

TERMS NOTICES.

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Religious Intelligencer.

REV. JOSEPH McLEOD, D. D., EDITOR.

WEDNESDAY, Oct. 11th, 1893.

—REFINEMENT is good; but as was well said by Beecher, that refinement which carries away from our fellow-men is not God's refinement.

—A MOTHER, talking to a minister on the subject of the religious education of children, said: "Well, I have made up my mind never to put my child under religious instruction until he has arrived at years of discretion." To which the minister replied: "If you neglect your child all that time the devil will not." A face which all parents should remember.

—WHEN A CHRISTIAN finds himself disposed to find excuses why he may discontinue, in part or wholly, any christian duties—attendance at public worship, family worship, contributions to the Lord's cause, or any other, he is in great danger. Close self-examination and prayer will reveal to him his need of re-consecration.

—IT IS SOMETIMES said "there are as many christians outside the church as in it." That there are some christians who have not formally identified themselves with the organized church we do not care to deny, though we cannot think the number very large. But be they few or many, they are not where they ought to be—where, for their own sake and for the sake of the cause of Christ, they need to be. Then, if there be many of them they have not been very successful in showing the possession of the new life by good works. The "National Baptist" says:

That there are Christians in great numbers outside the Church, we neither affirm nor deny. We leave the matter to the Searcher of Hearts; but we do respectfully inquire wherein these outside Christians make their existence known; wherein do they show their allegiance to Christ; wherein do they manifest the fact that "Christ's Doctrine is entering into their best striving and working"? Christ says to his disciples, "Ye are the light of the world." Wherein does the light of these outside Christians shine? Are they, in imitation of Christ, going to the ignorant and destitute, to carry light and hope and salvation? Are they reading the words of Christ in the cottage, in the cellar, in the attic, at the sick-bed, in the prison, in the poor house, in the hospital? Are they leading lives of prayer? Are they praying with their families? Are they going out as missionaries, self-sustaining, to China and India and Africa?

The place for christians is in the church. They are not safe outside.

—THE MOST WIDELY known are not always the most valuable and successful workers. Many ministers are in out-of-the-way places, beyond the limits of which they are scarcely heard of from year to year. The lot of some is cast in such places all their lives. But their work is far from being in vain, and is often of greater value than that done by men whose work is in the centres of population, and who are known far and wide. The workers in obscure places do a service without which the world would be poor indeed. They "will not be known as great preachers. They will not be spoken of as having achieved notable success. They will not be pointed out as men of commanding influence. They will be unheralded and not widely known. But what would the world and the Church be without these earnest, faithful heroes, who work for Christ and for eternity? In the light of

"that great day for which all other days were made," when every secret thing shall be brought to light, it will be seen that no place was humble where there was the opportunity to lead a single soul to Christ. To be unheralded here, does not mean that one shall be unknown forever. Usefulness is greatness, and to do one's duty in love to God and man, in one's own place, is to make life a success, so that at last, in the presence of angels and men, all shall see that it was successful and beautiful."

Special Prayer for Conference

Before another issue of the INTELLIGENCER the Conference will have met, and will be pretty well through with its business. Of course, all members of the denomination are anxious that it be a good session, fruitful of things that shall promote every branch of the work of the Lord which is entrusted to us as a christian body.

Perhaps it will be done without any suggestion from us, but lest some may be forgetful, and to emphasize to all its importance, we suggest that every church in the denomination make special prayer next Sabbath for the Conference. Doubtless much prayer has already been made, and there will continue to be earnest prayer, in the homes of our people, for the presence of God in all the sittings of the Conference. In addition to all this, it would, we think, be well to make next Sabbath a day of special supplication. From most of the churches the pastor will be absent. Some of them will be supplied with preaching by other ministers. But whether they have preaching or not, there should be, at least, one service during the day devoted to the special purpose of beseeching God to abundantly bless the Conference—to make the whole session a season of spiritual quickening and power, to enable the members to see clearly the needs of the work in all its departments, to help them to feel the responsibility which rests upon them with reference to it, to make them wise to adopt plans to meet all the requirements of the cause, and to give them courage to enterprise large things for God.

Don't forget the prayer-meeting, brethren, in every church. Whether there be few or many, have it. Whether you feel very well or not, have it. It will be good for you, bringing you into closer sympathy with the whole body and with the whole work; and, besides, God will answer your prayers in behalf of your Conference.

Pray! pray in the churches, pray in the homes, pray in faith, and the praying will not be in vain.

The Glory of the Church.

Annual sermon preached by the Rev. Douglas T. Porter, before the F. B. Conference of Nova Scotia, at Clarke's Harbor, Sabbath morning, Sept. 17th, 1893.

"The glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former, saith the Lord of Hosts." Hagai II. 9.

We have in the xxxvi. Chapter of Chronicles, from the 17th to 20th verses an account of the destruction of the first temple and of Jerusalem, and the carrying away of the Jews into Babylonian captivity. That captivity began 606 B. C. More was done toward it in 599 B. C. It was completed 588 B. C. Jerusalem could no longer boast of her greatness and glory; Her sacred sites and hallowed abodes were desolate, and her inhabitants, because of pride and sinfulness, were being humbled in a strange land. The fall of Babylon took place in 538 B. C. Two years after that there was a union of four kingdoms, Persia, Media, Babylonia, and Chaldea. They constituted what was known as the Persian Empire; Cyrus was the emperor. In 536 B. C. the edict in favor of the Jews was proclaimed. This proclamation gave permission to the Jews to return from captivity, and rebuild the house of the Lord; it also recommended that those who might not desire to return to Judah should help the poor who were desirous of going, and give also of their means toward the building of the temple. God had made provision for His children to return from captivity many years before their captivity took place. Through Daniel or some other Jew who understood the Scriptures, Cyrus learned of the divine will concerning him; Hence he could say, "The Lord of heaven hath charged me to build an house for Him at Jerusalem." The decree of Cyrus was well received. About fifty thousand Jews under Zerubbabel returned at once, together with eight thousand beasts of burden; while those who remained assisted liberally. Cyrus also sent back the vessels of the house of the Lord. In the month of October this great multitude arrived in Judah, and prepared to rebuild the temple. Although those who did not return gave liberally to assist in rebuilding the

temple, and funds were furnished from the royal exchequer of Persia, they were compelled to make the plan of it far inferior to the former edifice; and it is probable that on this account, the older men comparing it with the one that they had first seen, became discouraged, and abandoned their labor. They turned their attention to rebuilding and adorning their own houses, and neglected the house of God. The Lord now sent His prophet to encourage them to resume their work. "Who is left among you, he asks, that saw this house in his first glory? Who of you has seen the temple built by Solomon? The foundation of this temple had been laid about fifty-three years after the destruction of the temple built by Solomon, and this prophecy was uttered about fifteen years after the foundation of this second temple, yet there might still be some of the old men who had seen it, although it had been in ruins about sixty-eight years. The structure that they now beheld was as nothing compared with the former. "Yet now, be strong, all ye people of the land, and work for I am with you saith the Lord of Hosts." "Fear ye not I will shake all nations," with political and religious revolutions, and nations shall bring their desirable and valuable things into it, because of this, "the glory of this latter house, shall be greater than of the former, saith the Lord of Hosts." This, we believe was the primary meaning of the text. It cannot be said that "the glory of this latter house, shall be greater than of the former," because Christ made His personal appearance in that temple, or rather in the one built by Herod. The first temple was the dwelling place of God, for more than four hundred years. And though we believe that Jesus Christ is equal with God, we do not admit that He is greater. But the glory of this latter house was greater, because therein was made known the great scheme of human salvation, and the price of the world's redemption paid. This is doubtless a figurative view of the Christian church, the real house of God, the glory of which is superior to the glory of that possessed by the Jews. In other passages the church is figuratively called a house. Micah says, "In the last days it shall come to pass, that the mountain of the house of the Lord shall be established on the top of the mountains, and the people shall flow into it." And Paul says, "the house of God, is the church, of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth." As the latter house referred to in our text represents the Christian church, the former house undoubtedly represents the Jewish church. Let us speak—

I. Of the former house or Jewish church.

II. Of the latter house or Christian church, which exceeds the former house in glory.

I. The former house or Jewish church. There are many systems of worship in the world. Some of these are limited to single nations, others extend themselves over different nations, and in history we read of certain religions that do not exist at the present time. The question has often been asked, Where did these different systems originate? Those who have looked to the Bible for the answer, to the first part of the Book of Genesis, have learned from what is there recorded, that all religions grew out of one original system of worship. Traditions and history agree with this record. From the sameness of the ideas of God held by the different nations in their description of His power, and the resemblances existing between their legends or household stories, we are carried back to the early worship of the race, and we see from all these evidences, that originally man worshipped one God. The human race did not begin life on earth as a savage, or as a child; but man began life a full formed, mature, intelligent creature. From this high position, he descended; first, to the worship of many gods, later on, of idols.

In those early days man lived a long life, and so the worship of the one God could be handed down from age to age with very little change. While there was this general tendency to evil on the part of all the descendants of Adam, God preserved some pure characters, such as Enoch, Noah, who kept the truth from utterly perishing from off the earth.

On account of the increasing wickedness of mankind, God sent the Deluge, which destroyed all the race, with the exception of Noah and his family. Soon after the Deluge the descendants of Noah became very numerous, and on account of their wicked attempt to build the tower of Babel, God confused their language; thus it is supposed, their great dispersion was brought about in their inability to communicate with each other by means of speech.

The people thus scattered were left solely to the recollection of their teachings; their religions began to differ; and the worship of idols appeared. The people of Israel were descended from an idolatrous race. Joshua wrote, "Your fathers dwelt on the other side of the flood (that is the river Euphrates) and they served other gods."

Abraham was an immigrant from beyond the "great river." From Ur of the Chaldees he passed over to Canaan or Palestine, and was thus separated from his idolatrous relatives. He was to be the beginning of God's chosen people or visible church, and in him all the families of the earth were to be blessed. Over this people God has ever exercised His guardian care, and has wonderfully delivered them. When they could not subsist in the land of Canaan he found a home for them in the fertile land of Goshen. Here they were afterward oppressed, but Moses, the deliverer, was born at the time when oppression of God's people had been carried to the extreme. Under his leadership they returned to their own country from which they had been absent several hundred years, during which time they had increased from three score and ten to six hundred thousand men, besides women and children. They journeyed for forty years in the wilderness, and although they fell into idolatrous ways, and brought upon themselves severe punishments, yet the Lord regarded them in their affliction, and heard their cry. When they thirsted, He opened the rock, and the waters gushed out, and ran in the dry places like a river; when they hungered, He brought them quails to eat, and satisfied them with manna from heaven; He gave them a pillar of cloud by day, and of fire by night to direct their journey; dried up the seas and rivers before them; and gave them the lands of the people for an inheritance, and they inherited the labor of the people."

The family of Abraham had been enlarged to a tribe, to a race; the affliction in Egypt and the wonderful deliverance made the race a nation. All other nations having rejected God, He left them and chose Israel for His peculiar people. The covenant was their constitution and God was their king. The privileges of this kingdom were nearness to God and a righteous law, which they were to obey. There was no nation that had God so high unto them. (Deut. iv. 7) The words that God commanded them were to be in their hearts; to be taught diligently to their children; to be the subjects of conversation; and were to be written on the posts of their houses and their gates. If they kept God's statutes, other nations would say of them, "Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people." (Deut. iv. 6).

The agents of God whether prophets, priests, kings or special servants, sought to encourage the people to enjoy their privileges.

The attitude of the people was but little changed until the time of Samuel. Then they demanded a human king and renounced the possibility of being a nation of priests, and being each directly governed by God. They approached the king as God's representative. The prophetic order was set up beside the royal office to exert a restraining influence. There had been prophets, but no prophetic order previously. The object of this order was to secure observance of the covenant made at Sinai. This led to a diligent study of its requirements, the result of which could not fail to be beneficial. It was plain that the kingdom could not be established, save through the observance of the Mosaic law. While the prophetic order followed this course, the attention of the king was directed to the wars in which Israel was engaged with its neighbors. The complete triumph of David over his enemies, made them conscious of their power as a nation, and was followed by a development of the kingdom of God.

In the history of the next two hundred years after David, we have evidence of decline. In fact, its beginning was in the reign of David. The marriage with a foreign princess, and similar marriages on the part of Solomon, led to political and commercial relations with other nations. It was the design of God that they should be a separate people, until the time that true religion should be given to the whole world, but now the exclusiveness essential to the kingdom of God was lost. It is true that some kings labored in harmony with the prophets, and partially checked the inflowing tide of foreign ideas and customs. But other kings opposed the prophets, and gave their influence to foreign customs and heathen worship. There was a reaction against paganism, but it was followed by a reaction of worship, that deadened the spiritual life of the people. The nation during the remaining time of

its independent history alternated between paganism and the formal worship of God. We will now notice

II. The latter house or Christian church, which exceeds the former house in glory. This is built upon a sure foundation. Jesus Christ being the chief corner stone. Let us notice something in reference to its rise and progress. The disease of sin with which the human race was afflicted, demanded a divine Physician. Near the close of the reign of Herod the Great, the Son of God came down from heaven to dwell in the land of Palestine. Four inspired writers have given us an account of the birth, lineage, family, and parents of Christ. Little is said respecting His childhood and youth. When young, to save Him from the cruelty of Herod, the family fled into Egypt. At twelve we find Him in the temple, disputing with the most learned Jewish doctors, both hearing them and asking them questions on religious subjects. He lived with His parents as a dutiful and affectionate son until He was thirty; at that age He entered upon the work of His ministry. John the Baptist, son of a Jewish High Priest, to render the ministry of Christ more successful, came from the wilderness of Judea, calling upon the Jews to prepare for the coming of the Messiah. Jesus, before beginning His ministry, was baptized by John, in the waters of Jordan. As the Christian religion was to be preached throughout the world, it is necessary to appoint those by whom it would be fearlessly and faithfully proclaimed. He ordained twelve apostles from the Jews about Him, and sent them to preach the gospel, and to heal diseases. But wishing to have them near Him during the closing part of His life, that they might hear His words, and witness His deeds, He employed seventy more and sent them out to preach the gospel in Judea, as we go on our circuits. They were very successful, and returned with joy, saying, "Lord, even the devils are subject to us through thy name." Christ having established His divine authority by numerous proofs, told His disciples that he must suffer and die, and rise again the third day after His burial, all of which took place. Before He ascended to Heaven He commissioned His disciples to preach the gospel to all nations, saying, "All power is given me in heaven and on earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you, and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." The history of His people from that time up to the present, is proof that He has never forsaken them.

On the day of Pentecost the Holy Ghost descended upon them, and they were able to speak in different tongues and preach the Gospel so clearly and effectively that the infant church increased from one hundred and twenty, to three thousand one hundred and twenty, and a little later to five thousand. The good work extended beyond Jerusalem, amongst Jews and Gentiles. Opposition could not overthrow it; the ambassadors of Christ travelled over a great part of the world, and organized churches in various countries. Paul, accompanied by other Christians, went among the heathen of Asia Minor, and South Eastern Europe, among the worshippers of the gods of Greece and Rome, to preach the gospel. From Rome, when it became the centre of Christianity, other Christians went to Western Europe.

So long as the disciples of Christ were humble and devoted, they met with great success, notwithstanding persecution. But when they were greatly increased, they became popular, and the spirit of the world got in amongst them, and was largely substituted for the spirit of Christ. Such was the general state of the Church for several hundred years after the ascension of Christ. What is known in history as the dark ages of the Church belong to this period. It was indeed a time of darkness. The followers of Christ, of whom the world was not worthy, suffered persecution and were not to death. A light dawned in the beginning of the Reformation. Wickliffe of England, Luther of Saxony, Zuinglius of Switzerland, with others, worked successfully against the intrusion of Popish tyranny, and for the establishment of Christ's kingdom in the world.

After the Reformation there seemed to be a decline in religious interest. But there was another great awakening in England, and since that time great has been the prosperity of the Christian Church. Heathen countries have opened their doors to the coming of Christianity. In 1705 missionaries were first admitted to India, and since 1830 have labored continually. China in 1807 and Japan in 1859 welcomed the first Protestant Christian

missionaries. Asia, Africa, and the islands of the Pacific have been visited by missionaries in the last hundred years. During that period Christianity has been greatly developed. Pagan religions cannot prevent its incoming. Unlike Mohammedanism it does not seek to extend its system by use of the sword. It pursues peaceful methods. It works by love and persuades men to repent of sin and seek forgiveness. It is more glorious than all other religions whether past or present, for it proclaims peace on earth and good will toward men.

Christianity is the religion for the world. At first the Jewish Church was composed of one family, afterward of twelve tribes, and at last was confined to Judea, but Christianity has for its field of labor the whole earth. Its founder, Jesus Christ, intended that it should spread over the whole world. There is no religious system so well suited to its need. In reading the history of Greece and Rome it is apparent that in pagan civilization there is a deficiency. It has been said "that the central and decisive element in religion is civilization." A government cannot make a civilization; an aristocracy cannot make a civilization; neither can schools, nor literatures, nor inventions. Christianity as a controlling force has made the people of the nineteenth century what they are. Dr. Phillips Brooks said, "We are holding every doctrine of the Christian faith more firmly than in any century preceding; and there is not a doctrine that men will hold more firmly in the next century, if they become possessed of the enthusiasm of humanity." At the present time, we believe, it is better understood than ever before, that every man has a right to religious truth, and that he should seek it for himself. The possession of the spirit of Christ is more and more looked upon as essential to religion, and form and creed are less regarded. Men are more inclined to look to God as the universal Father, who loved the soul of every human being, and desires alike the good of all.

And further, the privilege of religious teaching in this age is open to all. An immense amount of instruction is imparted in Sabbath Schools. These and other associations of great extent, are increasing in the world, and reaching out to the poor and neglected. Woman, who in former times was looked upon as man's slave, is becoming a teacher and an evangelist. Benevolent institutions have been founded, where the blind and deaf, have imparted to them knowledge, that the possession of these senses makes it possible for others to obtain. Hospitals have been built where the sick and friendless receive the sympathetic care and kind treatment necessary for them. We see also in this age, a greater interest manifest in intellectual development. Nations set apart a portion of their revenues, to support, not only the universities, but the common schools, that the means of intellectual culture may be within the reach of all. In no previous age has it been so generally admitted that every mind was made for growth, for knowledge; that it is the privilege of every man to inform himself in respect to God and His works, and fit himself to perform the duties of life. Thus in religious and educational interests we see this tendency to improvement and extension.

We see the same tendency in government. In former times the influence of the people was little felt in affairs of state. Kings were despotic. Government was a monopoly. Now, the highest positions and the honor associated with them are within the reach of all. In former times the policy of government, placed property and wealth in the hands of a few, now all can acquire property, and government, as far as possible, seeks to place the means within reach.

The same is true of industrial pursuits. Activity has increased. Men enter every department of trade and commerce is extending itself over the world, awakening a friendlier feeling among the nations.

Under Christianity the world is rising to a better condition. A far better form of society exists than in earlier times. A greater opposition to wrongs and corruption, a greater confidence in the final triumph of truth and right. From the teaching of Christ and the apostles, we learn that this would be the glorious result, the seed that had been sown was to spring up and become a great tree, and spread its branches throughout the earth. "The glory of the latter house, shall be greater than of the former, saith the Lord of Hosts."

The history of the Free Baptist denominations of America is associated with the time in which the Christian Church has achieved its greatest success. Perhaps we are not fully aware of the influence they have exerted. It is certain that the religious world is more in accord with them than it was