

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, MAY 5, 1871.

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Fredericton, April 7, 1871.

The Intelligencer.

SERVICE OF MAMMON.

There are few who have not heard or perused these words, which fell from the lips of our divine Lord: "Ye can not serve God and mammon." Some have felt the full meaning of these words, and have realized the dangerous path they were treading. Others have allowed these words, often repeated, to pass unheeded. Others hear them, but are blind to their meaning. This sentence taken as the rule of life, would guide erring mortals in the narrow path. Its meaning, simple and easily comprehended, would not fail to convict many souls, if serious meditation were devoted to it. It allows but two ways of living, either a life spent in the service of God, exerting every effort to promote Christ's kingdom, or a life spent in the service of mammon, with every action devoted to the furtherance of Satan's power. "Ye can not," These words will admit of no doubt. And when Christ has positively asserted this fact, will man, the creature of his hands, defy its truth by protesting that we can engage in the service of God and yet walk in the ways of the world. These men are doing daily, by their actions. They profess to be disciples of Jesus, but we see nothing that differs from the vile, hardened sinner only the cloak of morality which the openly flagitious do not wear. Their whole aim is to gain influence, wealth, and power, so that the world will do them reverence. How often do persons of this class unite with the visible church to gain some coveted object? They well know that all true Christian men and women are regarded by the world as exemplary characters, though the world may not imitate their example. By uniting with this most honorable organization they think to gain the esteem and honor of all men—of the evil and the good—but they only bring reproach upon the pure cause; and through them religion is often ridiculed as a cunningly-devised fable. Well may Satan be pleased with this work, for he has an active corps engaged, and they are accomplishing much. This class frequently succeed so far that good men will recommend them as highly esteemed and respected citizens. They will say, "Oh, yes; Bro. D. is a worthy man. He has been a member of the E.—Church for many years." This same Bro. D. may possess a heart devoted to Satan's work, but clothed with the mantle of hypocrisy he moves among the good of earth as a brother and a friend. To the Christian, these words form a double service are ever arousing conscience, when tempted to act in opposition to the teachings of the good Spirit. We need not hesitate in determining what course to pursue; for these words are a scale which will weigh every action. But how often do we forget to use this rule! We say, "Well, there can not be much harm in doing this, or going there. Others as good as we indulge in these pleasures. Why should any one accuse us of wrong? We can still be Christians." We commit a great error in thus reasoning. In the judgment, what will it concern us as to what others have done? Who is to be our judge? the world whom we strive to please, or God whom we serve as nearly as we can, after gratifying the selfish desires of nature? The esteem of the world will then avail naught; but the sins which we committed daily, and which we supposed trifling because others committed them, will be sufficient to bar the gates of heaven against our souls forever.

Then let us take up our cross and press onward, regardless of the acts of others. Let us resolve to never commit an act that we could not with propriety invoke divine blessing upon. If we can not ask God's blessing upon anything, it must be part of mammon's service; and we can not engage in it without incurring the wrath of Him who has said, "Ye can not serve God and mammon."

RELIGIOUS THRIFT.

There is a religious thrift which redeems the time knowing that the days are evil; and there is a religious thrift which seeks to serve God with that which is without cost. No words of reproach can too strongly condemn and satirize the miserly habit that sometimes appears in the religious life. It is in effect, "I will, if possible, unlike David, be content to offer unto the Lord my God of that which doth cost me nothing. I desire to get to heaven at last, and to enjoy the ineffable splendor and rapturous blessedness of the Celestial City; but it shall be, if God permit, at the very minimum of personal cost. I will strive to this grand and glorious goal at as steady a pace and at as low a rate as I can. It shall cost me only just what is absolutely necessary. I will do it as cheaply as I can, and with as much economy of zeal and effort and substance as I may be able. I will spend as little time as possible in prayer, as little time as possible in meditation. I will as rarely as I find practicable attend a prayer-meeting or a week night service. I will withhold from God whatever I may be able of affection, of love, of self-devotion and of faith. I will give myself no more pains than a mere decent and passable piety demands to keep myself in the love of God, in the practice of righteousness, in the service of my Saviour. I will suffer as little inconvenience as I can in my obedience; I will make no open avowals, no distinct and unequivocal professions, no public and solemn commitments of myself to the Christian life and calling. It is possible to be saved without them, and so they are an unnecessary risk and expenditure of energy and power. I will lose no credit with the world that I can possibly retain. I will slip every privilege and opportunity I can of contributing in service to God's staff of workers, and in wealth to God's sacred treasury. I will merit no reproach of fanaticism, and bear no cross of shame or scorn. No one shall charge me with being righteous overmuch, or liberal beyond my necessity or my means. No one shall be carried beyond himself by the contagious power and enthusiasm of my example; and no one shall be inclined to excessive praise or be tempted to

pronounce a vain eulogy over my dust. I will serve God as cheaply as I can. I will seek to win the crown of life, but it shall cost me if possible less than any one else to win it. I will aspire to wave the palm of triumph, but I will shrink when I can from active warfare. I will gain the rich rewards of everlasting life, but it shall cost me nothing or next to nothing to gain them."

Who does not feel that all this is utterly alien from the spirit of the gospel and the temper of Christ? Who does not see that this spiritual parsimony is a virtual denial and renunciation of the very genius and essence of our faith? Who will not at once admit that it is altogether unworthy and unfitting in disciples of Him who gave His own divine nature to humiliation and scorn for us, who gave His own pure life to unwearied, self-forgetting service on our behalf, who gave His body of humiliation to be nailed to the cruel cross and His own large heart to be crushed and broken for our sin?

In this luxurious and effeminate age, when on every hand the endeavor is made to avoid inconvenience and discomfort, and secure the ease and indulgence which wealth and enterprise bring to our command, there is need to beware lest our religious profession become a softly cushioned service, and our Christian life of self-sacrifice an empty and unmeaning shell. With great good sense and the clearest Scripture to back us, we repudiate all ideas of penance and voluntary infliction of pain as a moral discipline and a means of spiritual grace; but better a hair shirt and spiked shoes than downy beds of ease and pillowed slumber and indulgence; better a religion that costs a little if it is only physical pain, than a religion that costs us nothing in holy service and sacrifice.

In this time of wide-spread universal business engagements, when the common habit of mind and thought is formed and fostered by a self-regarding, if commercially sound and ethically unobjectionable economy, there is need to be careful how we allow the principles of trade to dominate in the religious life. To drive a close and hard bargain may be good in commerce, but it is bad in religion. A piety which gives to God no more than can be possibly helped, and keeps to itself all that can possibly be kept,—a piety of bargain and compact,—is of a very questionable and very doubtful character indeed. To desire to render cheap service, and to offer cheap sacrifice, and to gain the richest and largest results, is to cherish a religious thrift contrary to the spirit of religion, and is sure in the end to defeat itself. That which costs nothing, religious experience and duty is commonly worth nothing. That which comes without labor and sacrifice goes without blessing and reward. He who sows sparingly reaps sparingly. He who will save his life shall lose it. God loves a cheerful giver of sacrifice and offering, not one who gives grudgingly or of necessity and constraint. Largely and freely has God blessed us, bountifully has he bestowed his gifts and liberally has he lavished his love upon us. Shall we be niggardly and parsimonious in our return to him? Or shall we not rather abound in the work of the Lord, and give our best service, our best affection, our best toil, our ripest thought, our highest effort, our most glowing zeal to him to whom we owe our life, our joy, our salvation, our all? Shall we not rather say, "I will not offer unto the Lord my God of that which doth cost me nothing." T. G.

NOW.

A grand device of the adversary, by which he seeks to ensnare every heart, is procrastination. It is not alone the impenitent, urged by conscience to perform present duty, who are continually waiting a more convenient season. The Christian is assailed in like manner. Five, ten, or twenty years hence, he is assured, he may execute some noble purpose; but just now he will excuse himself. And so the mass of men live, resolved to do something in the future, but neglecting to do anything at present.

The most of the failures in life, all the difference between what ought to be and is not, a majority of the crime, and the greater part of the vice that curses mankind, are the legitimate result of this fatal waiting. It is indulged by parents, and their children in turn exhibit the same habit. It is practiced by teachers and preachers, and multitudes who receive from them their methods, go out to wait, and return with nothing accomplished. It begets cowardice, increases self-distrust, adds to the swelling tide of laziness that is helping to fill our criminal asylums, and is yearly peopling the nether world with those who lift their voices in despair.

Aside from its sinfulness, such a course is almost invariably fatal. How frequent are the admonitions on this very point. And so you walk among the graves, learn a lesson. They are of all lengths, and the inscriptions on the headstones show that their inmates were of all ages. God would thus remind us that no age or condition is safe from the destroyer. Our daily experience proves its truth. The death-angel visits the very street on which we live; he knocks at our next door may be, and takes those by whom we may have sat an hour before.

Thus He would teach us that safety lies in a present preparation. Are we right now, fully consecrated and devoted? If so, we are prepared for whatever the Master saith. We need not then be anxious about future results. It pleases him that one labor here and another there; one in prosperity, another in adversity; one till his years are many, and another but a little while, what need that be to us? The command to each is, follow where I lead, and now.

Who stops short of this, does it at his own peril. "Behold now is the accepted time." Can it be at all consistent with duty or safety thus to keep back the efforts that are required of us? If death should come down at this moment on the members of the Christian church, what proportion of them would be found ready? It is well to call sinners to repentance, but do not many nominal Christians

need a call to Christian activity? He who simply professes what he does not in reality possess, is like the soldier who sleeps on the enemy's mine, to which the match has been already applied. There are many in quite as imminent a condition. Delay is as dangerous to the simple professor, as to the open blasphemer. If either knows duty, the only safety lies in performing it, and that at once.

The world is perishing because men, churchmen and all, are half-hearted, practically deceivers, so like the one who said "I go, Sir," but went not; We are ready to acknowledge the Divine existence, our own responsibility, the worth of souls, the prevalence and effects of sin, the conditions of those in its grasp, but how much further do we go? Do our daily activities really witness that we consider them realities, and that we are living in acknowledgment of them? By how much do our lives differ from those who possess far less than we? We say the world is unfair; that it judges the church by its faithless members. But can each one say to the Father, "Thou knowest that I am not to blame for any of this?" The world is apt to criticize very severely, but seldom unfairly.

Would we see the church strong and prevailing? Would we see it meet the tide of skepticism that is rolling in upon us, and push it back, and plant its foot on the neck of every evil shape? This is what the Bible promises that we may see, and when we arise in spirit of unyielding activity, with Christ's "now" in our hearts, this is what we shall see.—M. Star.

REUBENITES.

Discouraging indeed was the prophecy of Jacob, concerning his oldest son, "Unstable as water, thou shalt not excel." Yet it was intimated that he was strong, capable, and might become distinguished, but for a little defect. How many are in the same plight! Spoiled by one little defect; almost successful, but not quite. They know enough, can tell just how prosperity can be won, are astonished at the failures of others, and astonish others by their own. This was the case of Reuben. He had ambition, strong desire to do well, and could almost grasp success, yet he always failed. "Thou shalt not excel," clung to him like a decree of fate; it followed him everywhere, in all business, in every undertaking. This was discouraging, heart-sickening. Yet there was compensation in his nature. There always is in such cases. Nature breaks the blows of misfortune. Such unstable, unprosperous souls take things easily; they have great powers of endurance; disappointments strike them lightly and never last long.

But the saddest feature of Jacob's words is the prophetic. It is not Reuben alone who was not to excel, but his posterity. The sins of the fathers are visited upon the children. Men beget sons in their own likeness. Jacob saw the future, it passed before his mind in panorama, and the Reubenites travelled a hard road to the end. Very little is said of them in Hebrew history. They furnished no leaders, rulers, judges, nor men of valor or distinction; did nothing that was worth recording, except one. When that noble woman, Deborah, called her countrymen to strike for freedom, and led them to victory, the Reubenites took part,—the same part which thousands take in the great enterprises of the church of Christ,—they kept up a great thinking, but did nothing more. How withering the mention of them in Deborah's exultant song. Woven into the midst of the glowing narration of heroic deeds, is the terse sentence, "In the divisions, (in the villages,) of Reuben there were great thoughts of heart." They discussed the case with great energy, talked about it in their families, in the streets, in places of trade, and public concourse, but could not quite decide to rally to the call. So they did nothing but think and discuss.

These Reubenites are still plenty. They keep up a great thinking, have good desires, and intend, sometimes, to do a good thing, but come to no decision, are never quite ready for action, and delay till the opportunity is past. There are mission churches, liberal donations, heroic efforts to save souls, earnest preachers of the gospel, existing all around us and among us, in thoughts, purposes, expectations, but never developed into actions. They mean to do, are almost decided to do, come very near to doing, but just fail. The most that can be said to them is, "They have great thoughts of heart." One first-class speech, one grand share of prompt execution would make them mighty men; without that they will remain Reubenites forever.

BACKBONE PEOPLE.

It is with men as with animals—you may divide them into two classes, vertebrate and invertebrate. And there are remarkable for dignity and elevation in the scale of existence, vertebrate or backboneed; their backbones give them eminence and place; all animals to which we apply the term "inferior" want this backbone, and they can only crawl or creep because they are invertebrate. We have often thought, when looking among men, that this is the great distinction we notice between them—the successful and the unsuccessful, the principled and the unprincipled, the true and false. The schoolmaster, as he bids farewell to his pupils about to enter the great world of action and business, says, "I know they will never make anything of that boy—there is no backbone in him." Jenkins, the grocer looks doubtfully at his apprentice, and says, as he shakes his head, "Ah, I wish I had never had anything to do with that lad; I fear there is no backbone in him." And Thomson, the architect, refuses to have anything to do with building the row of houses, "For," says he, "there is no knowing where to find Williams, who wants me to build them; he has no backbone." These are customary modes of speech, and they represent the simple truth of life. We recoil instinctively from the touch on spider and the wasp, the leech and the king and the class of persons of whom these little creatures are a sort of moral analogy, because they have no backbone. They can sting sometimes;

they can weave a brittle web sometimes; they leave here and there a slimy trail; they can draw blood; and the instincts of society and humanity recoil from them. They have no backbone.

THREE CENTURIES OF PROTESTANTISM IN EUROPE.

The three leading races of Europe are the Teutonic, the Celtic, and the Slavonic nations. The former are to be found in England, Scotland, and the North of Ireland, Sweden, Denmark, Norway, Holland, and Prussia (with the exception of Posen), Upper and Lower Austria, as well as the minor German States, and German Switzerland. The Celts are to be found in the Highlands of Scotland, the South of Ireland, in France, in the French-speaking cantons of Switzerland, and in Belgium. The Slavonic race comprises the Russians, the Poles, the Bohemians, the Serbs, the Croates, the Lithuanians, and others.

Reubens, who gave much attention to this subject, writing in 1843, estimated the populations of Teutonic blood, pure and mixed, in Europe at 83,700,000; the Celtic at 68,000,000; and the Slavonic at 58,000,000. Or, omitting the British Isles, we may say that there were in 1843 about 62,700,000 Teutons, 58,000,000 Celts, and the same number of Slavonians throughout the European continent.

Nearly the whole of the Teutons are Protestants, and there has long been in operation a fixed law by which the Protestant powers have been rising in the world, while those under Papal influence have been on the decline. There are certain great crises in the history of nations and of individuals, when, on their conduct for a comparatively brief period, their whole future destiny turns. This, as a rule, happens when truth and error are in the providence of God, presented to them side by side, and they are asked to state which they prefer. France rejected Protestantism and embraced Popery, and she has been smarting for her choice ever since. When the so-called "Invincible Armada" threatened the overthrow of Protestant England, Spain could boast of 43,000,000 inhabitants; she has now only 14,000,000. Heaven has stricken her in her first-born as it smote the Egyptians. Upon the growth of Protestantism in Ireland, prosperity depends in that unhappy land, yet within our times, Ireland has lost upwards of 2,500,000 inhabitants, more than one-third of the whole. Left under the dominion of the Papacy, the logical demonstration is that these countries will become, like the deserted Palmyra, Thebes, or Memphis, howling wildernesses, residences for the toad, the bat, the wolf, and the serpent.

Looking at Protestant nations, Great Britain had 10,800,000 when the Armada came; she has now 32,000,000 in those islands. Besides this, she has largely peopled America, India, and Australia, New Zealand, and other islands of the South. She has centupled her wealth; she has seen her children grow from ten millions to ten times ten millions, and has spread the Bible all over the world.

Look at Prussia. Only a century and a half ago the title of the King of Prussia was first assumed. But Protestant truth was offered to it and accepted, and amid struggles it spread. Blessed with a succession of able electors, and then of kings equally distinguished, Prussia became a formidable kingdom. It is thus a fact that the Protestant powers of Europe have for three centuries been rising, while those enslaved by the Papacy have been sinking into deeper depths.

During the last fifty years the following countries have increased in population as follows:—Russia, 100 per cent.; England, 119; Prussia, 72; Austria, 27; France, 12 per cent. M. Block says, "The true increase of a population, however, is the excess of births over deaths. In this respect France does not appear to advantage. The excess is in France three times less than in Austria, five times less than in Prussia, six times less than in Russia, and eight times less than in Great Britain." Here it will be perceived that the great Romish powers, France and Austria, are prevented by some physical law from making the same progress with the other leading nations of Europe, and their voices must necessarily become less potent in the affairs of the world than they have hitherto been. If the scheme of German unity be fully consolidated, this mighty power will be wielded, not by Papal but by Protestant hands. And Protestant truth is capable of raising the century-formed empire to a position from which Popery and Celtic impulsiveness and gallantry will not be able to displace her.

DIVERSITIES OF GIFTS.

A young lady of rank and piety, in Scotland, wished much to draw others to the Saviour. In the circles where she mingled, it seemed impossible for her to speak for Christ,—to make personal appeals for her Master,—and for a season there was a constant struggle in her mind. Whenever she attempted to utter the constant thought and wish of her heart, the gay laugh, the merry jest, or light and frivolous manner of those about her, stunted every effort. In her discouragement, she laid the matter before the Lord, and then, as usual, closed the day with sacred song.

Her maid soon after entering, besought the young lady to sing along the words of Jesus; and then, in broken accents, told of the effect of those sweet strains upon her own heart. "No words of entreaty," she said, "could ever affect my soul as those plaintive songs to which for weeks I had listened, as my mistress poured out in them her love for the Redeemer, and her faith and trust in him."

This was indeed a joyous revelation to the youthful disciple; and so filled with gratitude was she for this discovery, that sleep fled from her eyes. "That talent," she said, "I now consecrate to God. I will sing for him; and if through this means I may touch souls, my happiness will be complete!"

From this period she gave herself almost wholly to the study and expression of sacred melodies. To a skilful touch upon many instruments she added a voice of uncommon pathos and power,—a voice which could en-

trance and thrill her hearers. Ah, what joy now to sing of that wondrous love that had come to save our race—of him who careth for all, who took little children in his arms, and who blessed with peace unutterable aged saints!

"That sweet story of old," seemed through her rendering of its marvellous truths, more potent than the studied pages from the pastor's lips. In drawing-room or hall, or in the cottages of humble friends, she sung for Jesus. The Master blessed her work for him, and before two years had passed away, she had the delight of knowing that many immediately surrounding her had, through the gift bestowed by the heavenly Father, been led to see their sins, and flee to the "Ark of Refuge."

WHO IS THE GREATEST?

There are many young men in the ministry and many others contemplating it, with a desire to devote their lives to it. These young men, or a majority of them, at least, desire to be great preachers. It is natural, yet more, it is right they should. He who engages in any vocation, and lacks the zeal and energy that aspire to something above mediocrity, is sure to remain in the lower ranks. It is this burning zeal to do something great for God's honor and glory, this noble aspiration to be a master workman, that enables the faithful minister to heed Paul's admonition to Timothy: "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." In the ministry, as elsewhere, "there is room enough up stairs"—the lower rooms may be crowded, but "up stairs" never.

But what is great preaching? Who is the greatest preacher? There is a diversity of opinion. If, as some seem to think, the great object of preaching is to make a name, to draw crowded houses, to create a sensation, then, surely, the greatest preacher is he who makes the greatest name, and creates the greatest sensation. But Paul says: "We preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake." If the object of preaching is to overwhelm the mind with a display of learning, to delight the imagination with glowing conceptions, or to dazzle the fancy with scintillations of beauty and loveliness, mingling in kaleidoscopic coruscations, the greatest preacher is he who is most successful in these things. But again Paul says: "I had rather speak five words with my understanding, than by my voice I might teach others also, than ten thousand words in an unknown tongue." And again: "Christ sent me to preach the gospel not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect." And what says the master? How reads the commission? "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." Two things are very plainly taught here. 1. We are to preach the gospel. 2. The object of preaching is the salvation of souls. Then the greatest preacher is he who preaches the gospel most faithfully, and is instrumental in the salvation of the greatest number of souls, either by bringing sinners to repentance or building them up in that holiness without which they can not see the Lord.

COUNT THE COST.

The religion of Jesus demands real service. It is not a mere profession. To profess it is not enough. It must absorb the thoughts, control the affections, and employ the hands. Christianity does not consist in forms or ceremonies. The lips cannot manage all there is of it in playful or poetic phrase. It does not effervesce in song or sermon, nor end its meaning at the altar or communion table. It is not fully represented in spirit, surplice, nor ritual, nor Sabbath observances. Persons may be in God's house serving the devil. The solemn words of public worship, the loud songs of choral praise, the beautiful array of faces and fashions in the sanctuary are not the service which "our Father seeth in secret."

True religion does not consist in opinions, however fervent. It is the motive back of all that makes the Christian. It is the image of the blessed Master on the heart that throws all beauty into the face, and all the music into the voice, and all helpfulness into the hand. Love, as the prime mover of all that goes into one's life and character, is the testing principle of the Gospel. For energy may have various motives; knowledge may have no charity; consistency may be ice, as clear as cold; perseverance may be all of the head and quite for selfish sake. But the service that God accepts, call it by what name we may, must be in spirit and in truth. It must be based on the Gospel itself, and not on what men say about the Gospel; it must spring from personal love for the Saviour, and not from mere churchly association or social circumstances. Religion is the service of love and not a bondage to letters. Love makes no reserve; holds back nothing; has no policy; flatters no tradition; boasts of no Calvin, or Luther, or Wesley, or Campbell; sacrifices everything for the one sufficient and satisfying Christ who is "all and in all," and counts it privilege to talk and work for Him in whatsoever sphere or circle Providence appoints.—Methodist Recorder.

THE SABBATH.—I think, with a shudder, sometimes, of what life would be without the Sabbath—if day after day the great wheel of the world went round with its ceaseless clatter, never a rest in motion, never a pause in sound. I speak of the Sabbath only in its original meaning, as a word that signifies "rest." And in this very sense it is by most men, and ought to be by all, esteemed as the very greatest of all the blessings which the Almighty Benevolence has bestowed upon man. The worst Sabbath-breaker of all is the ingrate who is not thankful when the Sabbath comes round. He may go to church three times a day, and be asustere in all outward observances, but he breaks the Sabbath in his heart if he rejoices when it is over. He who thoroughly enjoys his day of rest, lives from morning to night in a state of thankful-