

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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SAINT JOHN, NEW BRUNSWICK, FRIDAY, JUNE 13, 1873.

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THE SABBATH IN ITS MATERIAL AND TEMPORAL ASPECTS.

It has been well said that the "Sabbath is God's gracious gift to a working and a weary world." Many have been wont to regard the Sabbath as having only a religious value, and its observance as a sacrifice of the material interest of this life; that if one doubts his immortality, or chooses to postpone its consideration, he may violate the rest of the Sabbath, not only without loss, but with positive material gain. We propose briefly to consider and combat this opinion, and, fortunately, we are not driven into a metaphysical and speculative train of reason to do so, but can keep within the circle of homely and generally admitted facts.

No animal can maintain unceasing motion for a protracted period of time. Men have, a few times for a great while, and as an extraordinary feat, walked without ceasing, at a slow pace, for forty of fifty hours, but this is the utmost that has been done, or can be done. All animals, and man viewed as such, must have rest. How much rest is necessary? Some have seemed to maintain by their practice, that eight hours out of twenty-four, for rest, and one for meals was all the rest that man needed. Many experiments have demonstrated that nine or even ten hours' rest in each twenty-four, without any intervening day of rest, are not enough. A robust man may perhaps do more work for one or two months by working seven instead of six days in the week, but if the experiment be prolonged to six or twelve months it will be found that he has done less than another of equal strength has done who has rested a seventh part of the time. The reason of it is plain; his energies will flag and his movements become stiff, slow and feeble. Medical writers affirm that hard labor, long protracted, produces a nervous irritation, and destroys, or at least, disturbs the "balance" or harmony of the arterial circulation. They teach what experiment demonstrates—that the ordinary nightly rest of the laboring man is not enough to restore this "balance" of the circulation; that there must be an occasional intervening day of rest. One day in seven does not seem to be too much; experience has shown that is enough. We stop, not here to enlarge upon the manifold advantages to business and social enjoyment which a fixed and generally observed day has over an irregular and indefinite day of rest; this will be seen and felt upon a moment's reflection.

Let us now look at a few of the many experiments that have been made to test the value of a weekly rest. In European manufacturing establishments that produce the finest fabrics, laces, and the like description of goods requiring delicate handling, it has been observed that the goods produced in the latter part of the week are not so good and well finished as those of the foremost part; the reason given is, that the muscles have become stiffer, are less nimble, and attention has become blunted by continuous application. The bow needs to be unstrung occasionally to regain and maintain its elasticity. Cattle driven several hundred miles to market, if driven every day, do not get to market so good, in so good a condition, nor command so good a price as those that are rested one-seventh part of their time; because those that are driven every day become feverish, weary, and worn, and reach the market less valuable and salable. Proprietors of large manufacturing establishments, who keep several teams constantly hauling back and forth the raw material and manufactured articles, have made experiments, and have found that those teams that rested a seventh part of their time, lasted longer, drew heavier loads, and made more money than those that continuously worked seven days in the week.

All this holds not only as true in relation to man as to other animals, but more so; because man's intellectual and moral nature necessarily come into play, and operate no small influence upon his physical nature. Let life be one long drug—no unbroken scene of labor—and it becomes to tolling millions an intolerable burden, no hope of rest, of pleasing change, or social enjoyment; nothing to give elasticity and cheerfulness to the spirit. Such a state of mind, as such a life would necessarily produce, would most powerfully and disastrously react upon the body. The muscles would become stiff, the movements slow and heavy, the attention dulled and careless, until the unhappy victim of ceaseless toil would become a miserable and worthless drone. The constitution of our nature is a gracious provision of Providence to constrain the oppressive, unthinking and unfeeling to a reluctant humanity. The proprietor must rest his workers, or lose more than he gains.

Take away the Sabbath from the working millions, and you despoil their lives of their brightest charm. Suppose the clerk, ever in the office and counting-room, bending over book and desk; the artisan, ever in his shop wielding his tools; and the farm laborer, with his hoe, his plow, his axe, or his scythe, his constant, unceasing care, what would life be worth to those in its temporal and material aspects? Surely, if this were all they could get out of life they might well exclaim: "I would not live away," but ardently long for the repose of the grave, and envy those already resting there.

The seventh day brings delightful relief to weary multitudes, not only when it comes, but the very thought of it breaks and relieves the weary monotony of their toils, and helps them bear their burdens with cheerful hope. The laboring millions on the day of rest, in accordance with a custom which the day itself

has introduced, doff their labor-soiled garments for more cleanly, graceful and elegant attire; this promotes health and a dignified self-respect.

How delightful is the domestic and social intercourse of the labouring man on the day of rest, with the loved ones at home, enjoyed with a keener zest because debarred from it on other days; in winter around the cheerful fire or smoking-board; in summer-time, beside the brook and under the shade of trees, pleasantly pass the peaceful hours. Such a day and such a season of homely joy is a green oasis in the weary desert of care and toil. It is to our mind one of the most pleasing aspects of the labor saving machinery and travel-speeding improvements and facilities of the times, that they hold out a prospect of a more general observance of the day of rest. These improvements are fast going away with the last legitimate excuse of a grasping and oppressive covetousness for toiling and caring through the God-given and blessed hours of Sabbath rest.—*Texas Advocate.*

SITE OF THE TOWER OF BABEL.

From a foreign periodical, we copy the following interesting account of a visit to the reputed site of the Tower of Babel, by Rev. G. M. Gordon—

People go (he says) to Babylon, and come away saying, "There is nothing to see." I confess I went there prepared to see nothing—nothing, at least, like Thebes, or Baalbec, or Persepolis. But what one does see is the exact fulfillment of Scripture, and surely this is a rewarding study—"Babylon shall become heaps, a dwelling-place for dragons, an astonishment and a hissing, without an inhabitant. Her cities are a desolation, a dry land and a wilderness—a land wherein no man dwelleth, neither doth any son of man pass thereby." (Jer. li. 37-43.) The wild beasts of the desert are now the only occupants of what was once Nebuchadnezzar's boast, the centre of a kingdom which stretched from the river of Egypt to the river of Euphrates, and none of the beaten tracks of pilgrimage or traffic so much as pass the spot. It is difficult to sit on that ground and try to reconstruct in imagination the stupendous temple of Belus (the "Bel" of Scripture), or the "hanging gardens," or the miles of streets, or the lofty walls. So complete was the destruction of the temple by Cyrus, that history tells us that even Alexander the Great, when he wished to rear it again from the heaps of rubbish, failed in the attempt. It is difficult to realize that here Daniel witnessed a good confession, and rose to be the first minister at a court before which the world trembled, and that here the Three Children passed through the fiery furnace. From this mound I had my first view of the Euphrates, a stately river, like the Tigris, winding between belts of date palms, and fertilizing, wherever it flows, the "waters of Babylon," beside which the captive Jews hung their silent harps upon the willows. It seems that one gladdening feature of a country that is bound with a curse, threatening its way through barren lands, like the "promise of blessing" to Abraham, which has ever been sustained through the darkest periods of his descendants' apostasy.

From the mound, I followed the river's course to a spot called the "kasr," or "palace." Here Mr. Rich made some excavations, and laid bare some walls of great thickness and height, forming several chambers, and looking as if built but yesterday. He also discovered a large granite lion, which was then standing erect, but has since fallen upon its side for want of support. These Cities of the Plain are as completely buried beneath waves of sand and clay as Sodom and Gomorrah beneath the waves of the Dead Sea. What a commentary upon Is. xii. 19-22 and xiv!

After a refreshing bathe in the river, and a caution from the Arabs against the sharks, which make up in these rivers for the absence of alligators, I reached the town of Hillah, and crossed the Euphrates on a bridge of boats. A few hours sufficed to rest our horses, and, before sunset, we were again in the saddle, with our faces towards Birs Nimrod (the town of Nimrod). I had scarcely left Hillah, when I saw it, at a distance of seven or eight miles, rising from the plain, which corresponded strikingly with one's conception of the Tower of Babel. We came to an Arab encampment, and my escort proposed a halt. I knew there was another Arab camp further on, and I refused to yield till we got nearer to the tower. An hour more brought us to the sound of voices, and upon picked dogs, and the tents and fires of a camp. The chief received me with Oriental politeness, and bade me welcome to all that he possessed. I asked for a little milk and frowood, spread my plaid upon the ground, and soon enjoyed my cups of tea over a book, which carried me back to the days when men journeyed from the East and found a plain in the land of Shinar, and said: "Let us build us a city and a tower, whose top may reach unto heaven." Meanwhile, the fire-light flickered upon the fire-bronzed features of a ring of Arabs, who sat stately watching me, and upon picketed horses and ruminating camels, and low tents, with tall spears stuck before them in the ground; and inside Arab women chatted and sat grinding at the mill—the one turning the upper stone round and round, the other pouring in the grain. I found that the Arab dogs showed the same hospitality as their master. No sooner was I an acknowledged guest than they ceased barking, and commenced wagging their tails. The largest and most powerful of them took charge of me for the night, and weked round and round me as I lay, with all the grave dignity of a sentinel at Buckingham Palace. If my intruder, dog or man, came near, one growl was enough (he knew that a bark might disturb me, and restrained). Of course he got his "baksheesh," in the shape of some chicken bones, and our friendship was firmly cemented.

I rose at earliest dawn, and soon reached the foot of Birs Nimrod. A high mound is surmounted by a ruined and unfinished tower of brick, the summit of which is 235 feet above the plain. An examination of the

mound shows that it is composed of the same elements as the mound of Babylon—masses of brick and rubbish, interspersed with broken pottery. There are, all of them, inscribed on one side with cuneiform characters. The cuneiform is the ancient Assyrian, and is supposed to be the oldest written language in the world. To look at it, it seems as hopeless to decipher as though one were to gaze upwards, in a starry night, and try to construe sentences out of the stars. There is generally a touch of the ludicrous mixed with all one's contemplations of the ancient and sublime. Our countrymen are unfortunately given to the habit of commemorating their travels and handing down their insignificant names to posterity, by scrawling upon the rock or wall, and thus defacing the hoariest monuments of antiquity. I was searching for specimens of cuneiform among the chaos of bricks that strewed the mound, when my Arab guide came up to me and insisted that I was looking for inscriptions in the wrong place; he would show me some really good ones. I followed him with some little incredulity, when he led me to the lower level, knowing that there were none to be seen. "Look here!" he exclaimed, and pointed, with the utmost gravity, to a series of recent scrawlings, which spelt "Timothy Snooks, 1856," and "John Thomas, 1862," etc. My laughter quite astonished him.

There is something truly mysterious about this remarkable ruin. On one side, where excavations have been made, you may see walls of brick ascending tier above tier with masterly ambition. On another, all is convulsion and disturbance—huge masses of brick-work, rent and overturned, yet so solid in their ruin that it is easier to pulverize the brick than to separate it from the mortar. One of these blocks has rolled bodily to the foot of the mound. Others are vitrified or fused by a process which can be none other than electricity or fire. Curiously enough the Arabs have a tradition that it has been destroyed by "fire from heaven." The sides of the mound are pierced with holes and strewed with bones, which plainly indicate the lairs of wild beasts. The view from the summit at sunrise is distant and varied. The broad sheet of the Euphrates winds for many a mile, till lost in the distance in a sea-like plain. Looking along its bank to the south you see the white minaret which marks Ezekiel's tomb. Modern cities appear like the ancient Hillah, Tamasia, Mohavil, in the foreground are the "tents of Kedar," and the flocks, with the patches of tall green corn, which the Arabs call "iddeeva." It is difficult to resist the conviction that Birs Nimrod is the tower of Babel, the oldest ruin in the world. There are those who (like Mr. Rich) believe it to be the Tower of Belus, and regard it as part of the ruin of Babylon, but surely it is when standing on ground like this that the language of Scripture acquires a vividness and reality which rewards the toil of patient investigation, and makes the privations of travel forgotten; and a voice seems to breathe from the resting-places of the prophets beside these mighty rivers, which is daily more heard and felt, rebuking the sneer of the scoffer and sceptic. "I have cut off the nations; their towers are desolate. I made their streets waste that none passeth by; their cities are destroyed, so that there is no man, there are no inhabitants. Therefore wait ye upon me, saith the Lord, until the day that I rise up to the prey." For then will I turn to the people a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of the Lord to serve Him with one consent.—(Zeph. iii. 6, 8, 9.)

EMOTION IN RELIGION.
Surface emotion doesn't amount to much, and isn't worth much. It comes and goes like the lights and shadows of an April day. But there is a deep and abiding conviction, which is of another character, and has another price.

It seems to me that we want more Christian sensibility, more tenderness, more feeling; a breaking up of the fountains of our hearts, like the breaking up of "the fountains of the great deep;" a melting that shall dissolve all our hardness and coldness into tears.

This overflowing sensibility, this tender and weeping state, suits very well every relation and duty of our Christian life.

Certainly, it fits our return to Christ as those who have wandered away from him in paths of worldliness and forgetfulness. Think of coming back to him to hear him say, "I have somewhat against thee;" carrying in our consciousness a selfish reproach; I have not lived so near to Jesus as I ought; I have followed him like Peter, afar off. I have not been true to my covenant with him. My heart for him has been cold, my zeal languid, my finess false, my interest in his cause scarce above indifference,—all this on our hearts, without breaking down into tenderness and weeping! If any of us are passing through such an experience, does it not become us to go weeping night and day?

This weeping state suits even the joy of great sorrow. No one has ever had any great joy who has never known what it is to weep. "Tears of joy." Could you come to Jesus and receive a full and fresh forgiveness; feel his hand laid upon your head in welcome and benediction; hear him say, "Go in peace, thy sins are forgiven thee;" sing that song, "Love I much; I'm much forgiven!" and yet keep the tears back? If you were revolving it in your own mind, "Oh, what compassion my Saviour has shown me! Every shadow between my soul and his face has departed, I am in near and constant communion with him once more!" you are not your eyes overflow?

Such deep sensibility suits well the offering of earnest prayer. We cannot wrestle with God for great blessings with a heart cool and calm, whose pulses are unquicken, whose tenderness is slumbering.

that he is in danger of losing his soul, and tell him as though it were a fact which you bore philosophically, and not as though it were a grief that was breaking your heart, and you will not move him, except to anger and contempt. You can say anything to a man without offence, which you say through tears. If you fling your arms around his neck, and weep upon him, he cannot resist you. You cannot go hopefully on any errand of salvation unless you go tenderly. Love and longing don't use cold words.

Pray for this precious grace, or rather for this baptism of all the graces.

Bring before your mind all the scenes that stir penitential sorrow, tender joy, love's warm solicitude, and the fullness of the heart of Christ.

And when emotion rises, don't be ashamed of it, don't hide your wet face, don't suppress the sign of emotion, lest you stifle the feeling itself; give its cry free expression, and the fountain will deepen, and the issue be even more abundant.—*Rev. A. L. Stone.*

LIFTING BOTH HANDS.
During the winter season a young lady, while crossing the ice, came to a thin place and fell through.

A gentleman sitting by his office window, hearing a cry for help, hastened to the spot. He immediately put out both hands, saying: "Clasp my hand tightly, and I will save you." She replied: "Oh, I can not lift up both hands! one rests upon the ice; were I to raise it I should surely sink."

He answered: "Let go your hold upon the ice, trust me, and I will save you. Were I to take one I could not draw you out." She then raised up both hands, he caught them, drew her out, and she went on her way rejoicing.

Are there not many who, while walking up the sea of life, come to some point, when they see their needy condition, and cry for help? The Saviour hears the cry and stands with outstretched arms to save them, but, like the young lady, they are unwilling to put up both hands, saying in the heart, if not in words, "Oh, were I to lose my hold upon the earth I should surely sink, for he might not save me; then what should I have to lean upon?"

But the Saviour stands waiting, saying: "Trust me. You can not cling to both. Let the feeling world go. Look to me. I will take you from the 'horrible pit and miry clay, and set your feet upon the rock,' where you can rest secure for time and eternity."

Some obey the voice, lift up both hands, crying, "Lord, save me or I perish," are saved, and go on their way rejoicing.

But, alas! too many would be saved by raising one to Christ, while cleaving to the world with the other, placing its feeling upon its riches, honors, or pleasures, either upon their own, or those of others, so that they cannot give up all for Christ.

And when Christ says, "Leave all and follow me," they turn back and sink deeper into worldliness and are lost; yes, lost forever.

THE SABBATH SCHOOL.
HELPS FOR S. WORKERS.

Follow up the Impression.—A writer says, in the *Sunday School Times*, that "apart from, and above all intellectual preparation, there are certain things which are necessary to the teacher who would see the children of his love coming in the ardor of youth and hope to Jesus;" and gives the following as one of them:—

truths which pertain to the worship and service of God, that you will make greater progress in knowledge and holiness by attending the Sabbath school.

Dead Church Members.—The Apostle John speaks of those who had a name while they lived, yet who were dead. Of such are the church members spoken of in the following address from a Sunday school superintendent in San Francisco, as given in a letter to *The Interior*:

We have a devoted band of teachers in the school, the most of them all that can reasonably be expected of them, some of them much more. Their work could be greatly lightened by the *dead members*, if they could only be brought to life, and indeed by any means to do one-half as much as some of our teachers do. Dr. Smyth, in a recent lecture, says that we have lived men on this coast, and that when they cease to live we bury them. This is no doubt true, to a certain extent, in business circles, but a great many dead church members are above ground yet. We see some of them who have no money to give to bear the expenses of the Sunday school, no time to engage in its blessed work, nor interest enough in spiritual worship to attend a prayer-meeting, or partake of communion in a whole year; but we hear of them meeting us, unexpectedly at the theatre, surprised but comforted by the presence there of those who ought to stand high in the church on account of their long line of Presbyterian ancestors, and we hear of them off in the country, observing the progress of the crops, and breaking the Sabbath all to pieces to get a mouthful of fresh air. Would it not be better, if you were to go to the theatre on Saturday afternoon, and scour the country in an unlawful manner on the Sabbath, to offset the offence, to some extent, by doing every alternate Sabbath some work in the Master's vineyard, in the way of bringing neglected children into the Sabbath school? Try it, and see how the two things will work together, and choose that part which will give you most peace and comfort when you are called to give an account of your stewardship.

RANDOM READINGS.

In plain terms, you must deny yourself, as our Saviour says (Matt. xvi. 24); that is, you must utterly renounce all that ever you are, and all that ever you have done; all your knowledge and gifts; all your hearing, reading, praying, fasting, weeping, and mourning; all your wandering in the way of works and strict walking. In brief, whatsoever you have counted gain to you in the case of justification, you must now, with the Apostle Paul (Phil. iii. 7-9), "count loss for Christ;" must judge it to be a cross that you "may win Christ, and be found in him, not having your own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith."—*Fisher, A. D. 1646.*

DEATH THE WAY TO LIFE.—The path of death is to be trodden by all, and it is to believe the path of eternal life. It has been called by a heathen the birthday of eternity. The life of his posterity was committed to Adam, and he forfeited it; but the life of the believer is hid with Christ in God, and the second Adam has said, "Because I live, ye shall live also." In Him, their glorious Head, they suffered the penalty of their guilt. The triumphant shout, "It is finished," was echoed from the everlasting hills, when Jesus was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, and Justice and Mercy united in rolling away the stone, that the Prince of Life—the Head of the new creation, might come forth from the sepulchre in which he was laid, when He bore the sins of His people in His own body on the tree.—*Haldane.*

HE IS ABLE.—God is able of these stones to raise up seed to Abraham.

Able also to save them to the uttermost that come to God by him.

What he has promised he is able to perform.

Able to make all graces abound toward you, that you having all-sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work.

I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, who is able to build you up and to give you an inheritance among all them that are sanctified.

Able to keep that which I have committed unto him.

Able to keep you from falling, and present you faultless before the presence of his glory, with exceeding joy.

Able to succor them that are tempted.

Able to save them all whom the Father hath given him, so that he will lose not one.

Able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think.

Believe ye that he is able to do this?

A WOMAN'S QUESTION.—An infidel was lecturing on his favorite topic, against the Bible and Christianity, in one of the largest towns of the north of England. He was particularly bitter against the Word of God. At the conclusion of the lecture, feeling much delighted with his effort, he said: "If any one wishes to reply, let him come forward and speak."

After a brief period a middle aged woman came up to the stand, and said, "Sir, I wish to ask you a question."

"Well, my good woman, what is the question?"

"Ten years ago," said she, "I was left a widow with eight small children; my husband died poor; he left me not much except a Bible. That book has been read daily, and I've found sweet comfort and great support in its gracious truths. God has blessed me and my children, and has mercifully supplied my wants and thine. I have a good hope in Jesus Christ, and expect when I die to dwell with Him forever. Now, sir, what has your belief done for you?"

Rather confused, the infidel replied, "My good woman, I have no desire to interfere with your enjoyment."

"That is not the question. What has your way of thinking done for you?"