

Religious Intelligencer.

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

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SAINT JOHN, N. B., WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 15, 1886.

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WHO IS RESPONSIBLE!

Are we to have a winter marked by revivals and large gatherings of souls, or is the season to pass by without such blessed results? No doubt all will agree that we ought to have a season of revival, and that such a consummation is the desire of all truly devout men and women. The practical question arises: "Who is responsible for bringing about this result?" We may as well begin to answer this question by putting aside all false refuges.

First among these is the one so often sought by Christians who have either imbibed false teaching, or who desire to shirk responsibility—namely, that God only can bring about a revival. The danger of this position is that it contains a great truth. Certainly man cannot of himself produce spiritual results. Without the presence and power of the Holy Ghost we "can do nothing." There are, however, two or three fallacies which habitually lurk in and about this truth. We might as well say that we can only grow in grace as "God works in us to will and to do his good pleasure." Nevertheless we are commended to "work out our own salvation," for that very reason. God works with and for the soul that reaches up and out toward him for his help and blessing. He does not come to the soul unbidden, and unsought either by the soul itself or by some one specially interested to pray for it or seek it out. It is the same in respect to revivals. God only can produce a revival of religion in the hearts of his people and effect the regeneration of the unconverted. But he does this in connection with human ministry and effort. We have no reason to believe that any human soul is ever converted, as we understand conversion, without having the Word preached to him; for faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God. The preacher might as well stop preaching because God only can convert men, as the church stand still and wait for God to bring about a revival. It is true that a revival often occurs when there has apparently been no special preparation for it or effort made to bring it down from heaven by the church; but if we were able to trace the history of these sudden awakenings we would be sure to find out that some person or persons had been earnestly waiting upon God and working with men.

Sometimes, even in this our day, we hear Christians talking about God's "set time to favor Zion," as though God had times when he was willing and ready to bless his people and convert sinners, and times when he withheld his power, merely as an act of sovereignty. This is without doubt a great libel on the gracious disposition of God. His time is "now," and "now" is his "day of salvation." "Say not in your hearts, there are yet four months, and then cometh the harvest! Behold I say unto you, Lift up your eyes and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest." There is never a moment of time when God is not waiting to be gracious to sinners, or when a sinner crying to God for salvation, will not be heard and answered; and even so, there is never a month or day when God is not ready and waiting to hear the cry of his people and bless them with a revival of religion. He is as favorable to his people now as when of old they were in captivity. "For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you an unexpected end. Then shall ye call upon me, and I will answer you, and ye shall seek me and find me, when ye shall search

for me with all your heart." "Call upon me and I will answer thee, and show thee great and mighty things which thou knowest not." We might add a multitude of such promises, all going to show how ready God is to make bare his arm and open the windows of heaven and pour us out a blessing that we shall not have room enough to receive it.

The responsibility, for a revival, then, lies with God's people and not with him. If we fail of seeing a season of great blessing, beginning at once and continuing during the entire season, it will be because we have not called upon the Lord, or sought him with our whole hearts, or brought in all the tithes. No doubt a large measure of this responsibility lies with the pastors, who must rightly divide the truth, by preaching such truth as is calculated to find the hearts and consciences of both saints and sinners. There is a deal of faithful preaching needed both for the church and for the world. In many cases the church is asleep, lukewarm, worldly, and self-seeking; has partially if not largely forgotten her mission as a great missionary and evangelizing organization, and is at ease with herself concerning the masses of unconverted people all around her. No doubt there are many sins tolerated in the church which ought to be rebuked, and many professors who, like Achan of old, are hindering the onward march of Christ's triumph by having stolen some wedges of gold and worldly Babylonish garments, and appropriated them to their own uses. Until these sins are rebuked and these sinners in Zion brought to judgment, there will be no revivals in our churches, though God may and will preserve a witness to himself in the occasional conversion of a soul through the faithfulness of some individual believer. Moreover, the ministers must see to it that even faithful and wisely divided preaching is done not "in word only, but also in power and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance." Formal and perfunctory preaching will not bring about a revival of religion. The Word of God must be in living energy before it will pierce "to the dividing asunder of the soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and discern the thoughts and intents of the heart." There is very much responsibility resting with the minister. Let every one, therefore, in charge of the ministry, see to it that he is clear of the blood of souls by giving faithful testimony to his hearers.—Independent.

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MISSION WORK AMONG THE JEWS.

There is an opinion, very prevalent, that it is almost useless to attempt to Christianize Jews. But this is a mistake. There are peculiar difficulties in connection with Christian work among them; but these may be overcome; and many Jews do find the gospel to be "the power unto salvation" to them, because they believe it. It is stated, on good authority, that among the clergy of the Episcopal Church of England alone, there are four bishops and three hundred Presbyters who are converted Jews; and besides these, there are a large number of private Christians of that race who belong to that and other denominations.

There are now about eighty thousand Jews in London, and the London City Mission has six missionaries (who are themselves converted Jews), who are laboring for the salvation of that people. I have now before me the last annual reports of three of these missionaries.

Mr. Ehrlick has been engaged in this work for twenty-four years in White Chapel. There was a great influx of foreign Jews during last year, mostly from Poland, and he has distributed among these nearly a thousand portions of the New Testament and twelve thousand other books and tracts in various languages. He visits these people at their homes, at the baths and wash-houses, at hospitals and infirmaries, in the streets and wherever he can find them, and many of them come to him at the Mission Hall, and to his house, for instruction and conversation. And God has blessed his work. One family who were much opposed to him were softened by his inquiries for, and his attentions to,

a sick child; and they afterwards received his visits and listened to the reading and exposition of the Scriptures till they became convinced of the truth as it is in Jesus, and husband and wife became happy and consistent Christians, and willing to endure persecution for the sake of Jesus Christ.

A young Jew who was fanatically opposed to Christianity, attended the Mission Hall for the purpose of disturbing the meetings. But one day he stood up in the presence of a number of Jews, and said: "All of you know what a bigoted Jew I was at one time, how opposed I was to Christianity. . . . But I confess before you all how sorry I am for my unreasonable conduct, and I hope that God will forgive me. I am quite convinced that Jesus is the true Messiah."

Mr. Bergman has been eight or ten years engaged in this work in the parish of St. George, in the East. He also tells of former opposers who have received the truth as it is in Jesus. One young Jew came one evening to his meeting, and during the service caused great interruption. He was remonstrated with, but became the more blasphemous. He was not seen again for three months, and then he came to the evening service and listened very attentively. After the service, he asked to see Mr. Bergman alone. He then said that he was very anxious about his soul, and would like to know the truth, and asked for instruction in the Scriptures. He came secretly for several weeks, and then concluded that he must become a Christian, although he had to forfeit his situation in consequence. He has been baptized on a profession of his faith in Christ.

Mr. Oppenheim has been five years a missionary to the Jews in Spital-fields, where there are about twenty thousand Jews, very nearly the whole population of the district. During the five years, he has been instrumental in the conversion of twelve who have made a public confession of their faith in Jesus Christ. A Rabbinical student saw some young men enter the mission hall one Saturday afternoon, and went in after them and inquired, "What is going on here?" He was informed that a religious service was about to commence, and was invited to remain. From curiosity, he did so. During the sermon, he was very restless, and at the close he asked questions and requested some tracts. These were given him, and also a copy of the Gospel of John. He came to the missionary frequently after this, listening very attentively and asking questions. At the end of three weeks from the first visit, he wrote a letter to the missionary, in which he said: "I have been a long time longing for something, but I did not know what it was. . . . I listened to your forcible arguments and to your earnest appeals. I read your tracts and prayed, 'God, where shall I find peace—where shall I find salvation?' Thank God, thank you, for the Gospel of St. John. There I found the Saviour." This man is now a devoted Christian.

But while these missionaries find many who openly avow their conversion, there are numerous others who are hindered from doing so from the fear of persecution and financial want. So in the time of Jesus Christ "many believed on him," but "did not confess him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue," so it is now. A converted Jew becomes an outcast, his relatives disown him, his friends discard him, his employers dismiss him. But we may hope that many of these fearful ones may, like Joseph of Arimathea, finally avow themselves. It is evident that there is abundant encouragement for Christian mission work among Jews.—W. H., in National Baptist.

PROGRESS IN PERSIA.

There are decided indications of material and religious progress visible in Persia. Since the opening of diplomatic and commercial intercourse with Western nations, numerous public improvements are apparent. The extension of postal and telegraph systems, the building of turnpikes and introduction of stage coaches, the navigation by steamships on the Caspian and Persian Gulf, all help to make access to the principal cities more easy and rapid. There are said to be five hundred carriages in the capital, where a few years ago there were not a score. The national mint, with its improved machinery; the arsenal, with Euro-

pean arms and drill; the mining of coal, manufacture of gas, advancement in printing, establishment of photograph galleries and a court newspaper—these are all worthy of record. The comforts of life are increasing through the gradual introduction of window shades, stoves, tables, chairs, chinaware, knives and forks, as well as by the cultivation of vegetables and berries, and by the importation from Europe of dry goods, groceries, watches, clocks, lamps, matches, sewing-machines, spectacles, letter-presses, safes and musical instruments. The government shows improvement. Deposed prime ministers are no longer beheaded. The extensive use of torture is discontinued. The power of the priesthood is being curbed, and the slave trade regulated by treaty. Boundary disputes are often settled by arbitration. Friendship with European governments is cultivated, and their customs imitated. Religious liberty has made a most marked advance. A recent firman reads: "Hereafter eternally no hindrance shall be placed in the way of those Jews and Armenians who wish to enter another faith. They shall not incur opposition or molestation from any one." Compulsory conversions to Islam are declared illegal; the convert is no longer allowed by law to confiscate his Christian relative's property, and the testimony of a Christian is received in civil courts. The Christian no longer needs when he goes abroad to cover his new coat with an old one, lest it be violently seized by a Mohammedan. Prejudice against Christians has greatly lessened. Most Mohammedans will now shake hands with a Christian, invite him to their houses, drink his tea and smoke his pipe. On journeys one is rarely relegated to the stable, as heretofore, and can generally procure lodging in good houses. The sphere of our admitted rights as missionaries has been constantly widening. In the different parts of Persia our right to reside, to rent and purchase property, build churches, open schools and book depositories, settle teachers and preachers, publish and circulate books in Turkish and Persian—the language of Mussulmans—perform the marriage ceremony, bury the dead in our own cemeteries, and journey everywhere in the work of evangelizing—all this has been granted.—Rev. S. G. Wilson, in Foreign Missionary.

One of the strong bonds of union among members of a denomination is the denominational paper. Every family needs it.

THE BIBLE TEACHINGS CONCERNING MISSIONS.

That the spirit of the Bible is missionary in its tendencies needs no argument to establish. It is evident to every reader of the Sacred Book. Taking the apostolic commission, "Go ye" as the center of all missionary activity, we at once see why so many of the immediate disciples of Christ manifested such a strong missionary spirit. It was after the utterance of these words—after the command was given and the commission declared, that we find such an earnest zeal in Christ's disciples for publishing the truths of the Gospel. Yet long before this time we hear the prophet Isaiah say: "How laudable upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings!" both the Old and the New Testaments are replete with examples of true missionary zeal and activity. We may say, then:

1. That the Bible teaches the Necessity of Missions. It teaches this (1) by direct command, and (2) by implication.

The term mission is derived from the Latin word *mitto*, to send. Hence, when Christ says, "Go ye," etc., he gives his disciples direct command to engage in missionary labors. This is a command which is unchangeable. It holds for all ages. It is as much a command for modern Christians as for the disciples of our Lord in the days of his flesh. Wherever the Bible is read, and its teachings, doctrines, truths appropriated by men, this positive command, which makes missions a necessity, will also carry with it its divine authority; and as such, Christians can not be relieved from the consciousness of wilful disobedience, so long as they are oblivious or indifferent to this command of their Master.

Then, also, the necessity of missions is implied in the Bible. In Mark 13th chapter, where Christ foretells the

judgment, in the tenth verse he saith: "The Gospel must first be published among all nations." How can it be published except some one be sent? for the Gospel of Christ must be proclaimed by means of the living voice. It is to send out, to spread the Gospel of Christ with all its benefits unto all nations by the instrument of the missionary filled with the spirit of the Master,—that is missions. To send literature, etc., however good in its place, and as an aid to the work, only in a partial respect answers the requirements of the case.

Apart from the assurance of redemption from sin and the enjoyment of communion with God, through Christ, which the Bible affords the true Christian, it is also a great boon to civilization wherever its influence has reached. In consideration of this fact alone we would claim the indispensableness of missions for the good of mankind, and that we base this claim upon inference drawn from the Bible itself.

Besides, the Bible examples of earnest missionary activity which we have in Paul, in Barnabas, in Peter and John, and in others, can not but impress us with the importance of this work. Such zeal, such activity, such a holy consecration to the work of establishing their Master's kingdom in all the world, teaches us without leaving a doubt that the writers of Holy Writ deemed such work necessary in order to accomplish their ends. The same holds to-day. No truth, however eloquently expressed or uttered, addresses itself to the minds of men with the same degree of force as that truth exemplified in the living character of man. Such, most of the writers of the New Testament become for us.

II. The Bible teaches the Beneficence of Missions. The religion of Jesus Christ is eminently a pure religion. It is elevating, ennobling, refining, purifying the heart and affections of men. When, therefore, the Bible brings the Christian religion in contact with impure lives, its work is correspondingly beneficent. That the Christian religion is "pure" we learn from James iii: 17, where it is written: "But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without hypocrisy." Christianity can not be otherwise but beneficial when all these influences are brought to bear upon the human character. And this is the work of missions.

The spirit of missions is philanthropic; hence the Bible approves of their work. If the Bible did not tend to better humanity we would have no need of it. In the moral world a thing makes either for good or for evil. That which makes for good, it is the duty of all, philanthropically disposed, to increase and augment; and to check that which makes for evil. This is without a doubt the spirit of the Bible, and its ends can only be accomplished by missions.

Considering the Bible under this view, there remains for us who appreciate and love the Sacred Word, likewise a duty to perform in the way of disseminating its truths, and promulgating its light and wisdom which it has for us. He who has truly been adopted into Christ's kingdom wishes others to partake of the same inheritance. God hates selfishness and narrow-mindedness. He loves philanthropy and generosity. "He loves missions, for to be missionary in spirit is to be generous." This we can all be without ever crossing the wide oceans, or enduring the cold of the northern seas.—The Messenger.

DEATH IN THE BARRACKS.

BY REV. GEO. A. PHINNEY.

(Published by Request.)

The morning light had scarcely broken in through the unshuttered window of my room, when I heard the door bell ringing at this unusual hour. Some one had come to bring the sad news of the sudden death of a tanner at the well-known tannery of Charles Harrington & Co. The messenger asked the minister to come soon, as the body must be carried by the early express down East. I prepared to go immediately, and soon found my way to the barracks. The unfortunate victim was running a drench-wheel, and having been caught in it, was carried down into the vat, and before help reached him he was drowned. One of his companions took me to the place of the accident and explained the working of the "mischief-making" wheel. I was then conducted to the barracks, where

the body lay surrounded by half a hundred sorrowing hearts. I was welcomed to their midst. I asked them what they wanted, and one replied: "He was one of our best men. I never heard him swear, and he was a member of the Free Baptist Church down in New Brunswick. We don't want to have him moved, pastor; tell you say something." "It is pretty hard, sir, for us, and for that wife, and that boy and girl way down in Taylor village." I asked one of the men to open the casket, and taking a card from my pocket, on which I wrote "Peabody Methodist Church, Oct. 13th, 1886," I slipped it into the cold, closed hand of the deceased brother, John Sparks, and then read the Ritual and offered prayer. I shall never forget the impressions of that hour. These hardy sons of New Brunswick were overwhelmed with sorrow. They had no flowers on the casket, but that cold form was enwreathed with the warm hearts of his comrades. They freely poured out their tears as a morning sacrifice. The morning bell did not ring them to work, for bereavement had incapacitated them for that day. Sad picture! There on the bench was the trunk which a few months ago had been packed by loving hands as the deceased had responded to Peabody's call for men to fill the place of deserting strikers. Imagine that wife will find those clothes repacked very hurriedly. I think of those children who kissed father "good-by," when told by telegram this morning that their father is dead. How the quiet surface of that family neighbourhood will be storm-tossed by this hurricane of death! I can see that room, full of friends, who have come to offer that Mary their condolence for this Lazarus' death. So much bad news had Down East concerning the Peabody treatment of these men, I have wondered what they think of us. The other day, while one of them was going with happy heart back to the barracks to read his letter from home, he was brutally assaulted. Some of the men around the casket this morning had scars upon them. They are Christian men. I found a boarding-house last week where thirty or forty of them ate and slept, and the matron took me from room to room, where, on the brown blanket I dropped a card of invitation to them to come to church, she said: "They are real good men. I hear them praying morning and night." They are here in the providence of God, to teach the dictatorial and belligerent knights that there are men within reach of the manufacturers who will yet give business a fresh start along a highway of better prosperity. Our Sea of Galilee has been rocked by many a severe storm. There have been some dark nights among us. Capital and labor are arrayed against each other. This disturbance is an economic question of profound importance. Philosophizing will not hurt us, for out of its dust shall come the phoenix of truth more radiant than ever. But while the fires of the philosophical test are burning, let us not forget that God's Word is divinely clear in its teaching of the relation of these antagonistic forces; for God says to the employers: "Masters, give unto your servants that which is just and equal; knowing that ye also have a Master in heaven" (Col. iv. 1.) And to the servants he has He spoken these words: "Exhort servants to be obedient unto their own masters, and to please them well in all things; not answering again; not purloining, but showing all good fidelity; that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things" (Titus ii. 9-10).

NEW ADS.—See the new advertisements in this issue of Yerxa & Yerxa, J. G. McNally, W. H. Vanwart and J. D. Fowler. These are good men to do business with.

A PRESENT.—The friends at Marysville of Rev. J. E. Reud recently made him a present of a fine fur coat and gloves, and Mrs. Reud a muff. They will enjoy the comfort these will give them during the winter, as they enjoy the fact that they have thoughtful and appreciative friends.

Among Our Exchanges.

BE CAREFUL.

To the end of time, apparently, our churches will persist in being duped by clerical adventurers. At short intervals comes to us the old story of a committee that has invited, without inquiry into his record, some Rev. wolf in wool, who has performed with his few show sermons and ensnared the people, when the committee, too late, has begun to make disagreeable discoveries. A verdant countryman went to a chemist with a bit of iron pyrites. "See there, sir! Do you know that is gold?" "Not exactly," said the man of science, quietly slipping the lump into his crucible. As half of it disappeared in gas, with a little unseemly slag remaining, he remarked: "That is iron ore, sir." "Mercy!" cried the fellow, with a face like a yardstick. "A widow in our town has a whole hill full of that stuff—and I've gone and married her!" Too many a hasty ecclesiastical match results in like fashion.—Atlantic.