

# The Religious Intelligence

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.

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## The Intelligence.

### GOOD NEWS IN A FAR COUNTRY.

BY REV. J. D. SMITH.  
LIFE OF J. D. SMITH.

At the ends of the earth, in a land lonely and desolate, I chanced upon an object—a spectacle of misery. Crime, and want, and disease, like so many cultures of evil, had seized upon him as their prey. Flattened by an evil conscience, and a memory cruel as death, he had come there to die. Despair and death were already upon him.

And singularly—! happened to know him; as his father and his home, and his history, promising at first, but afterwards—! miserable. Thus knowing him, I felt I could deal with him respecting his condition, touching here and there springs of memory and feeling, known to no one, as he imagined, but to himself. What I wanted, in touching those springs, was to bring him to some sense of himself, and of his father, and of that distant home, which I knew would be happier and brighter than ever, if he, poor prodigal, were there.

Knowing him, and his father, and his home, with its feeling towards him, as I did, I felt a strange, pleasurable interest in him. Already forecasting the result of our conversation, I felt as if I could embrace him, and also as if I already heard the outbursting joy of his own circle over his return.

Thus, happy it is when we know the ground on which we can bring good news—glad tidings to the lost. None but those who do know it, can tell the secret spring of power and confidence with which one can deal with such as my poor outcast, I said to him—

"How long have you been here?"

"A long time."

"Do you know the place?"

"Yes."

"Have you any friends here?"

"No; I have no friends."

"Not a happy position?"

"No; but a miserable one."

"You seem in want?"

"In great want."

"But you had means?"

"I had, but I—"

"But what?"

"I wasted them."

"How did you waste them?"

"Evil habits—bad companions."

"They robbed you?"

"Yes; as long as they could."

"And then left you?"

"Yes."

"The old truth is it not, that where the carcass is, there are the vultures; but if no carcass, no vultures? When they could get nothing more, they left you?"

"And failed me?"

"Prior wages? reminding of another old truth, that 'the wages of sin is death.'"

"I often heard it."

"But did not mind it?"

"No."

"And how do you live?"

"Live! the damps of very death are on me; the chill deepens; no home, no food, no friends—I'm ready to die."

"Miserable!"

"Yes; but death would be welcome."

"Do you ever think of home?"

"Home! Not often—not—"

"Not what?"

"Not if I can help it."

"And why?"

"I would rather not think."

"But they think of you?"

"Who thinks of me?"

"Your father thinks of you."

"My father thinks of me! Do you know my father?"

"I do. I know the house, and the farm, and the hillside, and the tinkle of the sheep-bells, and the bark of the shepherd's dog, as the shepherd leads the sheep home at evening to the fold; and I know the change which has come over the scene since you left it. I know it all. It is the same, and yet not the same. It wants but one thing, and the last that I ever saw of your father was that he was sitting on the slope of that hill, one of the fold gates, still looking out for he said he yet had hope that some day he should see his poor prodigal come back."

"You cannot mean me?"

"I do mean you."

"Would he long to receive you. He has never ceased to long for it. In his constant longing for you, he has almost forgotten, at times, those who are still at home. He has never changed. He loved you before you left; he loves you still—yes, seemingly more now than then. Often then, it is said, he did not manifest any remarkable regard, but now it seems as if you were his one thought."

It is the nature of a father at all times to love his child. But if a son be lost—if he be as good as dead—how especially does a father's heart melt in longing after him! Then does it seem as if he had never before loved him. And the love never ceases. It is the father who is the last to give up the search for a lost child. When all rivers have been dragged, and the shore near at hand, and the woods and the rocks examined, when neighbors and friends, and even servants and brothers, have given up the search, there is one who has not. Ah! that one need not be told. It is the father—the mother of the child. Thoughts of the lost one may have long since died out of the minds of others, but never does it die out of theirs.

And where is the father, whose child is an outcast, who does not think of what he was to him when a child? "I remember him," he will say, "the kindness, the love of his youth; I remember what he was to me as a child; how he sat upon my knee, and put his young hand among my locks, and played with me, and sang to me, and loved me, and embraced me, calling me 'father.'"

Ah! it is here, in the old love, that memory finds its tenderest chord—its sweetest solace. And the old love never leaves—never changes. Others may hate and abandon, and never care for separation; but not so a father—he loves on and on. How a father is it even to think of it! For this with a father love on in the midst of his son's shame, and sin, and dishonor, yes, even when that son is an enemy with him.

"Do I understand you? I thought my father hated me; that he could think of me only to

judge and condemn me. He surely does not love me?"

"He surely does; and good news is it for you in this far country. And think what a welcome he has for you, where the joy, the music and dancing of the father's house await you."

"Not for me?"

"Yes; for you."

"But I have sinned."

"He knows it."

"And am in rags."

"Yes."

"And filthy."

"Yes."

"And ready to perish."

"Yes; he knows all, and wants you just as you are."

"In my rags and misery."

"Yes; just as you are—ragged, guilty, miserable! 'Then I will go.' But, still thinking of himself, he adds—'He may take me as a servant.' Dear friends, he goes. It is all true; for there, in the distance is the father. The father sees him; he has compassion on him; he runs to meet him. The son sees the father. The poor lost one is bowed—broken down—sunk—yes, deep sunk on the breast, and closely enfolded in the arms of his father! And what he resolved to say, was about to say, that he would be a servant, was all prevented. But how! Oh, scene of touching wonder and of tender love! For, without one sentence of rebuke, after falling on his son's neck—after the embrace of him in his arms, and the kiss, so deep of meaning, as securing his pardon and reconciliation, he commands his servants—'Bring forth the best robe.'—now the best robe is not for a servant, but for a son—and put it on him; and bring hither the fattest calf, and kill it, and let us eat and be merry; for this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found."

Beloved friends, I do not say that every feature of this picture is borne out by that inimitable one which Jesus himself gives of the Father, in His parable of the prodigal; but I do say, it is borne out by the character of God towards the sinner, by the mind which is in His word, and by the glad message, we are emboldened to carry to the sinner, even to the one most miserable, who, in the far land of his sin and misery, is found by the glad message of the gospel as one 'ready to perish.'

As to God—God is love. He is love. He is not merely love, but love; not love as something incidental, or as an adjunct or attribute, but He himself in His essence is Love. And towards this world, which, in its Eden state, was His pure offspring, He was love. And, like a father whose offspring may have gone from him, He is still love. Hence, what 'God so loved,' we are told, was 'the world.' And what man does, is to ignore this, to reject this truth. Man thinks of God only as an austere God—a judge, an enemy. Thus, he who was in the far country, and ignorant of his father, did not, in such ignorance, stir one step towards him, but continued to remain there in want—'ready to perish.'

But what I did in the far country, where I found him, was not merely to bring him to a confession of his own wretchedness, but to tell him the good news—to make known to him the gospel; and what he did was simply to believe. But this he did not do until he saw it to be true. And he saw it to be true when I pictured to him his father's house, and the hill, and the farm, and the sound of the bells in the fold. All these brought irresistible assurance of my knowledge of his father.

And what the returned prodigal found in the father, was the truth of the message concerning him. He sat, silent wonder at the table, meditating on the fact, and on the father, and on the music and the dancing of which I had spoken, and which he now saw was the fruit of that love to him, the truth of which, through the message, he heard. 'Ah!' he would say, 'those lonely shades, silent and gloomy as death! And that hunger! those memories! that misery! But this table! what a change! 'Twas well he told me, and I believed it. I almost wonder I did. It was too good; but it is more than he said. What a feast—such abundance and joy! How blessed for one who was 'ready to perish,' and to whom no man gave! And then, this robe—the best robe! In the far country, the land of my sensuality and sin, my companions had left me my rags only. But now, not rags, not a good robe merely, but the 'best robe.'"

That robe I tell you, nor sin, nor sins, but righteousness; and that righteousness, not the righteousness of Eden, or of angels, not a human righteousness, but divine righteousness—yes, the righteousness of God 'in Christ' himself, in whom, and as whom, we are accepted and loved by the Father.

And now doctrine, life, and experience, all seem to find a centre at this table. If any doubt it, let them inquire of the returned prodigal. Say to him: 'Where are you now?' and he will answer—'Seated at the table.'"

"Feasting on the fattest calf?"

"What else?"

"Listening to the music and dancing."

"Then you are not outside?"

"Oh, no!"

"Not craving to be let in?"

"No."

"But you are saved?"

"Yes."

"And happy?"

"Yes."

"And know it?"

"Yes."

"A great change?"

"Yes."

"How did it come about?"

"Just from what I heard."

"Did you believe before you heard?"

"How could I? I did not know it."

"Strange, that you should not know that your father loved you."

"Did you believe it when you heard it?"

"Not at first; it seemed too good to be true."

"What led you to believe it?"

"When he talked to me of the house, and the farm, and the hillside, and the bells in the fold; when, in fact, I saw it was true."

"Was it less true when you had not heard of it, or before you believed it?"

"Certainly not; my father, it seems, had never changed."

"Did your father not ask you to repent?"

"What is that?"

"To repent is to change your mind."

"No, for it was all a change of mind. I may

say I had repented, and am still a repentant one; for it is all a change. I had gone into the woods to die. I had no thought of return; I thought it was all useless—any effort to reconcile my father. I never thought of my father but in connection with my sin, on account of which he seemed to me as one who was simply and only angry with me, and who, if he had me in his power, could only judge and condemn me. But when I heard of his never having changed in his love towards me—when I heard that he was even hoping that some day he might yet see me—"

"What then?"

"Why, a strange feeling came over me—a sudden feeling—"

"Of what kind?"

"Of sorrow and joy."

"What else?"

"I wanted to see him."

"What! to be judged?"

"No; but to be loved."

"What else?"

"To tell him all my sins."

"What else?"

"Why, a strange change was wrought in me. Sorrow and pain and love, all sprang up unbidden, and took possession of me."

"But what did it?"

"What I heard."

"Not of yourself?"

"No; but what I heard of my father; of course of myself as connected with him."

"How could that have such an effect?"

"I had gone into the woods to die. I had no other thought. But what I heard awoke me from my thought of death, for I saw at once there was hope of life."

"Then you had no repentance until you met with the person in the woods?"

"None. I had remorse—I had despair."

"Tears?"

"Yes."

"Did not change?"

"None; but a change from one misery to another."

"Had you no gratitude?"

"Gratitude? No; but when I heard him say that my father still remembered me, and that he had not given up the hope that some day he might, even yet, see his poor prodigal; then, without looking for it, my mind was softened over with a strange tenderness; for I seemed at once at his feet, saying, 'Father, Father, forgive me!'"

"Father, I have sinned?"

"Father, I will be a servant. I will labour, work, do anything for such a father."

"You would not like the old life again, or again take up with your old sins? You are not an Antinomian?"

"What is that?"

"One who says he is saved, but may live as he likes."

"Live as I like! Yes! But now I like to live according to the love heaped upon me at this table. I have treasures here, and rest, and joys far more than all the so-called pleasures, to say nothing of the sins of the past."

"Did you at first, then, only believe?"

"At first, on hearing, I thought—I questioned—I was persuaded—I believed."

Beloved, this is the picture which the gospel presents to us of God. It portrays to us His love towards the sinner, and places in our hand the warrant which the sinner has to return to Him and live. It tells us of the joy which God takes in the sinner's return, not only for the sinner's sake, but for His own sake—for the gratification of His own loving heart—and opens out to our adoring gaze 'the exceeding riches of His grace,' which must have remained eternally shut up in the bosom of God, unless the sin of man had furnished an occasion for its outflow. It is this display of the loving heart of God, who takes pleasure in raising the poor out of the dust, and in lifting up the beggar from the dunghill, to set them among princes, and to make them inherit the throne of glory (1 Sam. ii. 8), that kindles the raptures of heaven, and raises the loudest anthems ever sung to God's unutterable grace.

But no one aspect of God, which a parable can present, contains a complete revelation of Him. So, elsewhere, we find that this grace and love of God to the sinner is not one-sided. It is not love at the expense of righteousness, which cannot but condemn sin; but grace towards the poor sinner 'reigns through righteousness.' Justice, on the cross of Calvary, poured out on the head of the sinner's Substitute is full measure of condemnation. God, who alone can know the heinousness of sin, and estimate its character, has there judged sin according to His own holiness. Jesus took the sinner's place. The sinless One stood for the guilty. 'The Lord laid upon Him the iniquity of us all; and in His sacred person visited sin with the awful penalty of death. God's righteousness, in the punishment of sin, has thus been vindicated and displayed in the sight of the universe, and now the grace can reign with undisputed sway. It can take the vilest prodigal that is wallowing in his pollution, wash him in 'the fountain that is opened for sin and for uncleanness,' embrace him without reserve, and place him at the Father's table, where he is greeted with the songs and rejoicings of heaven.

Beloved, here we pause. I can say no more. I am lost in admiration at the display of the righteousness and love of God which the cross presents. There 'mercy and truth met together;' there 'righteousness and peace kissed each other;' and, for those who believe, they never will be separated. Eternally we shall stand upon the strong foundation which righteousness has laid under our feet, and eternally we shall dwell in the full enjoyment of God's perfect love."

FAITH.—Dr. Jackson laboured on his mission station six years and saw no conversions. Being asked what evidence he had of ultimate success, he answered, "As much as that there is a God who will fulfil his promises." Thirty-one years after, seventy churches had been formed in his field of labour, having in the aggregate seven thousand members.

SEVERE GOD BY THE DAY.—"When I was young in the service of God," said a good brother, "I had many fears that I should backslide if I should live to see old age, and sometimes requested of the Lord that I might die young, and thus save religion from reproach and my soul from ruin. One day, while thus musing, the impression was vividly made on my mind that I must serve God by the day. This was more than thirty years ago, and by the grace of God aiding me to put that rule into practice, I am yet on my way to heaven."

"I AM GOING HOME."

It was towards the close of a bright spring day that I was returning to a small village in Devonshire, from an excursion I had been making in search of white violets. As I approached the confines of the village I saw a little girl apparently about ten years old, tripping gaily along, her hands filled with primroses, violets, and other spring flowers. I spoke to her, and asked her where she was going, and for whom her pretty flowers were. She lifted up her bright rosy face, and answered confidently, "I am going home, and these are for father." I walked with little Rose Brown, for such she told me her name was, to her home, a very pretty cottage, with a small but beautifully kept garden: her father, a widower, was waiting for her at the gate, and was delighted to welcome her. As long as I remained in the village I often visited the Browns, and became most interested in little Rose; but after a few weeks I went away and did not return for four years, during which time I quite lost sight of them.

It was a lovely evening in summer that I once again set out for Rose's home; as I walked up the little garden I noticed how neglected it looked. "Have they left it?" I thought to myself. The door was opened by a woman.

"Do the Browns live here?" I inquired.

"Yes, ma'am," was the reply.

"Are they well?"

The woman shook her head sadly. "Rose, ma'am, is dying of a consumption; her poor father is almost distracted; I am staying with her while he fetches for a few strawberries. Would you please to walk up and see her?"

I followed the woman up stairs to a room, where on a small bed, placed near the window, Rose was lying; she was looking at the setting sun, but turned as we came in. She knew me directly, and held out her poor thin hand to welcome me. Tears were in my eyes as I said, "Oh, Rose, I'm so sorry to see you like this!" She looked at me with such a beaming expression, and said, sweetly, "Oh, ma'am, I am going home."

Who says that? A lady as she steps into her carriage, and is whirled away to a home where every luxury that wealth can procure is provided for her.

Who says that? A poor artisan, as he walks towards a poor house in a crowded street; but poor as it is, it is not the less his home, for a loving wife and children, with cheerful, happy faces, greet him, and they sit down to their humble fare with light and happy hearts, for they feel the blessing of God is upon them.

And "home is home be it ever so homely," the palace or the cottage—all are hallowed by the sweet name of home! But much as we may love it, and thank God for his goodness in giving it to us, let us never forget that we are strangers here; and the home we have to look forward to is infinitely more blessed than any earthly home can be; our Father's house, where there is no night, no sorrow, no death; all is bright and lovely there, no delusions, no doubts, but pure unending joys.

Reader, if you were on your death-bed now, could you say, as Rose did, "I am going home." Can you think of death as this dear child. The first time I met her, she was going home to her Father's house on earth with her gift of sweet fresh flowers. The last time I met her, she was going home to her Father's house in heaven, to her crown before him and give him glory. Once only one we are passing on earthly dwellings. "This is not our rest." Here we have no continuing city. When this earthly home of our tabernacle is dissolved, have we a building of God—a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens?

"They are gathering homeward from every land—  
One by one.  
As their weary feet touch the golden strand—  
One by one.  
Their brows are enfolded in a shining crown,  
Their radiant robes are all laid down,  
Where the Lamb loveth his chosen to lead—  
One by one."

Before they rest they pass through the strife—  
One by one.  
Through the thorns and thistles they enter life—  
One by one.  
To some are the floods of the river still  
Sweet as the milk and honey of the land;  
To others the waves roar like a deep drum;  
Yet all reach the home of the undimmed—  
One by one."

We are all bound to the river side—  
One by one.  
We are nearer its waters each evening—  
One by one.  
Now and again through our life's deep stream  
We can catch the calm and cool of the stream  
Sometimes the floods all the banks overflow,  
Sometimes in ripples the small waves go—  
One by one."

Jesus! Redeemer! I look to thee—  
One by one.  
We lift our voices rapturously—  
One by one.  
The waves of the river are dark and cold,  
We know not the spots where our feet may hold;  
Thou who didst pass through in deep midnight,  
Strengthen us, send us the staff and the light—  
One by one."

Plant thou the feet beside us we tread—  
One by one.  
On thee let us lean each dropping head—  
One by one.  
Let but thy strong arm around us be twined,  
We shall not sink and cease to be mind;  
Saviour! Redeemer! with thee full in view,  
Blessedly, gloriously, shall we pass through—  
One by one."

THE UNBROKEN FATHER.—The complete pastor must be, even to his dying day, no less a Christian teacher. God honors human learning, if used in subordination to divine grace. It is truly said, "any branch of knowledge which a good man possesses he may apply to some good purpose. If he possess the knowledge of an archangel, he might apply it all to the advantage of men and the glory of God." An austere minister has a paralyzing effect upon a parish. There is a sameness of preaching. There is no sublimity of application, no progressive building up the flowers, no address to individual conscience. The bow is drawn mechanically, and the arrow is shot at a venture, and naturally misses the mark.

So, too in respect to literature. If the preacher betray the barrenness of his intellectual stores, and his want of sympathy with the educated class, his congregation, what can be the consequence but failure of personal respect, absence of attraction, loss of influence for the good objects of his ministry.—*Diocese of Sumner.*

SHORT SERMONS.

"Which say to the seers, See not; and to the prophets, Prophesy not unto us: right things, speak unto us smooth things, prophesy deceits; get ye out of the way, turn aside out of the path, cause the Holy One of Israel to cease from before us."—Isaiah xxi. 18, 19.

Israel, being tributary to Assyria, revolts. As Sennacherib is about to invade Egypt, the Jews fear that he will take Judaea in his way. They therefore propose an alliance with Egypt. This proposal Isaiah rejects and rebukes, and at the same time points out to them their downward course in unbelief and impiety. The text marks the six steps, which we shall call:

The Sliding Scale of Scepticism and Ungodliness.

1st Step. "See not." Notice not so carefully what God says against us. Make not Sinai so bold a feature in sacred geography. Allow for figures of speech, rhetorical flourish and poetry, in the Bible.

2d Step. "Prophesy not unto us right things." Though you see and believe all this, you need not preach it. We believe as much as you do, but it is not profitable to have depravity, regeneration, election and atonement preached.

3d Step. "Speak unto us smooth things." Out of the truest love, and so be popular and fill the pews. Preach the promises, talk of Calvary, mercy and heaven. Speak doubtfully of hell, or what would be better, give a learned dissertation on Hades, Sheol, Gehenna, Hell and the grave. Make evangelical doctrine so smooth that men will not feel them. Call total depravity a most unfortunate term, and make league with Egypt to overthrow the Assyrians.

4th Step. "Prophesy deceits." Turn the divine truths from their intent. Explain away the unwelcome ones. Reject some passages as spurious. Doubt the uniform and authoritative inspiration of the Scriptures. Also preach theories, speculations, philosophies and schools. Preach on literary, economic, civil and social questions. Bear down, if you must on somebody, on the heathen and foreign sinners.

5th Step. "Get ye out of the way." We weary of this antiquated religion. It is behind the times. All men are inspired as far as they are holy, and all books so far as good. All time is sacred and all services, if given to a useful life. A church with limits and regulations is narrow and liberal. Apostles and Puritans have had their day, and now we have ours. We are the modern reformers and believe in progress. "Get ye out of the way."

6th Step. "Cause the Holy One of Israel to cease from before us." We have our doubts and difficulties about the existence of an eternal, personal and sovereign God, with the attributes of omnipotence, omniscience, justice and holiness. We are parts of God and he of us. Or perhaps omnipotence and eternally producing nature is the only God. We are not certain whether there is any God. Therefore cease to speak of him before us.

So do men glide down the scale, from a scriptural theology and religion, to liberalism, naturalism, infidelity, a bald deism, and perhaps atheism. We infer:

1. That the understanding, and not the heart, should make one's religious creed, for we see that the heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked.

2. That the decline into error and impiety is almost imperceptible in its little beginnings. Guarding, therefore, against slight curves, we shall the more surely avoid the turning of wide and dangerous angles.

3. That we should part from old landmarks with great caution. For, in so doing, we may part from prophets and apostles and the goodly company of confessors.

4. That the ministers of God are greatly tempted to be unfaithful. For they would like to please their hearers, and be popular, and build up the society; while they often find themselves in Isaiah's tragedy, with Jews, Egyptians and Assyrians severely in each corner.—*The Boston Review.*

Once I visited a printing establishment. On a table was a large stereotyped plate, already electrotyped and polished—an elegant piece of work. On the other hand I saw a case of types, looking dull and uninviting enough. A friend asked me which I would choose, the burnished plate or the dirty case of types. "I would take the types," I said. Now, present religion to us as a stereotyped, burnished thing, welded together in one great mass—some gigantic creed or dogma. But give me the New Testament; give me this simple case of types; this that the Jew and the Greek, the haughty and the learned, despised. With this I can work. Its varieties are exhaustless. I can turn it in a thousand ways, and behold a thousand beauties, "a joy forever."

In ascending the Alps, the traveller passes through different regions of vegetation. First comes the vine; then the fruit-tree; then magnificent forest-trees; higher up, the stunted pine; higher again, dwarf trees and mosses; at last, the regions of eternal snow. But far up, almost on the very top of the mountain, a tiny, sweet flower peeps through the snow. It has often drawn tears from the eyes of the most listless traveller. It blooms away there, cheerfully, sweetly. And thus, in the soul, you pass on through the regions of knowledge, questions, will, and on the summit, despite the cold atmosphere of moral depravity and continual alienation—if you are a child of God, the flower of faith, true faith, ever blooms and cheers.

A house was on fire. There were women and children in the upper stories. They had no means of escape. But one of them was told to let down a string; it was a frail thread. To it the people below fastened a stronger; then a stronger; and at last, a rope, by which they were saved. Even so in the Christian life. Do not wait for a strong rope at first. Take hold of anything that can strengthen your faith. Touch the hem of his garment. Lay hold of his robe. After a while your faith will be stronger; and further on, stronger yet; until at last, joined to faith, will come assurance, joy, and the grand realities of heaven.

ETERNITY.—Eternity has no gray hairs. The flowers fade the heart withers, man grows old and dies; the world lies down in the sepulchre of ages, but time writes no wrinkles on eternity. Eternity! stupendous thought! The ever present, unborn, unceasing and undying, the endless chain, encompassing the life of God—the golden thread, entwining the destinies of the universe. Earth has its beauties, but time shrouds them for the grave; its honors are but the autumn of an

hour; its palaces, there are but as gilded sepulchres; its pleasures, they are but as bursting bubbles. Not so in the untiring bourn. In the dwelling of the Almighty can come no footsteps of decay.

THE MOLES AT WORK.—When Diocletian was executing his edict of persecution in Nicomedia, the Prefect, Galerius, was about to apply the torch to a Christian church which stood on an adjacent height. The prefect Emperor, however, feared lest other splendid buildings in the neighborhood might be destroyed. Orders were given to the pioneers of the Praetorian Guard to demolish the structure with the implements of their profession. In a few hours the church was leveled with the ground.

The example of Diocletian's edict followed by many who rejoice in the day of the Church. Their efforts are often most effectual where there is no apparent excitement, no precipitate hostility, no applying of the torch, but where there is a shrewd and thoughtful regard for what seems to be for the disadvantage of the truth and the advantage of immortal souls. There is more danger from the flood that steals silently and gradually across the plain than from the roaring torrent that admits the voice of warning when it bursts its banks.

The careful consideration of the persecuting Emperor is followed as an example by what is called the liberal literature of the present day. The bulwarks of the Christian Faith are not subject to violent attacks as in days of old, but time and perseverance are ingeniously employed in undermining their foundations. Volumes of general literature, articles in secular periodicals, bear the marks of these endeavors on their surface. Like the marks left in a garden path by the moles that love darkness rather than light, it is easy to blot them out with some gentle pressure from above.

CIVIL WORTH OF THE SABBATH.—1. To need us to wipe off the grime and sweat of labor—to refresh by change of apparel; to restore and invigorate the body, exhausted by labor; to enliven the mind by change of the current of thought; and by all this to fit laboring men for the renewed toils of the week.

2. Capital needs the Sabbath—to alleviate by intermission, the care of accumulation; to ease the unbending of the strained and exhausted mind; to give a sense of the value of nobler objects than silver and gold; to keep men's humanity and conscientiousness alive; to shield capital from harm, by securing the power and triumph of law and order in society.

3. The State needs the Sabbath—to illumine the public conscience, that guardian of public safety; to cause men so to recognize the Eternal Lawgiver as to honor the earthly "powers that be"; to secure the moral atmosphere in a community which is the only sure support of law.

SCRIPTURE ILLUSTRATION.—From the journal of a missionary who travelled in Greece some time ago, we have selected the following interesting illustration:

Having my attention directed to the words, "The sheep hear his voice, and he calleth his own sheep by name," etc., I inquired if it was usual in Greece to give names to sheep. He informed me that it was, and the next day I had an opportunity of verifying the truth of his assertion. Passing by a flock of sheep, I asked the shepherd the same question, and he gave me the same answer. I then bade him call one of his sheep. He did so, and it instantly left its pasturing and its companions, and ran up to the hand of the shepherd, with signs of pleasure, and with a prompt obedience I had never before observed in any other animal. It is also true of the sheep in this country, that a "stranger" will they not follow, but will flee from him; for they know not the voice of strangers. The shepherd told me that many of his sheep are still wild; that they had not yet learned their names; but that by teaching they would all learn them. The others, which knew their names, he called tame.—*Chris. Times.*

HOW WILL IT LOOK IN HEAVEN.—A correspondent of the *Presbyterian Standard*, writing of Salem, Plover, pays a high compliment to its minister for his securing the erection of a place of worship, which "for neatness, symmetry, and comfort, is just what a Presbyterian church ought to be." He recounts one incident as a specimen of Mr. Marshall's method of raising money:

"An aged elder of the church, living in the country, nearly deaf, was talking about his departure to another world, which he was expecting soon. No subscription for the new church had yet been made. Mr. Marshall asked him what he would say to the people up there (in heaven) if they would begin to question about Salem church, whether they were still in the old, uncomfortable building, or whether they built or were building a new and convenient one. The old gentleman seemed perplexed, and was restless all the night following. The next day he sent to the country seat for a person to come and add a cordial to him, with a request that he should call on the erection of a new church. And ever after he was unable to transact any worldly business. The same old elder, forgetting all worldly interests, when the name of Jesus or Saviour was uttered so distinctly as to be heard by him, would smile and add some word of appreciation.

A CASE OF CONSCIENCE.—Dr. Gay had, for some time, missed the hay from his barn, and was satisfied that it was stolen. With a view to detect the thief, he took a dark lantern, and stationed himself near the place where he supposed he must pass. In due time, a person whom he knew passed along into his barn, and quickly came out with as large a load of hay as he could carry upon his back. The Doctor, without saying a word followed the thief, and took the candle out of his dark lantern, and stuck it into the hay upon his back, and then retreated. In a moment the hay was in a light blaze; and the fellow, throwing it from him in utter consternation, ran away from his perishing booty. The Doctor kept the affair a secret, even from his own family; and, within a day or two, the thief came to him in great agitation, and told him that he wished to confess his sin; that he had been tempted to steal some of his hay; and, as he was carrying it away, the Almighty was at enmity with him, that he had sent fire from heaven, and not it to blazing upon his back. The Doctor agreed to forgive him on condition of his never repeating the offense.—*Dr. May's American Universalist.*