

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.]

Vol. XX.—No. 5.

SAINT JOHN, NEW BRUNSWICK, FRIDAY, JANUARY 31, 1873

Whole No. 913

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Fredericton, Nov. 15, 1872.

The Intelligencer.

PREMIUMS.

The Premium offer will positively close at the end of this month!

In the time remaining of the month, all unpaid subscribers may square their accounts and start the year with paid up subscriptions, and get the premiums in the bargain.

Do not wait till the last week in the month to send your renewals, but send them at once. They will do us good, and you will feel better.

As the premiums now being given are the last we expect to offer in this way, those who have not secured them will do well to attend to it without delay. The engravings are really good ones; and all from whom we have heard are well pleased with them.

For new subscribers we are thankful to the friends who have interested themselves. Cannot we have many more during this month? Let the ministers and other friends of the paper make another effort.

By the first of February our books ought to show no figures under 1040—i.e., no subscribers not paid in advance for 1873. We are hoping. Shall we be disappointed?

OUT OF THE BACK DOOR.

BY REV. THEODORE L. CUYLER.

There are two doors in our churches. At the front door new members are received. In revival seasons this door is thronged with in-comers. Some come in hastily, and without good evidences of conversion. And these are the ones who disappear soonest through the postern door.

For our churches have a rear door also. People do not go out through it in crowds; they slip out stealthily, one by one. I never knew of a concerted backsliding from Jesus Christ. Persons often urge the unconverted to repent and come in to Christ; but no one ever urges his fellow-member to steal out of the back door, and become a backslider. The very proposal would shock and alarm. People backslide without urging—and often before they are fairly aware of it themselves. That church which during the last year has had more travel through the door at the rear, than through the door of ingress, has gained a loss. They had better begin the New Year with a day of humiliation and prayer.

Backsliding is usually a gradual process. It is not a bold sudden leap—but a series of slow and almost imperceptible steps. "Christian" and "Hopeful" first grew discontented with the straight road to heaven, and found the footing rather rough. Then they looked over the stile into the soft velvet "By-path Meadow." It promised easier walking. They flattered themselves that the meadow ran close alongside of the King's highway of holiness. So after looking over wistfully they concluded just to step over for a little while. But that crossing of the stile cost them a kidnapping by Giant Despair, and a wretched imprisonment in his dungeons, by which they were only delivered by deep repentance and the key of prayer. That wise man Bunyan, describes only one door of admission into the Christian life, but the gateways of egress are very numerous. So our churches have only a single door of admission, but there are a great many posterns through which deserters slip out.

One professor begins to neglect secret prayer. If he keeps up the form, he loses the spirit of devotion. Presently he drops off from the social prayer-meeting. A slight excuse suffices to quiet his conscience. "The meetings are growing dull," he whispers to himself. "A sociable" concert, a sleighing-party, the opera or almost anything that promises a lively evening, draws him away. He drops quietly out of the back door, and gets fairly over into the ranks of the pleasure-seekers before he is aware. The number of professing Christians who owe their spiritual declension to sensual temptations, is larger than is supposed. When a young man begins to desert from his post of duty, I soon suspect that the dance, or drinking-cup, or secret licentiousness is at the bottom of it. The besting sin soon becomes an ever-watchful enemy; and if he does not quit his sinning he will very soon quit his praying. The backslider who slips out the door to gratify fleshly lusts, always intends to go "just this once" and then return again. But a person rarely commits one deliberate sin, and stops with that single transgression. When the devil fairly gets hold of a church-member he does not let go his grip so easily.

Back of all outward backsliding lies the decay of religion in the heart. Our heart must be in our religion, and our religion in our heart, or else it becomes an up-hill drudgery, or a sheer hypocrisy. Here lies the secret cause of many a church-member's desertion. He has not heart for his religious duties. They are a downright penance. He tugs at them awhile as a galley-slave pulls at the oar. He goes to his closet, or to the prayer-circle, or to the Sabbath-school, because he must, and not because he wants to. If the church-bell rings him to the sanctuary he hunts an excuse in the weather, or his health, and if none avail him he goes reluctantly to keep up appearances. Money giving to the Lord's treasury becomes a tax, and he submits to it with secret protest. It is not a free gift, but an assessment, like the tax on his house, or his income; he pays it grudgingly. In fact the whole routine of external service is gone through slavishly and reluctantly, and he shirks everything that he possibly can. As soon as the service of Jesus Christ ceases to be a cheerful voluntary labor of love, backsliding has begun. It is a mere question of time as to when he shall become an open deserter. His heart is outside of the door, and he soon goes with it.

This paragraph will probably reach hundreds of church members who have been stealing away from their duties during the year just closed. Perhaps some of them will lay down this paper, and say sadly, "Well this means me. O that I were as in months past!" The man or woman who honestly feels thus, I have some hope for. When there is conscience

enough left to feel "pricked" and penitent on account of guilty wanderings from Christ, there is a possibility of recovery. And this is a good time to begin a new life.

Upon every backslider's ear the bell that strikes the incoming of a new year, ought to sound as a most solemn warning from heaven. This is the right time to repent and do the first works again. This is a good time to give up false hopes and rotten foundations, and to seek a new conversion. Multitudes of church members are living on the mere memory of an out-worn experience, or on a faint hope that they were converted long years ago. They are really out of Christ's fold. "I am the noon," saith the Shepherd's voice to these wandering sheep. The first step of these wanderers must be to Jesus. By Him alone can they re-enter the deserted fold. Backsliding professor! what thou doest, do quickly! Even to thee very soon that door may be shut!

A Jostle through the Bazaars of Damascus.

BY REV. S. GRAVES, D. D.

Damascus claims to be the oldest city in the world, and so for aught I know it is. Certainly, its founding lies back of all history, and no city can successfully dispute its claims to this great antiquity. The first step of these wanderers must be to Jesus. By Him alone can they re-enter the deserted fold. Backsliding professor! what thou doest, do quickly! Even to thee very soon that door may be shut!

But whatever may be said of its antiquity, it puts forth another claim which is hardly less disputable: viz., as the most beautiful city in the world. And seen, as we saw it, from the mosque-crowned summit of one of the hills which surround it, in the broad plain embowered in a wilderness of verdure—of orange, lemon, citron and palms, with the white domes and minarets lifted up above this sea of green and the "Abana," that goodly river, winding round and through it; we felt, after a long, dreary ride over mountains and deserts, when all this life and verdure and beauty burst upon us, to yield the claim and sympathize with Mohammed, of whom it is related that when he first saw it, he perished from the very spot where we stood, he refused to enter it, saying, "I have but one paradise and that is above." We were not quite up to Mohammed's enthusiasm, and entered it without feeling that by so doing we seriously impaired our hopes of the Paradise above.

To nothing does the line of the poet Campbell apply with greater truth than to Eastern cities—"This distance lends enchantment to the view;" for alas, on entering even Damascus the spell is broken, and you are in the midst of a busy, crowded, filthy city, with not a bit of the romance left. The streets are narrow, unpaved and crooked. "The street called Straight," which of course we visited, and on which was the House of Judas, where Paul lodged, and which also of course we visited, is an exception. The House of Judas, or the site of it, is occupied by a Mosque; the court contains the tomb of some Mohammedan celebrity, and is accounted a very sacred place. But the institutions of Damascus are its dogs and bazars. Nobody owns a dog in Damascus, or, as I believe, is allowed to. They are the guests of the city, and enjoy all the liberties usually accorded to such honors. They lie around loose by day half asleep, in the middle of the streets, horses, mules, camels, men and women always turning out for them; and at night they set up such a unanimous, incessant and forcible howl as to make night hideous and drive sleep far from the pillows of the weary traveler. Between the dogs and the Ramadan, which was in full blast at Damascus—a fast of the Mohammedans for a month, during which the faithful fast by day and feast and carouse by night—between the two, sleep was an experience enjoyed only in stables, or not at all.

The dwelling-houses of Damascus are low and exceedingly mean looking, built mostly of rough round stone, and plastered over by a vile, dust-brown mud mixed with straw, which gives it its adhesive qualities, reminding one of the brick-making of ancient Egypt. The houses are built close up to the street, and present neither windows nor doors, which gives one a sense of the absence of all hospitality. A gate in the wall, however, leads to the court, to which, if you are fortunate enough to gain admission, you will be delighted with the air of comfort and often of refinement which opens to you. It was our good luck to have met on the steamer from Smyrna to Beirut a Turkish Bey who resided in Damascus, and who quite took to us Americans, and who sent again and again to our hotel to see if we had arrived in town, and who brought us to his home with much ceremony, and showed us all it contained—except his wives. His house, with the same shabby outside, was the abode of every eastern elegance and luxury—marble-paved courts, fountains, with flowering shrubs and orange-trees growing about them, rich divans and costly furniture, inlaid with ivory and pearl. On leaving, he accompanied us to the gate, embraced and kissed us, what seemed a genuine, hearty good-bye.

But I am a long time in getting to the Bazar, and into the jostle and jam which you experience in passing through them. The Bazaars are streets in which certain crafts are piled, or certain articles sold. There is the Saddler's Bazar, the Silversmith's, Goldsmith's—the grain, the cotton, the silk, the aromatic, etc., Bazaars. They are covered by a red or russet awning, which extends from the roofs of the houses on the opposite sides, and are also the principal thoroughfares of the city.

The shops, or stores, are much like a good-sized bay-window without the window, where the enterprising tradesman sits cross-legged half asleep, smoking his everlasting naghly; when accosted, he wakes up, but never gets up, for all his wares are within his reach. You buy or not; it is a matter seemingly of supreme indifference to him. How these creatures live and thrive is an unsolved mystery.

But while you are examining the dainty silks, or the ravishing shawls, or testing the essences of sandal-wood, or the otto of roses, you get a thump in the side, and look round

to see a donkey with a pannier of stones piled high on his back; and behind him is a long string of them marching in stupid procession, every one of which threatens a repetition of the thump. You squeeze yourself into the smallest space, bend your body into your friends' "bay-window," and so, for that time, escape.

Let us proceed. Our guide is before us; we must not take our eye from him, or we are lost to a dead certainty. Old men, with long grey beards and stately turbans and flowing robes, looking as though a pleasantly or a human sympathy never came within a league of their dignified frigidity, are bumped up against you without disturbing the depths of their serene equanimity; young men in short beards and red fez, meet you slap in the face; bleary-eyed filthy beggars; fierce, ill-savored mulberry boys with very thin pants and the very dirty fragment of a shirt; women muffled in white sheets—so they look—all but the eyes and forehead, which are screened by a dark checkered veil; old crones with bundles of faggots on their heads; men on horseback, on donkeys, a huge camel with a bale of goods and loads as though it might once have been lashed to his back, push and jam and threaten to squeeze or trample you to death. Add to this every one talking at the top of their voice; every one intent, too, on some house, as the crowd meet and surge, and you have a Damascus Bazar jostle from which you escape with a thankful heart, wondering how it was possible that you have come forth without a broken head or back.

Damascus contains about 180,000 inhabitants, and, for an oriental city, is full of thrift. A large cotton factory has lately been established there, which is doing a good business, and the city bids fair to stand for ages to come, as it has for the ages that are past.

The house of Naaman, the Leper, outside the walls of the city is shown. For ages this has been a kind of hospital for lepers. It is a beautiful situation on the banks of the Abana, and looks as though it might once have been the abode of wealth and splendor. The tradition is that out of gratitude for his recovery, Naaman gave his estates as a home for lepers. The window through which Paul was let down from the wall in a basket, is pointed out in a bit of very ancient wall beside a very old gate; and also the place of his conversion.—Standard.

FAMILY WORSHIP.

In a recent Lecture Room Talk, Henry Ward Beecher expressed himself as follows:

If you have family prayers before breakfast, you are apt to be Pharisees. An empty-bellied saint under twenty-one years of age is a pretty poor one. It is not good to smell the candle at prayertime. The odors of sanctity and breakfast together are not good; neither is it good to have prayers in a hurry, or to prolong them beyond a proper time; they should be mellow and free. The children need not sit in a long line against the wall. Let the child coil his legs up on the floor. Let him sit on his mother's lap. If the children want to make themselves into a bouquet around their mother, let them. Let the family sit in a little group, a social group. Let the father read, and let the silent, or read round in course, as they like. Make selections from the Bible, or read it through in course. The father is the priest of his own household. Don't hasten to get through, because the work has got to be done. Take ten minutes, fifteen minutes, or a half hour, and if the children are interested, don't say the servants must get things in order, they must take care of the table. The most important thing is to make religion interesting, to make the children want to come.

I know a house where at five o'clock, Sunday afternoon, they have family prayers. All the cousins and near relations love to come in, from grandfather to father. For thirty or forty years they have kept it up; not one of the children would miss it; they would go without a meal first. They sing, they pray, they talk; it is the most charming hour of the whole week. Bring the children in; call on them to talk; have free conversation; don't whip them if they laugh; it does not hurt a prayer to laugh.

If you read the Psalms, or the Old Testament, and you find when the Jews went up to their feasts, they were solemn and then full of mirth. The joy was sanctified; it was the handmaid and the expression of religion. It was not the higher joy of a remarkable development, but it was a part of the daily religious life. We ought to make the day that is apt to be the least profitable of all, bright, sweet and pleasant to old or young, learned or unlettered.

LIFE A FAILURE.

A gentleman of high standing in the State of —, a lawyer, a politician, a man of talents, and, as the world estimates, a man who was successful in all his undertakings, was suddenly arrested by disease, and soon brought to the close of life. As it was evident that he could live but a few days, he was asked by a friend how he felt, as he looked back upon his past life. And the answer, coming from a man of sense and thought, with eternity full in his view, was striking and memorable: "With all its success, I now see and feel that my whole life has been a failure! I have not gained one of the great ends for which life was given, and now it is too late to gain them!"

What a thought, what a feeling, what a prospect for the hour when life is passing, and eternity is to be entered, and character and destiny and state are to be forever fixed! What a lesson to impress on us right views of the great ends for which life was given, and to lead every one so to live here as to be preparing for the life beyond this world!

"Life a failure." God does not design it to be so. As in early days we look forward to its coming scenes, we do not desire or intend it to be a failure, but only a success. And yet there is but one way to success, but one way to make sure of the great ends for which life was given; and that is to be guided by God's truth, walk in the way that he points

out, rest our hopes on his mercy, and be consecrated in heart and life to his service. Thus we may form that character we shall wish to endure, and make sure of results in which we shall rejoice forever in heaven!

TO WHOM SHALL WE GO.

Jesus has been discoursing on high themes. He had uttered some hard sayings. He had propounded truths which the human heart, in all ages, has rejected, because distasteful and unpalatable. Many who had followed him hitherto went away and listened to his teachings no longer. Sorrowful he turns to the still faithful twelve, with the appeal "Will ye also go away?" Peter, while doubtless himself troubled in mind—far from seeing clearly how these things could be—yet shrinking from the alternative of disbelieving and rejecting them, says, "To whom shall we go? Thou only hast the words of eternal life."

In every subsequent age, the same scene has been enacted. Christ, by his word and by his ministry, still utters these sublime truths—these hard sayings. Unenlightened human reason rejects them. Faith, even if not understanding them, shrinks from the alternative, with the cry—to whom shall we go? Have we any other or better resource than Peter had? Has human reason, even under the name of science, discovered, through the intervening ages, any new alternative for those who turn away from Christ? Shall we rest in ourselves? Can the purest and the best of earth ever assure hope of eternal life, on the score of innocence, or by the deeds of the law? Does our righteousness so exceed that of the scribes and Pharisees, that we dare trust to it for salvation? Has human progress, or modern culture, so perfected the human heart and life that it needs no Christ? Shall we go to Liberalism? What does it in any of its phases offer us? What is the essence of its promises? What can it give us but the vague hope that our case is not so bad, nor our disease so deep-seated, nor its prospective results so disastrous, that the remedy need be so repugnant, the treatment so radical? Shall we go to unbelief? Do its latest apostles offer us any new resources? Are its deductions any more sound, its proofs any more reliable, its negations any more satisfactory than in the past? Has it dethroned God? Has it blotted out conscience? Has it yet solved that question of the ages—"Man giveth up the ghost, and where is he?" Shall we go to the world? It promises us much. It may yield something. But has it reached the "golden age"—has it discovered the fountain of "perpetual youth"? Ah, no! It has not and does not claim to have. It has no "fulness of joy"—no "pleasures for evermore." It can only say, "Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die."

With Peter, then, we will cleave to Christ. He alone has the help we need to bear present ills, to quiet fear, to console bereavement, to conquer sin. Above all, he alone has the words of eternal life.—Interior.

A WORLD FOR HUMBLE TOILERS.

The world is to be converted to Christ by earnest men rather than by great men; those whose motive power is the heart rather than the head. In the company of workers are not only those who occupy high places, as men estimate them, but those who are willing to take any place, if only the Master may be honored. And these are themselves most worthy of honor. For it seems to me that not those who walk as watchmen on the completed walls of Zion, seen, known and respected by their fellow-men, are most deserving of our praise, but those who toil at the foundations, laying deep and strong the basis of the future edifice, themselves unknown, save as their works shall proclaim them. O these men and women who are content to work and pray in mission schools, or in remote neighborhoods, asking no thanks, expecting no reward, beyond the consciousness that they are faithful and their Saviour's smile. What bands of angels gather round these true disciples, and what celestial cheer and comfort do they bring to them! They shall have their crown at last. Yet there is a reward richer than the crowns of gold. Salvation may be borne by them to the souls of the dying, and these souls shall become the gems in those crowns. Scores, perhaps hundreds, of young workers may be brought by them to assist in rearing the grand superstructure, of which they are laying the foundation, and the rising walls shall be the enduring and splendid monuments of their wisdom and devotion. It is a blessed privilege to labor where God can so gloriously multiply the fruits of our toil. It is an occasion for thanks that we are counted worthy to be spent, where our offering of service shall be attended by such far-reaching results. Let every teacher be aware of the real dignity of his calling, and allow the brilliance of the future, with its possible blessings, to throw back its light upon any present seasons of difficulty, or unrequited self-denial. He may teach a mind that is ignorant, he may save a soul from death, he may glorify his Lord, he may establish a power that shall continue to do all this in ever increasing ratio when he shall be resting in his grave.—Rev. James Ellis.

RANDOM READINGS.

WE CAN DO MORE GOOD by being good than in any other way.—Rockland Hill.

TEMPERATION will make thee stand faster; it will drive thee closer to Christ.

GRATITUDE does not depend on the amount of mercies received, but on the amount of mercies known and prized.

BE NOT ASHAMED because of your guiltiness. Necessity should not blush to beg. You are in the utmost want of Christ; therefore knock and cry.—Rutherford.

DARE NOT.—At a certain large dinner party, where were illustrious American and foreign statesmen, Mr. Colfax declined to take wine; whereupon a noted Senator, who had already taken too much, exclaimed, half jestingly, across the table: "Colfax dare not drink?" "You are right," was the answer, "I dare not." And a braver reply could not have been uttered.

SPEAK KINDLY in the morning; it lightens the cares of the day, and makes the household and all other affairs move along more smoothly. Speak kindly at night; for it may be that before the dawn, some loved one may finish his or her space of life for this world, and it will be too late to ask forgiveness.

WHAT SHALL I DO?—Whatever thy kindness and good. Stand in your lot, and work around you; in your own home; in your own neighborhood; in your own town or county; and if God enlarges the ability and opportunity to "break forth upon the right hand and upon the left," but don't wait for a large field; cultivate the spot you have, and help your neighbors.

THE LONDON SPECTATOR says at the late meeting of the Royal Astronomical Society, Dr. Huggins, the eminent spectroscopist, made an extraordinary statement respecting the motion, taking place among the stars. Last winter the Society placed at his disposal a fine mercurial telescope to aid him in his researches. He is now able to announce that many of the stars are travelling far more swiftly than had been supposed.

IF I BELIEVE in the name of Jesus Christ, I must acknowledge his precepts as my rule of life. I must be poor in spirit. I must be pure in heart. I must be meek and forgiving. I must be temperate and self-denying. A different society must be believed in; new habits formed; old habits abandoned.

HAVE YOUR TRUNK PACKED.—An old colored lady in the South, in an experience meeting, is reported to have said: "Whenever I'm going on a journey, I always begin to pack my trunk a long way ahead, and I pack a little every day. Den I sure dat when de whistle blows I'll be ready. An' just so I tries to do a little every day to get ready for de good world, so dat when Gabriel blow de big trumpet I may have my trunk ready to get right on de train."

THANKFUL.—There was once an old woman who, in answer to a visiting almoner's inquiries as to how she did, said: "Oh, sir, the Lord is very good to me; I've lost my husband and my eldest son, and my youngest daughter, and I'm half blind, and I can't sleep or move about for the rheumatics; but I've got two teeth left in my head, and, praise and bless His holy name, they're opposite each other!"

THE COMMAND OF WORDS.—A statistician has had the patience to count the number of words employed by the most celebrated writers. The works of Corneille do not contain more than 7,000 different words, and those of Moliere 8,000. Shakespeare, the most fertile and varied of English authors, wrote all his tragedies and comedies with 15,000 words; Voltaire and Goethe employ 20,000. Paradise Lost only contained 8,000, and the Old Testament says all that it has to say with 5,642.

CHRISTIANS SHOULD LIVE so as to be "living epistles, known and read of all men." Now, an epistle which can only be read here and there is not valuable. We must be able to read line after line, sentence after sentence consecutively, in order to be satisfied and profited. And a Christian life needs to be thus complete, if it afford the pleasure and profit to the world it is intended to give. To be orthodox yet penurious, sober but unsocial, reverent yet uncharitable, presents a character which is, as an epistle, without continuity.

UNITED FORTIFICATION.—"Only a prayer-meeting," said Brother Lake. Too often, indeed, those prayer-meetings are so dull as almost to justify Brother Lake's reference to them. How may we improve them?

1. Put more thought into them.
2. Come with more will to do the service.
3. Put more Bible into them.
4. Have more children present.
5. Let the prayers be shorter.
6. Let the singing be more spirited.
7. Don't let them drag.
8. Let the air of the room be purer.
9. Make the room lighter.
10. Last and first and all-important, let them be full of faith in God and his word.

EVERY WORD WE SPEAK for Christ is pouring oil on the fires of grace in our own heart, and will make them burn with an ardor otherwise unknown. The Christian will find, that while, before he commenced this course, he had a thousand questionings and difficulties, after he has done so, he will scarcely have an hour's trouble with himself. The truth seems to be this: Christ is so kind and so merciful a master that he will not let his servants fight two battles at once; if they will take the sword and go into the enemy's camp, he will keep the citadel for them; if they will be about his business, he will set their hearts entirely at rest.—Dublin Tract.

SUPPOSE WE ARE GOING to sing a hymn. If we wish to get well through with the tune we must take care to begin right. Every tune begins with one particular note. This is called the key note of the tune. If we begin to sing much above the key note, before we get through, we shall probably find some parts of the tune so high that we cannot reach them. And if we begin much below the key note we shall find the same difficulty on the other hand. Some of the notes will be so low that our voices cannot sound them. And even if we manage to get through the tune it will not sound half so pleasantly as if we began it right. And it is the same with living as it is with singing. Our life is like a hymn or song, that we have to sing. If we want it to be a useful and happy life we must be careful to begin right.—Dr. Newton in S. S. World.

"THY WORD HAVE I HID in my heart that I may not sin against Thee." It is the slipperiness of our hearts that causes so many slips in our lives. Conscience cannot be urged or aided with forgotten truth; but keep it in the heart, and it will keep both heart and life upright. "The law of his God is in his heart; none of his steps shall slide." Or, if they do, the word will recover the straying heart again. "Peter remembered the word of Jesus, and went out and wept bitterly." We never lose our hearts till they have first lost the efficacious and powerful impressions of the Word.