

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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(Correspondence of the New York Observer.)

A NIGHT AT ROME.

BY HENRY DAY, ESQ.

In Rome, on the Corso, under a church about fifteen feet below the street, is an ancient house, with massive walls and heavy arches over the doorways. It evidently stood on the corner of two streets in ancient Rome. This house is said to be, (and there is no great improbability in the statement) the place where St. Paul "dwelt two whole years in his own hired house, and received all that came in unto him," and where they say he converted his keeper, a soldier named Marcellus. In this house stands an antique marble column which came from the Catacombs. Fastened into this column is a rusty chain, centuries old, and out in the marble is this inscription, in Latin: "The Word of God is not bound." The story which this marble pillar and chain told ages since to the persecuted Christians who sought refuge in the Catacombs was, that though God's people may be chained and put to death, as was St. Paul, yet his truth cannot be chained. It will make its way in the face of all opposition. It may take time. Moral forces work slowly, but with the same certainty as physical laws. The Roman Church has for ages been trying to hide away this old column and the glorious truth it symbolizes, to fetter the Word of God and keep it from the people. But the truth has been too much for them.

I wish to relate to your readers the experience of one of my evenings in Rome, which will illustrate the great truth which the aged Apostle, a prisoner, near his death, wrote, perhaps in this very place I have named, viz.: "The Word of God is not bound." Not far from this very house is a short, narrow street, called Via Gallinaria. I went there one evening to attend a meeting of soldiers. Rev. Mr. Waite accompanied me. We mounted a dark, dirty, winding stone stairway for three stories, and rang a bell. A soldier opened the door. We were ushered into a dimly-lighted, brick-paved room, about twenty feet square, filled with soldiers, all in clean uniforms of grey pantaloons, blue coats with brass buttons. Some were corporals and sergeants, with small side-arms. There were present about forty strong, good, honest, intelligent looking young men, all under twenty-five years of age. Some were obliged to stand, others were seated on rude chairs. There was one pine table at one end, and in front stood the colporteur. Each soldier had a Bible, and all were studying the lesson together, which was the first two of the Ten Commandments. The missionary first read the New Testament our Saviour's summary of them. In the course of the lesson he had occasion to mention the images of the saints and the Virgin Mary, so much venerated by the Catholics, and he gave them the views of Protestants on that subject. After the lesson prayer was offered, and then came a free conversation with the soldiers. They were encouraged to ask questions about the Bible, and the Protestants' views of it.

One of the soldiers opened his Bible to 16th of Matthew and 18th verse, and asked how Protestants explained the saying of Christ, "Thou art Peter, and on this rock," etc. The missionary was quite ready with the answer to this question, which involves the great fundamental truth or error of Romanism. He told the soldier to read in the 16th verse of the same chapter the declaration of Peter, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." Then, said he, when Christ is speaking in the 18th verse of a rock, he refers not to Peter, but to Peter's confession in the 16th verse. This confession, that Christ is the Son of God, said he, is the rock on which the church is built, and to which Christ referred. This was evidently a new idea to the young soldier. Through an interpreter I was able to address them, and tell them the interest the Americans had in Italy, and in their having and reading the Bible. That we did not care what they called themselves, if they would read the Bible and obey its precepts. There was a card on the wall on which was printed the verse, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved." This I told them was the sum of our whole belief. They showed the most cordial approval of that, and were endeavor to see that they had a larger room to meet in, their hearty thanks were most touching. As they went out each one came up and saluted me, and shook my hand heartily.

At another of these meetings on Sabbath day I saw a Catholic priest, in his black robe and wide-brimmed hat, come in and take his seat in the back part of the room. My interpreter, who was an Italian, seemed greatly disturbed, and said he was a spy, and ought to be sent away, and before I could prevent it he told him he was not allowed there. The priest left and went into the hall. When I found what had been done I requested that he might be invited in, saying we had nothing to be ashamed or afraid of. He came and stayed through the service. After service I spoke to him, and asked if he had any objection to such a study of the Bible. He said to me: "I am a Catholic priest; I have this morning officiated at mass; but I have no objection to such a service as this. I am not in full sympathy with the Catholic Church; but I cannot leave it; I have no other means of support." I asked him if he would be willing to leave the Church and engage in teaching and missionary work, if he could find means of support. He said he was almost prepared even for this. I asked him his name and address. He gave me a

name, but said he preferred to be addressed through the post-office, and would like to hear from me. I take it for granted that he gave an assumed name, and that he was unwilling at present to have his address known. But his case is only one of thousands of priests in the Catholic Church who would be glad to be out of it.

This service for the soldiers has been organized by Rev. Mr. Waite of the American Union Chapel. He procured a young man by the name of Luigi Capellini, who had once been a soldier and a Catholic, to conduct the enterprise. Capellini has had a fair education, and some theological training. He opened his school about October 1, 1872. He goes during the day to the barracks of the soldiers, and talks with them and gives them tracts and invites them to his class, which meets every evening. He found easy access to these young men, and, after two months, he had daily at his rooms from fifty to eighty, and when I was there his rooms were overcrowded. Larger rooms have been procured, and now he says he will have 250 studying the Bible. These soldiers come from every part of Italy, and are generally from the better class of peasantry. The new state of things in Italy has opened their minds to new ideas, and they are anxious to learn. After staying in Rome for three years they are stationed in different parts of the kingdom or return to their homes, and they will carry with them their Bibles and all their new opinions.

I found many of these soldiers learning to read, that they might be able to read the Bible for themselves. This simple agency must do great good, for every one of these soldiers will not only carry with him and diffuse the knowledge he has gained, but he will awaken the desire for knowledge, and accustom the people to the ideas of a free Bible and a free press. Such classes might be multiplied through the aid of the churches at Rome to any extent. The cost of supporting one such colporteur and Bible class would be, including rent, lights, and salary of the colporteur, from \$700 to \$800 per annum. Any liberal Christian who could sustain one such agency would do a vast deal of good for Italy. There are a large number of young Italians now being educated who would gladly engage in this work, and I feel confident that a great many young Catholic priests, who are sincere Christians, would be willing to leave the Mother Church if they could be encouraged, brought out and set to work. We need all these new and practical agencies for the work in Rome, to attract their attention, to open their eyes, and accustom them to the new state of things just opening upon them. Capellini himself is an instance of how much good can be done in this way. He was sergeant in the army at Ancona. Mrs. Burton, a philanthropic English lady, in her visits among the soldiers some years since, gave him a Bible. He read it, believed it, and became a Christian. He then began to talk to the other soldiers and to read the Bible to them, and finally held meetings with them. Mrs. Burton furnished him with Bibles and tracts which he distributed, and he found even captives and colonels most anxious to receive them. He was encouraged to study theology, and to prepare himself to teach and preach to the soldiers. He received instruction at the Theological Seminary at Pisa, under the charge of the Rev. Mr. Pigot. Now he is preaching the gospel daily to over one hundred and fifty men. This is but one instance of the good done by one earnest Christian woman. Surely the good we do know not. The great future will reveal to many a humble Christian a glorious record of good deeds forgotten, and surprise him with their consequences far reaching as eternity.

"FAR FROM THE WORLD."

BY HEZEKIAH BUTTERWORTH.

There are hymns adapted to all our spiritual experiences, and there are, perhaps, but few hymns that are associated with sweeter and more elevated religious enjoyments than that by Cowper, beginning,

"Far from the world, O Lord, I flee,
From strife and tumult far,
From where the Satan wages still
His most successful war."

"The calm retreat, the silent shade,
With prayer and praise agree,
And soon by this the world is made
For those who follow thee."

The occasion of the writing of this hymn is deeply interesting. Cowper had just recovered from a prolonged attack of melancholy, in which his sufferings had been so extreme that he had attempted to take his own life. The storm that had fallen upon him had broken his friendships and divorced his heart from the pleasures of the world. Recovery brought with it a strong desire for the hopes and consolations of a religious life.

During the latter part of his despondency, he had been a patient of good Dr. Cotton, a poet-philanthropist, some of whose best literary productions are yet to be found in choice collections of English literature. Under the judicious advice of this most excellent man, Cowper became a Christian, and began to lead a very devout life. The soothing and controlling influences of religion hastened his recovery, so that he no longer needed the restraints of the Retreat, and Dr. Cotton advised him to leave St. Albans, the scene of his sorrows, and take lodgings in some quiet country town, where he could live for a time in retirement.

Cowper went to Huntingdon, a place associated with his best hymns and his most interesting religious experiences. His brother accompanied him thither, and here left him amongst strangers.

As soon as his brother had departed, the poet felt the solitude of his situation, and his despondency began to return. He wandered forth into the fields; it was a lovely country, and his spirits began to revive under the influence of the charming rural scenes. His heart was drawn out towards God. Like the disciples on their way to Emmaus, he felt the sweetness of heavenly companionship; his heart burned within him, and he longed to find a secret place for prayer. He at last

came upon a secluded place, overhung by a green bank and shrubbery, and here he knelt down, and poured out his soul to God. He felt a renewed sense of his Saviour's presence, and had the sweet assurance that, however his lot might be cast, Providence would direct him aright.

The next day was the Sabbath, and he went to church for the first time since his recovery. The sanctuary seemed new to him, and his services had a spiritual meaning that he had never felt before. The presence of God was on this occasion most gloriously revealed to him.

Not only was his heart changed towards God, but towards the worshippers. Observing a person near him devoutly engaged in worship, he was led to regard him with the deepest affection. He says: "While he (the stranger), was singing psalms, I looked at him, and observing him intent on his holy employment, I could not help saying in my heart, with much emotion, 'The Lord bless you for praising him whom my soul loveth!'"

After church, he immediately went to the solitary place under the mossy bank where he had found so much comfort in praying on the day before, and here again he enjoyed very remarkable spiritual refreshment in prayer. "How," he says, in referring to the occasion, "how shall I express what the Lord did for me, except by saying that he made all his goodness to pass before me? I seemed to speak to him face to face, as a man converseth with his friend. I could say indeed, with Jacob, not how dreadful, but how lovely is this place."

These were the experiences that produced the delightful hymn. Here was the "calm retreat" and the "shady grove." The hymn, always delightful, has an additional charm to one who knows its history.

Some of the best Christians the world has ever seen, have had a similar experience. Madame Guyon, whose deeply spiritual hymns Cowper himself translated, took great delight in praying in solitary places. Mary, mother of Washington, used to pray daily among some secluded rocks near the river that flowed by her home. Jonathan Edwards began his life of prayer by holding little meetings with his young companions in the woods. Another has sung as sweet an experience:

"How sweet were the breezes
Perfumed by the pine,
The low, the balmy breeze
The wild gnatling;
But sweeter, oh, sweeter,
Superior were
The joys that I tasted
In answer to prayer."

CONTENTMENT.

BY REV. N. CASTLE.

There are two kinds of contentment—the true and the false. The false manifests itself in doing and being anything that a slow, go-slow, doleful life is satisfied with. It has no element of energy or success in it. It puts up with anything with all the self-satisfaction of a stoic. It drones and dozes along, little caring how things go, only so its ease and quiet are not disturbed. It moves along in the deeply worn rut of habitual idleness, from which no amount of jostling excitement can throw it. It clings to old forms, quaint customs, and superstitious indulgences, through sheer want of vital energy. It goes the monotonous round of daily and yearly cares, taking no new lessons from the passing years, and adding no fresh energy to what ought to be an ever ripening and maturing life. It grows no better for all that is being done and said. It has to be crowded along, or pushed aside, to make room for more active and efficient agencies. It has assumed a slow, plodding pace, that forewarns of blight and ruin. In short, it is a stupid, senseless thing. The true is marked by sprightliness and sterling energy. It does not sit idly down and wait for the day of doom to come; but it is up, and advancing to meet it. It does not wait for the blinding goddess of fortune to wait it on to some favored eminence; but seizes the "golden opportunity," and presses it into the service of real progress and reform. If defeated, instead of grimacingly writhing over blighted hopes and baffled energies, it cheerfully repeats the exertions, or takes to a new line of endeavor. It does the best it can, and is contented with the result.

Contentment does not come, as many suppose, from outward circumstances. Imagined ease reigns in the home of elegance and plenty. But did a keener eye observe all that lurks in its secret chamber, a fretted spirit, ill at ease with itself and its environment, would be disclosed. A flower-festooned bed, for all its elegance, fragrance, and beauty, is a bed of pain to the sick. A silver slipper will not ease a gouty foot, nor a golden crown allay a fit of neuralgia. A discontented mind—a fretted spirit, plunging wildly and frantically about, sending confusion and riot into the spiritual realm—is more to be dreaded, in view of results, than the shock of an earthquake, or the bursting of a volcano. Who can bear to break the harmony of God's spiritual universe?

A contented mind will find a competency in a very small portion of this world's goods; but a discontented and restless spirit will be such, were all the world its own. Could we but see and feel aright, we would discover more imaginary than real wants. For there are more things that we do not want than there are that we do. Much of the real contentment of this world lies in non-possession.

Many seek for contentment. This is well if sought aright. But it is more a practical than a theoretical attainment. An old lady who had been noted for her peevishness and discontent, but who had suddenly changed to a quiet and sweet temper, on being asked the reason of this radical transition, replied, "To tell the truth, I have been seeking all my life for a contented mind, and have finally concluded to sit down and be contented with it." Many of us may learn this lesson.

THE SABBATH SCHOOL.

HELPS FOR S. S. WORKERS.

Reciting Bible texts.—The Independent wisely says:

No other exercise wears as well in the Sunday school concert as the recitation of Bible texts. The best variety of miscellaneous recitations becomes tiresome in the long run. Those schools which have maintained the Sunday school concert for a series of years with unabated interest are almost invariably schools giving prominence to Bible recitations. Only the Bread of Life is always the food for souls.

Never be Jealous.—Never be jealous of a fellow-teacher's success. There must be no such thing as self-aggrandizement in the Sunday School. Be glad if another can first accomplish that which you have long been reaching out after. The least touch of envy, jealousy or bitterness, will spoil you for your work. While you may lawfully desire to outstrip another for the work's sake, rejoice also for the work's sake, when another outstrips you. For the glory must be given to Christ. And if we receive the crown of honest endeavor, of pure motive, there will be neither commendation nor shame if we fall short of some results, or if another secures those results, and not we.—S. S. Times.

Giving to the Lord.—The Presbyterian gives an instance of what "the willing mind" may accomplish in giving to the Lord's work, even out of their great poverty:

A poor child in a mission Sunday school wished to give something to the Lord. But he had no money of his own except three cents a day, with which he bought his lunch. From this sum he saved a penny every day, and brought the amount to his teacher with great joy on the next Sabbath. How many of us will deny ourselves daily to the extent of one-third of a meal, which at its full value is very scant, that we may give to the Lord's cause? The same spirit carried out for one week by all Christians, in all branches of expenditure, would fill up the treasuries of all the good works in the land.

Helping the Scholars.—The Kalamazoo Herald and Torchlight suggests the following plan for helping scholars in the preparation of their lessons:

1. Take ample time on every Sabbath to assign work for the next Sabbath's lesson. One-third of the time is not too much, especially for junior classes.

2. Let the preparation embrace the fixing in mind what texts are to be committed to memory, reading them, pronouncing hard words, etc.; also assigning the general questions to all the members of the class, and a special question to each one; and doing all you can to awaken an interest in the next lesson. It will be found best to write these questions on slips of paper, and hand one slip to each member.

3. A faithful hearing of all that was assigned. If you do not give the pupils a chance to recite, they will not learn the lesson.

The One Thing Needed.—If the teaching of Christ be the great object of Sunday school instruction, a Christless teacher is sad ly out of place—how can he teach that of which he knows nothing? As the Sunday School Times puts it:—

"I can teach just as well as if I were a Christian," said an unconverted teacher. This might be, in one sense. A good education and a capacity for imparting knowledge might make a teacher very successful in instructing the mind. But to reach the heart is quite another matter. Alas! what would the most brilliant intellect be, if the soul knew nothing of an indwelling Christ? It is a noted fact, that many an unlettered, untutored mind has been known to expand quickly and eagerly, as soon as the heart was changed. The time is passing. Secure your own salvation. Lead your scholars into the kingdom.

Written Examinations.—The Baptist Teacher says the following "new idea" is being put in practice in the Sunday school of the First Baptist church of Philadelphia:—

At the close of each month, the scholars' knowledge of the lessons learned during the month is tested by means of a written examination. The examination, of course, does not cover all the ground gone over, but as nobody knows just what ground it will cover, there is a stimulus to the faithful study of each lesson, and a careful review of them all.

On the day of examination, printed slips of stiff paper are distributed among all the scholars, containing five or six questions, with blank spaces for the answers. At the expiration of fifteen or twenty minutes these are collected. They are subsequently examined by a judicious committee, and medals are awarded to the scholars who have answered most satisfactorily. It is said that manifest benefits have already resulted from the adoption of this plan.

The Power of the Sunday School.—The value of the Sunday school, as a means of arresting the progress of evil in a community, is shown in the following extract from the New York Observer:—

A missionary of the American Sunday School Union on the line of the Northern Pacific Railroad, following down the Red River of the North, found a village opposite Fort Abernethy, where was no day school, no Sunday school, no preaching, except for a part of the time by the Fort chaplain. The place was becoming utterly demoralized; saloons were more numerous than stores, and at almost every place of business liquor was sold. The children under such influences were generally neglected, poor and ragged. Only a few deplored this condition and longed for a better; but the proposal to start a Sunday school pleased such, especially mothers and children.

The missionary visited every family, and after discouragements and failures a Sunday school was organized, and \$40 were collected, and a good library secured. At the last ac-

counts six teachers and twenty-five scholars were in attendance, and interest continually increasing; and the missionary is now urged to send them a minister. Thus the salt is cast into the fountain of bitter waters.

RANDOM READINGS.

It is the wit, the policy of sin, to hate those men we have abused.

I DESIRE always to be in that frame which disarms death, and makes me look upon it only as a flight into the arms of my Redeemer.

If MEN would but hate themselves as they do their neighbors, it would be a good step toward loving their neighbors as they do themselves.

THE EVIL consequences of crimes long survive their commission, and like the ghosts of the murdered, forever haunt the steps of the malefactor.

A MAN in his business relations is stingy and grasping, and he seems to you unlovely and hateful. But you do not know what that love may be at home which is inspiring him to such intense industry and such closeness. You do not see the strife that is going on within him to make him what he is.—Becher.

THE CHRISTIAN LIFE.—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 lived in; new habits formed; old habits abandoned. There is one proof, that must be evident in every man who has a Christian hope within him, namely, that the flesh is subdued to the spirit. It is a sure mark of a Christian that he walks not after the flesh.—Archbishop Sumner.

THE VIRTUOUS MAN has not only the approbation of others, but his own. It is said by philosophers that the air we breathe would be a most oppressive burden to us did it not penetrate the pores of our bodies, and by filling every cavity within, render us unconscious of the weight which presses from without. Thus the self-approbation of the virtuous man renders the approbation of others an invigorating, refreshing thing; but without it the voice of praise appears a cruel irony, a weight which bends the consciously unworthy soul to the dust.—William Ross.

EARLY GIVING.—Rev. Mr. Edgar, in a letter to the Western Advocate concerning the dedication of the new M. E. church at Russellville, Brown county, Ohio, tells the following:—

"While the men were breaking stone in the foundation, a little boy named —, who was only six years old, whose arm had been broken, and was at the time in a sling, came with a little wagon-load of stone that he had gathered about the streets, and said, 'I would like to have an interest in this church.' Consent was given, and he dumped the load, and continued to haul, until it is supposed he put fully a two-horse load into the foundation. On the day of dedication he subscribed five dollars, and on the morning following brought his money to the class-leader."

ONE SERMON.—One sermon, or one single sentence of a sermon, may be like a nail driven in a sure place, which never through a long life loses its hold; or like a seed which lies hidden for a long season, but at length takes root and bears fruit. I well remember that the first serious impression made on my own mind was by the text of a stranger who preached at K—L— church, when I was five or six years old. I remembered nothing of the sermon, but it is impossible to trace the full and blessed influence which his text produced in after years. It was Isaiah i. 18, "Come now, let us reason together, saith the Lord; though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be like crimson, they shall be as wool."

HONESTY TESTED.—There was a lad in Ireland, who was put to work at a linen factory, and while he was at work there, a piece of cloth was wanted to be sent out which was short of the length that it ought to have been; but the master thought it might be made longer by a little stretching. He thereupon unrolled the cloth, taking hold of one end of it himself, and the boy the other. He then said, "Pull, Adam, pull!" but the boy stood still. The master again said, "Pull, Adam, pull!" The boy said, "I can't." "Why not?" said the master. "Because it is wrong," said Adam, and he refused to pull. Upon this the master said he would not do for a linen manufacturer. But that boy became the Rev. Dr. Adam Clarke, and the strict principle of honesty of his youthful age laid the foundation of his future greatness.

CRAB-TREE CHRISTIANS.—If there is one virtue which most commands Christians, it is that of kindness; it is to love the people of God, to love the church, to love the world, to love all. But how many have we in our churches of crab-tree Christians, who have mixed such a vast amount of vinegar and such a tremendous quantity of gall in their constitutions, that they can scarcely speak one good word to you. They imagine it impossible to defend religion except by passionate ebullitions; they cannot speak for their dishonored Master without being angry with their opponent; and if anything is awry, whether it be in the house, the church, or anywhere else, they conceive it to be their duty to set their faces like flint, and to defy everybody. They are like isolated icebergs, no one cares to go near them. They float about on the sea of forgetfulness, until at last they are melted and gone; and though, good souls, we shall be happy enough to meet them in heaven, we are precious glad to get rid of them from the earth. They were always so unamiable in disposition, that we would rather live an eternity with them in heaven than five minutes with them on earth. Be ye hot thus, unlike Christ in your loving spirit; speak kindly, act kindly, and do kindly that men may say of you, "He has been with Jesus."