

THE RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCER.

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TERMS AND NOTICES.

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JOSEPH MCLEOD, ... Editor.

All Communications for insertion, should be addressed, Joseph McLeod, Fredericton.

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Religious Intelligencer.

SAINT JOHN, N.B., APRIL 2, 1869.

BE ENCOURAGED!

All men are subject to feelings of discouragement. Christians are not by any means except; on the contrary, they are equally liable with all other classes of individuals, to be the victims of despondency. It is also true that christians are possessed of a serenity unknown to others, which leaves the open to receive wounds from sayings and doings, by others would be passed unnoticed and unavenged.

Numberless things that would not have a slight effect on others, deeply wound the children of God. It is often the case, too, that the things that would most deeply, come from those of whom other things are expected—from brethren who should extend sympathy rather than censure. Words as thoughtlessly uttered; looks are carelessly given, or actions heedlessly indulged in, that fall with heavy sense upon those who are struggling for the master, over their fears and temptations. Church members do not always consider how much their minister need sympathy at their hands. They are not sufficiently careful to provide for their necessities, or to help them bear their burdens. They are inclined to throw the whole responsibility connected with the management of church affairs, and the various religious services upon the minister. Old ministers do not always give assistance to the younger, who are aiming honestly and earnestly to be useful; and the younger do not in all cases entertain so great a degree of respect and reverence for the older, as they should. These things all produce depression of spirits. Did each exhibit a jealous care for the peace and prosperity of all the others, there would be no hours of pain and heartache spared the christian. As advice to the disconsolate, we append an extract from a letter recently written by an elderly minister of Christ to a young brother:—“In the trials of the ministry and the press of care you sustain, ever overshadow the pathway of your feet? If so, take fresh courage from the promises of the Lord and reassure thy faith in his precious word. Do the tardiness of the friends of Christianity, and the swiftness of its enemies at times, try thy patience or arouse thy fears? Still I repeat, re-assure thy faith in the word of the Lord, and press on in thy good work. The Master never was frustrated by the oppositions and trials he met in His great work, but with a patience and perseverance worthy of all imitation, he moved steadily and calmly towards the end for which he lived, suffered and died.”

What is applicable to the young minister, is as much so to every and every christian. Remember the declarations of the word of God, and remember them as intended for us, whatever our circumstances. Think too, of Christ, who is revealed not only as the Saviour, but as our example in all things; and thinking of him, labour to possess his Spirit, and bearing meekly, for his sake, all burdens, from whatever cause, which it may be our lot to bear, allowing no opposition or grievance to turn us from the way, walk in the course which he has left for those who would participate in his joy and glory.

YARMOUTH CORRESPONDENCE.

YARMOUTH, 20th March, 1869.

MY DEAR BROTHER.—The *Religious Intelligencer* pays in its weekly visit as usual, and is not less welcome now than it was years ago. When its beloved projector, proprietor and editor was removed from his work below to service above, I feared that the paper would suffer, especially in that certain something which made it at one and the same time denominational and unsectarian. That was the feature which interested me especially. But my fears—I say it with no intention to flatter any one—were groundless. I only do justice to my own convictions in writing this. And without saying more, except to wish you great success in your important work, I would, with your permission, resume my place as an occasional correspondent, if nothing more, and give expression to thoughts on current events from time to time.

But first let me add my testimony to that which I find in a recent number of the *Intelligencer*, respecting the Christian character and great worth of Bro. Joseph Durkee, of Carleton, Yarmouth. I had the pleasure of counting him among my personal friends, and am able, from frequent intercourse with our departed brother, to corroborate all that is said of his love to the cause of the Redeemer. That he was warmly attached to his denomination is true, but he was emphatically a lover of the gospel and of good men. He could rejoice in the prosperity of all who loved the Lord Jesus Christ, and was ever ready to respond to the call of any christian brother who sought his help in promoting the work of God. Others might take counsel of their feelings; but Bro. Durkee obeyed the voice of duty. Christians of his stamp are fewer than we might expect from those who profess to follow him who said: “If any man will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily, and follow me.” Doubtless cross-bearing is not possible where christians follow their feelings.

I have been expecting, from the same friendly person, notice of the death of another Christian brother, prominent in your denomination, a relative of our Brother Durkee. I refer to the late Mr. Hobson, of Chelogue Point, in this County, whom the Master took to himself on the 10th of January last. Without attempting anything biographical, I should like the privilege of giving some personal reminiscences of our departed brother. I formed his acquaintance about five years ago, and well remember when and where we first met, and what impressions his conversation made upon me. It was remarkably easy and original. It flowed freely and naturally. Its range was extensive. A quiet humor was one characteristic. It was seasoned with salt. A devout recognition of God as our Father, and a joyous familiarity, as of one who had access to a friend, were apparent. Subsequent intercourse ripened our acquaintance into friendship; and in his removal I feel that I have sustained positive loss.

Brother Robbins was a remarkably good hearer. It was a pleasure to preach when he was present and in sight. He had, without exception, the most sympathetic countenance I ever saw in a hearer. Any reference to the love of Christ would bring the tears to his eyes. Smiles and tears would alternate many times in the course of a single sermon. His nod of approval would put life into the dullest preacher. He would not hesitate to utter a fervent “Amen”

when his heart prompted it. I need not say that many hearers, so called, are the plague of those who preach. The dull, leaden, unvarying countenance; the eye that is looking into vacancy; the averted face; the attitude which speaks of endurance; the restlessness from side to side are hard to be borne; laughing, whispering, and sleeping are intolerable.

Brother Robbins loved to add a word of exhortation to the sermon. He never rose, as some do merely because they must, with no idea of what they ought to say. His difficulty was that thoughts, passages of scripture, and words of entreaty, crowded upon him, and he found it hard to keep within the limits which he felt to be desirable. And yet he was never boisterous, never reverent. His addresses were always delivered in a conversational tone. His speaking was remarkably natural.

Brother Robbins had the gift, which is rare, of introducing religious conversation at any time. This is a gift greatly to be coveted, and where our lives correspond with our speech, it can be made very effective in promoting the good of others. It is a gift which may be cultivated to an indefinite extent, and like other gifts, disease seriously impairs it. There is reason to believe that if we ask for this endowment, and use it faithfully, we shall receive. At the same time God bestows more abundantly upon some than upon others. Bro. Robbins was naturally endowed with this precious gift, and also cultivated it.

Our Brother was noted for his hospitality and his fine social qualities. He was a “good company” emphatically. His cordial welcome was endorsed by what followed. The immense concourse brought together on the occasion of his burial, may be regarded as the product of the pleasant impressions which the hospitality and kindness of the deceased had made upon the public mind. If we would have friends as is a covenant with God to serve him, in his church, forever. It takes in the whole of life for these to come.

If these are the truths, which we believe them to be, the dissolution of such a relation is a fearful step, by whatever means or agencies, may be brought about. It is akin to perjuring one's self. It exposes the soul to ruin by removing its restraints and protection. It wounds the church and grieves the Holy Spirit. When rashly done, by minister or society, without the best of reasons, it alienates from the church the heart and mind of the persons excommunicated, and utterly destroys her influence over them. An additional mischief done by such hasty cutting off, is the paralysis of the moral courage of those dropped. One failure suggests the possibility of another, and when the Spirit again awakens the soul the temper uses this as a powerful hindrance to a second trial at reformation.

We say not that immorality should be tolerated in the church. Delinquencies of every kind should be promptly cured. But we wish to impress it upon ministers, generally, that there is need of greater effort upon the part of all to prevent the necessity of separation from the church, and the exercise of all the forbearance with those who show weakness in the faith, consistent with the honor of Christ.

There is need of more frequent and thorough teaching upon the high relation of church membership. Impress this more fully upon the minds and hearts of young converts, and they will become inspired with a deeper sense of their obligations to pay their vows to the church and to God.—Exchange.

CONVENT REVELATIONS.

Last week we published an article from an English paper headed as above. Of this the *Freeman* says:—

“The Religious Intelligencer of this week repeats two stories about convents, one of which was explained and the other proved untrue almost as soon as they were first published. It is true that a daughter of Lord French was in a convent at Rothfarnham, and that her mother was not allowed to take her away; but it is also the fact that she was placed there by her father, with special instructions to that effect. Lord and Lady French have been separated for some time, and Lord French, for some reasons not given, seems to have taken a new wife, whose legal guardian is, as far as I can learn, his wife. The story that five nuns were found imprisoned in underground dungeons, in a convent at Louvain has been proved to be wholly untrue.”

We are unable now to find the paper from which we clipped the statement, suffice it to state that was a reliable journal (the *London Christian World*) of the latest date which we had then received. We have received later numbers since, but have been unable to find a denial of the case as at first stated.

However, admitting that the *Freeman* is correct in its statement, it is very far from proving the conventional system a correct one, and as affirmed by its admirers, promotive of purity and holiness. It is difficult for intelligent and pure-minded Protestants, and in many instances Catholics as well, to understand why it is necessary that convents should be so much like prisons in their outward appearance, if inside they are, as asserted, so supremely the shades of innocence and chastity. If conducted after so godly a sort, why are they closed to all inspection; and why are the inmates forbidden to have intercourse with their relatives? Does it not seem plain that the great majority of those who spend their days in Convents are induced to enter by false representations of the character of such institutions, and that once within their high walls, and prison bars, they are under a dead conviction, and if they obey the Holy Spirit a number more will be added to the church.

I rejoice to add that our dear pastor has the affections of the people; and he is ever a welcome guest at their homes. Sister Barnes is in Carleton, St. John. She has been very sick, but I am happy to say she is better.

REIVAL.—Bro. W. H. Miles is now in Maysville, Arroostook Co., Maine. He writes: “I have been laboring in this country since January 1st. I have been in several places, and the Lord has blessed my labors; many sinners have been made happy in the love of Christ. I came to this place (Maysville) one week ago. There was not one individual to witness for Jesus in the first few meetings. There had not been religious service here for about six years; and the people were extremely wicked. Since I commenced holding meetings the grace of God has been wonderfully displayed; and in the last meeting we had there were forty seven to bear testimony to the power of the gospel. Within a week thirty-three have given their hearts to God; and the Holy Spirit is still being poured out. Pray for us that the good work may not cease till this whole community shall know the power of God to save. This is an inviting field. The people have considerable means. It is my intention to remain in this country this year, devoting what ability God has given me to his service.”

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