

The Renowned 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.

SAINT JOHN, N. B., FRIDAY, JANUARY 25, 1884.

EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR.

WHOLE No. 1563.

The Intelligencer.

SUPPORT OF THE MINISTRY.

(We present below extracts from a sermon preached recently before the Ohio Baptist Convention, at New York, by the Rev. C. F. Fernald, of Springfield, Mass. The sermon was published in full in the *Journal and Messenger*.)

The salvation of souls costs money, and has cost money, and will cost money, in all ages of human history, by the direct appropriation of God. When, at length, the Redeemer came to Zion, it cost money to maintain the earthly ministry of Jesus. Many of the wealthy followed in his train, and "ministered to him of their substance," and the Master and his disciples had a common purse from which they bought supplies at their own discretion, and were accustomed to "give something to the poor." But here we are called to a sudden halt by the question, "What! did not Jesus send his apostles forth without purse, or scrip, or change of raiment, promising to provide for them?" Yes, the twelve and the seventy, for a limited time and a special mission. But this was exceptional, even then, and in the last solemn hours before he left them, he expressly repeated those instructions (Luke xxi, 33, 36). "But now, he that hath a purse, let him take it, and likewise his scrip." As he was to be taken from them, the common laws of sustenance were henceforth to be their guide, and the commission to go without purse or scrip was forever repealed, and inspired apostles carried out the spirit of the Saviour's latest utterance in the enactment, "Even so both the Lord ordained, that they who preach the gospel should live of the gospel." This, then, is the final order for the church minister on this subject. And, through all these eighteen hundred years, not one sect, which has insisted, in doctrine and practice, upon an unpaid ministry, has long survived and flourished. Not one strong denomination stands to-day, which does not, in some way, provide that its preachers shall "live of the gospel."

The great source of weakness to the believer and to the church is the eating of the worldliness—the cares, riches and pleasures of this life choke the word—and one of the surest remedies for this is voluntary self-sacrifice of earthly goods, and one of the simplest, surest ways of self-sacrifice is to give money, till you feel privation from the gift, and miss some pleasure which that money would have bought, and can say, with Israel's noble king, "I will not offer unto the Lord my God, that which costeth me nothing." No crowding of unscriptural papers into the warship! There, religion costs nothing—and becomes nothing. There, the salvation of souls cost nothing—and the souls are not saved. Near by will be some plain tarantula, where service is maintained by the contributions of the gift. There, where the gospel costs something, the whole church is full of their hard earnings, and the place is full of the joy of salvation. I know a fair valley, where one of the best of men ministered for many years to the churches, at his own charges. Now expiring Baptist churches line that valley, and if any one speaks to them of possible recovery, they lift their heads for a single question, "Will it cost anything?" and being answered in the affirmative, they sigh, close their eyes, and commend themselves for their Methodist brethren with their presiding elders and enforced contributions, to come in and bury them. For, brethren, it will be found that baptism can not be made to take the place of all the Christian graces. Giving of treasure for the soul of heaven and earth is as much a Christian duty as baptism, and a far older one, and I have observed that that when it comes to a choice between the two, the Lord has often the greater blessing for those who are true to the duty of Christian living, than to those who are only "sound" in the theory of Christian baptism. There is no surer way to ruin a church than to take away the expenses of the gospel, and no surer way to ruin the individual Christian than to exempt him from his full share of that expense. From the Christian to Christ, every religious contribution is indeed a gift. A pastor's salary, included in his salary, is an item which he does not receive, but for which he must pay. A minister should not be influenced by such motives, we reply, "These young men are not ministers, and that is just the trouble. We fear they never will be." And if you say again, "If the Lord has called a man he will preach any way," there is still an answer back of that. The Lord may call a man, but the consciousness of his people can exhaust even Jehovah's patience, till he will no longer call men to his unprized and uncompensated ministry, but will, instead, call for "a famine in [the] land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord."

Thus, then, stands the case: Leave out a small circle of churches who have been shaken on your ten fingers, and I will show you more than one prince among men, foremost in all the first interests of his city, and living on less than any accomplished book-keeper in that city receives—and, from that pastor who is deemed prosperous, we will go on by many a struggling worker till we pause where some true man of God, whose praise is in all the humble churches where he has labored, who has seen their numbers doubled and tripled under his ministry, now passing the line of age, feeling the chill of infirmity, looking back upon a past so stratified that no economy could save anything, and on a future where there is no hope but in the providence of God and the compassion of man; and we say there is something wrong in such a state of things—and something that must tend to decrease the supply of men for the future ministry.

Now what are the remedies for this state of things? They are—

First, that young men should take these poor-paying churches, "take what they can get," there, and as it is even suggested, continue unmarried for years, in order that they may live on such a pittance. No! Rome has tried long enough this ministry, and against it Protestantism, backed by the word of Scripture, has uttered its everlasting protest. We want no more pastors there, but churches that will sustain them suitably, each one "the husband of one wife." And it will be found that the moment a man takes one of these little bits of salary, he is a confirmed bachelor, and he becomes a 6000 minister. He gets ideas of having, he is driven to pitiful economy, he is apt to give an unfortunate turn to all his subsequent ministrations.

Secondly, I do not intend to the Bible only, and study it afresh day by day. It is a large tree with many branches, and I have never shaken one of them without at least one sweet fruit falling down for my use. How few know the Scriptures well! Many think that when they have once read the Bible through they know its contents. But its words are not words to be simply read, they are living words, not written to be speculated about, but to be lived and acted on.

Thirdly, I do not intend to indulge in a variety of thoughts, but keep strictly to the leading point of the discourse. All that does not necessarily belong to that one main point I leave unspoken, though ever so many bright ideas occur to me. Preachers who wish to unite a variety of thoughts in their sermons remind me of a servant girl going to market. She meets a friend and wants to have a chat; a second friend passes, and, of course, she must have a word with her; and so, a third and fourth soon join them in a long and idle discourse, so that the girl takes a long time in getting to market.

Fourthly, I strive to preach as simply as possible. I do not try to suit the taste of princes, but I try to suit the students amongst my hearers, but to be easily understood by the working classes, by peasants, and children of twelve and thirteen, and by servant girls. When you preach, take care that Jack and Polly may be able to carry home part of your sermon. We are to be the nursing mothers of our flocks, and, of course, they must be easily understood by the simple folk of the gospel, and not by publicans who intoxicate them with strong drink. I am a great enemy to those who try to show their learning in their sermons, for, with their lofty words, unintelligible to common people, they do more harm than good. We must preach for

tending to vicious courses, nor of the daughter now laid, with peacefully folded hands, in the Christian's early grave. But, of the ability God has given us, we will render you the fullest return we can, that you may carry on the Master's work among us effectively and well.

The mechanic can live in two or three rooms, with a fire in only one of them; wear rough clothing, a checked skirt and heavy boots, and his wife spend her time, instead, in the innocent care of the house and children, and guests rarely sit at their table. All this will not harm his work, and by strict economy he can lay up money from very moderate wages, till he becomes a property owner and a prosperous citizen.

But were a minister to attempt such economy, there would be an instant complaint among his people. His home would be no longer a place where they would be welcome at any hour of perplexity, need or grief. His dress would annoy them, by its sharp contrast to that of all other public speakers and his wife's presence be missed wherever devotion, charity, sickness or sorrow call for woman's heart and voice; while from the godly fellowship of the ministry he would be almost cut off, if unable to exercise a generous hospitality in his home.

It is not a true standard, because it takes no account of age and death. In my humble opinion, all this talk of "Homes for Aged Ministers" is an insult to the ministry and a shame to the church. It is a confession that the ministry have not been properly recompensed in the past, and the churches do not mean they shall be in the future. Better go to the root of things, brethren of wealth, and invest that money in a Sustainment Fund like that of the Presbyterian Church, which levels up all salaries so that no pastor shall receive less than \$800.

The celebrated Duncan Dunbar, of New York, was at one time attending an Association meeting, when the clerk of the church where they were met asked the privilege of making an announcement, which was that the widow of a former pastor was then in the poorhouse, and the church had decided to ask the members of the Association for a small contribution to procure her certain little comforts not provided for by the charity of the Lord. Dr. Dunbar rose quickly from his seat on the platform, and with raised hand and voice, called out, "Brother Moderator! will some one please get me my horse? I can not stay in this place where a dear pastor, who has married their youth, watched by their sick, and buried their death, comforted them in sorrow, and led precious souls to the life beyond, is now in the poorhouse, and the church has decided to ask the members of the Association for a small contribution to procure her certain little comforts not provided for by the charity of the Lord. 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