

J. N. Thompson

NEW BRUNSWICK

RELIGIOUS AND LITERARY JOURNAL.

Glory to God in the highest, and on Earth, peace, good will toward men.

VOLUME II

SAINT JOHN, SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 14, 1820.

NO. 4

PROSPECTUS

A WEEKLY PAPER, TO BE PRINTED BY THE NEW-BRUNSWICK RELIGIOUS AND LITERARY JOURNAL.

ALEXANDER MLEOD, Editor.

In an age which with peculiar propriety is denominated...

In compliance with the earnest and repeated requests of persons deeply interested in this subject...

The New-Brunswick Religious and Literary Journal, as its title imports, will be occupied chiefly with matter of a religious nature and character...

That this publication will have a favorable aspect towards the doctrines which are taught, and the discipline which is exercised...

As there is not at present, either in this or in the neighbouring Provinces, in a course of publication, any work of a similar character...

An usefulness on the more extensive scale, in the departments already mentioned, is the principal object designed in this publication...

Terms.—The New-Brunswick Religious and Literary Journal, will be published Weekly, at The City Gazette Office, in Queen's town, on a Royal sheet, at 15s. per annum, exclusive of Postage...

All communications involving facts, must be accompanied with the proper names of the writer.

DIVINITY.

REV. J. THOMPSON.

Text—Revelations, xvi. 15.—Blessed is he that watcheth.

Nothing is more to be dreaded than a spirit of slumber that benumbs the soul. So many things tend to encourage it, that we cannot be too much on our guard against its soft, gradual, and often unperceived approaches.

I. Our duty requires watchfulness.—I know not why the word duty should be dwelt upon, because some have turned it to self-righteous purposes. Let us define the word. Duty implies obligation, and requires acquiescence with what is right and proper. In this respect it applies to men and to God. What we ought to do to our fellow-creatures is our duty to men.—Render to all their dues, &c. Now, are not submission, reverence, and obedience, due to God? these, then, on our part, are called duty. I am now to call your attention to watchfulness, and consider who has enjoined it. Is a master to be served, a father beloved, a ruler obeyed? Yes; these are claims which none but the presumptuous and self-willed resist. You are commanded in the Scriptures to watch. Oh! how weighty, how solemn, how impressive the command! Think of the authority from which it issued. It combines all that is awful in justice, venerable in majesty, and winning in goodness. Though you see no fiery chariot, though you hear no voice of thunder, yet, while you have the volume of inspiration in your hand, remember it is the King of Glory whose authority is supreme, universal, and unchangeable that cries, "Watch!" It is the Leader and Commander of his people, whose word ought to regulate all our motions, who cries, "Watch!" Nor let any one think this regards not us. Hear this, ye saints; let it sit on your hearts earnestly! What I say to you, I say to all, "Watch." It is well known that among the Romans the law was so strict, that the soldier found sleep when his duty required him to be on the watch, was punished with death. The great Captain of salvation has appointed each his post, with the injunction to be watchful. And dare you desert your duty, forget his charge, and despise his authority? O tell it out in Gath!

II. Our safety requires us to watch.—Your own hearts are deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked. Have you not, then, abundant cause to watch against the intrusion of vain, wandering thoughts, which are apt to creep in at every unguarded avenue, and take possession of the mind, as it were by stealth? Is it not needful to watch against the risings of corrupt passions, which spread like catching fires? Is it not needful to watch against lukewarmness, which insensibly grows upon us, and naturally leads us to every thing good? Self-love is a flatterer which gives but a partial estimate. Be not deceived, look narrowly to your own motives and conduct.—he that trusteth in his own heart, is a fool. The world is full of snares, dangers, and allurement. If you are watchful, you will be safe. Surely, in you is the net spread in the sight of any bird. Be not conformed to this world; you are here in a wilderness.—Walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise. You are in an enemy's country; beware lest you are overtaken, and entangled by the cares, or overcome by the conflicts of the world. You must have tribulation here; you must watch against mischief, wrap up in fair colours; canopy under the mask of love—a base metal beneath a surface of false glitter. Satan is a busy, active, and malignant enemy. You are forewarned,

this journey be forewarned. The prince of darkness will try all his devices. How can he, entering in, that will attract every diversity of temptation, and turn forth fiery darts, that nothing can repel but the shield of faith. Therefore, be ye vigilant. Have you now any proper sense of the perils that beset you? Are you concerned to escape? Is the safety of your soul the main object? Oh, sleep, do not sleep! While heaven's pearls, the keys of alarm sound in your ears, while solemn signs are before your eyes, Awake to righteousness, and sin not! Will a man, possessed of jewels, that in a country of pirates without watching, what he has much values, lest it should be taken from him? And are not your souls more worth than jewels? Have you not seen the necessity of vigilance? O then, well wight in your heart, and bind to your heart the words of Jesus to his disciples, "Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation."

III. Our usefulness in the world, and in the church, requires us to be watchful.—Jehovah said to Abram, "I will bless thee, and thou shalt be a blessing." And shall not the spiritual seed of Abram in this be like him? It is the will of God that Christians should not only receive saving grace, but also impart the savour of their knowledge of Jesus, that they should not only be the children of light, but let their light so shine that men may see their good works; that they should not only have the name of Christians, but follow his example who went about doing good. But an unwatchful spirit in many ways impairs and lessens our usefulness. This is the cause of the mind being often so much ruffled, the temper soured, the conscious seared, the conversation spotted with the world, and the good ways of the Lord, evil spoken of. These are bare and obstacles to usefulness. It was in an anguished moment that Moses spoke unadvisedly with his lips, and drew down the Divine pleasure. David was not on the alert of holy vigils, but walking on the horse-top with a vanguard eye, with a care on the beauty of Bethshelah, which he felt into crime after crime, that filled him with anguish, and his household with discord and weeping. Peter was not watching when he denied his Lord, and so laid the foundation for that sorrow which forced tears of bitterness from his eyes. And cannot you look back, and see how often, through the same negligence, you have both injured yourselves and diminished the good effects of religion upon others? Would you keep a conscience void of offence towards God and men? Would you be worthy of your high vocation? Would you be faithful in every good word and work? Be watchful! Distrust yourself, and lean upon the Beloved. Pray for quickening grace, that you may live to him that died for you. Be watchful to improve your time. How ought you to tremble at the recollection of those golden hours, and precious moments which have been stolen by trifles, while you slumber and slept! The day of life is far spent; what your hands find to do, do it without all your might.

Be watchful to mark the striking and interesting events of Providence. The hand of the Lord is stretched ever till the families and nations of the earth, inflicting judgments, and scattering blessings; but the wicked will not see it. O how many affecting scenes, which ought to touch every movement in the heart, do they suffer to pass away unnoticed! With the harp and viol, the pipe and tabret, wine and feasting, they lull themselves to ease, but regard not the work of the Lord, neither consider the operation of his hands. By attentively observing the dealings of God with you, and his dispensations in the world, you will learn humility and gratitude, and grow in faith and love. Be watchful to seize opportunities of receiving and doing good. Sometimes our own openings presented for dropping a few words of warning or admonition that should not be neglected. There are favourable circumstances that ought to be instantly embraced. While the ground is soft, let the seed be cast in. If you can receive the word to-day, put it not off till to-morrow. If you perceive an impression of religion in