TERMS AND NOTICES.

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Religious Intelligencer.

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

WEDNESDAY, MAY 4TH, 1898.

Those who have received statements of account will not forget, we hope, that we need to hear from them at once. We are depending on their prompt responses, and trust they will not disappoint us.

The war is said to be affecting contributions in the United States to religious purposes.

The failure to transmit pity into action quickly hardens the sensibilities. Soon there is no feeling of pity.

It is stated that the Duke of Fife, son-in-law of the Prince of Wales, is refusing to grant sites for distilleries on his estates. And his course in this respect is said to be due to the influence of his wife.

—Certain Episcopal writers have a good deal to say about church unity. It is worthy of note, however, that with their great anxiety for unity they always have in mind a union which involves acceptance of the doctrines and practices of their own church.

Speaking of the vast latent power of the Christia church, Dr. Strong expresses his belief that there is not a church building, in any well settled part of the country, large enough to accommodate the people who would gather to it if the latent power in the church were in exercise.

Dr. Patton. President of Princeton University, has declined appointment by his Presbytery to a seat in the Presbyterian General Assembly. Several of the Professors, also, have refused to be appointed. There is a very general impression that Dr. Patton does not care to face the censure which the Assembly is likely to pronounce against the licensed rumshop which has been running under the auspices of Princeton's President and faculty.

In his "Revival memories,' very interesting papers now being published in the 'Star,' Dr. Penney says this, which may well be kept in mind by all preachers: "My experience and observation have convinced me that no modern appliances are comparable to a pure gospel earnestly and faithfully presented to promote a true revival of religion in the church and among sinners. O that the church of God would learn that such a gospel is the instrument of her working and the insurer of her success!

At the closing exercises of Queens College, Kingston, Ont., last week, Principal Grant presented Rev. Canon Lowe, of Almonte, Ont., for the honorary degree of D. D. That Principal Grant should present Canon Lowe was very fitting. The Canon has for a number of years been a doughty champion of the rum traffic people. He has written pamphlets for them; and, under oath, he has declared that the use of whiskey "does sometimes promote domestic happiness;" and that "because some men get drunk and their drunkenness leads them to crime, therefore to restrain everybody from drinking, or to destroy the manufacture of liquor and so on, looks to me like burning down the house to roast the pig;" and a lot of equally nonsensical things.

It was fitting, we repeat, that Dr. Grant, the latest champion of the rum traffic, should present for College honours Canon Lowe, the long-time friend and champion of the whiskey habit and the whiskey traffic

The Congregationalist says: „No denomination will long maintain its prestige or usefulness after it has lost interest in its own newspapers. Churches and ministers who have grown indifferent to these instruments for promoting their knowledge of one another and their fellowship, and for representing them to all Christian denominations, are neglecting opportunities to strengthen the whole Church of Christ, and from such neglect their own denomination is certain to suffer serious loss of power.

To which the 'Christian Standard' is moved to add,—"Aye, brother, and you may go farther. You ought, if you are a true Protestant, to keep an eye on the archenemy of freedom, both civil and religious, and you will never hear a word unless you get it from the religious press. Every escapade of a Protestant preacher will be exploited in your secular journal to the extent of columns, but of the gigantic rottenness of Rome you will never see a line. If you let you Christian journals shrivel and die, you lose the only avenue to the people on questions that will soon be burning ones

Faithful Witnesses Needed.

It is sometimes charged that christian people are not different from others in their business transactions and in their relations, generally, to their people. It has to be confessed that there are some professing christians who are guilty of mean and dishonest practices. But it is safe to say that, probably, not one of those thus guilty has honestly tried to make it the habit of his life to "seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness." Some of them may have the habit of saying, everyday, the Lord's prayer, but they are not in the habit of really praying it. They may have the habit of regular attendance at church on the Sabbath, but they hear little, remember less, and practice still less of the truth which is taught. They may be contributors to the funds of the church, and may receive considerably attention because their contributions are regarded as liberal; but their contributions are given more for appearance sake, or as an offset to questionable conduct than from devotion to Christ and desire for the success of His cause.

Without fear of contradiction, it may be boldly said that when a professing christian is guilty of questionable and crooked things, he is not one of those who try to regulate their conduct by the law of Christ, he is scarcely, if anything, more than a christian in name only. He is one who, contenting himself with the ordinary code of morals—the world's code, which is based on expediency rather than on principle—, has allowed his greed of gold, his love of popular favour, or some other selfish and ungodly lust to have the mastery of him and do to death his feeble morality. The fact however, that even some who profess to be followers of Christ can be rightly charged with unchristian conduct, is most painful. The injury such people do to the cause of Christ is very great The world is not careful to distinguish between the genuine and the counterfeit, and many are glad to make Christianity responsible for what is due, rather, to a lack of christian principle.

Perhaps there has not been enough clear and faithful teaching of the necessity of "living unto God"—being the Lord's in all the relations and ways of life. There doubtless, is need of more homilies on honesty, more warnings against covetousness and extravagance; but there is need, also, of such an earnest presentation of the Gospel of infinite love as will touch men's hearts, and lead them to set their affections on higher and better things than those of the earth, that will move them to count no sacrifice in the lower sphere too great to make for the sake of maintaining "a conscience void of offence toward God and toward men."

Witnessing for Christ is not a prayer meeting matter as too many seem to think. The witness in words, in the conference or prayer meeting, is worthless, and worse, unless the manner of life emphasizes it. There is a fine field for witnessing for Christ in the world of work and business. It is there—in the affairs of everyday life—our Lord calls His disciples to be true to Him, "adorning the doctrines of God." The demand to "take up the cross" for Christ's sake has not been withdrawn. And witnessing which costs something is often demanded. The ranks of "the noble army of martyrs" are not yet full. In the eyes of men, there is not the same show of heroism when a man gives up a situation for the sake of truth, or refuses a lucrative offer because his christian conscience is against acceptance, or suffers the loss of friends rather than yield his convictions on a moral issue, or does any of the many things that are being done every day for Jesus' sake by His unknown but faithful disciples—as if he had gone to burn at the stake for Christ's sake, but there may be quite as much real christian courage in these faithfulnesses, and with them God is surely well pleased. Christ has many who faithfully witness for Him in every circumstance and experience of life. He needs many more such, who in all things will ask, "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?"

Notes on Current Events.

A good deal of remonstrance against the reimposition of newspaper postage has been made, but the Postmaster General seems determined to push the matter through. Representatives of the religious papers of Ontario waited on Mr. Mulock a few days ago and presented their case.

Dr. Withrow, speaking for the delegation. represented that the denominational press is borne down by competition with American papers that have the advantage of large advertising, cheaper paper and cheaper printing material; that the country papers were protected by the ten-mile zone, while they, whose objects were to teach Christianity, and whose chief revenue came from subscriptions, were discriminated against. He went on to say that the spread eaglesim of American Sunday-school papers was promoting a wrong sentiment among Canadian children, and read an article from the 'Evening Telegram' in proof of his statement. Printing papers were twenty-five percent cheaper across the line, the best printing material had to be brought from there, and a heavy duty paid on it, while the printed product was admitted duty free. Papers trusting to the permanency of the postal arrangements had lowered their price of subscription.

They asked that denominational papers be carried free.

The Postmaster General asked questions, and a general discussion insued; at the close of which Mr. Mulock said he did not think he would be justified in making the exemption asked.

The Presbyterian Witness says: It is a serious objection to the imposition of postage on our religious papers and magazines that similar United States papers are carried free of postage through this country. There are objections also to the so-called zone policy. Papers of all kinds to be free for ten miles from the place of publication, and to be charged postage when they are sent beyond that limit. How unreasoning!

The "Wesleyan" says:

The action of the Postmaster General in imposing postage on newspapers discriminates severely and as we think unjustly, against denominational periodicals and Sunday-school papers. The keenest competition which these have is with periodicals of similar character from the United States, which are admitted free of duty, (while Canadian periodicals have to pay heavy duty on their printing material), and by the proposed law will continue to be admitted free of postage while the Canadian periodicals will be taxed for postage.

Besides this, under the proposed law the ten mile zone system will almost altogether relieve the country weeklies from postage, and the great city dailies will be distributed by delivery companies, while, as the constituency of the religious journals lies for the most part outside the ten mile zone, the burden of the postage imposition will tell heavily against them.

It is we think unfortunate that any reversion to the archaic condition of taxing information should have been thought necessary, at this stage in the country's progress, but it is more than unfortunate, it is most unfair that periodicals which are not run for profit, which are finding it hard to meet a very keen competition, and which are so manifestly a means of the mental and religious improvement of the people should be discriminated against as is now proposed.

We do not quite like the idea of asking exemption for the religious papers, though we believe a good case can be made in their behalf, as is shown above. Our objection is to the reimposition of postage on any Canadian newspaper of good character. It is backward legislation.

* *

The Prince Edward Island Legislature has passed a street railway bill for Charlottetown. The promoters, of course, wanted the right to run the cars on Sunday. To this there was strong opposition, and the Sunday running was made conditional on a vote of the electors of the city. The strangest part of the affair is that some of the pastors who strongly opposed Sunday cars running because it would be a violation of God's law, consented to the clause of the bill referring the matter to a vote of the ratepayers.

The approval of Sunday cars by the electorate will hardly change the character of the act. And yet that is what those ministers say who agreed to have the matter decided at the polls. There are people whose ideas of right and wrong are almost entirely determined by the popular opinion.

* *

The Australian colonies have been passing through a most disastrous season. From November 1897 to February of this year, says the Independent, was a period unprecedented for fires and floods. The prime cause was a severe and protracted drouth prevailing over the immense riverless and waterless tract in the interior. The first indications of disaster were local whirlwinds, or cyclones, generated in the heated plains of the north and extending over the south. Then followed a succession of intense and almost intolerable heat waves. By day the thermometer ran up on some occasions to over 160° in the sun and from 100° to 120° in the shade Fruit was roasted on the trees; birds and animals died by hundreds, while many human beings suffered terribly. Vegetation was reduced to a condition resembling tinder, and the result was a series of terrible conflagrations.

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From the same source it is learned that New Zealand fared still worse. "One hundred miles north of Wellington, the capital, a section known as the forty-mile bush, with giant forest trees, was converted into one vast ash-heap, hundreds of settlers barely escaping with their lives, while many fell victims to the flames. In a single district thirty thousand sheep were burned to death. Near the southern coast of Victoria there are forests of gum-trees, including some said to be the tallest in the world, exceeding even the big trees of California. The leaves and bark, rich with oil, were caught by the flames; and so terrible was the fire that five hundred miles away the smoke cloud darkened the sun. Then came a monsoonal depression from the Indian Ocean, and torrents of rain swept away the embankments of railways and interrupted every form of communication. Villages were wrecked, and in one locality the rain gage registered twenty-seven inches before the storm subsided. Over a great part of the colony of New South Wales the greatest havoc was wrought, and at one time the different colonies were cut off from all communication with each other and the rest of the world. Notwithstanding all this there is no lack of courage or confidence among the people.

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The women's polyglot petition in favour of prohibition is to be presented to the Dominion Government Tuesday evening of this week. It is the great petition to which signatures have been secured in all parts of the world. It has already been presented to Queen Victoria, and to the President of the United States.

* *

Hon. John Sherman, Secretary of State in President McKinley's Cabinet, resigned last week. Judge Day, who was Assistant Secretary of State, succeeds him. Mr. Sherman's resignation was due entirely to his poor health. He has been prominent in the affairs of the country for nearly a half century, being one of the country's ablest public men.

* *

The Ontario Alliance is bestirring itself now in preparation for the plebiscite. At a meeting last week it was decided to employ two organizers for that Province. An appeal is being made for contributions to a campaign fund, it being estimated that several thousand dollars will be needed to meet the legitimate expenses of organization &c. A Provincial Convention is to be held in Toronto July 5 6.

* *

It is now stated, on what appears to be good authority, that Col Strathy, who a little while ago was dismissed from the command of the Royal Scots, of Montreal, because of a quarrel with Gen. Gascoigne, is to be reinstated in his rank and placed on the reserve list of officers, retaining his seniority. And this, perhaps, explains Gen. Gascoigne's resignation.

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Reports concerning Mr. Gladstone's condition indicate that he is nearing the end. He is now entirely confined to his room, and most of the time to his bed.

* *

It is stated that the British Columbia Government is likely to make a contract with a company, presumably McKenzie & Mann, to build the Stikine-Teslin railway, and an extension of the nearest British Columbia port. The subsidy mentioned as probable is $4,000 a mile, the government to receive a portion of the profits of the road.

POSTAGE STAMPS.—Frequently subscribers send us postage stamps for small amounts. That is all right, when they cannot get scrip, or a Post Office Order, or an Express Order. But we desire to caution them against allowing Post Masters to give them stamps of the larger denominations, as 5 cts., 8 cts. and 10 cts. We can use ones, two and threes, but have little or no use for the larger kinds.

POLITICAL NEWS—The Manitoba legislature prorogued Wednesday. The session was notable for the passing of a Sabbath observance bill, and three railway aid bills.

War Notes.

When our report closed last week the United States Congress was formally declaring war. The declaration was in the following brief sentences:

Be it enacted, etc.,—

First, that war be, and the same is hereby, declared to exist, and that war has existed since the 21st day of April, A. D. 1898, including said day, between the United States of America and the Kingdom of Spain.

Second. that the President of the United States be, and he is hereby directed and empowered to use the entire land and naval forces of the United States and to call into the actual service of the United States the militia of the several States to such extent as may be necessary to carry this Act into effect.

There was no debate, and the vote was unanimous, the whole proceeding occupying less than two minutes.

The following rules, by direction of the British government, have been proclaimed in the Gazette:

No ships of war of either belligerent may use British waters as a place of resort for warlike equipment, or may leave British waters until twenty-four hours after a ship of the other belligerent.

Every such vessel of war shall be required to put to sea within twenty-four hours after entrance in the event of stress of weather or the necessity for repair or for provisions, in which case such vessel must leave as soon as possible and certainly within twenty-four hours of the completion of repairs.

No supplies will be allowed beyond subsistence for crew for immediate use; no coal beyond what will take her to the nearest port of her own country or near her destination. No coal is to be supplied to the same ship in any British port twice within three months.

No prizes are to be brought to any British waters. If a ship of either belligerent takes in coal in the colony under the rules the government of such colony must report by telegram immediately in order that the British government may notify other ports.

If any exceptional or doubtful case arises the colonial government must telegraph to London for instructions.

Under the illegal enlistment act proclamation all British subjects are forbidden to enlist on the side of either belligerent Another section of the act bears specially on the Canadian Maritime Provinces in this war, namely, the section prohibiting British subjects building or despatching ships to be employed in the service of either belligerent.

President McKinley has issued a proclamation that the United States will adhere to what is known as the Declaration of Paris, which contains the following provisions:

1. Privateering abolished. 2. Neutral flags to exempt an enemy's goods from capture, except contraband of war. 3. Neutral goods under an enemy's flag not be seized. 4. Blockade to be binding must be effective.

Spain will do privateering. Speaking of the Spanish decree to this effect, Mr. Balfour, acting minister for Foreign Affairs, made a statement in the British House of Commons to this effect:

He said that he was disposed to interpret the decree to mean that, while reserving the right of granting letter of marque, if circumstances made it expedient, Spain in the meantime meant to do what Great Britain was disposed to do and what the United States was doing, namely, to put merchant steamers under naval control for purposes of warfare. But he explained, these vessels must fly the Spanish flag.

Congress has provided for a war loan of $500,000,000. Besides additional taxes are to be levied which will yield about $100,000,000 additional annual revenue. The expenses in preparation for war have been about $25,000,000 a month for two months. The expenses, now that war is actually on, will be much larger.

In Spain the Carlists, Republicans and other factions have all pledged their support to the Government in all measures required to defend the rights and honour of the country.

On Thursday the forts at Matanzas, Cuba, were bombarded by United war ships. Some damage is believed to have been done to the forts.

The first real engagement was at Manilla, Phillipine Islands, on Sunday. The United States squadron, under Admiral Dewey, reached there Saturday night. Early Sunday morning they opened fire on Manilla. The report of the result is to the effect that two Spanish ships were burned, that among the slain is the commander of one of the Spanish ships, and that some other Spanish vessels were sunk to avoid being captured. The extent of the injury to the United States ships is not known at this writing. It seems quite clear, however, that the advantage, in this first battle, is with the United States. There was great rejoicing in Washington and throughout the country when the news came.

Tightening The Girdle.

BY THEODORE L. CUYLER, D. D.

The ancients, in Bible lands, were accustomed to wear loose garments, and when any strenuous effort was required they gathered the folds and bound a girdle around their waist. The apostle Peter—who had once girded his fisherman's tunic on in order to swim ashore to his master—exhorts his fellow-Christians in these words: "Gird up the loins of your mind." This exhortation is timely now; it contains one of the core principles of an effective, useful Christian life.

We need to be reminded that Jesus Christ did not suffer for us, nor did the Holy Spirit convert us, just to make us comfortable. Getting to heaven is not the chief reason for becoming a Christian. The chief object is to do Christ's will in all things, and obedience to Jesus is the first law of Christianity. The phrase, "girding the loins," implies readiness for duty. When the children of Israel were to leave Egypt they were commanded to stand with girded loins, and with staves in their hands, ready to be off at a moment's notice. Paul's first inquiry when he was converted was, "Lord, what will Thou have me to do?" and at the finish of his grand career of obedienee he exclaims, "Now I am ready to be offered." Eagerness for the fight marks the true patriot soldier; eagerness for the run made the successful Olympian racer; eagerness to do Christ's will even at sharp personal sacrifice in the trait of the most ready-hearted Christian. We ministers soon discover who are the minutemen in our churches; and we are not fit to prepare a sermon when it is regarded as a drudgery; our girdle has broken.

Another idea suggested by the apostle's phrase is the compacting of all our powers upon the work we have in hand. Consecration requires concentration. Paul's 'this one thing I do' tightened his girdle and kept him from frittering away his life on trifles. Pericles knew only one street in Athens—the streets that led from his own house to the executive chamber. The late Mr. Spurgeon used to tell me that he never went to dinner parties or public entertainments, and never would lecture for money, he did nothing but study and preach, preach, preach, until he had no longer breath to sound his Gospel trumpet. At this season of the year the feeble sun rays may be so focused by a burning glass as to set wood on fire! That is what we need now in our churches; a revival means focusing the faith and zeal of church members. Under the concentrating power of the love of Jesus some people of small means and moderate talents become powerful Christians. The current phrase of a man's pulling himself together" describes exactly what I mean; there are not a few church members who have gone to pieces for want of this girdle of spiritual concentration.

Loin-girding also implies a wholesome idea of restraint. Laxity in doctrine, in social life, and in church life are quite too prevalent in these days. Loose thinking often leads to loose living. The very word religion signifies something that 'binds,' something that both holds us together and binds us to God. If we are Christians we cannot act just as we like. The people who clamor for liberty to think as they please and do as they please, and who scout at all Bible restraints as a bondage, are the very ones who drift away into vagabondage. It is not a good sign when either a minister or a church member begins to loosen his girdle. He is preparing to shirk hard duties or popular positions, or else to drop off into indolent slumbers.

Too many people are falling all apart and going to pieces from looseness of principles. Weakness becomes wickedness. All backslidings in the Church start from loosening the hold on Christ. Conscience loosens its grip. The very garments which the professed Christian wears become entangled in an all manner of worldly habits and practices, until he can make no headway toward the "goal of his high calling."

There is a loud call for "revivals." They must begin in the church, with a prompt response to the roll call of duty. Wherefore let us all gird up the loins of our souls and "be sober." The service of our crucified Lord is not child's play, and co-operating with the Holy Spirit in the winning of souls is serious business, albeit it is the happiest of all occupations. There is joy in hard, honest work; joy in slaying a sin and in saving a soul; joy in pressing forward to the crown. Those who would fain go to heaven in what Samuel Rutherford calls a "close-covered chariot," may not gain admission at the gate, after all; if they do, they will be ashamed to look Peter or Paul in the face. Then let our loins be girded anew and our lamps be trimmed afresh! Eternity is just behind the door! "Blessed are those servants whom the Lord when He cometh shall find watching; He shall gird Himself and make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth to serve them."

MINISTERS DEAD.—Rev. Mr. White (Episcopalian) died at Shelburne, N. S. last week. He was 92 years old, and had been rector of Shelburne for over sixty years.

Rev. A. W. McLeod Ph. D. (Presbyterian) died at Thorburn, N. S. on Tuesday of last week. He had been in poor health for a year. He was a scholarly man, and much beloved by his people.