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THE CHRISTIAN REGISTER.

"ON EARTH PEACE, GOOD-WILL TOWARD MEN."

VOL. I. MONTREAL, WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 1, 1823. No. 1.

Published Semi-Monthly at Ten Shillings per annum.

PROSPECTUS.

It has long been a matter of deep regret to many pious individuals, that no vehicle for disseminating Religious intelligence, has been successfully established in these Provinces. The effect which these *Heralds of the Cross* have produced, in the various parts of the world, wherever they have been instituted; and the defective state of intelligence relative to Religious concerns, have induced a number of individuals to form themselves into an association to undertake the accomplishment of this great desideratum. It would, perhaps, be a needless task to expatiate upon the wants of the Inhabitants in a Religious point of view, as they are so generally known to those, who have even the slightest knowledge of the *Canadas*.

It is certainly a matter of no small surprise, that so great and powerful an instrument as the Press, should not, ere this, have been effectually engaged in these Provinces, to disseminate the glad tidings of the Gospel.

To give this paper a general circulation, it is necessary to state, that it will be subject to no party views, nor sectarian spirit; and that it will preserve the strictest neutrality, with regard to disputed points of Faith.—It is intended, that it shall contain the current news of the day, in all the various fields of Religious exertion. A faithful account will regularly be given of the different Societies, which have arisen to extend the

knowledge and Kingdom of Christ; and no matter of any moment coming within the reach of the association, will be neglected, which may promise to arouse a spirit of enquiry in these Provinces, or excite a more earnest engagement in the cause of Religion.—No exertion will be spared to place the Paper upon that respectable footing, which may give it a currency among all classes. The managers, however, are well aware of the futility of promises, where a corresponding degree of exertion and ability is not exhibited. The cause in which they engage is a good one; and it may prove an adamant shield, to protect them from aspersion or obloquy, even if their talents should not be of that distinctive stamp, to place them beyond its reach. Should the public exhibit a willingness to patronise their exertions, they would hope to become the feeble instruments of effecting some good, in the *Canadas*. Their labour is that of Love and good-will to all men; and the consciousness of having accomplished some end for the extension of Christ's Kingdom, will be their only reward. The profits of the work (after having extended the size of the Paper, without any additional expense to Subscribers) will, according to a rule of the association, be applied to benevolent Institutions.

CLERGYMEN and others, who feel an interest in the prosperity of this establishment, are respectfully requested to lend their assistance in supplying original matter.—Communications, upon the present state of Religion in various parts of the country, would be particularly acceptable, addressed to W. HENGE, Secretary of the Association.

"Man's obligations infinite, of course His life should prove, that he perceives their force."

In ushering into the world a new publication, the managers feel all the diffidence, which can attach itself to those, who are entering upon an untried scene of labour. The responsibility which they thus voluntarily assume, may by some be considered, as the arrogation of powers beyond their reach; and by others interpreted, to arise from an ardent zeal to cherish and extend religious views and feelings. The last is the only construction they could admit. Their sole object is to benefit their christian brethren. They regret however, that more able hands have not been enlisted in the undertaking; but this shall not withhold them from commencing the good work.

The want of a Religious Paper in the Canadas, has long been acknowledged and deplored; and a number of unsuccessful attempts have been made, to the permanent establishment of one. The causes which have operated to defeat the accomplishment of so desirable an object, it is hoped, are vanishing under the exhilarating influence of present appearances. The rapid succession, which has been exhibited for a few years past, in the rise of religious and benevolent Societies and Institutions, together with a corresponding degree of zeal and engagedness, manifested on the part of the servants of the Crucified Redeemer, are among the most flattering circumstances which can engage our attention. They are the promising features of a still greater change; and not an inhabitant, who can trace the letters, or understand the glorious principles, of the BIBLE, should be ignorant of them. They serve to arouse, to animate, and to encourage us onward in the great field of labour, where each has a part to perform. A few years past, and where was the Society for promoting CHRISTIAN KNOWLEDGE, the BIBLE, TRACT and SUNDAY SCHOOL UNION Societies, the Sunday Schools, and many charitable Institu-

tions, which have arisen to ameliorate the condition of our poor and our sick? These have sprung up with the rapidity of thought; and are spreading their salutary influences, throughout the Provinces. They are opening up to our view, a brighter and a more glorious era, when one sentiment shall pervade all hearts, and one object unite all hands.—Such are the plausible grounds, upon which we form the encouraging hope, that our exertions will prove successful.

It is not the cause of individual man or party, for which we contend; it is the cause of the whole world—it is a cause on which depend, the destinies of souls, and to which they will adhere when time shall be no more.

The field of enterprise, which we are about to enter, is not destitute of her champions. No, they rise up on the bleak coasts of Labrador, as well as in the proud cities of Europe. Their voice is heard in dreary Iceland, and on the burning sands of Africa—the cheering results of their labours are exhibited in India, and on the islands of the Pacific. Such is the comprehensive range of their exertions; and such are some of the indications to justify us in the assertion, that the redeeming spirit slumbers not.

In the full tide of prospective indulgence, an extended vista opens up to our view, clustering thick with the humble followers of Jesus, beckoning us onward; and while the current of feeling, which led us to enter the list of engagement in a cause so ennobling, continues to flow; (and may it never cease,) so long shall we be found ranging among that mighty phalanx that is raising the loud *Pæan* to the *Most High*.

ON THE NEW-YEAR.

Another year has rolled over our heads, and is gone as a vision of the night; its joys and pleasures, its cares and anxieties, have passed down the stream of time, and will no more delight or grieve us: we look back on it, as a tale that was told—

it was filled with mercy—and though not in all things, such as we could have desired, yet has it been crowned with the goodness of the Lord. The succession of day and night brought us alternate labor and rest, exercise and sleep; the seasons have moved their wonted course, and filled the earth with plenty. Spring put forth its variegated beauties, and covered the hills with verdure, and the valleys with flowers; the husbandman cast his seeds into the bosom of the earth, and the promising germs afforded pleasing anticipations of a plentiful harvest. Summer came in all its fervid brightness, “with light and heat refulgent,” nurtured the infant verdure of the spring, and matured it for luxuriant Autumn; that cheering season of joy and plenty, in which man beheld the indulgent blessings of the Lord, and rejoiced that the year had produced “food convenient” for him. Lastly, stern Winter has laid his icy hands on the earth, and claimed for it a respite, in order that it may again pour forth, with renewed energy, the beauties of vegetation.

The retrospect of the religious events of last year affords the zealous Christian ample cause for joy and gratitude. The nations of the earth have, with few exceptions, dwelt together in peace, and the desolating sword has scarcely been seen to move among men. The Heralds of the Gospel have spread the “good tidings” of peace on earth and good will towards men, in countries which had never before heard the news of salvation through Christ. Missionary exertions have progressed with unabated ardour, and have been attended with the most satisfactory results in every quarter of the world. By means of Bible Societies, the Scriptures have been extensively circulated; and many, who at the commencement of last year, knew not the faith, are now among the believers in the Son of God.

The inhabitants of this City have not been barren spectators of these blessed events; they have contributed liberally, during the last year, to Bible and Missionary Societies, Sunday Schools, and

many other benevolent Institutions: the spirited exertions of several of our philanthropic fellow-citizens have enlarged the opportunities of education to that class of society, which stands most in need of improvement; and hundreds of poor children, who at the beginning of last year, were advancing in the paths of ignorance, and growing up to crime and error, are now receiving an education which will make them valuable members of society. To the patrons of these Institutions, we would say, you have embarked in a good cause, persevere, persist; let not the scoffs of the licentious, nor the sneers of the censorious, shackle your exertions; let your consciences be your monitors, and the blessings of parents and children will be as a bed of roses and a pillow of down, affording you tranquility which the world knows not.

During the last year several of our friends and acquaintances have been removed from this scene of existence, to a world of spirits. “One generation passeth away, and another cometh, and though in many things, “their way was their folly,” yet it is to be feared that too many of us are still pursuing the same course of “vanity and vexation of spirit.” The tender remembrance which departed relatives and friends naturally excite in our breasts, should induce us to endeavor to imitate their virtues; we are moving towards the same eternal goal, we have the same moral duties to perform, and as such awful consequences depend on our performing them in truth and holiness, we should not lose a moment in “laying aside every weight and the sin that does so easily beset us,” in order that we may “run with patience” our christian race.

During the succession of the next three hundred and sixty five days, many parents and children will bid each other a long adieu, the loving husband and the tender wife, will in many instances, be separated for ever by the irresistible arm of death; and who can say that you, kind reader, may not be among the number of

those, who, ere another New-years-day, shall have passed away from among men? Who can affirm, that it may not be said of you "set thy house in order for" this year "thou shalt die."

"For numbers this is certain, the reverse
"Is sure to none ————"

Suffer not, therefore, this day to pass by with as much apathy as if time had ceased its flight; but as this is the commencement of a new-year, let it be also the commencement of a new æra in your life, from which you may set forward in walks of new and of better obedience,

BIBLE SOCIETY.

We shall commence our *expose* of the various Societies now in existence, for the dissemination of religious intelligence, by a slight survey of one, the most comprehensive in its range, the most stupendous in its features, and the most powerful in its supporters. Like a mighty landmark in the ocean of time, the Bible Society rises, the Colossean Pyramid of a new era. The two Hemispheres are enclosed in its grasp, and the Hindoo, the Hottentot, and the Esquimaux chaunt its praise. The Sunday School justly lays claim to its birth in the year 1804.—The mind is powerfully led to the acknowledgment of divine protection, in its rapid advance to the present period.

According to the Report of the British and Foreign Bible Society, for the year 1822, the total net receipts of the preceding twelve months, amounted to £103,802, 17s. 6d.—total net payments £90,445. 6s. 4d.—The issues of Bibles and Testaments were "118,766 Bibles, 136,973 Testaments; making with those issued at the expense of the Society from foreign presses, since the commencement of the Institution THREE MILLIONS, TWO HUNDRED AND FIFTY THOUSAND Bibles and Testaments."

It has promoted the translation, printing or distribution of the Scriptures, or portions of them, in ONE HUNDRED AND

THIRTY NINE different Languages or Dialects.

For the benefit of our readers we subjoin a list of some of the most important Bible Societies now in operation for the distribution of the Scriptures, with their dates of establishment.

	INSTITUTED.
British and Foreign Bible Society	1804
Bale Bible Society	1804
Berlin Bible Society	1805
Hibernian Bible Society	1805
Ratishon Bible Society	1805
Philadelph a Bible Society	1808
Swedish National Bible Society	1809
Calcutta Bible Society	1811
Finnish Bible Society	1812
Hungarian Bible Society	1812
Ceylon Auxilary Bible Society	1812
Wurtemberg Bible Society	1812
Zurich Bible Society	1812
Bombay Aux. Bible Society	1813
Nova Scotia Aux. Bible Soc.	1813
Quebec Aux. Bible Society	1813
Russian Nat. Bible Society	1813
Genoa Bible Society	1814
Hanoverian Bible Society	1814
Prussian Nat. Bible Society	1814
Saxon Nat. Bible Society	1814
Danish National Bible Society	1814
Java Bible Society now called the East India Bible Society	1814
Berg Bible Society	1814
Icelandic Bible Society	1815
Sleswick Holstein Bible Society	1815
Astrachan Bible Society	1815
Strasburg Bible Society	1815
Amer. National Bible Society	1816
Norwegian Bible Society	1816
Polish National Bible Society	1816
Netherlands Nat. Bible Society	1816
Frankfort Bible Society	1816
Sierra Leone Aux. Bib. Soc.	1816
Ningara Aux. Bible Society	1816
Malta Bible Society	1817
New South Wales Bib. Society	1817
U. C. mid. dist. Aux. Bib. Soc.	1817
Gottingen Bible Society	1818
Paris Prot. Bible Society.	1818
Ionian Bible Society	1819
Athens Bible Society	1819

South Africa Aux. Bib. Society 1820
 Montreal Aux. Bible Society 1820

We forbear to extend this list.—Our readers will now be able to form some idea of the magnitude of the Bible Society, although many of the principal ones, are not enumerated. There are upwards of two thousand now in existence.—The prospect of establishing them in Spain, is becoming more and more favourable; and we have good reason to believe, that the time is not far distant, when they will be instituted in every Kingdom and Principality throughout Europe. Asia and the East-India Islands are enlarging their numbers—they are likewise multiplying in Africa, and the West-Indies. South America exhibits some signs of a willingness to receive the word of life, and steps are now taking, to place the Bible within its reach. North America is following close upon the footsteps of Great Britain, and storming the strong holds of ignorance and superstition, for the admission of this heavenly light. We cannot better close these remarks, than by the concluding part of the EARL of LIVERPOOL'S Speech, at the formation of the ISLE of THANET AUXILIARY BIBLE SOCIETY at MARGATE. "It was a duty (he said) we owed to divine providence, to make all mankind feel, that in acknowledging the favours, Heaven has so bountifully conferred upon us, we were anxious to convey to them the greatest blessing Heaven can bestow, by circulating as extensively as possible, the word of eternal life."

From the Records of the United Brethren's Church.

SOME ACCOUNT OF THE WALDENSES.

Frequent mention being made in the ancient history of the brethren of that society of christians, commonly called Waldenses; it may be proper to introduce our extracts by inserting a brief abstract of their history. There is no certain account of their origin. It appears most probable that they had regularly descended from those, who in

the apostles' days, heard and believed the gospel. As long as those congregations, which in the first ages of christianity, had been gathered together in the various countries, remained faithful to the doctrine of Jesus Christ, and his apostles, they constituted the true Christian church, united in one spirit. But when, in process of time, and especially after the heathen persecutions had ceased, the great body of christians had deviated from the pure doctrines of the gospel, and proportionably declined in true piety, then all who saw and lamented the prevailing apostacy, sought fellowship with one another, covenanted together, faithfully to maintain the truths as revealed in the Bible, and to make them the rule of their lives; and regulated their congregations according to the practice of the apostles. Being on these accounts hated and persecuted, by the more degenerate christians, they sought rest and shelter in remote and sequestered situations. In the eighth century, and according to some historians, much earlier, a considerable number of these upright people, who refused to participate in the daily increasing depravity of the Romish church, had taken up their abode in the deep vallies situated between the highest Italian Alps. Hence they obtained the name of Valenses, or Valley-men.—They and their posterity traced their doctrines, and the succession of their bishops from the apostles and the primitive church. Original and authentic documents are indeed wanting to prove the date of the first formation of this remarkable society. Probably in their first beginnings, they did not commit their history to writing: and even supposing them to have done so, it would be no wonder, if, amidst the constant persecutions which they suffered from the Romish church, all their original records had been lost. It is, however, worthy of remark, that the testimony of their most inveterate enemies seems to confirm their apostolic origin. Among many other adversaries, was Reinerus Sachon, who lived in the 13th century. He

lived for some time in fellowship with the Waldenses; but apostatizing from them, became, as is usual in such circumstances, their greatest enemy. This man writes as follows:—"Among all sects or religious parties, separated from the Romish communion, there is not one more dangerous than the Leonists, (a name given to the Waldenses) for the following three reasons:—First, because this sect is older than any other. It existed, according to some, in the days of Pope Silvester, in the fourth century; and according to others, even in the days of the Apostles. Secondly, because it is widely spread; for there is scarcely a country into which it has not found its way. Thirdly, because, while other sects create disgust by their blasphemous doctrines, this has a great appearance of piety; as its members lead a righteous life among men, believe the truths concerning God, and divine things, and retain all the articles of apostolic faith, only hating the Roman church and her clergy."

Ever since the middle of the twelfth century, the above mentioned Vallenses, have been called Waldenses, from their union with the followers of Peter Waldus; through whose means, a great religious awakening took place in France. Waldus was a rich and respectable merchant at Lyons.—Being once on a party of pleasure with some friends, it happened, that one of the company was seized with an apoplexy, and fell down dead.—Waldus was thereby led to deep meditation concerning the state of his own soul, and became anxious to know what he should do to be saved. He began diligently to read the scriptures, and by the enlightening of the Holy Spirit, attained to true conversion, and saving faith in Jesus Christ our Saviour.

He now proved his faith by works of love, not only supplying the temporal wants of the needy, but, in order to make known the truths of the gospel, expounding the scriptures to the inhabitants of Lyons, in their own language. The number of eager hearers, who flocked to him from town and country, became so

great, that it excited general attention, and stirred up much hatred, and jealousy, among the ignorant and dissolute Romish priests, which soon broke out into open persecution. Thus the Waldenses were dispersed through various countries. Many took refuge in Bohemia, and it is even said, that Waldus himself accompanied the exiles thither, and died in that country. The Waldenses and Bohemians having united, enjoyed rest and peace for some time. Divine worship was conducted among them with regularity; their assemblies being held in some places privately, in others, more publicly: they maintained good order and discipline; administered help according to their ability, particularly to their dispersed brethren in distant countries: and sent missionaries to England, Hungary, Brandenburg, Pomerania, and other places. Thus they proceeded quietly, and unobserved, for about two centuries when, being betrayed, by the indiscreet conduct of two of their preachers, a dreadful persecution arose, and almost all of them were forced to fly into the neighboring kingdoms.

RELIGION AMONG SEAMEN.

LIVERPOOL BETHEL REPORTS.

When the Rev. CLELAND KIRKPATRICK was preaching at Pitt-street Chapel, a captain of a vessel was so powerfully awakened to a true sense of the value of religious duties, and particularly of the reading of the Holy Scriptures, which he had entirely neglected, that he wept very bitterly at the thoughts of having so long lived a monument of God's preserving goodness, and having neither read his Bible nor bent his knees in prayer. The following morning, very early, he was going to sea, and he remembered he had no Bible on board. He made inquiry at the house he boarded at, if they had a Bible, that he could purchase. The landlady had none, and no shops were open where one could be purchased. He

exclaimed with great anxiety, "I cannot go to sea without a Bible! a Bible I must have!" The time came for the vessel to be in the river; the wind was fair; she was passing the dock gates, and he must be on board. With a sorrowful heart he left his lodgings, without the book so much desired. The morning was just dawning. In a few minutes after this, he came running back to his lodgings, declaring he could not go to sea without a Bible. The mistress of the house recollecting there was a Bible left there by a gentleman belonging to the Seaman's Friend Society and Bethel Union, put that into his hands, but knew not the charge to make; at the sight of this much longed for treasure, his countenance cheered; with a smile of gratitude he placed it under his arm, and scampered away as if in the possession of an invaluable prize.

One of the Secretaries of the Bethel Companies was waited upon by the captain of an American vessel, who related, that being at Liverpool on a former voyage, he had the pleasure of hearing several sermons preached by the Rev. Mr. SMITH, of Penzance, and became fully convinced by his discourses of the necessity of religious instruction among seamen, particularly when at sea. By way of experiment, he purchased one of the books of tracts called the "Boatswain's mate, and other Pieces." When at sea, after reading the book himself, he called one of the men ast, and said to him, "I will lend you a book to read; be careful to keep it clean, and when you have read it, lend it to one of your shipmates, and then to another, and so on, and when all have read it, return it to me, and I will lend you another." In about a fortnight after, the book was returned, carefully wrapped in clean paper, with the following note, addressed to the captain:—

"The crew of the R—— beg leave to return their sincere thanks to Captain J. for the pleasure they have received in the perusal of this valuable book, and that he will please to honor them with another.

They pledge their word to take particular care of it."

A short time back, one of the Bethel friends was called on business, to attend a vessel lying in one of the docks: he was there at an early hour in the morning.—As he was proceeding towards the cabin, for the purpose of consulting with the captain, he was surprised to observe several of the men standing in mute attention round the companion. Approaching nearer, and listening, he heard some one below praying aloud, whom he afterwards learnt to be the captain of the vessel. When prayer was ended, he asked one of the men, if this was a common practice with the captain, or only a solitary instance of having prayer on board. He was answered, that the captain constantly began the labors of the day, by calling together all the ship's company, and engaging in social prayer.

Sunday, May 6.—Two sailors, strangers in Liverpool, loitering near the Floating Chapel, were addressed by a friend who informed them that there was a prayer-meeting on board for sailors. They replied, we are very dirty, and are not fit to stow away with those that are clean. The friend answered, "O you will do,—there is no respect of persons here: have you not a soul to be saved?" "Ah! Sir, we are quite cut down: we are poor men. Can we get a seat? We are strangers, and did not know where to go."—"This ship my good fellow," it was replied, "is fitted up for such as you: come in and join in prayer." After some short conversation, and a few more questions, one of them said, "Well, Harry, will you enter?" "I don't care if I do," said he, "so here goes." They entered the place of worship during the time of prayer. A captain of a vessel lying alongside the brig they belonged to, was engaged in prayer. He offered up supplications to God not only for his crew, but for the crews of other vessels in this port. This circumstance affected the men greatly. At the conclusion of the service, they thanked God, and said, "Surely Christian people are praying for the souls of us

poor sailors; and some masters of vessels too, are praying men. The Lord helping us poor sinners, we will also seek him with prayer." "Ah! Harry," said the other, "had ship chapels been built before, gladly should I have attended, and I might, by God's blessing, have escaped many sins. Thank you kind friend, the Lord reward you."

ANECDOTES.

A Sunday Scholar's value for the Bible.

A little boy, a Sunday scholar, was one day sent by his mother to a shop for some soap; when the shop-woman, having weighed it, took a leaf from a Bible that was placed on the counter for waste paper; at which the boy was greatly astonished, and vehemently exclaimed, "Why mistress, that is the Bible!"—"Well, what if it be?" replied the woman. "It is the Bible," repeated the boy, "and what are you going to do with it?" "To wrap up the soap," was the answer. "But mistress you should not tear up that book, for it is the Bible!" cried the boy, with peculiar emphasis: "What does that signify?" said the woman sharply; "I bought it for waste paper, to use in the shop." The boy with still increasing energy, exclaimed, "What, the Bible! I wish it was mine; I would not tear it up like that." "Well" said the woman, "if you will pay me what I gave for it, you shall have it." "Thank you," replied the boy, "I will go home and ask my mother for some money." Away he went and said "Mother, mother, please to give me some money?" "What for?" said his mother. "To buy a Bible," he replied, "for the woman at the shop was tearing up the Bible, and I told her she should not do it; then she said she would sell it me: O mother, do give me some money to buy it, that it may not be torn up!" His mother said, "I cannot, my dear boy, I have none." The child cried; still begged for some money, but in vain. Then

sobbing, he went back to the shop, and said, "My mother is poor, and cannot give me any money; but, O mistress, don't tear up the Bible, for my teachers have told me that it is the *word of God!*"

The woman, perceiving the boy to be greatly concerned, said, "Well, don't cry, for you shall have the Bible, if you will go and get its weight in waste paper." At this unexpected but joyful proposal, the boy dried up his tears, saying, "that I will, mistress, and thank you too." Away he ran to his mother and asked her for some paper: she gave him all she had; and then, he went to all his neighbours' houses, and begged more; and having, as he hoped, collected enough, he hastened with the bundle under his arm to the shop, and on entering it exclaimed, "Now, mistress, I have got the paper." "Very well," said the woman, "let me weigh it:" the paper was put into one scale, and the Bible into the other. The scale turned in the boy's favor, and he cried out, with tears of joy sparkling in his eyes, "*the Bible is mine!*" and seizing, he exclaimed, "I have got it! I have got it" and away he ran home to his mother, crying as he went, "I have got the Bible! I have got the Bible!"

Value of the Bible.

A Ship's company one sabbath evening attended the service on board the Floating Chapel. On closing the exhortation, a part of one of the Bethel Companies' reports was read, particularly relating to the wonderful effects which had, in some instances, followed reading of the Bible. They were so struck with the advantages resulting from an acquaintance with this precious book, that the following morning they begged of the captain to purchase each of them a Bible. The captain, therefore, called at the depot of the Merine Bible Society, and purchased a Bible or Testament for each of his men.