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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THOMAS LOGAN,

Fredericton, April 7, 1871.

The Intelligencer.

THE REASON WHY.

Some reasons why we do not succeed in holding men and women to the cross of Christ—for all who are even reached and powerfully convicted are not saved—I think will be in proper place about this time in the year. I shall not attempt in this article to name all the reasons why, but a few which seem to be the most prominent.

1. *A want of more holy activity upon the part of the members of church.* This I believe to be one prominent reason why we do not succeed better in saving men when they are reached by the means of grace. It is not enough that members of church be able to sing and pray a little when called upon to do so. They must be active missionaries, going out among the people, conversing with them on the great subject of their salvation. By this course of conduct they will enforce the truth upon their hearts, and make them feel that they, too, are interested in their spiritual welfare. Their zeal must not be a false one, but such as only the spirit and love of Christ can kindle in the soul. Precisely here is the difficulty in far too many instances. Men and women of long standing in church have no inspiration whatever for direct work. They love to have people saved, but they must be excused if they do not take hold and help—they are so weak and ignorant they can do nothing. O my brother, my sister in Christ, you certainly forget that God makes "choice of the weak things of earth to confound the mighty." You certainly forget that "Paul felt that when he was weak then was he strong." Did he not say that he could "do all things through Christ which strengthened him." Have you read that Jesus said, "My grace shall be sufficient for you?" Has he not promised "more grace?" The "joy of the Lord is your strength." Alas! for Zion; the Christian chart is too dusty, or her children, in faith, are too rusty. But this want of holy activity on revival occasions is too frequently occasioned by former indifference to the higher elements and obligations of religious life.

2. *The church and the world are too nearly alike.* I am heartily sorry to be forced to name this as a reason why we do not succeed better in saving men and women; but such is the fact, nevertheless. How often does the thought come home to the heart of the indifferent professor when he is called on to act his part before the wicked, that he has failed in the presence of these same persons to carry out his profession. Here is the rock upon which very many split. Such Christians have no confidence in themselves, and how can they expect others to have? But will this relieve the difficulty? By no means. Such persons are no less responsible to God and man because of their unholy life, but contrariwise their responsibility is increased by every consideration of the profession they make. The world expects from them a better life and a more holy example; and their right to do this none can dispute. This thought of itself, alone considered, only makes the responsibility of the professing man or woman more fearful, while it never can relieve the difficulty in the least. Nor is this the least objectionable feature to this difficulty. Such persons are not only in their own way, but they stand in the way of holy example in others. Thank God, there are some whose lives and characters are blameless. I mean by this that when the righteous would do good "loose professors" are referred to—I can think of no better title. Say they, "Get your members right, and then we will have faith to believe that we could do right." Now I do not justify the arguments of the wicked, for I verily believe that by the same arguments which they use to shield themselves, by the self-same are they condemned. For is it not a fact that their ability to mark out the way for others is an acknowledgment that they know the path in which they should walk? But such is human nature that men will find excuse, and never till all who profess faith in Christ walk according to rule shall we find depraved men without excuse.

3. *Numbers are in the world who have once been identified with the church.* This reason, founded as it is on facts, ought to startle the whole religious world. Only think! men and women forsaking the world for the blessings of the church of Christ and the benedictions of heaven, and then again forsaking these for the sake of the trash and chaff of earth. Yes! "The dog turns again to his vomit." "But," says the objector, "what has this to do with preventing the salvation of souls? Do not all know that they must stand for themselves?" Precisely; so they do. But the fearful example of those who have made effort and failed becomes to them a scarecrow. I can not refrain from offering a few thoughts with regard to those who are on the list of what is called backsliders. A backslider is one who falls back; and the act may be applied to persons who abandon their purposes. In a religious sense, more particularly, we believe it means to apostatize. In apostacy we abandon faith and party. Then what about backsliders? Well, I believe that there are some in the world, and that there are a few who are apostates; but that there are as many of this class really as there is accounted to be I seriously doubt. Yet I know that hundreds live to-day who have been members of church and are now numbered with the world and called "backsliders;" but from what did they slide back? Have they slid back from true evangelical saving faith in Christ, or have they simply gone back from the church and abandoned their purpose to be religious,—if, indeed, they ever had any such in view? Now it occurs to me that great latitude here will give great occasion to the devil, who always seeks such against the cause of God and truth. But be this matter as it may, it is to the disgrace of any who espouse the church and then go back, whether they espouse Christ or not. And this is the reason why we do not hold many when they are reached. They say, "If I start I shall not hold out. Here are neighbors A. and B. and so on have tried it, and failed; and I fear I should do even as they have done." But this is not the worst feature in the case. How frequently we are met with this argument: "If religion is the thing which you claim it to be; if there is such peace, such joy, such consolation and good hope in your religion, why do we see so many forsake it so soon? If it is so much better than a life of sin, why do not all men who have it hold on to it?" Substantially this is the difficulty; and there is reason and justice in the questions, and it is positively necessary to-day that every minister be able to answer them if he would save men from infidelity and final damnation.

4. *The fourth reason why, is because of divisions among Christian professors,*—not among Christians. There is too much of a spirit which seeks to *catch all*, with some religious operators in the present day, and with such a name that will count one is a consideration not to be lost sight of, while I fear that the salvation of the soul is too little regarded. This hedges up the way for those who do labor more directly for the salvation of men. Out of this principle grow jealousies, which beget opposition, contention, and strife, which never should be suffered for one hour.

I close with the prayer that God would give all light and grace to direct their path through life's rough seas and bring them safe at last to the "ever-green shore."—*J. L. Luttrell in Telescope.*

TEMPERANCE IN THE CHURCH.

AN UGLY FACT.

There is one ugly fact which we as Christians must not ignore—either in our conventions or in our churches. And this ugly fact is, that tippling is increasing frightfully in the community, and that drunkenness is making inroads into our congregations, is blackening some names on our church rolls! I do not believe there is a church of any considerable size in our country which does not contain some members who are to-day endangering themselves by tampering with strong drink. "If some of our members do not stop drinking, we shall have to discipline them," said the deacon of a prominent church to me lately. The deepest anxiety I feel for several members of my own large flock is, that they may fall under the dominion of that ensnaring cup "which is a mocker," and which upsets a Christian's brain just as soon as any other man's. Some are endangering themselves by using ale or wine every day as a medicine. Others are tempted to take it in the chop-houses and the restaurants. "Nearly every gentleman around me calls for liquor with his dinner," was the testimony of one of my church officers to me last week.

And so the drinking usages and the curse of drunkenness are eating their way into social parties, into our congregations, and too often into the ranks of the communicants at the Lord's table. I could give facts that would astound those who never look "under the crust," and see what the devil is about with his "sapping and mining" apparatus.

Our Christian conventions ought to ventilate this important question with thoroughness, and yet with prayerful tenderness and wisdom. It is not a pleasant topic to handle, but it must be handled! There is not a single moral precept which the church should not teach—not a sin which she should not have a remedy for—not a wholesome example needed which she is not able to practice. He is the most Christ-like Christian who hates sin and who loves sinners the most intensely.

This whole work of saving men and women from drunkenness belongs to the followers of Christ. They have no more business to leave it to outside organizations, to "orders" and "lodges," and other benevolent societies, than they have to leave the care of all God's poor to police-officers or keepers of alms-houses.

Every Christian church ought to have a Temperance wheel in its machinery as much as a Sunday-school wheel. Every minister ought to preach and to practice abstinence from the social glass. If alcoholic drinks poison the body and endanger the soul, then the physical and spiritual effects of strong drink ought to be carefully explained from the pulpit. Teachers ought to do this, too, in the Sunday-school. The Temperance pledge might be wisely used in every class where the children are old enough to understand its force and binding consequences. I have always thanked God that I signed a total abstinence pledge in childhood. It kept me from tampering with the "hot toddy" in college, and from "taking just a little" when I went to a wedding or a dinner-party.

A young man—the son of a godly mother, now dead—came reeling into my house the other night, and wanted me to "do suthin' for him." Now, it was just as much my province to take hold of that man as if he had come an anxious inquirer seeking the way to Jesus. And if it was my duty as a Christian minister to labor to save that youth from drunkenness, it is equally my duty to endeavor to keep young men from becoming drunkards.

It is prodigiously hard work to save an inebriate. But if taken in time, and in the right way, some may be saved. Others seem to be utterly diseased and hopeless; their will has rotted off like a decayed rope. But Christian efforts (with reliance on Divine help) will save many who will yet strike a harp in glory. I sat, the other evening, in a prayer-meeting, near four persons who were, not long since, inebriates; but they are now earnest Christians.

A Temperance association should be organized in every church. Much depends on having a live president and a live secretary. A small board of managers, a small bundle of pledges (which can be got at the Temperance rooms, No. 172 William street, New York), a few music-books for public meetings, are sufficient machinery. The public meetings should be free; a collection taken up will meet current expenses. There ought to be a good committee on lectures, and another one to labor for and with inebriates.

Such a society would be a rich spiritual blessing to any church. Their labor might be the seed-corn of precious revivals. But no pastor should delegate the solemn, vital work of preaching Temperance to others who might be invited from abroad. Let him take the lead! Every Christian pulpit should be a battery against drinking and dram-shops!

SOME STRANGE THINGS.

It is a strange thing that more frequent prayers are not offered in public religious meetings for the victims of strong drink. In the ordinary prayers of the social meeting and of the pulpit, petitions are made for the sick and sinful, for the poor and needy, for the conversion of the heathen, and for the restoration of the Jews. But the poor drunkard and his suffering family are commonly forgotten. We never heard a dozen ministers in all our life who especially and fervently prayed for the reformation of the slaves of alcohol! It is quite rare to hear the Christian work of Temperance mentioned at all in public devotions. In the whole Book of Common Prayer used by our Episcopal brethren we do not recollect a single prayer for drunkards. Yet there is never a day in which alcohol is not destroying more souls than any other one evil in the community. When Christians begin to pray for the Temperance cause, as they do for the missionary cause, they will be as ready to give and to work for it. God's "holy arm can give us the victory!"

There is another strange thing, and that is that, while some people of extra orthodoxy in the church find fault with too much tectotalism in the sermons of certain ministers, we never have heard that tipplers or their wives make much objection to it. Liquor-drinkers seldom censure a minister of the gospel for preaching against the intoxicating cup. Why, then, should Temperance people do it?

Is it not strange, too, that, in spite of all the wretchedness of drunkards' wives, young women are continually willing to marry men who are in the habit of indulging in the social glass? Ladies often refuse the marriage offers of young men because they are too poor, or of too humble a family, or too plain in their person or their manners. But only now and then one has good sense enough to refuse to unite herself with a man who will not pledge himself to total abstinence! We never pity the woman who marries a moderate drinker, when she finds herself the wife of a sot.

Another strange thing still we have observed, and that is, that good, benevolent people will give one hundred dollars cheerfully to the Bible and the Foreign Mission cause, and yet will look twice at a dime or a quarter before they put it into a collection for the Temperance enterprise. Rich men leave hundreds of thousands to other religious charities in their wills; but when did a man ever bequeath $10,000 to a Temperance Society or an Inebriate Asylum?

The strangest thing of all is that, in face of all the horrors of drunkenness, millions will still continue to tamper with the poison, and millions of professed Christians don't do anything to dissuade them from it!—*Rev. T. L. Cuyler.*

ENCOURAGEMENT.

That life does not pay, that human effort is of little value, and that we are insignificant, worthless, and perishable, is a conviction that sometimes comes over us with a sort of sickening heart-ache.

Among the millions who have lived, how few are of any seeming account. History mentions perhaps one or two out of a million. Song and story celebrate the virtues of here and there one of our race. Unless one can climb to the top shelf or stand on some pinnacle of human interest, his name is not likely to reach beyond, and his chance for being remembered by the next generation is exceedingly small. This is a sad view, if our real worth and power are measured by the place we occupy in human memory, or by the figure we make in the annals of history.

But the unwritten history is much more than the written. Unrecorded human power is much more than the recorded. The silent influences of life are much more than all professions, declamations and recitals.

The men who figure at the declaration of war and through bloody campaigns, are not the only ones concerned in the mighty upheaval; but away back in the silent influences of previous years the dies are cast for the sanguinary conflict. The power of the Prussian arms did not lie in a force and strategy begotten in the hour of engagement; but back of this, in the silent brain and heart work of previous years. The weakness of France was no sudden paralytic stroke in the right arm of her power. Her strength had been wasted by years of indulgence. Her heart had been corrupted by infidelity to moral principle, in a long catalogue of obliquities. Had these silent influences been reversed in the two nations, the result, in all human probability, would have been the reverse of what it is now. The truth is, the silent, constant forces in nature and history are really more important than striking events which are likely to be recorded. This truth, applied to human activity, raises the neglected and unpraised to an importance equal if not superior to that which is borne upon the highest billow of fame.

As there is more unwritten than written poetry; as song and story fail to set forth life as it is felt and experienced, so history fails to record the most important influences in the world. The poet always leaves something unsung. The orator never brings out the most intense life of his subject. The painter never gets his most perfect conception upon canvas. The marble always refuses to come into the exact lines of thought. There is a portion of life and experience which can not be translated into language, nor delineated by art. In this portion there is more power, more lasting and far reaching influence, than in all that is written or spoken. This should moderate our desire for distinguished positions, and relieve us of any sense of inferiority and insignificance.

Reader, how is it with us? Are we discouraged? Is our circle too limited? Do we feel we are doing but little? Let us fill the circle full. Let us do that little well. The records of eternity, the unwritten history of men, may show that work to be among the most important things of our age and generation.

M. C. B.

TRUST IN GOD.

BY J. L. HERSEY.

This world has been called a "vale of tears," and if we look around us, we shall see on all hands much to convince us that it is truly so. We are here called to pass through many and various scenes of affliction; our follies and sins are numerous, and are ever sure to bring us trouble. By experience and revelation, we are plainly taught that bitter and deep distress, degradation and moral pollution, are the natural and unavoidable effects of waywardness and crime.

Afflictions, too, fall upon the upright and good. The strong bands of love and friendship, which have for a long time bound hearts together in harmony and peace, are here doomed to be severed; here we must bid adieu to those we love, and consign their fair forms beneath the cold clods of earth. But thanks be to the Giver of all good, amid all these scenes of earth which cause the heart to weep, and the bosom to heave with anguish, we may find a safe refuge, and a sure fountain of peace. God has graciously revealed Himself to us as a kind and indulgent Father, whose wisdom never errs, whose goodness never fails; and "though He cause grief, yet will He have compassion according to the multitude of His mercies." To Him we are invited to look—in Him we are invited to trust for peace and support.

Then let the wayward and the rebellious, the careless and the indifferent, heed the call, and turn from all evil pursuits and practices; let them raise their thoughts from earth to heaven, and for all blessings trust in God, and the pure waters of the "river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God," will flow in and fill the soul with that peace which passeth all understanding. Christians should never despair, though the dark clouds of adversity should hang over them, and the storms of affliction "lash the ocean of life into fury." Let the blessed truth never depart, that God who is almighty in goodness, holiness and justice, will do all for the best.

O could these glorious truths ever be had in view, and sink with their full weight into the hearts of men, causing them to make God their refuge, hope and trust, the bitter streams of hopeless anguish would cease to flow, the despairing cries of the mourners would be changed to songs of gratitude and praise, that our loved ones are taken away from the ills of life.

It is well to trust in God—to be reconciled to the allotments of His providence, and trust in His goodness, because there are times when we need something to sustain us which man cannot give, and which cannot be found in this world with all its allurements and promises. In times of prosperity, when all is sunshine and gladness, we may feel, perhaps, that we have all that heart could wish, that there is no necessity for more. We look around us, and behold all things beautiful; the sun shines, the birds sing, the fields are green, and the odor of sweet flowers is wafted on every gale. But it will not always be so: our days are not all gladness; threatening clouds will gather, the green of the fields will be gone, winter will come, and the glory of summer will pass away, and the cheerful smile which now greets us will be changed for frowns. Then we must make God our friend, and trust in Him, knowing that whatever comes, it is all for the best.

NO SIN STANDS ALONE.

A sin is a sin, whether we own it or hide it, nor can we escape the consequences, however we may try to ignore the sin. People are all the time suffering and dying from their direct violation of the laws of God; they will not see it, will not own it, who think they can hide as Achan did. His great guilt is always spoken of as consisting in his covetousness, but as no one sin usually stands alone, quite as evil was his course in trying to hide what he had done, and to escape the consequences. Such an attempt is hopeless. We cannot escape the consequences of our evil doings. "Be sure your sin will find you out." There are certain habits and practices rife enough in our community which are undermining health and destroying life, just as surely as those lives are given, and no hiding or denial can avert the sure result.

We haven't now to deal with the grosser sins of men. Women are destroying themselves by the absurdity of their dress. Physicians say so, moralists preach, sensible people groan in spirit, and the mischief goes on. Every woman denies it; "whatever others may do, *I* am guiltless."

Somebody has said in a newspaper paragraph lately, that if women only knew it, men do not admire a small waist, they don't like a feeble, fretful woman, no man wants such a one for a wife.

Granted the last. No man wants a sickly wife, but there is too much talk of "sylph-like forms," and all that stuff, not to make it plain that men do admire a slender figure. Their eyes, like those of women, are trained to like deformity, for if ancient statues are of perfect proportions, most women would make but sorry statues in these days.

They have marred the fair proportions God has given, and are ruining his handiwork. This would be a small matter if it affected only themselves, but it works ruin and destruction in families, and makes their children a poor, puny race.

If people will only own that they are wrong there is some hope; but if sin is denied and cherished—well—people have to take the consequences, that's all.

And they are taking the consequences. Women are groaning so under hard work. There is some justice in it. I never could see why a farmer should have all the "hired help" he can afford and thinks he needs, while he grudges any to his wife.

But then in some countries women do the work at home and also labor in the fields. *And they have large waists.*

If we tie down our muscles, we can't use them. And that is just where we stand. Many women tie down the muscles about the waist till they cease to act or to grow, and become obliterated! It is as if a man tried to walk, and strapped down the muscles of his thigh so that they could not move, or to chop wood, and bound up his arm in a bandage. And it is not here and there one, but that here and there one is the exception.

Do you know it is a sort of agony to one who knows, to be in church or even to walk the street, and see such a number of suicidal forms; when you know that one is dying with consumption, another is weak and feeble, another has a twisted spine, another a weak back, another dyspepsia and distress, and all for this insane passion to look small—or, perhaps, merely from imitation and doing as others do, without thought. Of course there are other mischiefs at work. The woman did not bring all the sin into the world, though she was guilty of a part of it.—*Advance.*

THE HOME AND THE MOTHER.

Said a Christian mother, a few days ago, when asked to write a book: "I am writing one on the hearts of my children."

That mother is at rest; but her children are *living* men, exerting a powerful influence, and thus attesting the holy mission entrusted to her by the grace and providence of God.

"Oh, that I could write for the young," said a woman to us, not long ago—one whose mind and heart have the genuine culture which would adorn any circle.

"Never mind the writing," we replied; "you are exerting just the influence that God has ordained and will surely bless."

It is scarcely necessary to add, that this good woman's home, though the shadow of grief lingers there—a grief known only to a widowed heart—is as near a paradise as we can find in this sin-stricken world.

"When shall I begin to teach my dear babes?" asked a gentle spirit, whose joy was only shaded by an anxious thought lest she should miss the precious opportunity of determining the direction of those youthful minds for time and for eternity. What could a pastor say, but to encourage the mother to dismiss all questions as to the time *when* human responsibility commences, and address herself to the sublime task of training her children, from the beginning, for heaven? Though there may be a time when the little ones may not intelligently respond to the word and smile of love, there is no period when the divine influence may not reach those susceptible hearts.

Formal teaching may fail to reach the undeveloped faculties—may fail, even, to move the affections of the older members of the youthful group; but what we may attempt to do indirectly, God often chooses to do directly for us. The mother may weep and hope as she fondly tries to give the loved ones the taste and purposes of a purer life; but she may smile amid her tears, and rejoice in the expectation of faith, when she remembers the power of God and the blessed promises which accompany it. Christian mothers, yours is a task which, with all its anxieties, an angel might covet. We would have you value it for its opportunities to give those divine impulses which subsequent temptations shall find irresistible. We would have you careful, lest you throw off a heaven-imposed responsibility. The academy with all its promises, the Sunday-school with all its religious training, cannot do what you can do for your children.

At every age they will yield to your power, if rightly directed, when all other forces are powerless for good. The good in all the organized aids of society you can confirm and direct; the evil you can correct. The literary teacher, the religious instructor, the book, the companion—all together should be but the auxiliaries to the chief and divinely-appointed power which makes home the temple of a pure love and a heavenly training.

Let Christian mothers feel these solemn obligations, and their homes will be kept bright with those attractions which outshine the false glitter of fashionable folly and popular vice. Infidelity may multiply its teachers; evil may increase its seductive charms; error may creep into all the systems of social improvement and mental training; but with a home made lovely and a mother recognizing her responsibility, we have no doubt of the ultimate triumph of virtue and religion.—*Central Baptist.*

RANDOM READINGS.

Let your promises be sincere and within the compass of your ability.

The next best thing to paying a pastor a large salary is to pay him his small one promptly.

Every person complains of the badness of his memory, but none of their defective judgment.

How noiselessly the snow comes down! You may see it, feel it, but never hear it. Such is true charity.

I do not exaggerate when I say that not half the power which there is in the church is brought to bear as it should be.—*Beecher.*

It is certain that the nearer we come to heaven or to a meetness for glory, the more we are impressed with the value and privilege of prayer.

The preaching of the word in some places is like the planting of woods, where, though no profit is received for twenty years together, it comes afterward.—*Fuller.*

In church association, also, the feeble and ignorant get from the gifts of all an education which is not possible in any other way. A church that has a real Christian life in it is one of the best schools to which men can go.—*Beecher.*

It is the uniform doctrine of the Bible that none will be saved but those who persevere in a life of holiness. No other conduct gives evidence of piety but that which continues in the way of righteousness.—*Barnes.*

If a bee stings you, will you go to the hive and destroy it? Would not a thousand come upon you? If you receive a trifling injury, don't be anxious to avenge it; let it drop. It is wisdom to say little respecting the injuries you have received.