

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.

VOL. XXXII.—No. 3.

SAINT JOHN, N. B., FRIDAY, JANUARY 16, 1885.

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SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON IV.—Jan. 25.

(For Questions see Star Quarterlies and Lesson Papers.)

PAUL GOING TO JERUSALEM.

SCRIPTURE LESSON.—Acts 21:1-14.

DAILY READINGS.
M. Paul going to Jerusalem. Acts 21:1-14.
P. Philip the evangelist. Acts 8:23-40.
W. The prophet Agabus. Acts 11:22-30.
R. Paul's trial. Matt. 21:1-22.
P. Paul's trial. 1 Cor. 4:1-13.
P. Paul's trial. Rom. 8:31-39.
S. To die is gain. Phil. 1:12-20.

GOLDEN TEXT.—The will of the Lord be done.—Acts 21:14.

TOPICS.—Warning of Danger.
Christians in a City.
Paul's Fortitude.

TIME, A. D. 58.

TOPICAL TREATMENT.
Connecting Link.—This lesson contains an account of Paul's voyage from Miletus to Tyre, touching at Coos, Rhodes, Patara, Tyre and Ptolemais.

I. Warning of Danger. After Paul left his Ephesian brethren on the shore at Miletus, he continued his journey with no interruption, and in about six days arrived at Tyre, where the ship on which he sailed was to discharge her cargo. He soon found Christian friends in this city, for they of "the Way" had been scattered by persecution and had taken refuge in almost every city and town accessible to them. In the society of these disciples he spent a week, waiting for the vessel to continue her voyage. Some of them, being moved by the Holy Spirit, warned Paul not to go up to Jerusalem. It was revealed to them that dangers and persecutions awaited him there. This he already knew. The voice of the Spirit to him was bidding him go on, and no persuasion of kind friends could cause him to turn aside from his purpose and his duty. These warnings were repeated again in a striking manner at Caesarea, when a recognized prophet represented vividly the treatment Paul would receive at Jerusalem. Paul's face was steadfastly set to go to the capital city of the Jewish Church at this time, when thousands of zealous Israelites would be gathered there from all parts of the world. Never again would he have so good an opportunity to proclaim the truth as he had found it, to those who ought to have been most earnest in seeking for it. Nowhere else could he do so much to correct mistakes, to refute calumnies, to improve false notions, and to expound the doctrine of Christianity to large numbers of people as at Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost. He was also the bearer of large gifts from the Gentile Christians to the poorer brethren, made poor in many cases, by the persecutions inflicted upon them on account of their faith in Jesus of Nazareth, as the world's Messiah. He could then and there do more than he had even yet done to bring into harmonious relations the Jewish and Gentile portions of the Christian brotherhood. He was not blindly and foolishly

obstinate. He was simply loyal to his own conscience and the voice of God. He was steadfast in his determination to do his duty as he understood it.

II. Christian Hospitality. We have, in the story of this journey to Jerusalem, a vivid and forcible illustration of the ever abounding hospitality that characterized the early disciples of Christ. Paul's party was not a small one. Seven days were spent at Tyre, one at Ptolemais, and several days at Caesarea. Everywhere they were received with open-handed hospitality. Very likely these Palestinian and Palestinian disciples were poor, but what they had they gladly shared with those who had imperiled their lives for the truth's sake, and those who had been converted from among the Gentiles. Paul then had heard of, and very likely had seen; Luke may not have been an entire stranger to all of them, but probably had never met Philip before. The joyful greetings and hallowed fellowship of these days was an excellent preparation for the rougher experience awaiting them in Jerusalem, and was something to brighten all the future of the lives of those who enjoyed it. From those days to these in which we live, it has always been found that nothing soother, opens human hearts to the needs of others, nothing binds more strongly together hearts that have had but few interests in common, than the love of Jesus Christ as a personal friend and Saviour diffused in these hearts. "Strangers and foreigners are made high by the blood of Christ." Hospitality is one of the Christian graces, not exclusively a Christian grace, but one which is always developed under the influence of the spirit of the Master, who said, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these, my brethren, ye have done it unto me." And, moreover, it is in the very nature of things that the heart should so bring hearts into sympathy and fellowship that they will find great pleasure in the exercise of hospitality; that becomes a source of great enjoyment which they might in any case, gladly and cheerfully do for the Master's sake. Always and everywhere we find the early Christians practicing generous hospitality, and wherever the Christian religion goes its tendency is to awaken and foster the same spirit and practice among its followers.

III. Paul's Fortitude. One may sometimes be in danger by reason of the kindness of his friends. It certainly required a stout heart and a resolute will to resist the pleadings and entreaties of the many dear friends who sought to dissuade Paul from going up to Jerusalem at this time. Arguments were not wanting, weighty reasons, and apparently sound ones, for a different course could easily be found. No was he unmoved by them. His heart was moved, almost broken, by their self-sacrificing pleadings. Only because he felt that he must go; because it was unmistakably the voice of God that called him on; because he saw clearly the path of duty in that direction did he resist their entreaties. No doubt he would gladly have gratified them if he could have done so without sacrificing that which was dearer to him than life itself. He knew by true to his own conscience, and loyal to his Master, and for that reason he was ready to be bound and, if need

be, to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus. His steadfast purpose and unswerving fidelity commanded their respect, secured their sympathy, and gained their acquiescence. "The will of the Lord be done," said they, and dismissed him with prayers and benedictions. Out of the midst of such companionship went the undaunted and heroic apostle to grapple with the fierce and bigoted opponents of "the Way," which was making a way for itself, and was destined to make a way through the world's history, at sight of which millions of men should "thank God and 'ak courage," and along which millions should march with songs and everlasting praises to Him who had redeemed them and made them to be kings and priests forevermore.

THOUGHTS AND APPLICATIONS.
I. Christian fellowship produces true sympathy.

II. The Holy Spirit is not limited as to his agencies for proclaiming the truth.

III. No man need fear while he is doing the Lord's will.

TOPICS FOR FURTHER STUDY.
I. The history of Tyre; of Ptolemais; of Caesarea.

II. The gift of prophecy.

III. The source of Paul's courage.

MACHINERY, NOT POWER.

Never was the Church universal more thoroughly organized than now. The records of the numerous Assemblies, Conventions and Conferences, so recently held or still in session, reveal a vast amount of what we may call spiritual machinery, all in good order and working condition. All this is well, for without system and order all would be chaos and confusion, and no good results could be anticipated. Yet the more we are inclined to wonder at and admire it, the more we need to remember that machinery is not of itself power. Power belongs to God, and wherever the Christian religion goes its tendency is to awaken and foster the same spirit and practice among its followers.

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LEAD US NOT INTO TEMPTATION.

They who pray, "Lead us not into temptation," are offering the very same prayer that our Lord himself offered in Gethsemane: "If it be possible let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt." It was a natural human shrinking from extreme suffering that found utterance in this petition. There was no halting of the will before this ordeal; the "nevertheless" modifies the natural desire, and brings it into subjection to the judgment and the will; once before, standing in the very shadow of the cross, our Lord lifted up the same cry, "Now is my soul troubled, and what shall I say? I say, Father, save me from this hour. But for this cause came I unto this hour! Father glorify thy name."

With these words of Christ in our memory, those of us who believe in him will have no difficulty in believing that it is not wrong for the holiest and most devoted man to pray to be delivered from severe trials. Trials there are that tax the endurance and the courage of the strongest hearts. It is not only so; it is but imitation of the example of Christ Jesus our Lord. To pray to be shielded from them. Only we must always say what he said: "Nevertheless, not my will, but thine be done." "Father, glorify thy name!"—*The Rev. Washington Gladden.*

EFFECTIVE FAMILY RELIGION.
Family religion requires the highest mutual confidence. The reading of the Bible, prayer in the morning or evening, attendance at church, cannot constitute family religion. The spirit of the parents must know that both father and mother depend upon God for direction, and look to him for comfort. The accidental discovery of a parent as prayer makes a deeper impression upon a child's mind than a month of routine services.

The spirit in which religious subjects are referred to is more than the things that are said. The undertone is more important than the overtone. No gloom, nor tasks, nor morbid conscientiousness, but simple, unaffected confidence in God and truth, a personal trust in Christ, and a sincere spirit of goodwill to all help me to love him and to keep these resolutions.

To resolve, on New Year's Day and on birthdays, to live better is a good thing. If you have made resolutions in the past, and have not kept them, ask the Saviour to forgive you, and try again. When you were learning to walk, you stumbled and fell; you did not lie on the floor and determine never to try again, but you jumped up and persevered in the effort. So, if you fall sometimes as you try to walk in the straight and narrow way, you must not be discouraged, but just look up to him who alone can keep you, and try again.

It is well to learn how to let alone wisely. One thing well done is better than many attempted and left unfinished.

Trifling thoughts belittle the mind, weaken the intellect, and desert the affection. Shut them out. Noble thoughts make noble minds, and noble minds say and do noble things, that benefit mankind and glorify God. Seek them.

SPEAK FOR CHRIST.
Speak for your Lord and Master. You tell me you are nervous. Never mind your nervousness. Try once. If you break down a half-dozen times, try again; you shall find your talents increase. It is wonderful how these break-downs do more good than our keeping on. Just deliver your soul of what is in it. Get your heart red-hot, and then, like some volcano, let the lava of your inner feelings, let the lava of your speech run streaming down. You need not care for the graces of oratory, nor for

the refinement of eloquence, but speak what you do know; show them your Saviour's wounds, bid his sorrow speak to them, and it shall be marvellous how your stammering tongue shall be all the better instrument because it does stammer, for that God "hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to naught things that are."—*Spurgeon.*

HOW TO DIE IN FAITH.
Would you be so happy as to die in faith, take these advices:

1. Be careful to get faith beforehand; for death is a time to use faith, not to get it. They were foolish virgins who had their oil to buy when the bridegroom was close at hand.

2. Study to live every day in the exercise of faith, and be still improving and making use of Christ in all his offices, and for all those ends and uses for which God hath given him to believers.

3. Frequently clear up your evidences of heaven, and beware of letting sin blot them to you.

4. Record and lay up the experiences of God's kind dealings with you, and be often reflecting upon them, that you may have them ready at hand in this hour of death.

5. Meditate much on these promises which have been sweet and comfortable to you in the time of trial, and beg that the Lord may bring them to your remembrance when you come to die.—*Willson.*

RESOLUTIONS FOR 1885.
I will obey my parents in all things.

I will be kind to my brothers and sisters and friends.

I will speak pleasant and not angry words to every one.

I will sit at my lessons every day without being told.

I will learn the Golden Text every Sunday.

I will ask Jesus every night and morning to help me to love him and to keep these resolutions.

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GIVE WHILE YOU LIVE.—It seems to be more and more clearly realized that a gift made while living is worth double of one made after death. It is safer; because it is in no danger of being contested, divided, or misapplied. The giver can personally see that it goes directly and immediately where he intends. This is often not the case with posthumous gifts. It is more satisfactory, because the giver can himself enjoy seeing the good his gift is doing. It is more just and righteous; because, properly speaking, only what a man has while he lives is his own—when he dies it no longer belongs to him. It is more purely unselfish, more truly Christian; because he denies himself of what he might himself have used. After death he has no more use for it. To give to Christ's cause only what we have no more use for ourselves is not the highest form of charity. Therefore do not wait till death, but give while you live.—*Moravian.*

RANDOM READINGS.
"Ye are the salt of the earth." Do all who come near you feel the wholesome, purifying stimulation?

Let us take care how we speak to those who have "fallen on life's field." Help them up, do not heap scorn upon them. We did not see the conflict. We did not know the score.

If we would have powerful minds we must think; if we would have strong hearts we must love; if we would have strong muscles we must labor. These include all that is valuable a life.

Present institutions of genial, deep-thoughted men, even of the deepest, are, in part, a fruit of past institutions, culture generating an atmosphere wherein the largest brains are unconsciously fed.

A thankful spirit has always fresh matter for thankfulness. To praise God for the past is the sure way to secure mercies for the future. Prayer and praise live or die together.—*Reynolds.*

Mayhap you are disposed and trodden under foot of men, having almost lost your self-respect. Lift yourself up; let no man despise you! God is your Father! You are the heir of his love; you ought to be a sharer in his glory.

Anything which makes religion its second object makes religion no object. God will put up with a great many things in the heart, but there is one thing he will not put up with in it—a second place. He who offers God a second place, offers him no place.—*Askin.*

If a canoe be connected by a cord with a distant ship, one in the canoe may draw himself to the ship, if he cannot draw the ship to himself. So, as has been said, is it with prayer. If it do not bring God to man, it will man to God. And this is always well for man.—*W. P. Breck.*

Growth in grace manifests itself by simplicity, that is, a greater naturalness of character. There will be more usefulness and less noise; more tenderness of conscience and less scrupulosity; there will be more peace, more humility. When so full corn is in the ear, it bows down because it is full.—*Cecil.*