.—*Evangelist.*

THE MOTHERLESS.

They are motherless! O! gently, gently keep back those bitter words. Avert that cold, cruel stare. See you not the fearful eyes? Alas! that sorrow should ever make a child's heart its home!

They are motherless! Stranger hands ministering to their daily wants; stranger hearts wearying of the irksome duty.

No fond, sweet kisses of warm embrace! No gentle words of comfort and love! No soft folding of little hands in prayer! No mother's voice! Missing the low, sweet cadence of her voice; missing that "good night" seeking, seeking all in vain, that ark for the weary dove—a mother's heart.

Draw the little forms near to your heart. Pillow the aching head upon your bosom. Think of your sunny childhood—your mother's earnest love, her gentle care, her patient forbearance, her precious forgiveness. Then only in kindness let your hand rest on each honored little head; only in love reprove that stricken little flock.

Let your lips be the hand that will lead them in the green pastures, and by the still waters of the precious Saviour's love! Let yours be the blessed benediction: "Inasmuch as ye have done it to the least of these, ye have done it unto me." Remember their angels do always behold the face of our Father in heaven. Then, it may be a child's hand shall lead you to that heavenly home—a child's hand place a crown upon your head.

Speak gently to the motherless! Greet them with looks of tenderness—Greet them with words of love—Greet them with your own arms—Remember who has said them, "Come," and lead them out of the darkness—Then yours shall that blessing be—"Friends, ye have done this unto me!"

LOOKING TO THE THINGS UNSEEN.

Not infrequently did the Apostle Paul love to express, so far as he could, some of the deep things in the kingdom of grace by paradoxical language. How can a man look at things that cannot be seen? There is a function of the soul similar to that of seeing, and yet it is fulfilled without the use of the physical organ of sight, or even the exercise of the mental faculty which we employ in looking through that physical organ, the eye. Paul could not see Christ with the eye, nor the faculty which looks out through the eye; but he could apprehend himself in the presence of Christ; he could act as he would if Christ were present in the body; he could be as careful to please Christ in word, thought and deed, as was the beloved disciple when leaning upon the Saviour's bosom at the supper.

This function of the soul, this rising of the mind to the contemplation of invisible things, as implied by the term, "looking," is not an involuntary state of mind; but it is one of conscious volition, of conscious direction of the spiritual eye. Of course he could not do it without the aid of the Divine Spirit; no more could he see earthly objects with common vision without the presence of light. As the light is present to the natural eye, so the Spirit is present to the child of God when he turns the eye of the spirit to Christ.

THE CRUCIFIXION.

I asked the heavens—What foe to God had done This unexampled deed? The heavens exclaim, "Twas man! and we in horror snatched the sun From such a spectacle of guilt and shame."

I asked the sea. The sea in reply boomed, And answered with his voice of storms, "Twas man!"

My waves in pain at his crime recoiled, Dishevelled the abyss, and from the centre ran I asked the earth. The earth replied, agitated, "Twas man! and such strange pangs my bosom rent."

That still I groan, and shudder at the past—To man—gay, smiling, thoughtless man—I weep.

And asked him next. He turned a scornful eye, Shook his proud head, and deigned me no reply.

THE RESURRECTION.—Some years ago a vase, closely sealed, was found in a mummy pit in Egypt, by the English traveller, Wilkinson, who sent it to the Boston Museum. The librarian having unfortunately broken it, discovered in it a few lines—old, wrinkled, and as hard as stone. The lines were placed carefully under a glass, on the 4th of June, 1844, and at the end of thirty days, these words were seen to spring up into life. They had been buried probably about three thousand years ago, perhaps in the time of Moses, and had slept all that time apparently dead, yet still living in the dust of the tomb.—*Gleaner.*

What this writer has told us about seeds, should remind us that God is just as able to raise one dead body from the grave, and give them new life. For why should it be thought a thing incredible that God should raise the dead? "For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ; who shall change our vile body, according to the working whereby he is also even to subdue all things unto himself."—*Christian Witness.*

CRUCIFIXION.

The cruel mode of putting condemned persons to death by nailing them to a cross prevailed amongst various nations of the ancient world, both civilised and barbarous, from the earliest times till the reign of Emperor Constantine, by whom—partly from motives of humanity, but chiefly from reverence to Christ—it was finally abrogated throughout the Roman Empire. "His respect for the cross of our Saviour," says Crozier, "made him abolish crucifixion—a death which the Greeks and Romans had at all times inflicted upon criminals, particularly slaves. He would not suffer the instrument of our salvation to be dishonoured by any use not only profane, but capable of making men look upon it with horror. He thought it indecent and irreverent that the cross should be used for the punishment of the vilest offenders; whilst he himself erected it as a trophy, and esteemed it the noblest ornament of his diadem and military standards. The text of this law, so worthy of the piety of the first Christian emperor, has not been preserved; but the fact is asserted by a pagan writer, and the practice of all the princes and nations who profess Christianity is agreeable to the sentiment." The same religious sentiment induced Constantine likewise to forbid breaking the legs of criminals—a punishment often annexed to that of the cross, as appears from the example of the two thieves crucified with Christ. Crucifixion has, in consequence, scarcely been witnessed in Europe during the last fifteen hundred years.

LAY THY HAND UPON THY MOUTH.

How few obey the injunction of the wise man "If thou hast thought evil lay thine hand upon thy mouth?" Too many when they have heard or thought anything to the disadvantage of another do not hesitate to spread it abroad. They make what is bad a hundredfold worse by little additions in the way of surmises, suspicions, significant looks and gestures, until mountains are manufactured out of mole-hills. One busy-body may thus set a whole neighborhood in a ferment, quite unlike that produced by the Gospel leaven, of which Christ speaks. This gossiping disposition increases with wonderful rapidity, if it is ever in the least indulged; until one who would scorn the appellation of busy-body or gossip is in reality a most mischievous one. Many are in danger of acquiring such a character who least suspect it. There are so many annoying things in everybody's daily intercourse with his fellows, and it is felt at the moment to be somewhat of a relief to speak of them to another; but afterward they will never yield "the possible truth of righteousness." The only safe rule is that of Solomon, "If thou hast thought evil, lay thine hand upon thy mouth."

There is one form of evil-speaking which the world will never look on with toleration, though listeners will ever be abundant. When it exists in families, one member speaking ill of another in the presence of others, though the provocations are ever so great, it will always lower the speaker in the estimation of the hearers. We can easily corroborate this, no doubt, by remembering instances where our own natures have been repulsed by this fault-finding among kindred. Who can listen with respect to a daughter who speaks slightly of a mother, however great her defects, or a sister who parades before the world her brother's shortcomings? Surely, in the family, if no where else, love should draw a mantle around all imperfections and frailties, and we should "lay our hand upon our mouth," if we are ever tempted to speak of them.

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