

The Religious Intelligencer.

AN EVANGELICAL FAMILY NEWSPAPER FOR NEW BRUNSWICK AND NOVA SCOTIA.

Rev. J. McLEOD,

"THAT GOD IN ALL THINGS MAY BE GLORIFIED THROUGH JESUS CHRIST."

Peter.

[Editor and Proprietor.]

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SAINT JOHN, NEW BRUNSWICK, FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 20, 1868.

Whole No. 775.

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October, 1868.

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The Intelligencer.

(From the Montreal Witness.)

POPULAR AND FASHIONABLE AMUSEMENTS.

Sketch of a Sermon to Young Men, delivered in Trinity Church, Chicago, on Sabbath Evening, 11th Oct., by the Rev. Mr. Sullivan, formerly of Montreal.

The preacher took his text from 1 John ii. 14.

"I have written unto you young men because ye are strong," and explained that he was induced to preach this second sermon on the same text, because in the first, delivered a few weeks ago, he had not been able to get through a subject so extensive and important as the true sources of strength in young men. He had then explained that the first element of strength of character was loyalty to God, and a fearless acknowledgment of allegiance. Without this, all talents and attainments will only result in a life failure. The second element was self-command and self-control, and a wise selection of companions both as regards men and books, and especially the courage to avoid those places of amusement which are saturated with moral poison. The third was resolution and decision of character. Moral courage and firmness lie at the foundation of all excellence, for a weak, vacillating person is about as hopeless as a wicked one. Such persons are like the leaf whirled along by the autumn torrent. Their lives are spent in similar purposeless eddies, and their destination is as uncertain. Firmness, is not, however, to be confounded with stubbornness, which doggedly persists in wrong because it has made a beginning in it. Saul, Herod, Pilate, and Peter, were instances as examples of instability of purpose, and yielding to the influences around them for evil. Oh, young men, said the preacher, fear God more than the suzer of fools. This suzer, he knew, was very powerful unless there was a foundation of principle and resolution to resist it. A young man going home in the evening from his daily duties meets a number of companions and friends, who ask him to go with them to some questionable resort. He makes excuses, is urged, hesitates, but still declines, till at last a ring leader says, "Oh, leave him alone; he is setting up for a saint, and has to go home to pray!" This is the trying time, the turning point. Angels and devils are watching the result with anxiety. If he refuses, he is safe; if he consents, he enters on a rapidly descending career. In such a case don't make excuses or assign this or that reason which is not the true one, but give a good reason, unhesitatingly and at once. This is one of the noblest triumphs. The triumph of the soul over temptation and timidity. Hitherto, he had only showed what to shun, but the question remained what was the young man to do? It was right and necessary that he should have wholesome recreations, but what recreations are wholesome? There the spirit of gambling is fostered, however small the bet, or if the play be merely to pay for the game. There drinking is fostered, for all these saloons have attractive and well-furnished bars where the excited players can drink from time to time without needing to go out for their draughts, which to soothe their disappointment or to crown their success, or to nerve them for fresh efforts. The clerk or shopman who indulges in such recreations, as he calls them, soon finds them too expensive for his slender salary; and as he can neither steal nor beg he resorts to borrowing from his master's till, at first with the idea of returning the money thus secretly borrowed, but his necessities increase, and the borrowing is repeated till it becomes a large and hopeless deficit. At last he is found out, and his only refuge is suicide or the penitentiary. In fact, the evils resulting from billiard saloons are so great as to justify their prohibition by law—a consummation which he earnestly desired.

Another popular amusement is the theatre, which he could not characterize more favorably than the billiard room. All who have frequented theatres know that their influence is anything but religious or even moral. That the drama might be conducted without any immoral influence was true; but if it were it would have few or no spectators to defray the expense. Young men knew not only that the surroundings of the theatre were profane and immoral, but also most of those connected theatrical companies. This was proved by the very simple test of asking young men if they would introduce their mothers and sisters to them. No, no! The theatre is the porch of pollution and debauchery—the very vestibule of hell. But what is the alternative? If these be given up, what shall young men do with their evenings? Young men, have you nothing to learn? Have you no wish to gather knowledge from all sources, and they are innumerable. Can you not greatly improve yourselves? And again, can you not engage in your Master's service? He has much work to do. In connection with his own congregation he (the preacher) could find appropriate work for a hundred young men, and work which no other class could so well. Young men, the Lord has need of you; will you neglect his call? But what is the alternative? If these be given up, what shall young men do with their evenings? Young men, have you nothing to learn? Have you no wish to gather knowledge from all sources, and they are innumerable. Can you not greatly improve yourselves? And again, can you not engage in your Master's service? He has much work to do. In connection with his own congregation he (the preacher) could find appropriate work for a hundred young men, and work which no other class could so well. Young men, the Lord has need of you; will you neglect his call?

Finally, whatsoever is against the soul's life is forbidden; be it billiards, theatres, operas, card playing, or dancing. Not only the spirit of God's word, but the world itself, condemns such things in the christian, and points to any professor who indulges in them as inconsistent. It is unnecessary to go into argument in regard to each particular thing, and to prove that in itself, it is enough to regard them all in the light of God's word and human experience, and we cannot avoid the conclusion that they are to be condemned and shunned.

The great security of the heart lies in the new life, imparted by faith in Christ, and let the attractions to which he had alluded be as gaudy and seductive as they may, they will have little or no power to draw away one who has felt what has been well called "the explosive power of a new affection." Get the greater light and the lesser will be put out.

The preacher could not close without an earnest warning concerning a good deal of the literature of the day, which he described as seductive and polluting in a high degree; and he entreated young men to be careful what books they read. It was replied, How can we know a book to be bad unless we read it? It would be as reasonable to say, "How can we know a man to be bad unless we take him to bed?" Bad books are even more dangerous in some respects than bad men, for their society can be had more secretly and frequently, and any one even looking into them receives an

injury that may last for life. They should emphatically neither be touched, tasted, nor handled.

The commandment of the Lord to the Jews, not even to inquire into the idolatrous rites of the heathen, was eminently wise and necessary, and it extends in its spirit to all licentious and immoral books. No amount of talent in an impure author can justify him in reading his works, and the pure and wholesome issues of the press of the highest excellence are abundant enough to occupy all the time you can spare for reading. Especially let the Bible, which is the true fountain head of all good literature, pervade your mind and life. Ye are only strong when the Word of God dwelleth in you; and you can only expect to reach your desired haven when you have it for your chart and compass. He who has the Word of God for his guide will not find at the last that his has been a wasted life. There is in this connection a sin fearfully prevalent, against which he would take the present favorable opportunity of warning them—namely, the irreverent use of the Word of God—making jokes and plays upon scripture language. All irreverence in the use of God's name or word provokes His righteous indignation, and the first step across the threshold of irreverence will, unless repented of, lead finally to the ridiculing of all religion, even the cross of Christ itself.

To sum up the whole matter, he entreated one and all to yield themselves now—this night—to the gracious influences of the Holy Spirit.

THE PEACE-BREAKING BROTHER.

The following incident was told to me by the Rev. J. C. Stiles. It occurred some years since, in one of the New England States:

In a church in a village there was a brother who made it his special duty to labor for the ruin of every pastor whose services the church wanted. The fact became so generally known that it was a very difficult matter to induce any minister to accept the charge of the church. For a long time no pastor's voice had been heard within the walls of the church, for each one feared immediate decapitation at the hands of this brother, if he should dare to venture into his vicinity.

The church was rapidly declining, and one member became so anxious on the subject, that he wrote to a minister that he must come and preach for them, or the church would perish. The minister fully expressed his objections. But this member urged upon him the necessities of the church, and promised that he would do all in his power to save him from the fate of his predecessors. The minister at last consented to become the pastor of the church. For a time, all moved on smoothly. But after awhile the pastor heard a buzz about his ears; and soon another passed; and then another. He knew that the brother was at work, and that there was danger. He became very sad in consequence of what he knew must come upon him. One day he met the brother on the street, when he said, "My dear pastor, you seem to be sad, do tell me what is the matter. I will comfort you in your distress; I have often encouraged and strengthened my pastor when he was sad and discouraged." His pastor excused himself then, but promised that he would tell the cause of his gloom in a short time. The brother invited him to take tea with him that night, when he could do so. He consented. He was at the house of his brother at the appointed hour. At once he called for the reason of the sadness of the pastor. He consented to give it provided the brother would not become angry. This was promised.

"Well, brother," began the preacher, "I had a dream that has greatly disturbed me. I dreamt that I died and went to hell, and was carried through many of its departments. At last I came into the palace of his satanic majesty. He was in the chair, listening to the reports of his servants. And brother you were there. One servant arose, and said: 'May it please your honor, I have been among the kings and rulers of the earth, and have stirred up their wrath against Christians, and caused to persecute and slay many of the followers of Jesus, and thereby I have done much for your kingdom.' 'Well done,' said his majesty, 'take your seat; you shall be rewarded.' Another arose, and said: 'Please your honor, I have labored to stir up malice and jealousy among men, and thus have I set neighbor against neighbor, and caused disputes, fights and murders.' 'Take your seat,' said his majesty, 'you shall be rewarded.' A third arose, and said: 'Please your honor, I have turned men from truth, and made them my subjects, and thus added many to my kingdom.' 'Be seated, sir, you also shall have a reward.' Then, brother, you arose and said, 'May it please your honor, I have not labored among kings and rulers, nor have I caused murders, nor sown the seeds of error and falsehood; but I entered the church of Christ as a disciple, and my business through life was to kill preachers—destroy their character, influence, and usefulness. Sir, I have wrung oil from the heads of many who preached the gospel. When near the end of my journey, and by a wave of his hand, and in an approving tone, said, 'Brother, take the chair.'—Baptist Visitor.

ATTACKED BY AN ELEPHANT.—A correspondent of the Newark Advertiser says that Dr. House, an American missionary at Bangkok, Siam, has been severely injured by an elephant. He was on his way to a new station, a two months journey being required to reach it, in order to receive medical aid to other missionaries who had preceded him. He was accompanied by his four native guides and three large elephants to carry the baggage, as through the jungles and mountainous country this is the only way of proceeding. When near the end of his journey, while passing one of the huge beasts, as he had often done before on the way, the animal suddenly turned upon him and smote him with his trunk, laying him prostrate, and then with his great tusks tore his clothes and pierced his flesh in a terrible manner. One of the natives was on the neck of the beast all this time, and only descended and gained control over him just in time to save the doctor from being trampled to death. He lay under the trees, where he was stricken down, for two weeks, being himself his only physician and surgeon, with great fortitude sewing up his own wounds. He was two days' journey from the station, with ignorant natives about him, with only one pint and a half of water with which to wet his lips and dress his wounds, and the thermometer at ninety-two degrees in the shade. In due course of time he recovered sufficiently to be carried to the end of his journey and the arms of his friends.

THE FIRST OFFENCE.

In the cheerful dining-room of my friend Stevenson, a select party was assembled to celebrate his birthday. A very animated discussion had been carried on for some time as to whether the first deviation from integrity should be treated with severity or leniency. Various were the opinions, and numerous were the arguments brought forward to support them.

The majority appeared to lean to the side of "crush all offences in the bud," when a warm-hearted old gentleman exclaimed,—

"Depend upon it, more young people are lost to society from a first offence being treated with injudicious severity, than from the contrary extreme. Not that I would pass over even the slightest deviation from integrity, either in word or deed; but that would certainly be mistaken kindness; but, on the other hand, neither would I punish with severity an offence committed, perhaps, under the influence of temptation—temptation, too, that we ourselves may have thoughtlessly placed in the way, in such a manner as to render it irresistible."

"There is truth in what you say," remarked our benevolent host, who had hitherto taken no part in the conversation; "and it reminds me of a circumstance that occurred in the earlier part of my life which may serve to illustrate the subject you have been discussing."

"In the outset of my business career," said he, "I took into my employment a young man to fill the situation of under-clerk; and, according to a rule I had laid down, whenever a stranger entered my service, his duties were of a nature to involve as little responsibility as possible, until sufficient time had been given to form a correct estimate of his character. This young man, whom I shall call Smith, was of a respectable family. He had lost his father, and had a mother and sisters in some measure dependent upon him."

"After he had been a short time in my employment, it happened that my confidential clerk, whose duty it was to receive the money from the bank for the payment of wages, being prevented by an unforeseen circumstance from attending at the proper time, sent the sum required by Smith."

"My confidence was so great in my head clerk that I was not in the habit of regularly counting the money when brought to me; but as, on this occasion, it had passed through other hands, I thought it right to do so. Therefore calling Smith back as he was leaving my counting-house, I desired him to wait a few minutes, and proceeded to ascertain whether it was quite correct. Great was my surprise and concern on finding that there was a considerable deficiency."

"From whom," said I, "did you receive this money?"

"He replied, 'From Mr. —,' naming my confidential clerk."

"It is strange," said I, "but this money is in correct." He changed countenance, and his eye fell as I looked at him; but he answered, with tolerable composure, that it was as he had received it."

After some further questioning, I became convinced that the young man had taken the money."

"It is in vain," I said at length, "to impose upon me. I am convinced that you have taken this money, and that it is at this moment in your possession. The evidence against you is sufficient to justify me in immediately dismissing you from my service. But you are a very young man; your conduct has, I believe, been hitherto correct; and I am willing to afford you an opportunity of redeeming the past. All knowledge of this matter rests between ourselves. Candidly confess, therefore, the error of which you have been guilty; restore what you have taken; and endeavour by your future good conduct, to deserve my confidence and respect; and the circumstance shall never transpire to injure you."

"The poor fellow was deeply affected. In a voice almost inarticulate with emotion he acknowledged his guilt; and said that, having frequently seen me receive the money without counting it, on being entrusted with it himself, the idea had flashed across his mind that he might easily abstract some without incurring suspicion, or at all events without there being sufficient evidence to justify it; that, being in distress, the temptation had proved stronger than his power of resistance, and he had yielded."

"I cannot now," he continued, "prove how deeply your forbearance has touched me; time alone can show that it has not been misplaced." He left me to resume his duties."

"Days, weeks, and months passed away, during which I scrutinized his conduct with the greatest anxiety, whilst at the same time I carefully guarded against any appearance of suspicious watchfulness; and with delight I observed that so far my experiment had succeeded. The greatest regularity and attention, the utmost devotion to my interests, marked his business habits; and this without any display; for his quiet and humble deportment was from that time remarkable."

At length, finding his conduct invariably marked by honesty and plain dealing, my confidence in him was so far restored that, on a vacancy occurring in a situation of greater trust and increased emolument than the one he had hitherto filled, I placed him in it; and never had I the slightest reason to repent of the part I had acted towards him."

"For years he served me with fidelity and devotion. His character for rigour, nay, even scrupulous honesty, was so well known, that 'as honest as Smith' became a proverb among his acquaintances."

"One morning I missed him from his accustomed place, and upon inquiry learnt that he was detained at home by indisposition. Several days elapsed, and still he was absent; and upon calling at his house to inquire after him, I found his family had great distress on his account. His complaint had proved typhus fever of a malignant kind. From almost the commencement of his attack he had, as his wife (for he had been some time married) informed me, lain in a state of total unconsciousness, from which he had roused only to the ravings of delirium, and that the physician gave little hope of his recovery."

"For some days he continued in the same state; at length a message was brought saying that Mr. Smith wished to see me; the messenger adding, that Mrs. Smith hoped I would come as soon as possible, for she feared her husband was dying. I immediately obeyed the summons."

"On entering his chamber, I found the whole of his family assembled to take fare-well of him; they so tenderly loved. As soon as he perceived me, he motioned for me to approach near him, and taking my hand in both of his, he turned towards me, full of gratitude and affection, and said,—

"My dear master, my best earthly friend, I have sent for you that I may give you the thanks and blessings of a dying man for all your goodness to me. To your generosity and mercy I owe it that I have lived useful and respected, that I die lamented and happy. To you I owe it that I leave to my children a name unsullied by crime, that in after years the blush of shame shall never tinge their cheeks at the memory of their father. O God," he continued, "Thou who hast said, 'Blessed are the merciful,' bless him. According to the measure he has meted to others do Thou meet unto him."

"Then turning to his family, he said, 'My beloved wife and children, I entrust you without fear to the care of the heavenly Parent who has said, 'Leave the fatherless children to me, and I will preserve them alive, and let thy widows trust in me.' And you, my dear master, will, I know, be to them as you have been to me—guide, protector, and friend."

"That," continued the kind old man, looking round upon us with glistening eyes, "though mixed with sorrow, was one of the happiest moments of my life. As I stood by the bedside of the dying man, and looked upon his children growing up virtuous, intelligent, and respecting and honoring me as much as they loved their father; when I saw his wife, though overcome with grief for the loss of a tender and beloved husband, yet sorrowing not as one without hope; when I saw him calmly awaiting the inevitable stroke, trusting in the mercy of God, and at peace with his fellow-men; and when I thought of what the reverse of all this might have been—crime, misery, a disgraceful and dishonoured life, perhaps a shameful and violent death—had I yielded to the first impulse of indignation, I felt a happiness which no words can express."

"My friends, I am an old man. During a long and eventful career in business, I have had an intercourse with almost every variety of temper and disposition, and with many degrees of talent; but I have never found reason to swerve from the principle with which I set out in life, to 'temper justice with mercy.'"

Such was the story of our friend. And I believe not one in that company but returned home more disposed to judge leniently of the failings of his fellow creatures, and as far as lay in his power, to extend to all who might fall into temptation that mercy which, under similar circumstances, he would wish shown to himself, feeling "that it is more blessed to save than to destroy."—The Church.

GETTING THE WORST OF IT.

"Do you want to buy any berries to-day?" said a poor little boy to me one afternoon.

I looked at the little fellow, and saw that he was poorly dressed. In his hand he held a large basket full of ripe raspberries.

I told him I should like some; and taking the basket from him, stepped into the house. He did not follow me.

"Why don't you come in and see if I measure your berries rightly?" said I. "How do you know but I may cheat you and take more than I agreed for?"

The boy looked at me and smiled. "I am not afraid," said he, "for you would get the worst of it, ma'am."

"Get the worst of it?" I said. "What do you mean?"

"Why ma'am, I should only lose my berries but you would be stealing. Don't you think that would be the worst for you?"

Let us think of this when we are tempted in any way to cheat one another. How often do we hear persons pity any one who has had his property stolen from him. Yet tho' a man lose all, and keep honest, he is rich indeed compared with the man who has robbed him.—Winning Words.

VARIETIES.

If God has sent thee a cross, take it up and follow him. Use it wisely lest it be unprofitable; bear it patiently, lest it be intolerable. Behold in God's anger against sin and his love toward thee, punishing the one and chastening the other. If it be light, slight it not; if heavy, murmur not. Not to be sensible of a judgment is the symptom of a hardened heart; and to be displeased at his pleasure is the sign of a rebellious will.

Elliott was painting some divine, who felt incumbent upon him to give the painter a moral lecture during one of his sittings. Somewhat in awe of the artist he began rather nervously; but as Elliott painted away without any sign of annoyance, he gathered courage as he proceeded, and finally administering a pretty good sermon. He paused for a reply, when the artist, with the urbane but positive authority of his profession, merely said, "Turn your head a little to the right, and shut your mouth."

A remarkable mirage was lately witnessed at Dover, England, whereby the dome of the cathedral at Boulogne, France, was made distinctly visible to the native eye, and by means of a telescope, the entrance to the port, the lighthouse, the forts, and the surrounding towers and neighboring farm houses, with their windows illuminated with the setting sun, were plainly distinguished. Even a locomotive and train were seen leaving the city and travelling toward Calais. The distance from Dover to Boulogne is about thirty miles.

A GOOD DAUGHTER.—There are other ministers of love—more conspicuous than she, but none in which a gentler, lovelier spirit dwells, and none to which the heart's warm requitals more joyfully respond. She is the steady light of her father's house. Her ideal is indissolubly connected with that of the freeds. She is his morning sunlight and evening star. The grace, vivacity, and tenderness of her sex have their place in the mighty way which she holds over his spirit. She is the pride and ornament of his hospitality, and gentle nurse in his sickness.

CHRIST THE MODEL PREACHER.—As to his mode of teaching, it was not systematic; and in this his example was imitated by the Apostles. The language and form in which it was delivered were unphilosophical; that is instead of employing terms of science, he formed his expressions from passing occurrences, and whatever objects happened to be present to his hearers at the time of his addressing them. Or else he spoke in parables, or made use of that ancient symbolical language so often adopted by the Jewish prophets, as when he washed his disciples' feet, and set a child in the midst of them. As to the matter of his teaching, his discourses aim either at correcting what was perverted, and explaining what was obscure in the preceding state of morals and religious knowledge, or else they declare truths not before revealed. With the several leading topics which they embrace, the Christian reader is presumed to be familiar; and it is sufficient to observe briefly, that of the former kind are his exhortations to inward purity, as opposed to mere outward acts of obedience, and compliance with the spirit rather than with the letter of the precept. To the latter class belong the doctrines of Atonement and Grace; of the Trinity in Unity; certain points of revelation relating to a future state; and whatever else may be considered as peculiar to the Christian revelation.—Bishop Hands.

POWER OF MEMORY.—Themistocles, an ancient Grecian, could call by their names the twenty thousand citizens of Athens. Cyrus could repeat the name of every soldier in his army. Hortensius, one of the orators of Rome, after sitting a whole day at a public sale, could enumerate from memory all the things sold, their prices, and the names of all the purchasers. Ben Johnson could repeat, word for word, all that he had ever written; and indeed whole books that he had simply read. Seneca, the rhetorician, was able to repeat two thousand names in the exact order in which they had been spoken to him; and, on one occasion two hundred unconnected verses having been pronounced in his hearing, he at once repeated the whole of them in a reversed order, beginning with the last verse and proceeding backward, to the first. It is said of Pascal that he "forgot nothing of what he had read, heard, or seen." Sir William Hamilton, on whose authority we give the above facts, mentions the case of a young Corsican who could, without a moment's hesitation, repeat "thirty-six thousand names in the order in which he had heard them, and then reverse the order and proceed backward to the first"—being able to do this after the lapse of a whole year between the time of hearing the names and that of repeating them.

On one occasion, one said to some of his young clergy, "young brethren, if at any time you find your preaching productive of good, and that your congregation value your exhortations, beware of being pulled up and losing your balance! Self-respect is valuable and useful; but as there will be a sufficient growth each day, out it close every morning. And when, through the goodness of God, you are successful in your ministry, enter into your closet, fall down on your knees before the throne, and to the Lamb ascribe all the praise, the honor and the glory."