

# The Religious Intelligencer.

AN EVANGELICAL FAMILY NEWSPAPER FOR NEW BRUNSWICK AND NOVA SCOTIA.

JOSEPH McLEOD,

"THAT GOD

IN ALL THINGS MAY BE GLORIFIED THROUGH JESUS CHRIST."

Peter.

[Editor and Proprietor.

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## The Intelligencer.

SURGEON, NEWMAN HALL, AND PUNSON.

MAY 1868.

BY REV. JAS. COOPER, LONDON, ONT.

We arrange the names of these three in the order in which we listened to them. They are all Englishmen in the prime of life, and leading preachers in their native isle. They are all great men, whatever little deductions may be made or preferences given by denominational prejudice. No three men could move the English heart as these three men are now doing unless they were men of extraordinary power. Let us not hesitate then for a moment to give them this honor; by all means, "honor to whom honor is due." The two last named have visited our new World; we may soon see and hear the first also in our pulpits and on the platforms. But though these are three great men, there are striking differences between them. They resemble three noble trees of colossal growth, but how different their shape! They have barked in the same sun, breathed the same atmosphere, sipped the same dews, been drenched in the same rains and reared by the same storms; but there is no sameness, there has been no imitation. They may have seen each other and admired each other, as doubtless they have; but their admiration has not even blurred the finest edges or clipped the finest angles of their respective individualities. And they are not only great men, but they are good men; thank God for them. What they might have been to the world at the bar, on the bench, or in the halls of legislation, it is not for us to say; but as they now stand before us, it is in the light of goodness that we see and feel their greatness. They have each enlarged views of the dignity of man. They see him great in his erect, great even in his fall, precious in his ruin. Their life work, too, is one. They see man under a remedial scheme, where by the application of truth to his conscience and his heart, he may be saved for glory, honor and immortality.

A glance at the external physique of this trio prepares us to expect very different mental manifestations. Newman Hall is a fine looking man, rather tall, well proportioned. I suppose his features are Grecian; at any rate, his forehead, eyes and mouth all bespeak refinement and intellectual power. Spurgeon's forehead, though somewhat broad is rather low and gives very little indication of mental calibre; he must stand about three inches below Mr. Hall, and has nothing at all prepossessing in his appearance. Punson's appearance is that of a jolly Englishman, who both loves his beef and gets it, but at first sight does not appear to have read much or thought deeply, until he has got fairly into his subject, when his countenance lights up and all is aglow of enthusiasm. His eyes are rather small, and recede rather than protrude from their sockets.

In private, Newman Hall is gleesome as a boy, very communicative, gentlemanly and winning in his manners, and must be to those who are intimate with him a true Christian friend. The prominent feature in his character is benevolence. In conversation, Spurgeon is very easy, disposed to ask questions rather than tell you what is being done in the Tabernacle; and it is only now that you begin to discover a roguish waggishness in his eyes, which tells you that if he had been a frequenter of the bar room, he could have kept it in a roar of laughter, and sung a song and cracked a joke with the most experienced lazzar.

We have seen less of Punson in private, but we should judge him to be very genial in his nature; his personal friends say he is, yet we should expect to see him all in the fidgets at the appearance of anything mean or cunning. He is one of nature's nobility.

In the pulpit, Newman Hall's voice is very agreeable—well modulated and his action is all perfectly natural. His language is free, simple, no exclusives, and chastely correct. As an extemporaneous style he is certainly a model. Punson's voice is much against him. It is at best husky, sometimes gruff, but his language is culled with the most scrupulous care. Here the Methodist differs from the Congregationalist. The correctness of the diction of the latter stands forth amid all the surroundings of a natural ease and carelessness. The correctness and beauty of that of the former is the result of pick and choice. He is designedly beautiful—intentionally classic. Spurgeon's style is not at all classical except in the sense in which Shakespeare and the English Bible are. You feel that he is more of a self-made man than either of the other two, and has not enjoyed the advantage of drill that they have. His style is colloquial, his language thoroughly Saxon, and he is intensely earnest. But hear his voice—it is not loud, yet clear and penetrating, in its multiplied variations is like the chiming of silver bells.

Newman Hall is a Philanthropist. Spurgeon is a Theologian. Punson is a Religious Lecturer. Hall was in his element when on his late mission of peace and love he visited our shores, rubbing down the asperities of American feeling, and talking with Mr. Seward at the breakfast table about the adjustment of the Alabama claims. That mission has done much to weld in gospel harmony the two greatest religious nations on the face of the earth. Blessings on the head of the peacemaker! Spurgeon is in his element when he is ringing his silver bells at the ear of a sinner, dead in trespasses and sins, or helping a timid believer to buckle on his armor and fight for the crown. Clinching the former by the arm he shakes him, and rouses him by the announcement "Man, I want you to come to Jesus!" Into the fainting spirit of the latter he infuses courage by pointing him to the horizon already being reddened with the beams of breaking day. Punson feels that the Methodist pulpit is too small for him, and religious experiences and love feasts too limited a sphere for the range of his thoughts; and in this age of sham and blow-hard, scolders he takes the platform with his manuscript lecture, and pours truth on his audience like a stream of Greek fire, in which are commingled all the beauties of the rainbow, that he may burn up the bad in our nature, and make us better men and better women. Welcome to our shores the Methodist lecturer!

We do not mean to say that the Congregationalist is not a theologian, or that the Methodist cannot preach, or that the Baptist cannot lecture. In saying what we have said, we merely fix on the prominent gifts of these gifted brethren. A man is always seen at best advantage in his own uniform, and in his natural armor. We heard Hall preach; his text was "Lord increase our faith," and he kept to his point; it was an

excellent sermon. He brought his theology out of his text as every preacher ought to do, instead of bringing the same thing to every text, and preaching really the same sermon whatever the text may be, as is often done. And we heard Spurgeon deliver a lecture in his college, full of startling facts and stirring thoughts. The facts had respect to the number of students he had sent out, and the harvest of souls that they had gathered in; and the burning thoughts had respect to the necessity of a growing earnestness in preaching Christ and the glories of the kingdom. He has also a "Lecture on Candles," that he has delivered with great power in many places, in which he deals out his shot and shell on the new institution of altar candles burning in the Church of England. It is very like man's way of lighting up this dark world with the candles of superstition. No mean preacher; a goodly number of his sermons are now before the world, beautiful specimens of classic English, and acting as refreshing rain showers on the Church of Jesus Christ.

Newman Hall has been known to the world for quite a number of years, and as the successor of the Ven. Rowland Hill and James Sherman he stands high as a London preacher. He is the author of several works, chiefly of a devotional character, and they do equal credit to his head and to his heart. But it was the distress in Lancashire growing out of the American rebellion, when days were dark and friends were fearful, that drew Mr. Hall more prominently out as a philanthropist. Believing that war would be the death blow of slavery, and that law and humanity would gain the ascendancy, he threw his whole soul into the trouble, and by stirring up the operatives to patience, and calling the rich to come to the rescue, he has won for himself laurels that will never fade. C. H. Spurgeon is publishing all the year round. His sermons delivered to a regular congregation of 8,000 are taken in short-hand every Sunday, the proof is read on Tuesday, and on Thursday morning they fly by mail through the length and breadth of the land. Occasionally both sermons are thus published, but generally only the one preached in the morning. Nine volumes have been republished in Boston. He edits the *Sword and Trowel*, a monthly of a hundred pages, preaches when in health at an average about five times a week; superintends his college with 80 students, and he has just lately got up an Orphanage, capable of maintaining 400 boys. The number of communicants in the Tabernacle is 3634, the increase last year was 224. The preaching stations, supplied by the young men, number 117, and the annual expenditure of the college last year was \$27,115. The breadth of character that this one man is developing, and the amount of work he goes through is perfectly amazing. W. M. Punson has also been abundant in labors. He has published a volume of poetry, a masterly lecture on Macaulay, and quite a number of sermons. In addition to his own regular work as a City Minister he has for years past run all over the country, preaching at anniversaries, chapel openings, etc., and now he comes amongst us as the President elect of the Canada Conference. But it is as a teacher that Punson proves himself a strong man, and the one that we have just heard of "Daniel in Babylon" is said to be amongst his best. In matter it is weighty, full of good thoughts, entombing sentiments and good practical lessons for every day life. The grand features in Daniel's character are brought out with singular power and beauty. His fidelity to the right; his calm dignity and decision in the midst of the most terrible perils; his fear of God and fearlessness of man, and his greatness is shown to be the outgrowth of his secret life of goodness. In the elaboration of these points, poetry brings her flowers of choicest odors, reason asserts her sovereignty, and a graceful eloquence extends her richest treasures in vindication of the Babylonian captive. Skepticism is exposed by a most withering rebuke. Now by sarcasm, and then by irony, quiet but keen, religion and hypocrisy are undressed and exhibited in such a manner as to make every sinner ashamed of himself. Throughout the lecture there is a sprinkling of allusions to classic story, which a fastidious critic might take exception to, as savoring of pedantry and useless to a common audience; but then since Punson has done it so well, why not let him take his own way? He gives us noble thoughts in settings of the finest gold; and when we get true gems we shall not quarrel with nature about the mould in which she has shrouded them. We hope that W. M. Punson's visit to this country may be productive of lasting good, and that he, with C. H. Spurgeon and Newman Hall, may long be spared to defend the great truths of our common salvation, feed the flock of Christ, and gather in many as heirs of the believer's inheritance.—*Can. Baptist.*

MONSTROUS CUSTOMS.

Just a week after the event I have just related, the Queen died, and her cousin, whose name is Ranavalona, was proclaimed as her successor without any opposition. The corpse was wrapped in fifty-silk mantles of native manufacture, and in this state was kept for a fortnight previous to burial. The Prime Minister wrote to inform us that the Queen had "retired, or turned round" (a word used to express the death of a sovereign), and also to apprise us of the Malagasy custom of mourning, but politely telling us that so far as they might affect us personally, we need not conform to them. The people were commanded to shave their heads, and were ordered not to wear hats, shirts, dresses, trousers, or shoes, not to wash their clothes or their faces, not to lie on beds, and to leave their shoulders uncovered. A few hours after these orders were given, some of the streets were literally strewn with human hair. I calculate that at least two millions of people had to go in mourning for the late Queen by shaving their heads. A nation of bald heads and naked shoulders is a curious sight. The change in the personal appearance of the people was so great that I could scarcely recognize my most intimate friends until I heard their voices. While the dead body lay in the palace, bands of music were playing continually, companies of women went in succession "to weep," and several rounds of cannon and musketry were fired every hour. It was very amusing to watch the soldiers with their old flint guns, which were sent as a present to the Malagasy Government from England, fifty years ago. Some of them who had never used firearms before, placed the stock of the gun against their abdomen while discharging it, and a few were really afraid to pull the trigger, and handed their guns to more courageous companions to let off. As the firing was kept up for a fortnight, however, they became bolder and more expert in using their muskets.

FUNERAL PREPARATIONS.

I went to the palace one day to see the preparations that were being made for the funeral. The large courtyard was filled with people; on one side were a number of masons building a tomb, and on the other the soldiers, armed with rifles, making a silver coffin. To obtain the silver, the Chief Secretary of State told me (I think this was the exact amount), that they melted 22,320 French dollars, so that the coffin cost \$4,444. Considering the state of civilization here, and the few opportunities the people have of obtaining money, this is really astonishing. Of course the workman was very roughly done, and it was no better than so much tin so far as appearance is concerned. The coffin when finished was placed in a tomb and the body was carried to it. The tomb is a large square, twelve feet high, built of stone, and has a small wooden house, painted green on the top which is ornamented with gold and gilt, and has both window and door.

BARBARIC POMP.

When the tomb was completed, the funeral took place, and all our missionaries and also the French Catholic priests were present. The road to the tomb was covered with calico, the soldiers wore white scarfs, and the officers were in their best military uniform. The palace was hung with white calico, and the roof of the house in which the Queen died was covered with red cloth. About three o'clock in the afternoon, the funeral began to move out of the palace. The corpse was borne on an enclosed bier, which was covered with red cloth, silk, and the state dresses of her late Majesty; on the top of the bier was a large gilt crown, and in the front the gold crown which belonged to her Majesty; the poles on which the bier was carried were covered with red cloth, and were borne by officers. Several long ribbons of various colors were attached to the bier, and those were held by the Prime Minister, the Chief Secretary of State, and other members of the Government, who were elegantly dressed. Altogether it looked more like a theatrical than a funeral procession. The bier was placed on an embankment just outside the tomb door, then several guns were fired; and the Prime Minister, after bowing to the corpse for some minutes, walked back to the palace weeping, and wiping his eyes with a black silk handkerchief; two or three of the higher officers followed after him, and after taking off their gold lace dresses, they came out again with a dirty piece of calico folded loosely round their bodies, and wearing neither shirts, trousers, hats, or shoes. About twenty men were thus employed in carrying the deceased's possessions to the tomb to be buried with her. This occupied them until sunset. We noticed about 200 dresses, chiefly silk and satin, all of European manufacture, besides a large quantity of native made clothes. There were also chairs, lamps, looking-glasses, chest of drawers, a large box of money (which took eight men to carry), &c., all of foreign make, and these were put into the tomb with the body. As it was now dark, and we could not see what was being done at the tomb, we all went home. As I sat alone in my house in the evening, I was suddenly startled by hearing a low moan coming from every part of the town, as though some one were in great trouble. Thinking there was a house on fire, or that some other calamity had happened, I went out of the house to inquire, and I was told that all the people were "weeping," and if they did not weep they would be flogged. This plaintive noise, arising from thousands of voices, had a very peculiar effect.

CURIOUS TRIAL OF THE REBELS.

The funeral being over, the trial of the rebels was commenced. They had been very cruelly bound with cords, so bound that the cords cut through the flesh to the bone. The trial resulted in their being found guilty; and it was the general expectation that they would be put to death. We wrote to the Prime Minister, and suggested to him that an act of mercy at the commencement of the reign of the present Queen would greatly strengthen her throne, and give to her a good name among other nations. He replied that he should follow the desire of the people as to the punishment to be inflicted. A meeting was there-

fore called, and the death of the prisoners was loudly called for; four officers strongly urged this in long speeches to the people; then there was a pause, for those who were in favor of mercy were too timid to utter an opinion that would be at all likely to conflict with that of their superiors; the sentence of death was just about to be pronounced, when up rose a Christian young man (one of my preachers, who believed that he was called of God to this work, and who came to me for assistance in preparing his speech on the previous evening), and boldly pleaded in behalf of mercy; and notwithstanding some persons endeavored to interrupt him and prejudice the minds of the people against him, by calling out that he was implicated in the rebellion, his eloquence (or, as he himself put it, "his prayer") won the victory, and the rebels were sentenced only to imprisonment. This is an act of clemency quite unprecedented in Madagascar, and certainly in advance of the people. It is the result of the indirect influences of Christianity. If there had been no Bible here, these poor prisoners would probably have been spared to death without form or trial. Even those who do not receive the "truth in the love of it" are often unconsciously influenced by the power of the Gospel.

RECKLESS SLAUGHTER.

There has been a great slaughter of bullocks in Antananarivo and the surrounding villages during the past month. It is the custom with the Malagasy, when a rich man dies, and especially on the death of a sovereign, to kill a large number of these animals, according to the wealth and rank of the deceased, and distribute the beef. It is said that between two and three thousand have been killed in consequence of the death of the Queen. Three were given to us missionaries. I cannot discover that any idea of atonement is connected with this custom, or that any of benefit is thought to accrue to the departed from it. Still the custom may have had its origin in something of this kind.

ABOLITION OF IDOLATRY.

The most pleasing intelligence I have to communicate to you is the fact that the national idols have been abolished. To the great astonishment of everybody there was no idol present at the proclamation or the funeral. The late Queen, who knew something of Christianity, lost faith in her idols some time before her death; and when she was dying she called upon some Christian officers who were attending upon her, "to pray to the true God." This circumstance may have had something to do with what has taken place since; but it is quite true that the idols have been sent away to the annoyance and loss of their keepers. The Prime Minister himself, until lately an inveterate heathen, has, as the Malagasy express it, "begun to pray." He has not yet attended any of our chapels, or sought the instruction of one of the missionaries, but he diligently studies his Bible in private, and has some of our best native preachers by turns, to conduct a daily service in his house. May the good Spirit convey the truth to his heart, and lead him and his royal mistress to that knowledge which is "life eternal!"

TRYING TO BE A UNIVERSALIST.

BY PLAIN JOHN.

A young friend once wrote to me that he had made up his mind to be a Universalist, and desired my views on various passages of Scripture. In reply, I reminded him that the Scriptures are of no private interpretation. He must read the Word of God for himself, and judge of the meaning of any passage by its own statements and its relation to the context and other parts of the Bible. I was not unwilling to assist him, but he would be more firmly settled one way or the other if he acted in his own behalf. As to "making up his mind," I only hoped that he would consult his conscience; and I thought if he did so, and studied the Word of God honestly, he would hardly hang on to that hook. This phrase is not original. I heard it first from the lips of a good man, who was relating his experience. His conscience was very troublesome, and so was the plowings of religious friends. To escape both, he for some time attended a Universalist church, and became quite forward in making the thing a success. The more his conscience troubled him, the more eager he was to connect with this enterprise some flesh excitement. It diverted his mind, and then he could plead so plausibly: "We keep the Sabbath and go to church; we try to make ourselves and others better men; and what do other churches more than this?"

But, after all, his conscience was busy, and reminded him ever and anon of the testimonies of the Word of God. From a child he had been taught the Scriptures; and now and then, when a text seemed of itself good, easy doctrine, he could not forget its connection, and the sermon did not bring smooth things to him. And then, sometimes, in reading a chapter from the pulpit, he observed the omission of a paragraph, and the incident had its witness. He turned aside at last, and finds in the obedience of faith a better way. "I tell you," said he, "I could not hang on to that hook."

It is pleaded by the friends of this system that there is a great deal of sympathy with them among members of orthodox congregations. Yes, there is a great deal of trying to hang on this hook by those who love and will not forsake sin—some of them and some members of our churches! But, on the other hand, there is a great deal—merely of sympathy, but—of conviction in favor of orthodox views among members of Universalist congregations. Many of them are not ignorant. They know what the Bible teaches. They know that the Word of God will not be trifled with. Their consciences, moreover, are not wholly seared, and often they are compelled to ask: "How should man be just with God? If he will contend with him, he cannot answer him one of a thousand. He is wise in heart and mighty in strength. Who hath hardened himself against him, and hath prospered?"

It has always been so, and probably it always will be, that to a great many such a doctrine will be attractive as offering a hook to hang upon, without repentance and faith and a holy life. But the question of eternal life is not one to be left insecurely settled. Necks are often broken by trusting to hooks that hang to rotten beams, and souls may be lost who cling to hopes that rest on no "sure word of promise."

The last time I saw the good man of whom I have spoken he was serving God with a childlike faith. His face glowed as I spoke of the scenes

amid which he first confessed Christ before men. His favorite hymn is:

Jesus, my all, to heaven has gone—  
Whom I fix my hopes upon;  
His track I see, and I'll pursue  
The narrow way till I see him view."

There is no trembling now. In well-doing he commits his soul to God as to a faithful Creator. I asked about his present enjoyments. "I have more in one prayer," said he, "than ever I had in all the days of sin." The hook on which his soul now rests is given by the Word of God, and it will lift him to heaven,—for he in whom he believes is not only "the Way and the truth," but also "the Life." Alas, that others, as troubled as he was, do not seek the same Scriptural hope!—*New York Observer.*

PATIENCE.—There is no greater proof of grace than to smart patiently, and humbly and contentedly to rest the heart in the justice and wisdom of God's proceeding, and to be so far from chiding, that we dispute not. Nature is forward, and though she will know we meddle not with our match when we strive with our Maker, yet she pricks us forward to this idle quarter, and bids us with Job's wife, curse and die. If God either chide or smite, as servants are changed to their masters, we may not answer again; when God's hand is on our back, our hand must be on our mouth; else, as mothers do their children, God shall whip us so much the more for crying.—*Hall.*

THE CROOKED STICK.—James Therrall, an old carpenter on Salisbury Plain, said to a young Christian who complained that she was unworthy to serve the Lord, "I used to think as you do, but the Lord taught me otherwise by a crooked stick. One day my son went to a sale of timber, and in the lot he brought was a piece of twisted and bent stick, after I said, 'It will be of no use.' 'Wait a bit—don't fret; let us keep a lookout, father,' said the lad, 'there is a place somewhere for it.' And so it proved, for soon after, when I was building a house, there was a corner to turn in, and not a stick in the yard would fit it. I thought of the crooked one, and fetched it. It seemed as if the tree had grown aright for that purpose. 'There,' said I, 'there is a place for the crooked stick, after all; either at the top or the bottom of the house.' Dear Lord, show him the place in which he may fit, in the building of the heavenly temple! That very day, poor and unclean as I was, there was a work for me. And so there is a work for you to do, and nobody else can do it."

AN OBEDIENT BOY.—When the Rev. Richard Cecil was a little boy, his father had occasion to go to the India House, and took his son with him. While he was transacting business the little fellow was dismissed, and told to wait for his father at one of the doors. His father on finishing his business went out at another door, and entirely forgot his son. In the evening, his mother, missing the child, inquired where he was; on which his father, suddenly recollecting that he had directed him to wait at a certain door, said, "You may depend upon it, he is still waiting where I appointed him." He immediately returned to the India House, and found his boy on the very spot he had left him.

CHRIST'S PATIENCE.—What sorrows did he undergo, and with what patience did he suffer them! Patient when Judas unworthily betrayed him with a kiss; patient when Caiaphas despoiled him; patient when hurried from one place to another; patient when Herod with his men of war set him at naught; patient when Pilate so unrighteously condemned him; patient when scourged and crowned with thorns; patient when his cross was laid upon him, and when he was reviled, reproached, scoffed at, and every way abused. Lord Jesus, grant me patience, after this example, to bear thy holy will in all things.

THE MISSIONARY PRESS.—The press is one of the agencies of modern civilization which has followed most closely on the footsteps of the missionary enterprises of all evangelized denominations. It has its peculiar work to do, in aid of the ministry, among the heathen abroad as well as among the heathen at home. The *Christian Star* is the title of a new religious paper issued from the Methodist mission press in India, and edited by Rev. J. W. Messmore. It is in the Hindustani language.

CHIPS.

Through repentance and faith may fallen men obtain heights from which rebellious angels were hurled.

The probabilities of sinners finding the way to life depend largely on the faithfulness of their Christian friends.

How can two walk or work together except they be agreed; to work successfully together they must be agreed in methods as well as object. Two boys were sent to take a horse from a stable to water. There were two doors to the stable which the boys had named Methodist and Baptist. One of the boys insisted on leading the horse through the Methodist door, the other was equally determined that he should go out through the Baptist. The boys being of about equal strength, the one prevented the other, and the poor beast was left without water. Great was the folly of these boys, a thousand fold greater folly is often displayed by some sectarian religious leaders.

The words of the angry are like sparks of fire; when they fall among combustible matter, desolating conflagrations will follow. The words of the upright are like the gentle showers quickening the virtues of a community to life.

A farmer who attempted to repair his clock, on attempting to put it together again, discovered that there were too many wheels, at least, more than he knew how to dispose of. Some would-be-wise men have also discovered some unnecessary parts to the system of God's government; and even boast of the wisdom of their discoveries, while they boldly cast aside truths on which the eternal welfare of souls depends. There are many religious systems which may in part be composed of truth, but their teachers will in the end learn to their sorrow that there are no unnecessary parts to the word of God which they may safely cast aside.

Whatever God has intended for you, you may safely trust Him to bring you to; He may lead you round, but He will guide you right; see the history of Joseph.

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