

Religious Intelligencer.

"THAT GOD IN ALL THINGS MAY BE GLORIFIED THROUGH JESUS CHRIST."—Peter.

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SAINT JOHN, N. B., WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 13, 1886.

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Every Free Baptist Minister in the Provinces is an agent for the INTELLIGENCER.

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The following are amongst the regular contributors to the INTELLIGENCER: Revs. Edwin Crowell, C. F. Penney, D. D., W. Creelman, A. Taylor, W. Kinghorn, G. A. Hartley, W. Downey, J. T. Parsons, John Perry, J. L. Porter, G. W. McDonald, C. T. Phillips, T. H. Siddall, S. H. Weyman, J. W. Clark, W. J. Halse, S. N. Royal, A. C. Thompson, F. Babcock, B. Minard, A. Kinney, B. A. Sherwood and J. E. Reid; W. G. Gance, A. B. Boyer, W. B. Wiggins and others. We think our readers may expect many good things from these writers, and we are hoping that their contributions will have a marked beneficial effect on the work of the denomination.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.

For many years subscriptions to the INTELLIGENCER have been acknowledged in the paper. We have now discontinued the practice. Hereafter each subscriber will receive a receipt. If he pays in person he will get the receipt then, if he remits by mail he will receive a post-card receipt. Besides this the date to which his subscription is paid will be printed on the address label on his paper.

AGENTS.

Some of our agents have made encouraging returns. We hope to hear from all of them soon.

PLEASE REMEMBER.

- 1—That hundreds of subscriptions expired with the old year; and that we are expecting renewals of them all.
- 2—That prompt renewals are a positive blessing to the paper; and that our friends will confer a favour by renewing right away.
- 3—That this is a good time to canvass for new subscribers.
- 4—That if you send a new subscriber with your renewal, \$3.50 will pay for both for a year.

Our Contributors.

PASSING THOUGHTS.

NO. I.

Backsliders.

Living as I do, in a community made up largely of those whom we term backsliders, many thoughts concerning them, have, first and last, passed through the mind. I am led to ask, Why is it?

One reason is this: There are families who move into the community from country districts; they have been connected with, and in many cases have been active members of the churches in the places from which they come. But coming to the town or city they fail to report themselves to the pastor in charge, or to show themselves as Christian workers. Further, they think that to sever their connection with the old church at home, and unite themselves with the church in the town is not necessary. And, hence, without a permanent Christian home, they drift about from church to church, and in a short time lose their interest and find themselves in a backslidden condition. In some cases the impression obtains that, if they do not identify themselves with the church they are free from responsibility; if things go wrong, they are not to blame; if there is no revival, they are not the hindrance. But we ask, Are they not, as members of Christ's body, in some degree responsible? Are they not somewhat to blame? Are they not largely a hindrance? Would it not be better for themselves, better for their families, better for the church, and better for the community, if all such persons would deposit their letters with the churches where they now reside? Would they not feel more at home, and that they had something to do for Jesus, and for the community. We think every person, moving from one place to another, should be urged by the pastor and officers of the church to take with them letters of commendation, and to seek a Christian home as soon as possible after settlement. Failing to unite with the corps of workers in their new place of residence, is it any wonder that they backslide?

Again, there are churches which, when a member asks for a letter of dismission and commendation, are unwilling to grant it. They say to the

one asking the letter, you have been so long associated with us that it would not do to sever the connection; or, if you go, we will lose your support financially. These objections are wrong. To shirk responsibility, some say they have been told something about somebody in the church, therefore they would rather remain as they are. And, rather than identify themselves with such a church, they will stand aloof and ultimately backslide. Tell me, you who know, where there is a church without a Mr. Crooked-stick in it? Did John say he would not go to the table, on the night of the betrayal, because Judas was there?

Another reason, we think, why so many have grown cold and indifferent is, the neglect of daily private prayer. A Christian can no more live without daily communion with God than the body can live without daily food. Prayer is God's appointed means by which His children live and grow. Neglect prayer, and you will soon lose your interest in spiritual things. Your heart will become hard. Your mind will become clouded; peace will depart; you cannot sing one of the old songs of Zion. Maintain daily communion with God, and you live; you are active in the church; in the community you are a power for good; your path grows brighter and brighter; your love for God and humanity increases; and your interest in all good moral enterprises deepens. Neglect prayer, and the chances are your family will grow up prayerless. In your eyes everybody else will be wrong, while in truth your own heart is all wrong. You stand in the way of sinners, and must in some measure be responsible if they are not saved. Let me urge upon all who reads this, never to neglect daily private prayer; and when you pray, remember God is present and hears your prayer. The Bible is full of encouragement to pray, for instance, Jer. xxxiii. 3: "Call unto Me and I will answer thee, and show thee great and mighty things, which thou knowest not." Again, in the sermon on the Mount, "Ask, and it shall be given you." In John 16, where Christ is comforting His disciples against tribulation, by the promise of the Holy Ghost, and by His resurrection and ascension, and by assuring them that their prayers, made in His name, would be acceptable to the Father, we read: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, He will give it you."

"Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name, ask and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full." Again in James v. 16-18: "Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed." "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." "Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain; and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months. And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit." Let us go to God as we are; tell Him what we need, pleading the merits of Jesus, and our prayers will be heard and answered. Blessings rich and full will be ours. The churches with which we are connected will be stronger spiritually; the community will feel the influence, and the day is not far distant when sinners will begin to cry for mercy. Let us hasten to the throne of grace. W. J. HALSE.

A GREAT NEED.

Reading, recently, the *Missionary Helper*, I came to these words: "The financial outlook is hopeful, the lack of laborers is ominous. For the first time, in twenty-five years, there is no one saying—'Here am I, send me.' Fifty men and their wives and fifty single women are needed to prosecute the work already commenced." This was said in reference to the work of the American Board of Foreign Missions, an old and God-honored Society, formed for the purpose of sending the Gospel to the heathen. The facts presented in the above extract, together with some other things, have caused me to think and feel deeply concerning our denominational want of ministers and missionaries. Never have means been so available with us; but where are the men and women to use the means in work for Christ? Where are the reapers? If we were the only people that lacked laborers, I should be

led to think there might be something wrong about our work, and that that wrong God was withholding laborers. But our condition is only that of many religious bodies. How shall we obtain the needed laborers? I answer, in different ways. First, by prayer. "Pray ye the Lord of the harvest to send forth laborers." Ministers and missionaries are the children of the church, given in answer to prayer. Let us remember that, and act upon it. Second, look for them, and expect them, and when any seem inclined to enter the work, encourage them. Another indispensable requisite is consecration to God on the part of Christians, especially those whose age and providential qualifications would indicate that the Lord might use them in special public work for Him. No Christians, young or old, can know what the Lord can do with them until an entire surrender is made of themselves and their all to God. I have fears that the want of laborers, with ourselves and others, is owing entirely to this lack of consecration to God. There is too much loose Christian living, the standard of the Christianity of too many is far below what God requires.

The urgent need for laborers is seen from a view of the fields "ready to harvest," viz.: Home wants, the North-west, India, Burmah, Africa, and other places, from all which places comes the "Macedonian cry." Never in the history of the church have there been such opportunities to work and reap for Christ, never such possibilities within the reach of Christian workers. Ye young men and young women, who want to make your mark in the world for God, will you not think of these things? Lay yourselves on God's altar as living sacrifices, and thus learn what God wants you to do for Him. I know what this consecration to God means, hence I write as I do. What little success I have achieved has been by my being given up to God. And so it is with all who are workers together with Christ. May the incoming year bring to God, to us, to others, many consecrated ones, "To share in the glory of the harvest home." F. BABCOCK.

SIGNS OF BLESSING.

There are indications of unusual religious interest. There are in the religious papers that reach us many and full reports of unwonted Church activity. The editorials and correspondence of the religious press very clearly voice the desire after the endowment of power for the Church and the winning of many souls to Christ. The "missions" held by the Episcopal Church in New York have awakened much interest. Special services by Presbyterians, Baptists, Methodists and other churches have been or are to be held. The signs seem to point to a year of much good. The Lord grant a great blessing. Referring to the apparent general feeling of expectancy the *Independent* speaks some words of warning and counsel, thus: Let it come. No, that was the wrong response to the message of the approaching Spirit. Go, rather, to meet it! Seek it; call for it, bring it with you to your own church.

Let this be understood, that where the blessing does not come the only reason is that it has not been sought. It is like drawing from a full fountain. The water is there. It is free to all; one only has to go and get it; if one has no water it is his own fault. The conditions for the spiritual blessing of a church are equally large and free. Christ's grace is abundant. His Spirit is ready; human nature is the same as ever, waiting for instruction and responsive to appeal.

And yet how many of our churches will go through this winter and spring, and yet receive no blessing! If one or two young children of the best instructed families, daughters of the pastor or elder, are received in the natural order of things into the church, they will be satisfied. Satisfied? Yes; for if they were not satisfied they would not have it so. If they really wished large fruits they could gather them. If they would give for them prayer and service faithfully, they might have a great revival of God's work.

We pray for special revivals. But this is not because we believe that such times of periodical special religious labor are best. The constant dew of divine grace is better than the oc-

casional flood. But what else can we ask when we see three-fourths of our churches contented with one or two additions a year? So long as that is the case everything is going backward. The number of those who have failed to enter the communion of the church is increasing. At last the church wakes up to find that it must make a mighty struggle, or it will be swallowed up and lost in the tide of worldliness about it. There must be special labor, and there must be a revival of religion, to bring in the scores in a single year who ought to have been gathered in many years earlier. There are thousands of such churches in the land. Probably the present reader's church is one of them. If the harvest is not gathered this season it will be the reader's fault. It will be the pastor's fault, and that of each member of the church.

RELIGIOUS REVIEW OF 1885.

The year just closed was a year of activity among the Churches in all parts of the world. Few of the numerous branches of the Church of Christ have failed to form new congregations, or missions and to gather in a larger number of members than they lost by death and other causes.

The great historic event of the year was the publication of the Revised Old Testament, completing the work begun some fifteen years ago. In May the complete Bible as revised by the English and American Company was given to the public. There was less popular interest in the publication of the Old Testament than in the appearance of the New in 1881, and the sales were much smaller; but it was hardly to be expected that people would buy as many copies of the whole Bible (the Old Testament was not offered separately) at a dollar each (the lowest price) as of a single Testament, which sold as low as twenty cents in 1881. There was anxiety to see how the revision had affected the Messianic passages. The reception given to the revision was kindly, and the criticisms were mainly directed against its conservatism. No steps have yet been taken by any denomination to adopt the Revised Bible.

No movement of the year received more attention than that of Nonconformists and Liberal electors for Disestablishment of the Church of England, and the Church of Scotland. The question never came into politics so prominently before; and never was there a sharper controversy over it. The fact that upward of 1,500,000 new voters had been added to the electorate, mainly from classes of the population supposed to be out of sympathy with the Church, offered an excellent opportunity of striking a blow for Disestablishment. When the Liberal candidates had all been named, an alert Church paper discovered that the great majority of them were in favor of Disestablishment. Mr. Gladstone had not, it is true, declared definitely against it, he had intimated that the drift was setting in that direction, and had expressed the belief that the Church had so cultivated the voluntary principle that it could exist without the help of the State. The Church, backed by the entire Conservative party, raised an alarm, and appeals were made to Churchmen who loved the Church to come to her defense. Bishops, deans, canons, vicars, curates, laymen, and statesmen responded, and press and platform were made lively with controversy. The Tories unquestionably gained something by their attitude as defenders of the Church; but the Disestablishment party never had such strength as to-day.

The Church of England, in all its branches has had a prosperous year. In London a general "Mission" was held in February for West London. A "Mission" had been held in East London in the previous November, and it had been very successful. In East London meetings were held in about 200 places for a space of ten days; and in some churches there were as many as fifteen services in a single day. The Mission was extensively advertised, missionaries were engaged for the occasion, use was made of laymen, and processions, headed by the clergy, marched through the streets singing hymns. It was a very impressive movement; and much good, it is believed, was done. It was sought to reach all classes of the population, even the lowest. A procession, consisting of two church choirs, in surplices and cassocks, and missionaries and clergy attired in their official vestments, and led by a brass band, marched through the Potteries, one of the most wretched districts in London. Hundreds of the people fell in line, and at intervals a halt was made and addresses were delivered. The Episcopal Churches of

New York City held a similar mission in December, which they called the Advent Mission. Eighteen or twenty churches united in the movement, and missionaries from England, from Canada, and from other dioceses in this country were engaged. A very general interest was manifested in the services in the various churches, and the Mission is regarded as having been beneficial to the churches and to the masses.

The spirit of revival in the Churches, which was so manifest last winter, has grown in depth and fervor since September, and 1886 promises to be a more fruitful year than 1885 has been. Revival notes come from all parts of the country and from many denominations. Single churches have already gathered in hundreds, in some cases, of new converts.

It has been remarked that the Evangelical Churches are becoming more cordial and fraternal in their relations with one another, and that the controversies of a past generation have left scarcely a memory behind. The Episcopal Mission may be taken as evidence, not only of this feeling of Christian fellowship, but of the fact that the denominations are fast coming into accord on the subject of revivals. The Episcopal Mission is only a Presbyterian, Baptist, or Methodist revival, with another name. All Churches have rejoiced in its success, and from no evangelical source has it received unfavorable criticism. In May last a movement intended to give opportunity for the expression of the cordial feeling existing between the Churches took form in a "Congress of Churches," which held its first meeting in Hartford, Conn. In its council of twenty-five are embraced unofficial representatives of the Episcopal, Congregational, Lutheran, Baptist, Methodist, Reformed (Dutch), Unitarian and other denominations. The object of the movement is "to promote Christian union and to advance the Kingdom of God by a free discussion of the great religious, moral and social questions of the time." In Brooklyn, Detroit, and other cities, ministers of the Episcopal Church have met with the ministers of other Churches to plan for revival meetings.

Presbyterian, Baptist, Methodist and Congregational Churches have had a quiet but generally prosperous year. The American Board (Congregational), celebrated its seventy-fifth anniversary at Boston, with crowded and enthusiastic audiences.

The Roman Catholic Church has suffered severely in its missionary interests in Asia by the French-Chinese war. Its missions in Tonquin have been almost annihilated and thousands of its native converts have been put to death in the fury which the French invasion roused among the people. In China, also, Catholic missions lost heavily in property, and in many cases French priests were driven from their stations. The ecclesiastical war in Germany, Italy and France has lost much of its former violence, and only a slumbering controversy remains. The Pope has hurled no thunderbolts at the Quirinal, although his Christmas speech shows that he has not forgotten the tradition of Pius IX that the Vatican is a prison house. The French elections have resulted quite favorably to the clerical party, and for the time being, nothing is heard about separation of Church and State. One of the notable events of the year was the Pope's letter to the Archbishop of Paris severely censuring certain Ultramontanists for inspiring remarks concerning the reign and memory of Pius IX so conceived as to reflect unfavorably on Leo XIII. The Papal Encyclical of November, on the "Christian Constitution of States," has been interpreted both as a liberal and as an Ultramontanist document. Some find it in accord with the sentiments of Pius IX; others find indications of a progressive spirit in it. It is certainly not in harmony with the Syllabus of Errors, either in spirit or expressions on several important points, particularly concerning the toleration by rulers of other religions, and the acceptance of the results of science.

A convention of Reformed Rabbis, which met in Pittsburgh, in November, caused a great stir in Jewish circles by a declaration which the orthodox regarded as striking at the integrity of Judaism. The question of abandoning circumcision as a barbarous rite, and of holding services on the Christian Sabbath, was discussed, but left undecided. The discussion which has taken place in the Jewish press has served to emphasize the confusion into which Jewish belief seems to have fallen in modern times.

The work of Foreign Missions has been prosecuted with vigor, and broadening fields, new churches, increased membership, and enlarged constituency attest the character of the results. In Japan an evangelistic work of remarkable extent has been going on; in China the Franco-Chinese war disturbed, but did not seriously injure, Protestant missions; in India and Turkey a deepened and more intelligent religious life among the people has gladdened the missionaries; in Siam a renewed change in the attitude of the government toward Christianity has been the feature of the year; in Burmah the downfall of Thebaw and the opening of every part of the Kingdom to the missionaries is the great event; in Africa Bishop Taylor and upward of thirty missionaries have settled on a

line extending toward the interior several hundred miles from San Salvador, and the missions on the Great Lakes have encountered both fortune and misfortune.

On the whole, the Christian Church in the world has enjoyed a year of peace and prosperity.

Among Our Exchanges.

MAKE IT UP.

In an editorial on "Fouls in Churches" a contemporary gives excellent advice. Unfortunately such advice is often necessary. There are churches where two persons would sing the same hymns and bend the knee before the Trinity, and yet look at each other in the spirit of a meat axe, if they could not avoid each other's glance at the door, a few moments later. A trifling affair in business, a supposed slight, has been the sole cause. Only that and nothing more. But here is the advice:

Heal the breach. But how? Ah! that is the difficulty. Yet it is difficult only because most people begin the wrong way. They say, I am not to blame; the blame is all in the other party. Let them make the apology; let them begin the reconciliation. There is the great mistake. It is not the party to blame, but the party not to blame that should take the first step. If you wait for the party to blame to begin, you will probably never begin at all. It is much easier for you who are not to blame to make the advance. Go to the other party, and invite them to a pleasant entertainment at your own house. Tell them you may have said harsh and irritating things, and are very sorry for it. Ask them if the old difficulties, if they cannot be explained cannot, at least, be forgotten. Do not discuss them; ignore them. Ask forgiveness for your own harsh feelings. Promise to try to live in peace. Under all circumstances, and at the risk of as much loss of personal feeling as may be required make peace. Respect the opinions and judgments of others. Do not ask them to accept yours. Only forget the past and shake hands over the future.—*Westland*.

HOW NOT TO BE.

Young man, buy and read one book every month of your life, and you will not be a fool, unless you are so much of a fool already that you do not know how to spend your money, even in buying books. If you know enough not to buy a book merely because of its showy binding or because of its sensational contents—if you have sense enough to know that you do not know enough to choose books for yourself, but ought to ask the advice of some one who does know what good books are—if you have pluck and persistence enough to resist the temptations to idle companions, and to spend your evenings at home reading the books you buy—if you have wit enough, when you come across something you cannot understand in your reading, to do as the Ethiopian eunuch did, ask some man to teach you—if you believe that the best of books says, that "wisdom is better than rubies, and all the things that may be desired are not to be compared to it"—then take our advice and buy and read one book a month, and you will not be the fool the average young man of the day is.—*The Educator*.

THREE CLASSES.

The people of this world have been classified by a shrewd observer as those who believe, those who disbelieve, and those who make-believe. If the last class is not the largest of all, it is the most difficult to deal with. The believer and the unbeliever we can place, and we know how to deal with them, but what can we do with the make-believer? The worst of it is that those who make-believe are not all conscious hypocrites; if they were the problem would be greatly simplified. A conscious hypocrite is capable of being unmasked and shamed before the world or in the forum of his own conscience. But the man who has made-believe so successfully that he really believes that he believes, while he does nothing of the sort, is proof against all forms of attack. He cannot be reproved, convinced or shamed. Of all men, he is the most hopelessly hardened against the Gospel.—*Examiner*.

INSANE.

Every now and then the daily papers report that such and such a person has become insane through religious excitement. While these reports are true in one sense they are misleading in another. An eminent physician in the East, who is not identified with any church, expressed the opinion some time ago that in nearly every case those persons who lost their reason while attending revival meetings were on the verge of insanity, and that any strong excitement would have brought about the crisis.—*Observer*.

GOING TO EGYPT.

The Church that is educated in all sorts of expedients to raise money instead of giving it directly as the Lord hath prospered each one, finds in the end that even these unworthy devices fail. When Israel goes down to Egypt for help, overthrow follows.—*Nashville Ad.*