# 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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## The Intelligencer.

### FASTIDIOUSNESS IN THE CHURCH.

There are in our denomination, in common with most others, quite a large number of ministers who are not preaching constantly, and a large number of churches which have no settled or acting pastors. The question suggested by the facts is, whose fault is it? Is it the fault of the churches, or of the ministers, or of both?

The ministers on the whole will not compare unfavorably with those who are settled. Some of the churches are able to support a pastor. Others could unite together and have preaching half or a quarter of the time as the case might be, and thereby sustain the church ordinances, and keep in operation a Sabbath school, and thus secure their prosperity and growth. Why do they not do it? There must be some reason. If this could be found and remedied, our ministers set to work and our churches supplied with preaching, it would be the harbinger of better days, the earnest of a large prosperity. We imagine that the fault, if it is a fault, may be on both sides.

In the first place, the churches are too fastidious. They want a "smart" man. By this they do not mean a man of superior depth of thought or acumen, who will give them something to think about every time, something substantial to nourish manliness of character and growth in Christian grace and usefulness. It is not talent of this kind that is wanted. If they were seeking for an advocate on a legal question or a physician on the diagnosis and treatment of physical disease, they would much prefer the man of experience and of mature judgment. But it is often not so when we come to the interpretation of divine law or the application of sovereign gospel remedies to spiritual maladies. Then a novice is too often preferred—young, handsome, and prepossessing. Experience is of no account here.

Thus "Gray hairs and fifty" feel compelled to retire from the field when he is really better qualified for his work than ever before. He can preach better sermons, and manage the affairs of the church with more discretion and wisdom; and yet he must be superseded by inexperience. He can afford to be considered superannuated better than the denomination and the world can afford to do without his service.

There is another class of ministers,—young men well educated, who have been all summer without places. They are willing and anxious to preach, and they would prove a blessing to the churches who would give them a call, and strengthen the denomination; and yet because they have not the qualifications which the fastidious churches demand, they are left to grow weary and to turn their attention to some other denomination, or to some other business, as they necessarily must to gain a livelihood. They are generally young men who would soon adapt themselves well to their work, and improve every year. They have "the root of the matter in them;" and instead of creating dissensions in the churches they would instruct and confirm them in the "faith once delivered to the saints." They are Free Baptists who have prepared themselves at great expense of effort, time and money, for life-work among us. Do we give them all the opportunities for work that we might?

When the inexperienced candidate "takes" with a people who are pleased with mere display without looking beneath the surface, they at once conclude that he is the right man for the place, and begin in their imagination to surround him with a halo of excellence which he does not possess, and which no one possesses, and give him a call. With such visionary impressions, they do the man injustice, for he can not possibly meet their expectations, and when they come to be more intimately acquainted with him and learn his human foibles, they are inevitably disappointed, and very soon demand a change. Or, if he grasps the situation and attempts to meet the demand and avert the result, it leads him into a course that is almost sure to result sadly. It doesn't help the matter much to admit that such a course is beneath the dignity and integrity of a true minister of Christ, or the honor and ingenuousness of a Christian church.

We do not pretend to say that the churches and people are entirely to blame. We are ready to allow that ministers are too fastidious. Take young men of true merit, fresh from the schools. It does not follow that experience is to be displaced for their benefit. It is not for their interests or for the interests of the cause of Christ. They lack the experience essential to success in the most responsible position, and it tasks them beyond ordinary powers of endurance if they attempt to do the duties presented in such places. But let them go to work bravely wherever Providence opens the way, and if they have talent they need not fear the result. They will gain experience, and a broader field will open before them. The secret of success is doing our whole duty wherever in Providence we may be.

Fastidiousness, whether in the church or ministry, is an evil to be deplored. It is very strongly assimilated to that "pride going before destruction and a haughty spirit before a fall." The evil is obvious, but how to correct it is not so clear. The fastidious should come down from the clouds, and dwell among men, and let humility, docility and spirituality take possession and control them.

Here are the churches. They are many of them perishing for pastors. But the duties between the two are reciprocal. "How can they hear without a preacher?" How can they preach without a hearer?—*Star.*

☞ Take advantage of our offer of Premiums at once. The Pictures are said to be very correct.

### BREAD CAST UPON THE WATERS.

The lamp was burning low in a poor widow's cottage, far away over the sea. The shades of the evening had gathered in, and on a little table by her side lay her well-read Bible. The evening of life, too, had come; and it found her poor and sorrow-stricken. She had known better days—days of earthly good, when this world's portions had flown in upon her. The husband had died, leaving her a competence. But two profligate sons had wasted her substance with riotous living. When she saw that her property was being squandered, she determined to make an offering to the Lord. She took twenty pounds and gave to the Foreign Missionary Society. Her sons were very angry at this, and told her that she might just as well cast her money into the sea. "I will cast it into the sea," she replied, "and it shall be my bread upon the waters."

The sons, having spent all, enlisted in a regiment and were sent to India. Their positions were far apart; but God so ordered in His providence, that both were stationed near the missionaries. The eldest one, through missionary influence, was led to see his sins, repent of them, and embraced Christ. He lived but a short time after this; but he died in the triumphs of faith.

Meanwhile the widowed mother was praying for her boys. She was lifting up her heart in prayer for them, through all the weary years, to the God of her salvation. On the evening of the day we have mentioned, as she was taking down her family Bible to read, she door was softly opened, and the younger son appeared, to greet the aged mother. He wept upon her neck, confessed his follies, and begged her to forgive his cruel treatment towards her. He told her he had turned to God, and Christ his Saviour had blotted out all his sins. Then he narrated his past history in connection with the influence the missionaries of the cross had on his own mind, while his mother, with tears of overflowing gratitude, exclaimed, "O, my twenty pounds! my twenty pounds! I have cast my bread upon the waters, and now I have found it after many days."—*L. G. Bingham.*

☞ Is there not some poor but deserving family to whom you might do good, by sending the INTELLIGENCER a year?

### TOO GOOD FOR GOD.

Some people act as though their best things were too good for God. Their highest endeavors are the world's. Their corn and wine and oil gladden their own hearts, and on particular occasions the hearts of their friends. But they give grudgingly to God.

Their children are trained for the world. That bright, earnest-eyed boy, is too good to be a minister; he is too good to be a missionary; he is too good for God.

The writer of this knew a young man who wanted to be a missionary; but his wealthy and worldly father thought he was too good for that, so he made a merchant of him.

The young man went sadly about his daily tasks. Like the statue of Columbus at Genoa, which is made ever to look longingly westward, the heart of the disappointed young man would look longingly toward the ministry—toward the sublime service of that prince of missionaries, the Lord Jesus Christ.

"*Too good for God.*" Look out professor of religion, lest in the last great day, you, who have thought your best earthly possessions too good for God, shall find that heaven, Christ, and everlasting glory, are too good for you.—*American Messenger.*

☞ Do you care to know anything about Free Baptist ministers and churches? Then take the INTELLIGENCER.

### NEED OF PASTORS.

When the Lord uttered his well-known words, "The harvest truly is plenteous, but the laborers are few," it was when he had been going about the cities and villages teaching, and had seen the multitudes "scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd." The want of suitable spiritual leaders will occasion the decline of any church, just as the Jewish church was scattered by blind guides who had not the good of the people at heart. The pastoral work will ever be of importance in the church of God. We may talk of "lay preachers," who go from place to place to create religious interest among the masses; but they are not pastors. Their converts will soon be scattered as sheep without a shepherd. There must be for the people men who are set over them to watch for their souls as those who have to give account. People may think they can get along without so much preaching; but they will soon find that without the regular pastoral work requisite they decline and become scattered.

The Lord's compassion for his people extends to their condition as flocks; and when they are without good shepherds he is moved to great solicitude. The pastoral office is an important feature of the church of Christ. The Lord himself was the best of pastors. He knew how to do the people good, and was tender in his regard for them. He ordained a system of pastoral work, and commissioned men to enter that work. He gave them authority and promised them his never-failing presence and help. The apostles, who were the predecessors of all other Christian pastors, were designed to be true spiritual guides for the people. The appointment was the direct outgrowth of the Saviour's solicitude for the spiritual care of the people. They were models for all future shepherds of the people in their zeal for the Master. They were concerned about his glory, as they were enabled to understand it more than about anything else. They earnestly sought a revival of religion. The old forms of religion were no longer adapted to the wants of men. A revival of religion was the want of the times. This want never ceases. Pastors of to-day must be revivalists above every other thing. It is only through revivals that they can hope to build up the church and save many souls. The importance of revivals is felt by every wise Christian scholar and statesman. Prof. Taylor Lewis says: "Every revival of literature in the world, every new interest in philosophy, every notable quickening of the human intelligence, can be traced to something that may be called a revival of religion."

The somewhat recent speech of that distinguished statesman, Mr. Adams, calling for a revival of religion, has become well known in every intelligent circle. The want of the church to-day is a class of revival preachers, doing the work of evangelists in all the pulpits of Christendom. The small aristocracy which is fast stifling the pulpit is the greatest weakness of the Christian church. Ministers of the gospel are becoming leaders in all manner of levity and folly, under the impression that they are able to sanctify every worldly device, and thus rescue it from the service of the devil. But they are deceived, and are themselves the slaves of the wicked one.

Pastors must be not only revivalists, but also intelligent teachers of the doctrines of Christ in their bearing upon practical life. The ignorance of the pastor is always a curse to his people. Blind guides fall together with their people into the ditch, and all perish in the same difficulty. We must educate the ministers of the gospel till they know how to teach properly the truth in all its aspects.

The pastoral relation must be kept inviolate, and not frittered away upon uncalled and unconsecrated men. It must be a work to which men are not only divinely, but also humanly called. Men must be taught to respect the calling, and to contribute to its support. But it must not be allowed to appear that men seek the pastoral work to get a mere living. The Lord forbid such a profanation. Yet while men called of God enter this work with full consecration, Christians are taught by the Scriptures to relieve them of the necessity of making their own living outside of their preaching. We find the relations of pastor and flocks nicely settled in the Bible, and we need but look there to find all the light we need on all the questions involved in these relations.

☞ A good Present to your son, daughter, or friend far away, would be the INTELLIGENCER for a year.

### INSTRUCTIVE ANECDOTE.

A respectable merchant in one of our principal cities was travelling, some few years ago in a certain county of New York State. He arrived on Saturday evening at a public house where he had been accustomed to stay in travelling that way. After taking some refreshment he immediately commenced to distribute some religious tracts to those among whom he found himself surrounded, presenting these tracts in a respectful manner, recommending the same from the pleasure and advantage which he himself had derived from their perusal. Among those who received these tracts were some families who were removing to the new settlements. He gave several tracts to these to be carried by them to the place of their future designation.

Before this gentleman had completed the circuit of his distributions he offered a tract to a poor man, who declined receiving it, saying, "It is of no use to give me one, sir, for I can't read."

"Well," said the merchant, "it is probably you are a married man, and if so, perhaps your wife can read it to you.

"Yes," said he, "my wife can read, but I have no time to hear it read."

"To-morrow," said the merchant, "is the Sabbath; you certainly can hear it read then."

"Sir," said he, "I have no more time on the Sabbath than on any other day. I am so poor *that I am obliged to work on the Sabbath.* It takes six days to provide for my family, and on the Sabbath I am obliged to get my wood."

"If you are so poor as that," said the merchant "you must be *very* poor."

"I am," said he, and then proceeded to state that he had no cow, and that his family were very destitute.

"It is no wonder you are poor," replied the merchant, "if you work on the Sabbath. God won't prosper those who thus profane his day. And now," said he, "my friend, I have a proposition to make to you. You, landlord, will be my surety that my part of the contract will be fulfilled. From this time *leave off working on the Sabbath.* If you have no wood with which to be comfortable to-morrow, get a little for your necessity the easiest way you can, and then on Monday morning provide a supply for the week; and hereafter leave off your other labor every week early enough to provide a full week's store of wood on Saturday. Quit all your work on the Sabbath—reverence that day; and at the end of six months, whatever you will say that you have lost by keeping the Sabbath, I will pay you to the amount of *one hundred dollars.*"

The poor man solemnly confirmed the contract, and the landlord engaged to be responsible for the due payment of the money. With this the interview was closed.

About five months afterward, this same merchant stopped again at this same public house, and before he retired to rest he began, as before, to distribute to each person present a tract. He observed a plain but well-dressed man, who seemed to be watching him with special interest, and who when he approached him, said, "Did you never distribute tracts here before, sir?"

"Probably I have; I am not unfrequently distributing them."

"Did you not, four or five months ago, give a tract to a man here, who said he worked on the Sabbath day?"

The merchant replied that he recollected the circumstances very well.

"Well sir," continued the other, "*I am that man.* I carried the tract you gave me home and told my wife every word of your conversation. She said you were right; and we sat down together, and she read the tract aloud. So much affected were we with the tract, and with what you said, that we scarcely slept any all night. In the morning we rose; I went and procured a handful of wood with which to get our breakfast, and after breakfast was over we sat down and read the tract again. By and by one of our neighbors came in, as was usual, to loiter away the day in vain conversation. We told him what had happened; he said, too, that you were right; and my wife read the tract again to him and myself. Other neighbors came in, and we did the same by them. They came the next Sabbath, and we again read the tract to them, and now, sir, *as the result of your distributing this one tract we have at my house every Sabbath day a religious meeting;* this same tract has been read every Sabbath since I saw you; and the reading of it is now accompanied with religious conversation."

"Well," said the merchant, "If you have kept your promise, you perhaps would be glad to have your money; how much have I to pay?"

"Oh! nothing, sir," replied the man; "I have never prospered so, as I have since I observed the Sabbath to keep it holy. When I saw you before, we had no cow—now we have a cow, and all our wants are comfortably supplied. We were never so happy before, and never can be thankful enough for what you have done for us."

Thus we see how much good a man of business can do if he is so disposed. You, reader, can do the same if you will make the effort. Often in our own travels we see a man, Mr. Graves, who is a travelling agent for some house in New York. This man goes all through the train on which he travels, and quietly distributes tracts. The judgment day alone will reveal the good he does in this quiet way. Go thou, and do likewise.

☞ Every subscriber whose renewal is due, should send it within a week.

### NUGGETS FROM ANCIENT GOLDFIELDS.

The christian's armor will rust, except it be furnished with the oil of prayer.

What the key is to the watch prayer is to our graces; it winds them up and sets them going.

The hone that sets an edge on the husbandman's scythe helps him to mow the grass.

No merchant trades with such certainty as the praying saint.

Some prayers have a longer voyage than others, but they come with a richer larder at last.

Some persons pass their wretched days like so many swine; they never look up to heaven till God lays them on their back.

Satan knows if thou playest the truant to-day thou wilt go the more loth to school to-morrow.

If thy mercies were of the growth of thy own country thou mighest spare a voyage to heaven.

Prayer is a humble appeal from our impotency to God's omnipotence.

As weeds grow rankest in richest ground, and fruits ripest in hottest climates, so do sins grow to the greatest heights where the gospel sun climbs highest.

That cloth which a bungler thinks too little for a garment, a good workman can make one of, and leave some for another use also.

☞ Every one has now a chance to get Moody and Sankey. Subscribe for the INTELLIGENCER, and it is done.

### LIVING WITH BEN.

"I can't be a Christian and live with Ben." Mrs. Moore said it.

And Ben was her husband.

She told her minister so; and the next Sunday he preached about it. That was our old minister, Father P., who had been settled over the parish twenty-seven years. He used to preach right at us, not over our heads. He never shot at random; they all went straight home to to the mark—they hit. When he came round calling on us in the week, if he heard us complain that brother A. or sister B. did not do as they had ought to, he came down on us the next Sabbath. He did not allude to brother A. or sister B. though. Not a word about their shortcomings; but he took us on Christian charity and forbearance, and made very plain to us the beam in our own eyes.

On this occasion he might just as well have said: "My hearers, my subject this morning is Living with Ben Moore; the impossibility for a Christian to do it."

Mrs. Moore was a kind of intermittent Christian. Or, as one of the deacons said, "she did not seem to be converted all through." She seemed to think that religion was something that belonged with Sabbaths and prayer meetings; something too spiritual for every day. It did not appear to her that her life ought to be regulated by it; that there was a principle in it which was able to keep her steadfast. It was a state of mind, an experience, which came, and then was all over with, as a dream is. When she was in meetings, and was with Christian people, and when nothing special crossed her, she "enjoyed her mind," as she called it; and nobody doubted that she did not try to live a Christian life.

But her "thorn in the flesh" was Ben. He had an irritable disposition; and she never appeared to think that it was to be a part of her discipline to bear it. He was often absent for many weeks at a time, on business; and then she was a good Christian, consistent, cheerful, contented. But when he came home, she said she fell from grace; and if she had not once had clear evidence to that effect, she would be afraid she had never been converted at all.

He found fault; and she retorted; and they had some bitter experiences of recrimination, till neither of them had any respect for her character as a Christian, which was the saddest part of all to her, for somewhere in the woman's consciousness was a feeling, which at times amounted to a conviction, that she truly had repented of her sins and accepted Christ; and she would not for the world have been shut out from her hope in him.

"And, oh!" she said to Father P., "if I was differently situated I think I could live a consistent life. But I can't be a Christian and live with Ben."

So the dear old man preached about it. He had a homely, direct way; and the first thing he said was: "We have among us some of the old-fashioned kind of saints, who speak about 'how they got religion.' And nobody doubts that they did get it. But what was it? What do they mean by it? They are in possession of something, which has not only given them great comfort and support all the way along, but has made them better than they were before. A woman may have hope in Christ, and still may not be any more loveable for it; a man may have faith enough to save him, and yet be no kinder, no more considerate; but in such a case religion is not doing its work.

"And the excuse of some that they have many provocations, that they are in a hard place, is of no avail. Is it any merit to be amiable where there is nothing to hinder. There are families in which it is so easy to be good that it would be a proof of utter depravity not to be. In the home where all are Christians there are so many mutual helps that the members fail of its deepest and richest experiences. And I apprehend that our Saviour watches with a more tender solicitude the sorely tried ones whom he has set solitary in irreligious households."

And he went on to say: "I have failed in one of the most vital points in my ministry if I have failed to make it plain to my people that the spiritual life cannot be a separate thing from the natural life. The two must go together; they must be incorporated till the diviner element, working all through the other, like the leaven, shall be constantly making us more like Him into whose image we shall one day be changed.—*Congregationalist.*

☞ The INTELLIGENCER is acknowledged to be second to no family paper in the Dominion.

### EASY RELIGION.

It is not to be denied or overlooked that there is a prevailing tendency in many of our popular and fashionable city and country churches, to favor and advocate a loose and easy going religion among christians, as well as among ministers, especially among young christians.

Three months ago, one of the most intelligent, clear-headed professional men in the country, not himself a professor of religion, said to me, in a conversation on the importance and reality of religion; "If there is any thing in this world that tempts me to disbelieve the whole thing, it is when I see men profess to be converted—covenant to labor for Christ and his cause forever—come to the communion and take the body and blood of the crucified Saviour in their hands and lips—and then in three months after I see those same persons playing cards at whist parties, dancing at public balls, frequenting operas and theatres, and all manner of vain, worldly amusements! It looks to me like consummate hypocrisy, and I am tempted to think the whole thing a delusion!"

I cannot wonder at it. What a slur upon christianity, that there is nothing in it to interest, delight, and satisfy the soul! Must the young christian be without joy, pleasure, and happiness, only as he seeks them ever in the green fields of vain worldly amusements?

Said Dr. Cuyler, "You cannot grow healthy, young christians, in the foul air air of social dissipation! Midnight parties, operas, Germans, and whist clubs, do not suit Christ's plants of grace, any better than Labrador ice fields suit orange trees. A christian cannot keep all the habits of a worldling without killing his piety. Come out and be separate, means something more than to take the communion seat half a dozen times a year."

If there is setting in upon our churches a strong prevalent current towards an easy-going religion—a tendency to favour and practice vain, dissipating amusements, which lead away from Christ; the true demand of the pews upon the pulpit is, that it shall be awake to that fact—shall speak, and preach, if need be, against these things, though they seem to be little matters, and though some may be offended by it—for the watchman must warn the flock against present dangers, and present forms of worldly conformity, and departures from God—though he may find, in faithfully doing so, that the offence of the cross has not yet ceased.

☞ Do you want to know what is going on in the Christian World? Then subscribe for the INTELLIGENCER, which tells all about it.

### SEEDS AND FRUIT.

"The mayor of Philadelphia, it is said, asserts that he could rid the jails of two-thirds of the juvenile criminals in the next year. If he could banish certain plays from the boards of the variety theatres, and put certain books out of print."

And yet parents go on suffering the poisonous literature to corrupt the minds of the children; and society but feebly protests against the circulation of the foul streams that fill and pollute all the streams. The teacher of a successful school in this vicinity assures us that in guarding his boys against forms of sensational literature, he has their parents to contend against. The boy writes to his father to subscribe for the—; we will not name the magazine, because we do not care to advertise it. The father is a busy man; the title has in it nothing objectionable; he possibly buys a copy, glances over its pictures, laughs at his boy's childish fancies, and subscribes for a weekly poison-potion for the year.

Every father watches his table carefully. He will not, knowingly, put adulterated articles of diet before his children. But there are scores of fathers who never scan the children's literature. Pray, sir, do you know what magazines they read, what books they get out of the circulating library, or what "private circulars" come to them through the post office?

The nation's reading makes the nation's life. The reading of the boy or girl, for the first fifteen years, gives tone to all their future. It is one of the most potent of the influences which go to make up his character. But here are scores of men who take more pains in the selection of the jockey to train their horses than in the selection of books for the training of their children.

To the statement of the mayor of Philadelphia, we are inclined to add a supplement. We believe we could rid our courts of two-thirds of our divorce suits, if we could banish certain novels from English and American literature. The "love" represented in this class of novels is a miserable mock sentimentalism. It bears the same relation to the genuine article that mock jewelry does to gold and diamonds, or the heroines of the stage do to the actualities of life. Young ladies and gentlemen are taught to "fall in love" by a stumble. All sense and judgment in the selection of a life partner are rigorously excluded. The better knowlege and cautious counsels of father and mother are all put down to the account of the selfishness of a cruel father or a match-making mother; the heroes and heroines are without fault, flaw, or blemish; and all the obstacles which the course of true love, that never runs smooth, encounters, are due to outsiders. That love wins its real victories loving on in spite of foibles and faults, in spite of controversies and sometimes contentions, in spite of hidden rocks in the very stream itself—this the scholars in this school of fiction never learn. So when the demigod of the young girl turns out to be a very common sort of man (as most of us are), and the angel of the young man's dreams proves to be a flesh and blood young woman, with a spice of obstinacy, or a bit of a temper, or an underlying streak of selfishness, there is first bitter disappointment, then coldness and estrangement, then sometimes a quarrel, a separation, and a divorce. When we see how many there are who are not even restrained by pride from spreading their quarrels before the public, we wonder how many there whom a mistaken conception of love, and the bitterest disappointment life can afford, have divorced in their secret hearts.

Know your children's literature; especially know your children's novels and story-books.—*Christian Weekly.*

☞ The people that read the INTELLIGENCER are much easier to preach to than those who do not. Will the ministers please make a note of this?

### COURAGE AND ENTHUSIASM.

Now this morning I want to call your attention to two words. The first is "Courage," and the next is "Enthusiasm." In this first chapter of Joshua the Lord tells him four times in that one chapter to be of good courage. And if you will take your Bible—your Bibles—and read them through carefully, you will find in all ages that God never has used a man that is full of fears and doubts and misgivings. If we could only get these doubters out of the church or get them out of "Doubting Castle," it would be the best thing that could ever happen to the church. Why, there are more people living in Doubting Castle than in any other; a good many of God's people just hang around Doubting Castle, and it's really salvation by doubts now instead of by faith. It is doubts, doubts, doubts, and fears, fears, fears, so that God cannot use them. Now, if we are going to be successful in the harvest-field, and going to be the means of calling souls to God, we have got to be of good courage. As he said to Joshua, you must be of good courage, and no man shall be able to stand before you all your days. And as you will look over his life you will find from that hour no man was able to stand before him. But God don't have a man he can't trust. When Joshua got over Jordan and went walking around those walls of Jericho, all at once a man stood across his path with a drawn sword, and Joshua stepped up to him saying, "Are you for us or for our adversaries?" Aha! I have tried you Joshua, and I have come down to lead you on to victory. But if he had begun to tremble, or had shown any sign of fear, he wouldn't have been the man to lead on that victorious army. He had got God's word, which was, "Believe, and no man shall be able to stand before you," and the Captain of his salvation comes and stood right before him and tried him, and found him full of courage. And so as to God's people. When he finds you full of courage and not afraid, the word will be a defence that no one can stand against. See how many men during our last war were all the time on the defensive, with their armies held in camp, because they were afraid to move on the enemy's works. Those generals were being constantly removed; they were not successful. Those men who were always on the defensive were not the men we wanted. What is God's church coming to? It has been on the defensive for the last few years, and the time is coming for Christ's army to move on to the enemy's works. And if we are of good courage, God will be with us; but if we are cowards, full of doubts and fears, He cannot use us.—*D. L. Moody.*

☞ Tell your neighbors about the INTELLIGENCER, and about the offer of Moody and Sankey with it; and persuade them to subscribe.

### HOW TO SPEND AN EVENING.

A writer in an English paper says:—"It might be interesting if I were to tell of the way in which we spent many pleasant and profitable evenings during the last two winters. A number of the members of our church and congregation met by invitation at the house of one of our friends, and had a social tea, after which we took our Bibles, and two or three hours passed with astonishing rapidity. A minister, to whom this work was a labour of love, and who was singularly fitted for it, presided, and always commenced by asking that the same Holy Spirit who inspired the Sacred Word would open to us its meaning. We never argued. Our first invitation stated our purpose to be 'the devotional study of God's Word,' and the every-prepared illustrations from church history, etc.; application (practical and spiritual) and conversation free and open to all—these, with frequent singing of hymns bearing on our subject, were some of the chief features of our pleasant gatherings. We went through the First Epistle of Saint John, and I can indeed say that the treasures of blessing opened to us in its chapters have often filled us with wonder and gratitude to our Father in heaven. Have your readers noticed the threefold purpose for which this epistle was written? 'These things write we unto you, that your joy may be full,' (chap. i. 4); 'These things write I unto you that ye sin not' (chap. ii. 1), and 'That ye may know that we have eternal life' (chap. v. 13). Surely nobler purposes never moved a pen, and we, studying what was thus written with an earnest desire that all these purposes might be fulfilled in our experiences, have not been altogether disappointed. We have been brought nearer to each other, and this for members of Christ's Church is an incalculable blessing; and we have been brought nearer to Jesus, and in some humble measure we share in the confidence of the beloved apostle when he said, 'We know Him that is true, and we are in Him that is true, even in His Son Jesus Christ.' All ages were alike interested, many christian homes gladly opened, and a kindly, social feeling greatly promoted."

☞ Free Baptists should give the INTELLIGENCER a hearty support. It is the acknowledged organ of the denomination.

### RANDOM READINGS.

Thanksgiving makes our prayers bold and strong, easy, moreover, pleasant and sweet; feeds and enkindles them as coals of fire.

It is related of Dr. Griffin, that he once became so anxious in regard to the spiritual dearth long prevalent in his congregation, that he spent a night in prayer, and the next day preached with such power and earnestness that *forty* followed him in tears to his study to ask what they must do to be saved.

Do not judge of the truth or falsehood of doctrines by the opulence or the poverty, the exterior polish or the coarseness, the fame or the obscurity, the numbers or the fewness, of those who hold them; for, judging by these tests, Moses would not have attached himself to the Israelites, nor Paul himself to the apostles.

Revenge is longer lived than gratitude. Indorse Mr. Smith's note to keep him from bursting, and he will forget all about it in a month. Pull Mr. Smith's nose, and he will cherish a secret desire to burn your house down for the remainder of your life. Revenge is a passion. Gratitude appears to be only a sentiment. We can all hate; but it is only one man in a hundred that possesses sense enough to be thankful.

There are cases, it is to be feared, where embarrassment in pulpit duty arises primarily from mental inability. Some "earthen vessels" are too contracted to be made reservoirs of gospel "treasure," and their limited contents are soon exhausted. We once heard a good old "aunty" of ours express great astonishment that a Princeton graduate should make such a poor attempt at preaching. "Seven years studying," said she, "and can't preach any better than that!" To which a venerable minister made answer: "My good woman, you might try seventy-seven years to put a cannon ball into a musket, but couldn't do it."

It is as well for ministers to deliver what are called brilliant, intellectual and learned discourses on the leading topics of the Bible, such as Faith, Repentance, and Love, but unless those sermons contain a solemn, earnest, and pathetic appeal, such as:

"Dost *thou* believe?"
"*Thou* must repent."
"Give me *thine* heart."

and are to be delivered in such a manner as to cause the hearer to feel that he is the one meant, they will fail to accomplish the end for which they were intended.

A gentleman who did not live very happily with his wife decided to procure a divorce, and took advice on the subject from an intimate friend—a man of high social standing. "Go home and court your wife for a year," said this wise adviser, "and then tell me the result." They bowed in prayer, and separated. When a year passed away, the once-complaining husband called again to see his friend, and said: "I have called to thank you for the good advice you gave me, and tell you that my wife and I are as happy as when we were first married. I cannot be grateful enough for your good counsel." "I am glad to hear it, dear sir," said the other, "and I hope you will continue to court your wife as long as you live."

CORRECTIVE SERMONS.—The best sermons are not always those that comfort us, but those that make us displeased with ourselves. What said George Whitfield? Said he, "It's a poor sermon that gives no offence; that neither makes the hearer displeased with himself nor with the preacher." One of the best compliments that was ever paid to a preacher was that which was paid to Massilon by Louis XVI. He remarked, "I don't know how it is, but when I hear other preachers I usually go home praising them; but when I hear Massilon, I go home condemning myself." If a man, after hearing a preacher's eloquence, should go away saying, "I did like the preacher," he would merely go away extolling a mortal man; but if he went home saying, "I did feel condemned under the sermon," it might send him on his knees at once to pray to Almighty God.

Mr. Moody says: "For a number of years I have made it a rule not to read any book that does not help me to understand the Bible. I think I have got the key to the study of the Bible. Take it *topically.* Take love, for instance, and spend a month in searching what the Bible says about love, from Genesis to Revelation. Then you will love everybody, whether they love you or not. In the same way take grace, faith, assurance, heaven, and so on. Spend six months studying Genesis; it is the seed-plant of the Bible. Read the same chapter over and over again, till you understand it."