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## TERMS AND NOTICES.

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## Religious Intelligencer.

ST. JOHN, N. B., JANUARY 20, 1871.

## BE "WISE UNTO THAT WHICH IS GOOD."

Holiness may be contemplated under two views—the one as conformity to what the moral law commands, the other as abstaining from what it prohibits. Sinfulness may be contemplated in like manner under two views—the one a want of conformity to what the moral law commands, the other doing what it forbids. Sins that fall under the former view are denominated sins of omission; those falling under the latter, sins of commission. Holiness is the predicate of that character free from both classes of sins, the subject of both forms of obedience. "I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves; be ye, therefore, wise as serpents and harmless as doves," is a passage which looks to the blending of these two forms of obedience in the Christian character. There is a passage in Romans in which the Apostle, while counselling the brethren at Rome to be "simple concerning evil," says, "I would have you wise unto that which is good."

It is worthy of remark that the generally prevailing idea relative to Christian character, is that it consists mainly in a negative goodness—abstinence from wrong, being simple concerning evil, being harmless as doves, being free from sins of commission. One reason of this is doubtless owing to the manner in which sins of commission strike the sense, and challenge attention; while sins of omission so easily pass unobserved. Robbers who half kill the traveller are execrated as murderers, while the Priest and Levite, who, by their neglect, do the last half of the killing may be esteemed models of goodness, and worthy moral instructors. The same difference is revealed in the fact that the violations of the law, when it says "thou shalt not," are those which are, by human law, for the most part regarded as crimes.

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The same prayer would, no doubt, be offered for every Church and Christian, by Paul, were he now upon the earth. The church has much to learn in the way of being "wise unto that which is good."

## LOYALTY TO CHRIST.

No virtue is more admirable, or more generally and justly admired in man or woman, than genuine loyalty. We extol the patriot, who counts his life of little value in comparison with the well-being of his country. We applaud the man, who at great sacrifice to himself in property or reputation, stands by his friend through evil days, when all others are against him. Even that faithfulness to a prince, which to our republican eyes, seems rather the lowest exhibition of the virtue, when exercised under adverse circumstances, draws out the instinctive admiration of every ingenious soul.

But it is in its Christian character that the virtue of loyalty finds its purest, noblest expression. The true Christian, in his relations to his Master, is a loyalist of the most perfect type. It is rare, indeed, that in the exercise of loyalty toward earthly objects, there is not some vitiation, taint of selfishness, for, though one of the most unselfish of passions in its genuine development, nevertheless it is of the earth, earthly, and partakes of the universal imperfection of earthly things. Loyalty to Christ on the contrary, is, and must be, in its very nature, wholly unselfish. Its essence is love, its very nature, heavenly. It has its spring in the spiritual grace implanted in the heart, not through our own selfish volition, but by the Spirit of God. Thus pure, untainted by the self-seeking, self-aggrandizing disposition which, often unconsciously, is so apt to mar the manifestation of ordinary loyalty, devotion to Christ and his work gives to human character its most noble and generous development.

The constant culture of this ennobling virtue by every believer cannot be too strongly urged, for it is the foundation of all successful Christian labour. Where the sense of loyalty is weak, there will be found a languishing faith, little grace, and but feeble effort for the Master's cause. But let the master-passion of a man's heart be loyalty to Christ, and his whole soul is alive with zeal. He abounds in labours. "Woe is me," is his incessant cry, "if I preach not the gospel!" He cannot rest while souls are to be saved, and his Master's enemies to be overcome.

The necessity of such loyalty to the life of the Church, while the adversaries are many, and the dominant spirit of the world is opposed to the truth of Christ, is sufficiently evident. The mournful lack of it, so prevalent in our churches, puts off, to time when the whole earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the gospel of Christ. The principle of this precious virtue is divinely implanted in every believer's heart. But it demands culture. Like some fair exotic, taken from its far-off home and placed in ungenial soil, it must be nurtured and trained, kept in the vivifying sunlight of God's presence, and watered with the dew of heavenly grace. Whoever aims to be a loyal follower of Christ, a laborer with him in the world's great harvest, must keep close to his side, maintaining a constant, vigorous, practical devotion to his service, alike through evil and through good report. But how is this to be done?

1. By profound confidence in the promises of God. No faltering trust, no timorous doubting of the Divine word, can here be admissible. True Christian loyalty accepts what Christ has said, with a serene faith which no adversity can shake. And it is one of the happy results of this confidence, that the more implicit it is, the clearer do the promises upon which it rests become. Like trees, the deeper the root strikes into the soil, the braver and sturdier grow the branches, and the better the fruit.

2. By honest and hearty obedience to the expressed will of the Master. "If ye love me," says Jesus, "keep my commandments." Perfect loyalty does not admit of carping and higgling and nice discriminations as to "essentials" and "non-essentials." It is enough that Christ thought it needful to command, to ensure instant and cheerful acquiescence. So, whether the command be to "go into all the world and preach," or to baptize those who believe, both alike are acknowledged as binding, and obeyed with joy. A vast deal of the false doctrine afloat in the world has its origin in the making light of certain commands of Christ—as though he would require anything of his followers absurd, or unnecessary for them to observe.

3. By labouring incessantly for the advancement of the Master's cause. In no other way can loyalty to Christ be more clearly shown. "Go work in my vineyard," is to the earnest Christian the bugle-call to duty, and he works because he loves Him who calls to the task. What might not be accomplished in the world, before the close of this century, if every one who bears the name of Christ would manifest this practical loyalty to him!

It is a sorrowful reflection, that half-way loyalty to Christ is the prevalent state of the majority of professed Christians. That which ought to be intense, joyful, abounding, is weak and faint-hearted, seldom venturing on great things through a timid distrust of Him whose promises are "very sure." On every hand doors are opening wide for the spread of the gospel into regions hitherto closely locked against it. Surely now, if ever, Christian loyalty ought to manifest itself in the churches of our Lord, and bring forth rich and abundant fruit to the honor of his name.—*Examiner and Chronicle.*

## "THEN PRAY."

If you want to see a revival and the cause of Christ built up in your vicinity, then pray. Pray everywhere—in the closet, around the family altar, in the prayer meeting, with your friends or among your enemies; while your hands are busily engaged, and when you rest from your labors for a moment, then lift your desires to God in fervent prayer.

If your love has grown cold, and you feel inclined to shun the cross of Christ, then pray. Take up your cross and pray for the Holy Spirit's influence continually, and with an earnestness that takes no denial. Constantly attend the prayer meeting, and if you sometimes feel discouraged because the brethren do not "come up to the help of the Lord, against the mighty," then pray. Never wait till you can make a prayer and learn it by heart, but pray at once. Improve the first opportunity in the prayer meeting, that no time may run to waste, in prayer, singing, or exhortation, but do not make long prayers in public. The closest is the place for long talks with God, and if you pray long in public, you may forget to talk to God, and pray to be seen and heard of men. Pray for your pastor, and if possible, stay up his hands at times, while he labors for the salvation of souls. If he is staggering under the burden of souls, never thank the Lord for that and sit down contented, but put yourself to the task and faithfully carry a part of the burden. Too many professors of religion rejoice while the minister or some other faithful child of God is pressed down like a cart with sheaves, but will not take a particle of the burden themselves, and often contend about little things, and the way and manner the burden should be borne or got rid of, till the minister is only relieved by death, or Satan gets an advantage, and the religious life is destroyed.

When the cause is languishing, and Christians scarcely keep of the enchanted ground, then pray. Remember, however much you are inclined to sleep there, and pray till God in mercy comes to your assistance.

In trials and afflictions, in sorrows and darkness, forget not to pray, but persevere, and by patient continuance in well doing, you will be able to overcome the power of the enemy.

If you are a sinner, then turn away from every sin and pray. Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and earnestly call upon his name, exercising faith in God with repentance, and receive the pardon of all your sins, that you may be saved.—*M. in Star.*

## Correspondence.

## WILL THE NEW SYSTEM BE A SUCCESS?

BRO. McLEOD.—It is certainly pleasing to observe by your notice in the INTELLIGENCER, as well as by the Circulars to the churches, that the Committee of "Ways and Means" is pushing forward the work of systematizing the mode of obtaining the necessary funds for the support of our various Societies. A healthy financial system, from the Government of a country down to a Society of the least importance, is a bulwark of strength. If the finances of any Society are well managed, and funds abundant, then confidence is a sure result, and as a rule, prosperity follows. In fact, there can be no greater source of weakness, next to a lack of integrity, either for a moral, secular, or religious organization, than debt; especially if produced by want of proper management. It is no secret, that however much good there may be about a Society or organization, if its finances become disordered, but few are willing to become identified with it.

I am aware, that some persons object to religious bodies asking for funds to carry on its work. They fear too much dependence is put upon "material aid," to accomplish God's work on earth. This view, however, is now held chiefly by persons who have never yet come to the point where they would "sell all for Christ," or even give Him moderate interest for what is all His. Every true follower of Christ knows and feels he is but a steward for Him; he is not striving to learn how little he can give to God's cause and reach heaven, but is anxious to know how much he can give and do for the extension of the saving truth. That man is to be pitied who believes he is a Christian, and at the same time is doing all he can to persuade himself and others that the cause of Christ needs no aid from them. If this be true, why did Paul teach the members of the church to give as God prospered them? or why did he seem so anxious to take to Jerusalem the money given by another church? And why did Jesus teach, "It is more blessed to give than to receive?" He who possesses a disposition to withhold from God's cause, either has not made the Scriptures his study, or requires a conversion that will include his purse. How can we expect that God will require less of Christians now than He did of His ancient people? It is true, He has left us free agents in this matter; but who supposes we will be justified by doing less?

Here let me stop, for I am far from the point at which I aimed when starting. I said I was glad to see the plans of the Committee of "Ways and Means," being worked out. Judging from the plan adopted, one would suppose it would work a great reformation in the matter of finance, should it be faithfully attended to. We most certainly need the means to carry on, successfully, our work in its different departments. The plan submitted was approved by the General Conference.

It is what we require—it meets our necessities—but will it be faithfully attended to? This depends upon the leading men in each of the churches. Will they see that it is done? I hope, for the credit of the churches, and for the honor of the Body, as well as for the benefit of the cause of Christ, this will be promptly and faithfully accomplished.

I would devise, that a public business meeting of each church be called, and the matter taken up; committees and officers appointed, and semi-annual meetings named, at which these committees and officers shall make their reports, &c.

It is certainly nothing more than just and Christian-like, that the system put forward should have a fair trial; and if it should prove to work well, God's cause will be benefited, and His people be led to rejoice. Who prays for its success? Let him act.

## SABBATH SCHOOLS.

NO. III.

The writer of Article No. I, on "Sabbath Schools," published a few weeks since, gives such a perfect picture of a correctly organized school, that but little more is required to be said on that point. I would advise every person who expects to organize one soon, or supposes he may be required to do so in the future, to read that article again. The writer of Article No. II, has given us much information on the moral and religious phases of a good school, and shows some of its practical workings.

As the writer of No. III, I shall confine it chiefly to practical points.

The Superintendent of a Sabbath School requires to be a man of more than ordinary ability, to adapt himself to the many circumstances in which he may, from time to time, find himself placed; to be able to make use of every fortuitous circumstance, which may be thrown in his way; and when matters are working hard, to suggest some plan, or adopt some scheme, by which the school will be interested.

In order for him to accomplish this satisfactorily, he should allow his mind to ponder such points during the week; and with an earnest desire, that he may be led aright by the Spirit, enter upon his work as though the whole success depended upon him; having this frame of mind, he is sure of success. The first point toward the success of a Sabbath School, is perfect order. By this term, I do not mean quietness alone, which in itself is very good; but, in addition to this, I mean the power of changing the whole order of the school, without confusion and without loss of time.

Managers of schools may not be aware of the fact, and it is a fact—that children love order. Do not misunderstand me. I do not say they love to keep themselves in order; but, I do say, they love to be kept in order, they love the system, and are pleased with the school for its good management, as well as for the other attractions found there. At this point then, allow me to advise, not to continue any one exercise, whether it be reading, recitations, music, or any other, beyond thirty minutes; and not that long, if the interest is flagging. It should be one of the rules of every school, to continue no exercise longer than it is seen the interest is maintained. The success of a Sabbath School, depends largely upon the variety which can be introduced with order and precision.

Let then the exercises be changed as often, at least, as the prevention of tediousness demands. This may be done by reading the scriptures, by explaining them, by recitations or music, or by an address. Some little previous arrangement, on the part of the Superintendent, will keep matters working smoothly, and give not only pleasure, but will prove profitable to all who attend.

Music should not be neglected in the Sabbath School; for all, or nearly all, can learn to sing, if they begin young. The melodies of the Sabbath School, like the prayers and counsel of a godly mother, are among the things longest remembered. A teacher often gets discouraged with his class; the Superintendent should endeavour to encourage, and if possible, to assist any one in this condition; but, in many instances, it is the most prudent way to give such a teacher another class at once; for though failing with one he may succeed with another.

There is another point which should be carefully attended to, by either the Superintendent or his assistant, i. e., the statistics of the school. The results of each Sabbath's work should be not only recorded, but briefly stated to the school, before closing; all these things give variety, encourage regular attendance, and serve for future reference.

Lastly, allow me to say each has an influence upon all with whom he mingles; let the language, deportment and labours of teachers, Superintendent and other officers be such, that not only what the children read, but what they see and hear, while in your presence, shall convince them of your sincerity to do them good, and of the reality of the religion of Christ.

## REV. J. NOBLE'S REPORT.

DEAR BROTHER.—I suppose it becomes me to make my Report. It is not so favorable as I would like. At North River we had some encouragement. I held meetings there about a week. Some good converts were secured, and some were restored to the fold of the Father of the Lord; and some came forward and spoke for the first time. On the whole, I think good was done. I am spending my time around on my circuit. It is large, and gives me hard labor with little profit.

We dedicated the Meeting at Newtown on Sabbath, Jan. 1st. We did the best we could under the circumstances. We were all well, and under the influence of the Spirit. It makes it hard for us to appoint men to speak to a disappointed congregation, and that was my lot at the dedication. In the afternoon, Brother Lockhart (Methodist) preached; in the evening, Brother Weyman (Methodist) preached; and in the morning, Brother Sherwood and Phillips, and some others, were with us. The house is a very neat and substantial one, 48x28. It is plain, but well finished. The pews have arms, but no doors. The stand is open, with a breastwork in front. The stand is open, with each side, gothic style; and over the door is a porch. It is a credit to the builder and the place. We believe God has been honored in the building of such a house; and we hope He will honor it in making it the place of the conversion of many souls to Him.

J. NOBLE.

## DENOMINATIONAL NEWS.

FREDERICTON.—Three converts were baptized last Sabbath, and one the Sabbath before.

AN EIGHTEEN HUNDRED DOLLAR PRESENT.—A lady in Fredericton has handed us a copy of the *Journal*, published in Mount Pleasant, Iowa, with a request for the publication of an article referring to a present made to Capt. Warren Beckwith, the road-master of the B. and M. R. R. Capt. B. seems to be very popular. The paper before us speaks highly of him; and goes on to tell that the workmen of the line of which the Captain was Superintendent presented him, on the 2nd of December, with a gold watch and chain, costing \$450. Not satisfied with this, they added \$1,000 in cash. Then to Mrs. B. they gave \$100 worth of solid silver-ware, besides \$230 in cash, the whole amounting to about \$1,800. The lady informed us that Capt. B. is the son of a New Brunswick, born only a few miles from Fredericton. Many relatives and friends of the family are now living in this Province, and in Cornwallis, N. S., who will be pleased to hear the above facts.

## WANING OF PRIESTLY POWER IN FRANCE.

A common sight in a Continental town is a procession of young girls dressed in white aprons and caps, walking two and two, with here and there a doleful sister of mercy in charge; or a school of boys, dressed in a semi-military costume, marching along with a priest or two at their side. As we have seen, the clergy have never been satisfied to restrict their efforts to private schools and charitable institutions. They have invariably aimed at controlling all departments of education, and have succeeded in all Catholic countries in gaining absolute mastery of youth. So far as the primary schools are concerned, the outcome of the democratic revolution, such as distinguished the common people in Italy, Spain, and even France, and infidelity, such as notoriously pervades all classes of men in every Catholic country of Europe.

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It is worthy of remark that the generally prevailing idea relative to Christian character, is that it consists mainly in a negative goodness—abstinence from wrong, being simple concerning evil, being harmless as doves, being free from sins of commission. One reason of this is doubtless owing to the manner in which sins of commission strike the sense, and challenge attention; while sins of omission so easily pass unobserved. Robbers who half kill the traveller are execrated as murderers, while the Priest and Levite, who, by their neglect, do the last half of the killing may be esteemed models of goodness, and worthy moral instructors. The same difference is revealed in the fact that the violations of the law, when it says "thou shalt not," are those which are, by human law, for the most part regarded as crimes.

But God's law threatens the same penalty upon sins of omission as upon the other class. "To him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin." "Inasmuch as ye have not done it unto one of the least of these, my brethren, ye have not done it unto me," says the Saviour; and then He proceeds to sentence those thus guilty to "everlasting death." It is not enough to "cease to do evil," the "do well" is always in God's law, expressed or implied.

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