

The Religious Intelligencer.

AN EVANGELICAL FAMILY NEWSPAPER FOR NEW BRUNSWICK AND NOVA SCOTIA.

Rev. J. McLeod,

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"That God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ."—PETER.

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Editor and Proprietor.

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The Religious Intelligencer

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A Cause of Weakness.

No doubt every one in every congregation has frequently heard regrets and complaints of the frequent non-attendance of members upon the public religious services. The evil does not seem to be in a process of correction; on the contrary, it seems to be growing worse. It is an important query, What efficient remedy may be employed? Such habitual non-attendance of course have reasons for their neglect, which they seek to make satisfactory to their consciences. It would be useless here to attempt to enumerate them. Often it is laid upon the pastor, who, they claim, is not to their liking; does not preach to suit their ideas; or, by some other means, fails to invest these services with interest or profit to them. We are willing to allow that often pastors have not a superabundance of capacity, and that they, like other men, have imperfections, etc. It is their duty to use their best capacities, and faithfully and wisely direct their efforts to benefit their membership in the greatest possible measure. As far as our observation goes, the great majority do this. Such are unfaithful or indifferent in their duties are the exceptions. Non-attendance are numerous in almost all congregations, and when under the best and most faithful pastors.

Granting the remedy lies in part with pastors, mainly it lies with the membership. The habit of non-attendance creeps upon an individual; others see the example, catch the indifferent spirit, and help to spread the irreligious contagion. It somehow gets to be the common idea among church members that they can go to church when it suits them, or stay away when it suits them better. The immense weakness which this spirit introduces into the congregation and church, and the immense barrier it puts in the way of successful work, is not thought of, or properly measured, by those who entertain it. It is a source of weakness to themselves. They neglect the best opportunities to acquire Christian knowledge, of cultivating spirituality and devotion, and of training (and disciplining by sacrifice, if sacrifice it is) the Christian character and habit. It is a source of weakness to the congregation and the church. They fail to invest the services and relationship of the church with their due importance, detract from the general sum of interest in public services, and stand in the way of doing good in the fullest measure to other members and such as are not members. It is a source of weakness to the ministry. They could not state more plainly their refusal to aid their pastors, or their want of appreciation of their services, frustrate them and chill their ardor in preparing and endeavoring to strengthen and edify their members. How can a conscientious Christian do wrong and evil in this way? In its effect upon those out of the church, this absence is most deleterious. It lowers at once their idea of the value of the church and her privileges, weakens the attractions for them to attend, and shades down the Christian religion to a colorless and insipid thing in their estimation. Romanists do not generally honor the Christian religion by their practical everyday piety and correctness of life, and yet their constrained faithfulness in attendance at church does command respect, and gives Romanism power and influence. What could not evangelical, earnest Christians do if, with their practical everyday piety and correctness, they would unite a conscientious and constant attendance upon the religious services of the church? Members of the church, who of you will lead off or persist in this evil and weakening practice?—Ch. World.

Every man has just as much vanity as he lacks understanding.

Conversation vs. Gossip.

We have often thought as we listened to the conversation of others or reviewed our own share in the talk, how much unnecessary and injurious gossip gains place among our words, and how many unkind, illiberal, and alas! untrue statements find utterance even in our best and most charitable moods.

True, the mischief is often done unconsciously, but it is done nevertheless, and we venture to say that the exemplary and careful talkers would be startled and conscious-stricken if they could read over an exact transcript of their own conversation for any one week. Such a record would fill them with uneasiness and regret; they would deplore many of their utterances and long to blot out many others; and under the influence of such a retrospect they would guard themselves more sedulously from the seductions and the perils of gossip.

Will any of our readers think this statement exaggerated? If they do, let us advise them to remember and note carefully the conversations in which they take part, and we doubt not that they will lay their hands upon their lips and cry, "Memento, culpa," as fervently as any patient of old.

And how insidious is the habit of gossip! How rapidly it demoralizes the gossip, and how wretched may be the consequences to the gossiped-about! For gossip is always more or less conscious, owing its life, in fact, to misrepresentation and malice, and languishing in the clear atmosphere of truth. The careless remark, the half-told story, the unsupported inference—these are the small beginnings from which great results may spring—great only in the mischief and the wrong they accomplish.

Let us be more careful, my friends, in what we say of others; better still, let us say nothing of others that we should blush to repeat to them.

Especially should this be our practice when a friend is discussed; then every sentiment of affection and loyalty demands that, if we cannot refute a damaging criticism or an unfavorable remark, we should at least be silent.

It must be confessed that, as a rule, men are seldom guilty of indulging in gossip. They very rarely do we hear a man speak of his intimate friend as a woman will speak of hers? Yet we do not believe this difference grows out of any nobler view of friendship or any more exalted virtue on the man's part. It has a simpler solution. Men have larger aims and interests than women, wider ranges of thought and action, and thus they escape much of the pettishness which belongs to a more confined life and narrower sphere. If women read more (the right sort of books), thought more, interested themselves more in subjects worthy of their powers, we should have less comment on Mrs. Such-and-such's absurd polonaise, or Miss This-and-that's affected way of casting down her eyes, and a host of similar and belittling topics of conversation with which so many precious hours are now occupied.

We recall as we write a dear friend, a brilliant accomplished woman, from whose lips no word of gossip ever falls; by whom no invidious story is ever welcomed or circulated—yet can she lead to the most insipid subjects a charm and flavor caught from no forbidden source. "If we must talk of people," so have we heard her say, "if we must canvass their faults and follies, let us choose the dead and gone ones—the kings, heroes, statesmen, whose lives interest us because of their fame."

It is a fact beyond dispute that gossip most abounds where vacant lives give rise to vacant thoughts. The remedies, therefore, are plain. First, more Christianity, next, more culture—the heart attuned to loving kindness and tender sympathy, the mind well stored with all the treasures of knowledge.

All great and noble lives, all the wonders of philosophy and science, all the beauties of nature, surely we need not lack topics for conversation which shall elevate instead of dwarfing our souls.

"What nonsense," says some objector, "who would care to hear a lecture on science, or a dissertation on history, in the family circle? Have we not subjects of more familiar interest to talk about?" Doubtless, and we have no intention of crowding out the daily talk among friends and relations, the kindly interest in little things, the helpful sympathy which takes note of the most trivial needs and acts of those we love, for if this could be done we should be only mummies after all.

But we can supplement our pleasant home-talk at times by wider themes, and bring into it

"All the sweet serenity of books," as Longfellow musically expresses it, without imparting its domestic charm.

At last, let us seek to discourage gossip, if not by open rebuke, by disapproving silence.—Ch. Intel.

What we want in Christ we always find in him. When we want nothing we find nothing. When we want little we find little. When we want much we find much. But when we want everything, and get reduced to complete nakedness and beggary, we find in Him God's complete treasure-house, out of which comes gold, and jewels, and garments to clothe us, wary in the richness and glory of the Lord.—Sears.

Hope for Him, too.

It is pitiful to hear some "scientific" men declaring that faith in a helping God is a worn-out superstition. Faith has, and always will have, its reason in our necessity, and its foothold in the heavenly promises—and its effects are as plain to those who are saved by it as was the possession of his sight to the cured Jerusalem blind man.

Almost every Eastern newspaper has mentioned the case of the converted inebriate, T. B. Hawks, the man of whom even Mr. Moody, at the first look, doubted whether he was "worth saving." The story of Mr. Sawyer has been told. An instance of restoration quite as remarkable was that of a self-ruined man in Western Pennsylvania. Friends, clients and acquaintances (and he was known to a large and influential circle) shook their heads in sad astonishment when Judge Granger fell, and spoke his name with hushed voices. Time had been when the State of Iowa claimed him as one of the most promising men of her bar and bench, for he had risen rapidly and won his honors young. The country, too, owed him a debt for his gallant service through the four years of her civil war. But as his own talents raised him, his own vices dragged him down. An appetite indulged beyond control became his daily enemy, his growing habits of intemperance cost him his position, and he finally sank so low that his nearest relative disowned him. He wandered to a little town in the oil region of Pennsylvania, and lived there a wretched bummer, lounging about the saloons. In his old home far away he was thought of as one dead, and in a last impulse of sorrow and crushed hope his father, learning his whereabouts, sent money and a message to a prominent man of the place, saying—"If Henry is found dead in your streets bury him decently—don't send his body here." News of this message reached the ears of the poor vagabond. It stung him to desperation. The contrast of what he had been and what he was overcame him, and he resolved to put an end to his life. On his way out of the village he passed a place of public assembly. It was God's hand that arrested him there and made him stop to look and listen. He entered the building with a vial of poison in his pocket. The speaker was one of the laborers in the "Murphy movement," and he preached the Gospel of hope. He did not say that reformation was a matter of will, and reason, and self-interest, and self-respect. He did not try to describe the horrors of intemperance, or appeal to the drunkard's "common sense." He said that God could and would help him out of his vilest sin; and ruin the worst man who would freely trust Him.

To poor Henry Granger that night this doctrine of hope, and faith, and love, and cheer, seemed all new. He became interested, forgot his intention of self-murder, and remained while others went forward to sign the pledge that recognized the Divine power supreme in the sinner's victory. The promptings of a holy purpose strengthened his heart and straightened his bent frame. Was a humble religious trust indeed his only way to restoration and safety? Then he would trust. He saw two men, two of the worst drunkards in the region, put down their names upon the Christian pledge. With an inward prayer he went forward and put down his own—and at forty years of age the man who had been a soldier, an officer, a judge, and a sot, began his life anew.—Watchman.

Buying Elephants.

It is stated that the Baptist ministers of New York city are making efforts to raise sufficient money to buy an elephant for the use of their missionaries in India. That is a commendable enterprise. The fortunate elephant that gets the honors of missionary service will do more good than the poor stolen beasts that trudge through our land in the itinerant circus shows. Elephants can do service, too.

But we have known cases of investment in a certain kind of unwieldy elephants that did not pay. There are individuals, and corporations, and families, and congregations, who have elephants on their hands, and know not what to do with them.

The vain and ambitious congregation that drove off a plain and faithful pastor, and "bought" a dashing, brilliant, skyrocket preacher, to tickle the ears of the world and to "draw" are waking up to the fact that they have an elephant on their hands, and are not able to feed or house the animal.

The leading men of the small church, who are determined to have as fine a place to worship in as their aristocratic and wealthy neighbors, and who now sit in cushioned pews, under a lofty roof covered with a fifty thousand debt, which they are not able to bear, find that they have an elephant on their hands that proves extremely inconvenient and troublesome. Big church, and nobody to fill it. Big debt and nobody to pay it. Big conceit, and nothing to feed it. Elephant!

It is fashionable to have a costly piano in the parlor. A shoddy aristocrat buys one. There the big awkward bulky stands, as if hesitating whether to go or stay. It is kept nicely covered from sight. It is dusted and cleaned regularly. But nobody knows what to do with it. Nobody can play on its shilling keys. It is a huge—elephant!

If you sell your farm you will get your money scattered among your friends; it is difficult to get the interest when due; very often you lose both interest and principal. You will also be taxed heavily on your money, much more than in the country. Real estate is appraised low, and you

A young man whose idea of life has been formed from milk-and-water novels, thinks it is time to marry. He must find an elegant lady of leisure. He finds one,—for they are very plenty! He soon makes the discovery that he got more ribbons, and silks, and jewelry, and sentimentalism than anything else. His wife can't keep house, and he can't hire help. She don't know how to manage, and he has nothing to manage except his own conceit. Elephant!

Don't buy elephants except for mission-work or for a menagerie!—Eccl. Messenger.

Famine and Faith in India.

Miss Louisa Austey sends us a letter dated Kolar, Mysore, May 1. Our readers will remember the name of this lady, who last year wrote us a deeply interesting narrative of her recovery from illness in answer to faith and prayer. She had previously been in India, and had returned invalided; there seemed no prospect of her restoration but India lay upon her heart, and having given herself unreservedly to the Lord, He raised her up, and she went forth. The following extracts will, we are sure, gain the attention and awaken the sympathy of our readers:

From famine and from cholera "the air is full of farewells to the dying and mournings of the dead." The whole creation groans; it is very oppressive, very solemnizing. Our hearts bleed with sympathy for their terrible trials, especially as it seems they harden their hearts and will not "bear the rod," nor "turn to Him who hath appointed it." The heat is extraordinary, and the weather most unhealthy; we have had only two showers of rain since reaching India, and unless rain comes soon we shall be in another year of famine. In February the natives of this division lost 10,000 head of cattle, and in March 14,000. The suffering and loss increase as time advances. The heat increases, and there is no rain; poverty and suffering are to be seen on all sides.

Within the last two months, I have gathered eighty little orphans; the parents part with them to a trifling help, so that the children may be provided with food and shelter. The number will probably be doubled before this letter reaches you. As provisions are at famine prices, the contribution towards the support of these children which the readers of *The Christian* so unexpectedly sent me through you was very welcome. I was thinking on the perfect freedom from anxiety as to the funds for the mission which I enjoy day by day, and yet the expenditure is heavy for rice is very dear. Then, recollecting that we must ask as well as trust, I asked, and the very next morning brought a kind note from Captain L—, Madras, stating that he and two other Christian brethren had sent up ten bags containing 1600 pounds of rice. Soon afterwards came the tidings of £16 5s. from the readers of *The Christian*. So we continually have to send up notes of praise and thanksgiving.

These little ones by the Spirit's power, are to be trained up as native agents to sound forth the glad tidings of salvation by word and life to their perishing countrymen. A very enlightened Hindu gentleman said to a friend of mine, "I deeply appreciate Miss Austey's coming amongst us, but I do not think she will gather Christians from amongst us." Since then the Lord has committed to my keeping in less than two months about eighty caste children, to be trained up and nursed for him. We have a Mohammedan family consisting of mother and four children; we have also two fathers, each with two boys.—London Christian.

Stay on the Farm.

This is the advice I would give every one who has lived for any considerable length of time on a farm. There seems to be a great disposition among farmers to leave their farms and move to town when they and their wives begin to get old, and work begins to go hard with them. Farmers get the impression that it is much easier to live in town than in the country. This is a great mistake so far as the wife is concerned. It is nearly as much work to keep house in town as it is in the country. If the men will milk the cows and make the garden on the farm, which they should do, and make things as convenient about the farm-house as they generally are in town, which may be done at a trifling expense, the wife will find the difference very small. The farmer will also find it much cheaper to make the garden and do the milking than to buy the vegetables, butter and milk. He will also find a great difference between having marketing to sell, and having everything to buy. This is much more noticeable to persons who come from the country to town than it is to persons who were raised in town. If you have children you would much better raise them on the farm than in town—more especially boys.

Country people while living on their farms only see the sunny side of town life when they come to town and see persons in the street. They generally see them well-dressed, especially the ladies, but it is often very different if you were to see them in their poorly supplied kitchens, and bathtubs, &c.

If you sell your farm you will get your money scattered among your friends; it is difficult to get the interest when due; very often you lose both interest and principal. You will also be taxed heavily on your money, much more than in the country. Real estate is appraised low, and you

will pay tax for every dollar you have. If you live in town you must help to pay town expenses, which are high and numerous. You will help pay for keeping up a police force, cleaning streets, gas, and lighting street lamps, fire engines and a fire department, and many other things which will cost you nothing while you are on your farm. If you have a farm and rent it, the rent will not pay you five per cent on the investment, and it will soon run down, as all rented farms do, and depreciate in value, which will annoy you if you have been a good farmer. If you are a well-to-do your family will not want to live in a house that will cost you not less than \$3,000 or \$4,000 which you can put out at ten per cent interest, and it will bring you \$300 or \$400 interest yearly, which will pay a good share of the hired help on a farm.

If you and your wife are no longer able to do your work, which I would not advise any one to try to do when they are old, and you have no children that will take charge of the farm and run it, I would advise you to build one or two tenement houses and have your hired help board themselves and let them work the farm on shares. It may be annoying, but not more so than it will be to leave your farm and move to town. I know many persons who have sold their farms and gone into business in town, and in a very short time lost all they had; so I would advise you to stay on the farm.—Practical Farmer.

The Spirit of Work.

The spirit of Christ was the spirit of work. Whether he was talking to the fishermen on the beach, or preaching to the sailors on the deck, or addressing the rustics amid the mountains, or spending the summer evenings in the village. He was always busy. Hewing in the carpenter shop; helping the lame man to walk without any crutch; curing the child's fits; providing rations for a hungry host. He was very busy. The hardy men that pulled out the net from Gennesaret, full of floundering treasures; the shepherds who hunted up the grassy plots for their flocks to nibble at; the shipwright thumping away in the dock-yards; the wine-makers of Engedi dipping up the juice from the vat and pouring it into the goat skins—none of these were half so busy as He whose hands and head and heart were all full of the world's work. From the day on which he stepped out from the caravansary of Bethlehem to the day when He set His cross in the socket on the bloody mount, it was work, work, work, all the way.

It is not so with us, not so with you, not so with me. We want the burden to be light if we are to carry it, the church-pew soft if we are to sit in it, the work easy if we are to perform it, the sphere brilliant if we are to move in it, the religious service short if we are to survive it. On the way to heaven, rock us, fan us, sing us to a joyous heart; but without a kindness there can be no true joy.—Julius Hare.

The more enlarged is our mind, the more we discover of men of originality. Your common-place people see no difference between one and another.—Pascal.

United Prayer.

For ten long years Mrs. H. prayed for her infidel husband. She knew that the Lord heard, and that he was "faithful that had promised," but as yet the answer did not come. The thoughts of her kind indulgent companion seemed as far from her as when in the joy of her new-found hope, she had told him how "God so loved," and asked him to join her in a life of loving service. Yes the Lord was leading her gently that she might know and do his will.

One evening at the church prayer-meeting her heart was more than usually burdened, and near the close of the service, she rose timidly and said: "For many years, dear friends, I have longed to ask to help me pray. It is not customary with us for ladies to speak in the meeting, and I have feared to be intrusive, but I can forbear no longer. Will you pray for my husband?"

Every heart was touched. A good brother immediately led in prayer, then another, and another took up the petition. Mr. H. was well known and much loved in the community, and they poured out their hearts before the Lord, pleading, "as one pleadeth for a friend." Last of all a colored brother led in prayer, and in humble confidence seemed to enter into the very presence of Jehovah.

Just after Mrs. H. had made her request, her husband, as was his custom, came to the church to accompany her home. Finding that the service had not yet closed, he entered, unobserved, and took a seat near the door.

"Tell me, wife," he said, as they were leaving the vestibule, "who was the gentleman they were praying for just now?" "He is the husband of one of the church," replied Mrs. H.

"Wife," he said again, as they ascended

the steps at home, "who was it they were praying for?"

"The husband of one of the sisters, Charles,"

"Well wife," he replied, that man will certainly be converted; I never heard such prayers before."

Again as they were preparing for the night, he remarked, "Those were wonderful prayers, wife. Can you tell me the gentleman's name?"

"He was the husband of one of the ladies present," replied Mrs. H., and then she retired to her closet for prayer and praise.

At midnight she heard her husband's voice again. "Wife, wife, God heard those prayers; I cannot sleep wife. Will you pray for me? Can the Lord show mercy to me, wife?"

There was joy in the presence of angels that night. When the faithful pastor called the next morning he found Mr. H. "praising and blessing God."

Blessed words of Jesus, "when two of you shall agree, touching anything that ye shall ask, it shall be done of my Father."—Advocate and Guardian.

Trials of Newspaper Men.

One of the greatest trials of the newspaper profession is that its members are compelled to see more of the shame of the world than any other professions. Through every newspaper office, day after day, go all the weaknesses of the world; all the vanities that want to be puffed; all the mistakes that want to be reaped; all the dull speakers who want to be thought eloquent; all the meanness that wants to get its wares noticed gratis in the editorial columns; all the men who want to be set right who were never right; all the cracked-brained philosophers with stories as long as their hair, and as gloomy as their finger-nails in mourning because bereft of soap—all the bores who come to stay five minutes, but talk five hours.

Through the editorial and reportorial rooms, all the follies and shams of the world are seen day after day, and the temptation is to believe in neither God, man, nor woman. It is no surprise to me that in this profession there are some skeptical men; I only wonder that journalists believe anything.—De Witt Talmage.

Random Readings.

Each man has an aptitude born with him to do easily some feat impossible to any other.—Emerson.

Twenty Christians can fight heroically where one can suffer greatly and be strong and be still.—Dr. Cuyler.

The wealth of a man is the number of things which he loves and blesses, which he is loved and blessed by.—Carlyle.

A laugh to be joyous must flow from a joyous heart; but without a kindness there can be no true joy.—Julius Hare.

The more enlarged is our mind, the more we discover of men of originality. Your common-place people see no difference between one and another.—Pascal.

He only is great who has the habits of greatness; who after performing what none in ten thousand could accomplish, passes on like Sampson, and tells neither father or mother about it.—Lavater.

Faith and works are necessary to our spiritual life as Christians, as soul and body are to our natural life as men, for faith is the soul of religion, and works of the body.—Colton.

If there be any whom you have wronged or injured, if possible, at once make reparation. Why should you carry thorns to your dying pillow, or have to regret as undone that which you might have done, but can never now attempt?

Kind words bless him that uses them. A sweet sound on the tongue tends to make the heart mellow. Kind words react upon the kind feelings which prompted them, and make them more kind. They add fresh fuel to the fire of benevolent emotion in the soul.

Be not weary in doing what God bids you, nor in waiting for what God has promised you. Your work may be difficult, but persevere in it. The delay may seem long, but it will come to an end. Look to Jesus, rest on the promise, keep on with the work, and in due season you go to the rest if you faint not.

There is as much reason why we should keep the Sabbath holy with our tongues as with our hands. If it be unsuitable to employ our hands about common and worldly things, is it not as unsuitable to employ our tongues? The Sabbath is a thermometer of the spiritual state of the soul.—Jonathan Edwards.

"What does Satan pay you for swearing?" asked one gentleman of another. "He does not pay me anything," was the reply. "Well, you work cheaply—to lay aside the character of a gentleman; to inflict so much pain on your friends and civil people; to suffer; and lastly, to risk your own precious soul, and for nothing— you certainly do work cheaply, very cheaply, indeed."

FLY PAPER.—Powdered black pepper is mixed with syrup to a thick paste, which is spread by means of a broad brush upon coarse blotting paper. Common brown sugar will answer, but syrup made from sugar is preferable, as it dries quicker. For use, a piece of this paper is laid upon a plate and dampened with water.