

urged me to pray to God to keep me, and I do."

"What was that you had in your jacket pocket?"

"My Testament, which my teacher gave me. I thought if I did perish, I would have the word of God close to my heart."—*Seamen's Magazine*.

THE OBSERVER.

TORONTO, FEBRUARY, 1851.

It has been suggested to us, that if we would give subscribers two or three months credit, we might easily double, and perhaps treble their numbers. We do not doubt, for a moment, but that we might, by such means, greatly swell our list; but justice to the publishers, and to those who have paid in advance, forbids our taking such a course. Let it be remembered, that an increase of subscribers is an increase of expense to the publishers; so that the more subscribers we have the worse are we off, unless they pay in advance. The paper is secure enough on the prepayment system—on the credit system, it would soon sink to the grave of its predecessors. This ought to be satisfactory to all who have at heart the dissemination of truth.

We have not as yet had returns from a number of our subscribers. Have they forgotten our terms?

The Rev. Dr. Cramp, of Montreal, has received an invitation to the Presidency of Acadia College, Nova Scotia. We learn that he will accept the invitation.

AMERICAN BIBLE UNION.—We learn that this body, whose object is to give the word of God, faithfully translated, to all the nations of the earth, have appointed Rev. I. I. Fulton as their Agent for Michigan and Canada. The Union has been peculiarly fortunate in securing the labours of such a brother. His experience, piety, and talent, fit him in an eminent degree for such a work.

BAPTISMS.—The ordinance of Christian baptism was administered, in the Baptist Chapel, Bond Street, Toronto, on the first Lord's day evening in the new year, to three individuals—one male and two females—on a profession of their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

We learn, with much pleasure, that additions by baptism, have also been made to the churches in London, Brantford, Gwillimbury, and Montreal. We should be happy, if other churches have been blessed in a similar manner, to receive intelligence from them.

PROGRESS, AND ITS OBSTACLES.

A reflecting mind can scarcely fail to perceive, in the advance of liberal principles, the mighty influence of the Bible. That book is sapping the foundations of despotism in all its multifarious modifications.

To fight against human freedom is to fight against God; a work in which fallen man has long been too successfully engaged. Human councils and stratagems, however, must all be overthrown, and righteousness and truth must prevail over oppression and error. The believer, resting with confidence on the promises of God, sees a day approaching, when selfishness shall be restrained, and when vassallage, mental and physical, shall cease. The signs of the times seem to indicate the rapid approach of this state of things. Every expression of popular feeling which we are called upon to mark, develops the fact, that the masses, so long deemed brutish, and vulgar, and ignorant, are nevertheless, in advance of their leaders, on many points; and in matters civil and sacred are merely tolerating what they see not how to alter, but what in their hearts they despise. What, in enlightened lands, at the present day, is the power of the priesthood? It may indeed, in its external aspect, seem imposing and mighty, but it lacks authority in the minds of men. Teachers may seat themselves in the temple of God, and arrogate to themselves divine honours, they may sit in Moses' seat, or by virtue of some mysterious, invisible current of apostolic grace, flowing on from generation to generation, through prelatical fingers, they may seize the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and open and shut the gates at discretion; still the intelligent, sneer at such vain assumptions, and the pious heart is moved with piety. Such pretensions are tolerated, in some instances, because there are many hallowed reminiscences associated with the systems to which such pretensions belong; while in other instances, they are tolerated simply because men shrink back from a contest with the powers by which they are sustained. Men know not how to obtain that deliverance from the toils and trammels of proud ecclesiastics, after which their souls pant. They perceive the evil, but do not perceive the remedy. Their fear of burying what is right with what is wrong in a common grave, the dread of being denounced as heretics or proscribed as wanderers from the old paths of hoary headed orthodoxy, seals many lips, and we listen to ill-suppressed murmurs, from thousands who only seem to await a fitting occasion to separate the wheat from the chaff, and take their stand upon the broad basis of everlasting truth. Every noble

feeling of their natures, every free thought of their intelligences, and every enlightened decision of their consciences, is adverse to priestly power, and yet they are held in its grip, like a bird in the fowler's snare. Men can not long continue, thus to think, and feel, and desire in one direction, and at the same time will, and act in an opposite direction. Here a rational being is seen to be at war with himself, and the conflict is intolerable. It has begun to develop itself in the midst of the hierarchies of the earth, and as Bible knowledge increases, as the work of God's Spirit in the hearts of men progresses, the conflict must become more and more intense, until human ecclesiastical systems are utterly abandoned, and those whom Christ has made free are free indeed.

But we perceive a desperate effort on the part of the priesthood, to retain its power and authority. Fire and sword are not at the present day, in enlightened lands, the instruments of ecclesiastical rulers to enforce their laws and compel obedience to their mummeries; but a resistance of their authority is heresy, and proscription is the lot of him who dares to question their infallibility. From all this, poor flesh and blood shrinks back. And we must not suppose that this merely refers to the efforts of the minions of Rome. They indeed, forge thunderbolts more terrific, than do protestants, while their system holds out but little hope, that salvation will reach many of those who are entangled in their net; but they are not alone in seeking to centralize power in the hands of the priesthood. We have, Prelates, Conferences, Synods, and ecclesiastical Councils, all looking with more or less earnestness in the same direction. Resist the authority of an Episcopal Bishop, and you are a dissenter, or an infidel or perhaps both! Resist the authority of the Annual Conference, and you will be excluded as a rebel from the connection! Resist the Synod, and you are stript of your authority to preach to the people, and are branded as an heretic! Question the legality, and resist the assumed authority of certain ecclesiastical councils, amongst Congregationalists and Baptists, and you will be cast out of the sympathies of these denominations. Against such efforts by professed ministers of the gospel, to bring or to keep God's people in a state of subserviency to themselves, and to trench on hallowed ground, to subvert the indepen-