

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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The Intelligencer.

PREMIUM TO NEW SUBSCRIBERS.

"THE OPEN DOOR" WITH EACH PAPER!!

We are anxious to increase our list of subscribers. We have therefore been at some pains to make arrangements whereby we can offer the following liberal inducement:

To each NEW SUBSCRIBER SENDING ONE YEAR'S SUBSCRIPTION (\$2.00) WE WILL SEND (POST-PAID) A COPY OF "THE OPEN DOOR."

INDUCEMENTS TO CANYASSERS.

To our present subscribers we are deeply thankful for their faithful adherence to the paper. That they may also receive the premium, we make them the following offer:

To each person who will send us, before the first of January next, FIVE NEW SUBSCRIBERS (with the cash, \$10.00) WE WILL FORWARD A COPY OF "THE OPEN DOOR." The names may be sent singly or all together, it only being required that the whole number be sent before January first, to secure the premium.

The book which we propose to give is a good one, and we know the reader cannot but be interested in its perusal. Its retail price in the United States is \$1.25; and it is only by special and very favorable arrangement with a friend in New York who is interested in the work, that we are able to offer it as we do.

Shall there not be a grand rally of the friends of the INTELLIGENCER to increase its subscription list? Begin the work at once, and carry it on vigorously, and we do not fear for the result. Send the names along as soon as possible. From whom shall we hear first?

REMEMBER THE POOR.

Winter is approaching; be mindful of the poor. You need not go far to find them; for the children of want are in every place. Speak a kind word, stretch forth the open hand of charity, and you will not lose your reward. Some there are whose poverty comes through misfortune. Business is dull, wages are small, there is sickness in the family, and death takes away the husband and the father, on whom the other leaned for support. Hard is then the struggle to provide bread for the table and fuel for the stove. Harder still and more bitter far, is it for such to beg for help. Those who most deserve help are those who cannot ask for it in loud and importunate tones; but they suffer in silence. Blame not too harshly the sensitiveness of those who will suffer rather than beg. Call it not pride, for it may spring, often does spring, from self-respect. Try to find such out, and help them with a sympathetic, Christ-like spirit.

Some there are whose poverty comes through crime. Vice has brought them out of a good situation, broken their health, and ruined their characters. Do not, in their wretchedness, oppress them with harsh words. They suffer. Help them first; warn them or reprove them afterward. Show that you have a heart which beats tenderly toward them, and try to win them to a better way by kindness. Oh! think of the power, the redeeming power there is in human sympathy and love. Those who are in trouble cannot forget the kindness which is then shown them, but will recall it with gratitude. Thus, you may have an influence which may lead some to Jesus.

Learn, like good scholars, one of the most useful and joyous of all arts—the art of giving. It is not enough to give to the needy. Give intelligently, so as not to encourage vice or laziness. Give to all; but especially unto those who are of "the household of faith." Give freely and willingly, that you may receive a blessing as well as those on whom you bestow your bounty.

Let there be personal sympathy. It is not the value of the gift, but the kindness of the giver which arouses gratitude. Not money, but love awakens love. Do good, not that you may be thanked, but because of the promptings of your better nature; and let "the blessings of Him that was ready to perish" rest on you. Then, though no trumpet may sound your fame, in the last great day you will hear the judge say: "I was an hungry, and ye gave me meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink; I was a stranger, and ye took me in; naked, and ye clothed me; I was sick, and ye visited me; I was in prison, and ye came unto me."

"Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."—Methodist.

AN ADDRESS BY A PRESIDENTIAL ELDER OF THE UNITED BRETHREN CHURCH was preaching in Minnesota, and was much admired by persons taking and laughing. He paused, looked at the disturbers, and said: "I am always afraid to reprover those who misbehave in church. In the early part of my ministry I made a great mistake. As I was preaching, a young man who sat before me was constantly laughing, talking, and making unbecomingly remarks. After the close of the service, one of the official members came and said to me: 'Brother, you have made a great mistake. That young man whom you reproved is an idiot.' Since then I have always been afraid to reprover those who misbehave in church, lest I should repeat that mistake, and reprover another idiot." During the rest of that service at least there was good order.—Herald and Presbyter.

"A person converted in youth," says John Angell James, "is like the sun rising on a summer's morning to shine through the long, bright day. But a person converted late in life is like the evening star, a lovely object of Christian contemplation, but not appearing till the day is closing, and then but for a little while."

WHAT WE HAVE; AND WHERE IT COMES FROM.

A SERMON,

PREACHED IN THE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, SHEFFIELD, BY THE REV. W. WILLIAMS.

On the occasion of the Annual Thanksgiving, November 9, 1871.

[Printed by request of the Congregation.]
"What hast thou that thou didst not receive?"—1 Cor. iv. 7.

These words came to the Corinthian church, as a humbling reminder of its original and inherent nothingness and spiritual destitution. It came at a time when some of the converts were so puffed up by their supposed advance in the study of christian philosophy, that they deemed they had, like the Psalmist, "more understanding than their teachers"—even though those teachers were the chosen and inspired apostles of their Lord and Saviour. They esteemed themselves to have eaten to the full of spiritual food; they reckoned that they were "rich" in knowledge. As kings, they had seated themselves in the place of authority, and had no longer need of their spiritual guide. To such men, the words of the text would come as a healthful medicine—abating the fever of their pride—their moral inflammation—and throwing them back upon those first principles of spiritual life which are found in the recognition of personal destitution, and of the great facts of divine provision and supply. If they were made to feel that all they had, or boasted was the gift of God, then would they be led to live in that humble dependence upon the divine grace, which is the only healthful state of being for the christian soul.

But not in spiritual things only is it well to be reminded that all our sufficiency is of God; it is for our moral health that we should not be allowed to forget that all things are of God: whether things relating to our earthly life and bodily needs or comforts, or things relating to our higher spiritual faculties or necessities, or even things relating to our future existence, and our most exalted aspirations.

We are gathered to-day in obedience to a divine law which bids us "render unto God thanksgiving," and the ostensible cause of our gratitude is the bountiful harvest of the earth's fruits, which we have been permitted to gather. The frosts and snows of the previous winter passed away in their due course, and again, under the working of the divine laws, the waters flowed and the rain descended, and the earth was softened for the operations of the husbandman. And the sun shone, and the warm air breathed upon the tender, springing plants of the earth, and they grew up till the glorious living green of nature's mantle was spread on the land. Then, under the influence of the sun and sunshine, "grass grew for the cattle, and herbs for the service of man." In due season, a waving sea of grassy fields invited the scythe of the mower, and golden grain smiled in rich abundance upon the sickle of the reaper. Meanwhile, under the benign power of the early and the latter rain, the growing root-crops increased in size and density, till, with few exceptions, a rich store lay ready in the earth, as food for man and beast. And, still, was the good hand of our God upon us; and we were permitted to use and safely to gather in the precious fruits of the earth. Thus another year of blessing and abundance has added its testimony to the truth of the divine promise, that "While the earth remaineth, seed-time and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night, shall not cease." The sickle has been put in, and once more the harvest of the earth is reaped. It is safely gathered, and carefully bestowed in the barn.

But this is but one of many causes of thanksgiving and praise with which our life is crowned. There is abundant reason for gratitude in the aspect of our national affairs. Peace and prosperity are within our borders. From all parts of the land come reports of flourishing commerce—of abundant employment—of increased development of the resources of the country. It may almost be said of us, as of Jerusalem of old, "There is no complaining in our streets." On all sides our land is increasing in population and in wealth; we are stretching out on the right hand and on the left; we are strengthening our cords, and at the same time strengthening our stakes—in our free institutions and in our gospel principles—laying a foundation, broad and deep, for a prosperous and permanent empire.

And we are at peace. The war-cloud has drifted from our horizon, and all things give promise of a glorious future, if we be true to ourselves and to our God; and, seek above all, to honor him, and to walk as a people in his fear. But the number and value of the national blessings, which we this day acknowledge as received from God, are more strongly felt—more clearly seen—by an outlook upon the nations.

The year has been a year of peace to us, and to the whole British Empire. But in a sister country the hand of the same merciful God has been seen in the chastisement of civil and of foreign wars.

France, overrun by Prussia, has had her inordinate pride humbled by the desolating hand and crushing heel of the invader. She has also suffered the horrors of civil war. Famine, fire, and bloodshed, have co-operated for her ruin; and, with the "dogs of war," the blood-hounds of infidelity and irreligion were let loose, and for a time fastened their fangs upon the throat of the nation. Bleeding and sore, she yet pants under the attack. And, on this side of the Atlantic, there are many who cannot, to-day, swell their song of thanksgiving with those notes of praise, to which we may attain our lips. The social life of the sister country is largely tainted with vice and corruption. These have produced their legitimate fruits in civic misrule and municipal spoliation. The people of the cities to-day, groan under a despotism more galling than that of Rehoboam, and are oppressed and plundered, with little mercy. It needs but small insight into the working of the fixed principles of the divine government, to connect these things with their cause. Wherever

evil is seen, look for sin. So the root of these social evils may be seen in the neglect of social duties; the ignoring of the divine rule—the too-absorbing pursuit of wealth, and ease, and pleasure; in a word—the forgetting of God. And, looking West, we have humbly to offer our thanksgiving to the Lord that we have been spared the desolating scourge of fire. In whole counties—after the anxious processes of the plow and the sower—after all the benign influences of heaven upon the land, and after the rejoicings of the harvest—the fruit has been mysteriously snatched away by the greedy and insatiable hand of the angel of fire. Before the face of this destroyer, the land was as the garden of Eden; behind it there is left a desolate wilderness, blackened and blasted by the flames. A wasted territory, ruined houses, a flying and terror-stricken people, suffering privation and death, have been the lot of these Western States, of many of these incentives to thanksgiving, which, by the mercy of God, stir all hearts to-day; for "it is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed."

And what shall we say, as we think of that great and fair city—the Queen of the West—which to-day was, and on the morrow was cast into the oven. Chicago—the city of a thousand virtues and a million vices. The city, which like Jonah's gourd, sprang up, as it was, in a night, and withered in a night. Now exalted into heaven, and now cast down into hell. Chicago—the city of wealth and progress, and material prosperity, and liberality, and pride and wickedness, miserable in the smallness of its beginning, terrible in the rapidity of its advance—the hurricane of flame swept through the city. Then, amid the crash and confusion of falling buildings, a tramping, terror-stricken crowd left a writhing track of the maimed and the dying. Then followed the agonies of that long night of suspense, as separated sufferers sought to find those they loved; and the wail of despair that rose from thousands of agonized hearts, as the morning light revealed the wretchedness and ruin. All these horrors combine to form a picture, such as God gives us—would have us study—of the final judgment, and the outpouring of wrath upon the unrepentant world.

We desire not to arrogate to ourselves a superior virtue, or a higher deserving; we simply bend in praise and thanksgiving unto God, who has given us richly all things to enjoy. "What have we that we did not receive?" Yet it is right to remember these things, as we praise the Lord for his goodness; and that we should set our face, as a people, against those national sins, which have called forth the divine reproof, e.g., arrogance, and pride, and the love of ease, and the disregard of his day and of his word, &c.

We have a government, which, in its real freedom and elasticity, stands out in strong contrast with despotism or democracy. We have free, civil institutions; the power to order our local well-being. God has given them; we acknowledge his hand in our mercies; let us see that we strive to preserve them—setting our face as a flint against the beginning of evil, and using our municipal and political privileges to combat and conquer whatever threatens to injure the moral health of the community.

But having these great but still inferior mercies, let us again ask, "What hast thou from the divine hand? Thou hast a free Bible. Once it was locked up in a foreign tongue, of which even the recognized instructors of the people were ignorant. Priests and monks, without scriptural light, were but blind leaders of the blind; "darkness covered the land, and gross darkness the people." And, even when, by the progress of the Reformation, this reproach was rolled away from christianity, the Word of God remained literally locked up by so many such sects as might often have been witnessed in the early days of the reformed church—when a group of earnest faces, desirous of looking into the Word of God, assembled round the one copy of the Scriptures, which was the envy and possession of a whole parish, and which was chained to a pillar in the church. None of our modern wearisomeness was felt, as these reverent heads were bent to listen to the slow and stumbling utterances of the one rare being among them who could read, and who undertook to make known the words of eternal life. And, later still, the Bible was locked up by ecclesiastical prohibition—the wisdom of man exalting itself above the wisdom of God, and declaring that the word that "maketh wise the simple," was a dangerous book for the unlearned. Therefore, in Spain, and in Italy, and in England, those who prized the word, have hidden it as a dangerous treasure in caves and cellars and secret places, bringing it out only by night, and then seeking to hide it where it could not be found—in their hearts: where alone it was safe—where alone it could profit them.

What a contrast to thy lot to-day! Thou hast the word of truth very nigh thee; it is in thine house and in thy hand. Seek also to hide it in thy heart, as the seed of good, and the preventative of sin.

And thou hast a free Sabbath. Leave to fulfill the command of God, and to dedicate to him the seventh day. More than once this has been lost. It was necessary to re-state the law to Israel, when its knowledge had been lost during the Egyptian bondage. As was again the case with the Babylonian captivity; the dominant heathen race ignored the special characteristic of the religion of Jehovah, and even in the lifetime of some in our community, the dominant, political power has sought to blot out the Sabbath from the calendar, because it was so inseparably connected with the religion of the Bible. The Directory of the French Revolution—like the council of the Commune—was a bitter foe to the religion of Jesus; and, therefore, gave the people a day of its own devising for that of the Lord's appointment: one day in ten for one in seven. These facts are as a warning to ourselves. The thing that has been, is the thing that may be. Our danger lies in our neglecting to guard the day from social desecration. The privileges we misuse, are the privileges we are in danger of losing.

Thou hast also a free Church. Instead of the bondage of Rome and of some modern ecclesiastical systems, there is the essential liberty and purity of our own Protestant communion—a communion formed after the model of the apostolic church; itself constructed on the divine type of the Jerusalem which is above, and is free, and is the mother of us all. We were never in bondage to any man, and can hardly appreciate the blessing of a religious system which suffers none to come between the soul and its God; which allows not of an earthly priesthood as the distributors of sacramental grace, but which erects one altar, with an unchangeable priesthood and an abiding sacrifice.

And, in these things, thou has a free Gospel. A proclamation from God which is "glad tidings of great joy." Not the tidings of a salvation which can be bought with money or by human works of righteousness, but by the precious—above all price—blood of the incarnate Son of the Most High; incarnate, that he might bear our sins and make an atonement for our transgressions. And not a doubtful message which may, perchance, belong to you, or, perchance may not; but a gospel free as the air you breathe—a gospel to be preached to every creature, and offered for the acceptance of every dying sinner—a gospel unbought; and unchangeable—the gift of God. And the glory of this gospel is, that it comprehends the supply of all your needs: a free Saviour, who will cleanse you from sin and set you free from condemnation; and a free Spirit, who will lead you into truth—giving you understanding in the will and mind of God, and who will comfort you with the truth: with the assurance that the will of God is, that you should not perish: that his mind is, that you should be sanctified through the truth, and so be prepared for his kingdom and glory.

And, on this Thanksgiving Day, it is well to remember that more than half of God's mercies which demand thy gratitude. Hast thou health, friends, happiness, worldly prosperity? any or all of these? Be thankful; they are good things all, and they are all of God. "What hast thou which thou didst not receive?" "Every good gift cometh down from above," and is God's dispensation of mercy to your soul, as designed to lead you nearer to himself, and to fasten you to his loving heart with the cords of gratitude and affection.

But let me ask each heart, "Hast thou Christ?" Ah! my dear friends, this is one of those searching and separating questions of the world of God, which divides the world into two classes. By many names and with differing expressions does God's word thus pierce to the joints and marrow in its searching queries, but one will suffice us now. "Believer, what hast thou to thank God for to-day?" Ah! thou hast present help in the midst of thy infirmity, thy God is at hand, and thou hast a present comfort in the midst of doubt and perplexity—"Unto the upright there ariseth light in the darkness." And thou hast a lively joy in the midst of humiliation and sorrow—"When thou passest through the waters I will be with thee." And thou hast beyond these things, a glorious hope in the midst of depression. For thou hast the blood of the atonement abiding in its power to satisfy for thy sin; thou hast the power of the Spirit of God to remove thy corruption; and thou hast always the love—the abiding love—of thy Father which is in heaven.

But, unbeliever, what hast thou to thank God for—especially to-day? Dost thou not know? I will tell thee. Thou hast still the offer of mercy. All the blessings I have named, are held out to you, and may be yours. Thou hast a long-suffering God, and he has given thee still a day of grace—a day in which thou mayest lay hold on eternal life, and be made glad and thankful with the riches of his love in Christ Jesus. I beseech you, "be no longer faithless, but believing." Even this day's commemoration may help you, or it may condemn you. The argument of a fruitful season is enough to condemn the heathen, leaving them "without excuse." From these natural things, they may learn the goodness and severity of God; his goodness in the benign influences and powers of nature, and his severity in requiring men to accept the conditions of his goodness, and co-operate with the heavenly forces. And, if the heathen are without excuse, how much more hast thou to teach thee the loving-kindness of the Lord? God's great mercies to thee are typified in the smaller mercies of a bountiful harvest we acknowledge to-day.

But it may be, some one here has mercies of a different cast and hue; not less truly mercies, but wearing a strange garb. It may be, thou hast sickness, weakness of body and of mind, and it is hard to bear. Perhaps thou hast domestic or family grief and trials, and they crush thy young spirit; it may be, pecuniary difficulties weigh on down; or some secret sorrow of which the world knows nothing, and which you can tell only to God. Well, thou hast still *His love and care*. Cast all thy care upon Him, for "He careth for thee."

Our earthly parents corrected us according to their pleasure, but He for our profit, *always*. He never makes a mistake. Thou hast received these things from God—and the medicine is right. Affliction springs not from the ground, but descends from God. Let thy faith look beyond the present, and, by God's grace, you shall "glory in tribulation also;" knowing that "tribulation worketh patience; and patience experience; and experience hope; and hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts, by the Holy Spirit given unto us." And, with this love in your heart, afflicted child of God, your song may be—

"For what shall I praise Thee
My God and my King?
For what blessings the tribute
Of thankfulness bring?
Shall I praise Thee for pleasure,
For health and for ease;
For the spring of delight
And the sunshine of peace?
For this world I praise Thee;
But if only for this
I should leave half untold
The donation of bliss,
I thank Thee for sickness,
For sorrow and care;
For the thorns I have gathered—
The thorns I bear."

The flowers were sweet,
But their fragrance is down:
They yielded no fruits,
They are withered and gone.
The thorn it was poignant,
But precious to me;
'Twas the messenger of mercy,
It led me to Thee."

The application of my sermon is but a word or two. "Thou hast" the blessings which I have tried to remind thee of; thy lot is full of mercies, acknowledged or unacknowledged; "And what hast thou that thou didst not receive?" The deduction from this is obvious and necessary, "Freely thou hast received, freely give."

You, my friends, have social enjoyments and domestic comforts; the ease and amenities of the nineteenth century; civilization far in advance of your forefathers. They were noted—as a community—for their piety and zeal. Let me ask—"Do you, with improved advantages, show a corresponding gratitude and devotion to God's service, and in God's cause?" I speak not in blame, but to prompt self-inquiry. Are the Bible and the Missionary Societies regularly supported? Is the pressing claim of the Home Mission attended to? The world's needs are very great, and God has entrusted you with a portion of his supply. I beseech you, "Be good stewards of the manifold grace of God."

Now, our thoughts to-day, pass on, naturally, from the harvest of this year of grace, 1871, to the great harvest—the final ingathering—when the blessed of the Lord shall gather, and raise around his throne the last thanksgiving song, whose notes shall roll and echo forever through the halls of heaven.

"Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honor, and power, and might, be unto our God, for ever and ever." AMEN.

A SERIOUS SUBJECT.

Never laugh at religion. Never make a jest of sacred things. Never mock those who are serious and in earnest about their souls. The time may come when you will count those happy who you laughed at—a time when your laughter will be turned into sorrow, and your mockery into heaviness. Whatever you please to laugh at, don't laugh at religion.

Contempt of holy things is the right road to infidelity. Once let a man begin to make a jest and joke of any part of Christianity, and I am never surprised to hear that he has turned out a downright unbeliever.

Have you really made up your mind to this? Have you fairly looked into the gulf which is before you, if you persist in despising religion? Call to mind the words of David: "The fool said in his heart, There is no God." The fool, and none but the fool! He has said it, but he has never proved it! Remember, if ever there was a book which has been proved true from beginning to end, by every kind of evidence, that book is the Bible. It has defied the attacks of all enemies and fault-finders. "The word of the Lord is indeed tried." It has been tried in every way, and the more evidently has it been shown to be the very handiwork of God himself.

Matthew Henry tells a story of a great statesman in Queen Elizabeth's time, who, retiring from public life in his latter days, and gave himself up to serious thought. His former gay companions came to visit him, and told him he was becoming melancholy. "No," he replied, "I am serious; for all are serious about me. God is serious in observing us, Christ is serious in interceding for us, the Spirit is serious in striving with us, the truths of God are serious, our spiritual enemies are serious in their endeavors to ruin us, and why then should not you and I be serious too?" Don't laugh at religion.—J. C. Ryle.

THE BETTER COUNTRY.

The man of severe toil, accustomed to fatigue, whether of the brain or of the muscles, thinks of heaven as a place of rest. The man whose lot is cast among vicious associates looks to heaven as the place of pure society. The poor man is interested in heaven as the place of satisfied want. The mourner for departed kindred attaches great importance to the ideas of reunion and recognition. Analyze the conceptions which any Christian forms of heaven, and they will be found to have been shaped by something special in his personal experience. The prominent points in his hope are in contrast with certain prominent points in his earthly condition. He thinks of some present discomfort or annoyance, and anticipates its opposite in another world. What troubles him most in this life he is delighted to believe will be absent from the life to come. Hence the value to so many of the various negatives by which heaven is described in the Book of books, it is refreshing to know that certain evils are not there, and never will be there. When Robert Hall who was for years a physical sufferer, was asked what idea of heaven was most constant in his mind, he replied, in an interval of paroxysms of piercing anguish, "Neither shall there be any more pain!" Another, in different circumstances, would have answered, "No sorrow," or "No death," or "No tears," or "No disappointed hopes," or "No sin."

Take the single idea, "No pain," and see how comforting it must be to millions. What else do most men earnestly deprecate? For the removal of what else do they more devoutly pray, or more persistently labor. Well, God says there shall be no pain in heaven. Whatever may be the nature of the "spiritual body," one thing is certain, it will never be subject to suffering. No fevered blood, no inflamed tissues, no broken bones, no twinking nerves, no obstructed respiration—none of the thousand casualties and forms of disease will be there which here afflict humanity. All in heaven is perfect health.

In this world how often does pain, which no medical skill, no curative agent, no tender assiduity of friends, can relieve, make life a burden and prompt the desire for its termination! In eternal life there will be no evil to render existence tedious, or excite a wish for its discontinuance. Here some suffer every hour is exclaiming, "Why would you detain me? Let me go. To die is gain." There, as