

your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be like crimson they shall be as wool."

TERMS AND NOTICES.

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Religious Intelligencer.

SAINT JOHN, N. B., FEBRUARY 23, 1866.

And when, in the face of all instructions, entreaties, warnings, reproofs and corrections, such as rent the heart of a mother with anxious grief, you still persisted in that course, what could be my resort but the throne of grace? You will remember the day of fasting and prayer set apart by your father and myself on your account. My heart was that day overborne with sorrow. I thought it would be comparatively easy to follow you to the grave, but I then sinned. But my heavenly Father was pleased to show me, before the day was out, that my help and hope were only in Him; and to Him did my heart turn as to its only refuge, inasmuch that when the day was ended I felt as though my work was just begun.

It is impossible for me to describe to you, unless you know experimentally what it is to "wrestle with God," the order of my soul before God on your account. At first I seemed content to plead for restraining grace, but I did not long rest there. The covenant promises of God respecting the righteous and their seed, were very precious to my soul. I knew that God would be inquired of by the house of Israel to do this for them. It was God's constituted way to bestow the blessing. There I had confidence to plead with Him; my work seemed plain before me, and I had no disposition to relax it. I told God should appear for me. I told no one my feelings, not even your father; the work was between God and my own soul. I firmly believed that God in his own time would answer my prayer.

That you may the better judge of my feelings, I relate one circumstance. In the course of a few months after these impressions on my mind, I was taken sick. I was at first attacked violently, and thought that perhaps God was about to remove me from the world. My work as to you was not done, and to whom should I commit it if I were removed? I determined to wait for more decided appearances in my disorder, and if I found myself failing to commit this work to your father, enjoining it on him as my dying request, never to cease wrestling with God for you till you should be gathered into His sheep-fold. But God, in mercy to you and my other children, I hope, restored me, and with renewed vigor I returned to my closet. When the first serious impressions were made on your mind that I was acquainted with, I felt a new and fresh engagement in my work, and sometimes, at least, the midnight hour has witnessed my prayers and tears for you.

You will not wonder that I was anxious to know your state of mind when you were absent from me. Sometimes, indeed, I was ready to limit the Almighty, and say, "O let the salvation of God come this night to my child!" But God taught me more commonly to be at his feet, and humbly to implore the blessing in his own time and way. In his own time, I trust, He has brought you forth to the light, and you behold his righteousness; yes, the complete righteousness of Jesus, your Advocate on high.

THE FIRST TOTAL ABSTINENCE PLEDGE.

BY REV. WILLIAM M. THAYER.

It was a necessity. The honor and power of religion were endangered. The intoxicating cup was invading the sanctity of the Church. Aaron and his sons, Nadab and Abihu, had been consecrated to the work of the ministry. They entered upon the duties of the priesthood in circumstances that were suited to elicit high resolves and holy aims. And yet, very soon after their solemn vow had been taken, the two sons disgraced themselves and profaned the temple service by drunkenness. Barely of reason through the intoxicating cup, they "offered strange fire before the Lord which he commanded not." They knew not what they did. Strong drink completely befuddled them, so that they had no respect for the time or place. This was a serious offence—a daring and heaven-defying act. God could not overlook it, and he rebuked the drunken ministers in the most fearful manner. "There went out fire from the Lord and devoured them, and they died before the Lord." A consuming flame, like a flash of lightning, darted forth, and struck them dead in an instant—a most appalling spectacle to all beholders!

Aaron stood and gazed upon the scene appalled. Two of his sons lay dead before him in the temple. Nor could he murmur. The retribution was just. While he stood there overwhelmed by the sight, Moses said unto him: "This is it that the Lord spake, saying, I will be sanctified in them that come nigh me, and before all the people I will be glorified."

Aaron had other two sons, and another insult to Jehovah might be offered in the temple. Wine might inflame their passions in an evil hour, and the scene described be repeated. God would guard against the repetition of so wicked an act. Therefore he proclaimed the following pledge, which Aaron and his sons were required to observe: "Do not drink wine nor strong drink, thou nor thy sons when ye go into the tabernacle of the congregation, lest ye die: it shall be a statute forever throughout your generations; and that ye may put difference between holy and unholy, and between clean and unclean; and that ye may teach the children of Israel all the statutes which the Lord hath spoken unto them by the hand of Moses."

This was the first total pledge, and Aaron and his two sons were the first three persons to observe it, so far as we know. If they drank wine any where else, they must not do it when engaged in their sacred work in the temple—a very plain hint to ministers and professed Christians generally.

It is a singular and interesting fact that the total abstinence pledge had its origin in the Church. It is a mortifying fact that the occasion for it should arise among God's chosen people. The fact is not very complimentary to human nature, and it damages also one of the objections which a class of men urge to our methods of promoting the temperance cause. "The Gospel is the only remedy for the evil," they say; "men may sign the pledge, but it will avail little or nothing without the Gospel." Now, it seems that all the religion possessed by Aaron's two sons did not save them from drunkenness, even in the temple. God saw that the aid of the pledge was necessary, in order to prevent further disgrace of the priestly office. Since the fall of Aaron's two sons other ministers have fallen victims to appetite, even while they were preaching the Gospel of Christ. If the Gospel only is needed in this reform, then surely ministers who preach it ought not to become drunkards. And yet here and there a preacher of righteousness has fallen!

Then, too, the most faithful ministers of the Gospel have not reformed the people to whom they preached in respect to temperance. If the Gospel is all that we need to hold up to the attention of the vendor and drinker of intoxicating liquors, then the prevalence of temperance, after it has been preached eighteen hundred years, is not much of a compliment to the preachers. Baxter was a faithful preacher in Kidderminster for more than thirty years, and yet that drunken town was not reformed; Edwards, Emmons, Griffin, Maloin, and a host of others, were "sons of thunder" in crying the claims of the Gospel and yet drunkenness abounded under the very droppings of their sanctuaries. And yet some persons say that "we need no pledge, no temperance organization; the Church is a divine temperance society, and the Gospel is all the agency needed to advance the reform."

We have noticed that the authors of this objection are the least of all saints in actually reformed drunkards. We have known two or three clergymen who urge this view; but the wine-drinking and dissipation in their congregations weakens the force of their argument, or exposes their lack of fidelity, one of the two.

We utter not a word in disparagement of the Gospel. It is the power and wisdom of God unto salvation. We simply expose the fallacy of the foregoing objection. It is not more unreasonable to say that we need not the pledge and temperance organizations because we have the Gospel, than it is to say that we need not physicians and medicine because Christ healed diseases. God acknowledges and blesses cures to an end; and all our past experience testi-

fies that this temperance work has shared the divine blessing until our cause is partially triumphant. We invoke the ghosts of Aaron's two sons to haunt the authors of the aforesaid objection, until they can see that God accepts human instrumentalities even in advancing the cause of temperance. If pledge is needed in the Church, as the case of Aaron and his two sons proves, then we protest against being called singular when we ask it for the world. Moreover, if Aaron needed to sign the pledge, who don't?—*National Temperance Advocate.*

VALUE OF RELIGIOUS PAPERS.

The work of the pulpit has not ceased to be laborious, responsible, and the most important of all the agencies which God employs for the advancement of His Kingdom. But it has in our days an auxiliary in the religious press which was wanting in the earlier periods of preaching.

Never before has the Church been so fully awakened to the importance of using this vastly powerful agent, in every way which can be devised to make it efficient and useful, in diffusing sacred knowledge, applying truth to the conscience, and exhorting men to repentance and reformation. Multitudes of volumes are issued every year, but these are addressed to but a small portion of the community; the multitudes must be reached in another way. To effect this object, printed periodicals of every conceivable size and form, filled with information and instruction of variety which meet the demands of the wisest and the cravings of children, are now multiplied to an almost unlimited extent, and at such a price as to make healthful and attractive literature accessible to all classes of the community. We have child's papers, and monthly religious magazines, and the more sedate and thoughtful quarters; and first in influence, as in circulation, the weekly religious newspaper. *How often those who have no sympathy with religion may deprecate and despise these journals, in order to attract the temporary attention which violent and racy writing always secures, the fact that the weekly religious papers meet a great want, and supply it in a manner entirely satisfactory to a great portion of the community, is sufficient proof of their usefulness, and an adequate refutation of the statements of their enemies.*

The thousands of subscribers, the hundreds of thousands of readers, the eagerness with which these journals are received and read, the disappointment when mails miscarry, or accident interrupts the valued sheet, attest the importance of the weekly religious papers, and give some idea to the thoughtful mind of the vast influence which must be exerted by them through every grade of society. An English writer thus alludes to this subject:—"The religious journal is becoming a moral necessity. Almost every political question now has its religious aspect, and all subjects for public discussion, have their moral bearing upon society. This renders religious papers necessary, and their growth and increase will give them a power which even politicians and important personages will not be able to ignore. The religious newspaper has a mission to perform. It must enter largely into the work of educating the people, and preparing them to estimate and weigh in the religious scale the questions which from time to time agitate the public mind; while also the moral influence of a weekly journal, whose pages are freighted with sound and wholesome articles of a strictly religious nature, must be great upon the public mind. The time has come when every family requires a religious newspaper. It is therefore poor economy that shuts out from the family or the church the religious newspaper under the plea of hard times. It would be for the spiritual and financial advantage of the country if every family would take and read a good religious journal."

These are the words of a wise man, and we give them circulation, not without hope that some who read them may be stirred up to make the endeavor to place a first class religious paper in every family in their town or neighborhood.—*N. Y. Observer.*

THE MISSIONARY WORLD.

AFRICA.

No Society prosecutes missions in Africa more vigorously than the American Episcopal Board. This Society sustains twenty-one stations in the region adjacent to Liberia, and operates in seven native tribes, which give them access to 150,000 people. The mission has existed twenty-eight years, and the number of communicants is about 600. It reaches along 250 miles of coast, and stretches eighty miles into the interior, and employs six missionaries and four ordained Liberian ministers. The natives show an interest in the work. At one of the stations, near a large town, when danger of hostile attack threatened, the natives professed themselves ready to fight rather than that the mission should be given up. Natives are constantly from the far interior, through whom the light of the Gospel might be diffused to an indefinite extent.

An African Christian king was lately crowned at Cape Coast, and on the evening of his coronation attended a missionary meeting, where he made an earnest speech, in which he declared that on that day, when the Lord declared him to be king, it was his greatest glory to find himself among them as one of themselves—a Christian. He said that after his father's death, nearly twenty years ago, he had been excluded from the succession because he preferred the service of the true God. "The time has now come," he said, "when, with the blessing of God and your co-operation, the worship of idols shall triumph no more in this land. Every effort shall be made by me that shall tend to subvert superstition and build up the edifice of Christianity, that all may know the true God, and love the knee only at his altar."

A Bible woman in Northern India is meeting with much encouragement in the village of Poonah, already received as a candidate for admission to the church, but who had delayed, hoping that his wife would accompany him, has at length come forward, and the letter was very satisfactory. The missionary says, "It is a worth a lifetime, spent in the hot plains of India, to witness such a scene." When asked what she prayed for, she replied that she asked God to give her a husband, and that she had given to Paul, and Moses, and David, "she gave a hundred and eighty-eight, and the Holy Spirit, that it was worth more to me as a proof of the reality of the religion of Jesus, than anything I ever experienced in my life."

The Moravians in the Western Himalayas, after twelve years of unfruitful labor, report their first converts, and sons. They confessed that they had found nothing in Buddhism, which could give life to the soul, and believed that Jesus is the only Saviour. Others are candidates for admission. A second station has been commenced, and a majority of the workmen engaged in erecting a necessary building, attend the preaching of the gospel every evening.

A Jew in Amsterdam has lately made a public profession of religion, who has held a high position among his brethren, and was well acquainted with rabbinical traditions, and seems to have been, like Paul, of "the strictest sect" of that religion. In Cairo, Egypt, where there are 8,000 Jews, the London Society has a house, with twelve laborers and converts. In the city of Jerusalem, eight converts have recently embraced Christianity in heart, all of them men of education and position. One of them was led to the missionary, and then to the Saviour, solely by reading the Bible. A second was obliged to leave away from his persecuting relatives; and when the choice was set before him, he took the trade or a return to his Jewish faith, he chose poverty and shame, and cast in his lot with the people of God. The case of others was equally interesting.

Encouraging news is reported from various points in Turkey. At one point, where the Christian converts are few and poor, and labor for their daily bread, they are willing to support their own institution, and have given two hundred dollars in gold toward a new chapel. A missionary writes that, the village of Samsun was hospitably received, and the villagers soon began to come into his small, ill-ventilated room; and for five hours we sat in that room, with from twenty to forty persons crowded into it, and read and talked to them a large part of the Bible. The public confession of a Moslem in the in-

terior is announced, whose story has much of romantic interest. He has been twice imprisoned for the gospel's sake, heavily ironed, tortured in various ways by the jailer, insulted, beaten, pinched, and tormented by his Moslem fellow-prisoners; he has been deprived of his wife, children and property, and has literally "suffered the loss of all things." Still he firmly adheres to the gospel of Christ.

The Sultan of Turkey has ordered the Koran to be translated into Turkish, saying that because the Christians are translating their sacred books into Turkish and circulating them, it is necessary that Mohammedans should be fortified against the New Testament, by being able to read the Koran in their own tongue. Hitherto it has been deemed by Mohammedans scrupulous to render the Koran in any tongue but the original Arabic.

A movement has lately been made to instruct and enlighten Turkish females, which is received with great favor—a hundred or more of them meeting in a chapel, and listening for an hour to one of their own sex, explaining to them the gospel of Christ. They have found, at last, that women have souls.

ITALY.

A few Bible-women in Milan are doing an excellent work among the Catholic families. Many desire to know the truth, but are too timid to attend the place of public meeting, and they eagerly ask questions of the Bible-women, and listen most attentively when they explain the gospel of Christ. Many precious fruits have sprung out of these labors.

In a place near Milan, a colporteur visited the people with Bibles and Testament, and to his surprise the people to be taught the truth, that they would not suffer him to leave till he had instructed them several weeks. Every evening he explained to them the Scriptures in his room, which was often too small to contain all who came, and during the day he visited from house to house. This excellent disposition of the people has continued some months. In twenty or twenty-five other places in Northern Italy, evangelists might labor with every hope of success. The Scriptures have been long asking repeatedly for evangelical preaching. The excellent disposition of the people has continued some months. In twenty or twenty-five other places in Northern Italy, evangelists might labor with every hope of success. The Scriptures have been long asking repeatedly for evangelical preaching. The excellent disposition of the people has continued some months. 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