

grown them;—they have seen all this; and it is reasonable to suppose they would be led to discard and shun all mere creed authority, and take their stand upon the Bible alone, as the only rule of faith and practice. And so, we find, they are doing. Coming to the Bible as independent inquirers, untrammelled either by Church or by creed, they would naturally be led to set aside Transubstantiation, the Trinity, and all such doctrines, which are not to be found in the evangelical word. And it is gratifying to find that they are doing so.

The prominent leaders in this vigorous religious movement in Germany are Ronge and Czernski. Between these men, it is said, there is a difference of opinion, but in what this difference consists, we cannot undertake to say with precision. Ronge has been charged with having rationalistic tendencies, whilst Czernski has been regarded by many as the champion of what are technically termed evangelical views. It seems to us probable that the difference between them may not be so great in reality as has been hitherto supposed. We have seen the charge of rationalism against Ronge denied by what we consider competent authority. And it will be perceived from the paragraph which we here quote, that Czernski, by his conduct at the Synod of Schneidemühl, has brought his reputation for "evangelicalism" into very serious doubt.

The annexed extract is from the Berlin Correspondence of the London Standard. It bears date July 27th :

"We have news of the result of the Synod of the congregations professing the apostolic faith, which has been held at Schneidemühl; and it is most afflicting. So unblushing was the denial of the saving truths of the Gospel manifested at this meeting, that Dr. Jettmar and his lay coadjutor withdrew in disgust before its sittings terminated. They represented the apostolical flock in Berlin, and in spite of all the persuasions and exhortations which Christian love and faithfulness could urge, were unable to prevent the meeting from repudiating the Confession of the Holy Trinity, the divinity of Jesus Christ, and the personality of the Holy Ghost. Not only did the members protest against the adoption of the three ecumenical creeds, but treated even the Apostles' Creed with slight. The Godhead of the Saviour having become the subject of discussion, the Rev. Mr. Port, of Posen, who acted as president, asked whether any one present really believed that Jesus Christ was very God? And upon one of the Berlin deputies replying that he believed it, and was as firmly convinced of it as his own existence, the president treated the asseveration with scorn and contempt. Again, when the Berlin deputies earnestly besought the assembly not to reject the Apostles' Creed, and to abstain from abbreviating it, the same individual observed that it contains "arrant nonsense." One of the deputies called upon Czernski to use his influence to discountenance so unscriptural and unbecoming a remark, and to support the opposition raised by them in behalf of the apostolical symbol. He answered that he saw nothing objectionable in the remark; and for himself was averse to all confessions (symbolic), and should vote for the doing away with all creeds, and the adoption of the Bible as the only standard. Dr. Thimen was also present, and proposed a confession for the congregations of the Grand Duchy of Posen, which is of so equivocal a character as to suit almost every shade of belief, and the meeting adopted it. Czernski, I am told, has been invited to attend the meeting of the Evangelical Alliance in London; but how can he show his face in so Christian an assembly after consenting to the unchristian proceedings transacted at Schneidemühl?"

The writer of the foregoing is evidently a warm adherent of conventional orthodoxy. But his testimony of the undoubted Unitarianism of the Synod of Schneidemühl is not the less worthy on that account. He regards the intelligence as "most afflicting." A certain eminent man in England once likened some well-known institutions in his country to moored barges, which were held in their places while the tide of improvement flowed around them and past them. So it is with creed orthodoxy. It is held fast by its creed like a moored barge. Religious light and freedom have risen like a swelling tide and flowed clear past it, and it laments the progress as "most afflicting,"

because the stream did not come to a stand just where it was settled. Our readers will understand what the writer means by the "saving truths of the Gospel." He means, we presume, the Trinity and kindred doctrines. Very saving, surely, if they were only scriptural. As to the "President treating the asseveration with scorn and contempt," and such things,—these are probably the mere embellishments of a writer evidently much disappointed at the conclusions to which the German reformers have arrived. We should not even suggest such a probability, were it not that we have so frequently witnessed the great injustice done to every shade of liberal Christians, by exaggerated or distorted representations of some amongst the "orthodox" religionists. If the Synod indicated "scorn" or "contempt," either by speech or action, they were blameworthy, and deserve rebuke, though the doctrines they maintain were as true as heaven. Having cast off the papal authority, and come out from the Roman Church to enter on the path of honest and independent religious enquiry, we trust they will go on without any fear of man before their eyes, until they arrive at the pure and simple truths of the Gospel of Christ. We trust, likewise, that no amount of zeal against the errors either of Romanism, or "orthodoxy," will ever betray them into a forgetfulness of the demands of Christian forbearance and charity.

SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHING.

The eighteenth annual report of the Boston Sunday-School Society has been transmitted to us by the Corresponding Secretary. It will be remembered that one of the agents of this Society (Rev. F. T. Gray) visited the Sunday School of the Unitarian Church in this city during the summer of last year. The report before us is a highly interesting and valuable document, containing as it does much information from various persons, well known as experienced and earnest friends of the cause of Sabbath Schools. We are anxious to direct attention to this subject, and have to regret that circumstances prevent us just now from enlarging on it as we should desire. We subjoin some extracts from the report, relating, as it will be perceived, to matters of great importance.

The Hon. Stephen C. Phillips, who, in addition to his many public labours, has for many years been the devoted Superintendent of a Sunday-school, writes as follows:

"You desire me to say something of THE QUALIFICATION OF SUNDAY-SCHOOL TEACHERS. I begin by saying that a moderate share of intellectual power and acquirement may be sufficient for great usefulness, if combined with a large share of spiritual gifts and graces, and that such a combination is not impracticable or unrequited. The work of a Sunday-school teacher, duly appreciated, allows ample scope for the most active and cultivated intellect; and he who, possessed of such a talent, is willing to employ it for a season or for life, in searching for truth, that he may impart it to others, as well as acquire it for himself—he who will give such a mind, and a heart along with it, to the study of God's word, and from Sunday to Sunday will gather the young or the old around him, will find ample employment for all his powers, and will never fail to thank God that he has been led thus to employ them. Would that there were many such. But even though there should be but a few, the work of Sunday-school instruction can be profitably conducted, if such as are willing to be teachers are willing to do what they can to prepare themselves for the service, combining always the preparation of the heart, with that of the mind; if they meet their pupils, earnestly intent upon using their utmost efforts, and spending the whole time, while with them, in imparting religious knowledge, and in exerting a religious influence upon their characters; and if they will feel that they are to make it, if possible, a work for life, a regular portion of Sabbath duty while the Sabbath lasts, and that they can only accomplish all that should be expected of them, when their connection with a class becomes so intimate and permanent that every scholar regards the teacher as a friend for life, and becomes accustomed to meet the teacher as a friend everywhere, in the street and at home, as well as in the school, and acquires the habit of conversing freely with the teacher upon whatever re-

lates to moral and religious improvement. To effect this all may seem to be a great deal; but can a Christian heart be satisfied with less? and can a Christian heart fail to exert such an influence, alike upon teacher and scholar, as will be sure, quietly and gradually, to effect it all? A Christian heart is, in my view, the sum of all qualifications. Let the heart be right, and such will be the sense of responsibility, that every faculty will be applied, every opportunity will be improved to do the teacher's work; the Bible will be duly prized; the spirit of devotion will never be absent; and all the lustre of the purest virtue will be constantly reflected from the teacher upon the scholar.

"This is what is wanted, everywhere wanted. Let teachers pray and strive that the want be supplied, or else, but only in such an alternative, let them not feel themselves worthy to be teachers."

Other questions were put to several correspondents, respecting THE BEST METHOD OF EXISTING THE RIGHT KIND OF TEACHERS, AND OF IMPROVING THOSE WE HAVE.

In answer to these, the Rev. Mr. Whitman says:

"I fear that the difficulty in obtaining the right kind of teachers, arises from the fact that Christians generally do not feel that they are called, by all their religious obligations, to work for Christ and for God. Christians seem to feel that religion was given for enjoyment merely, and not committed to them as a sacred trust for the good of mankind; but we ministers should seek ever to impress it on their minds, that they have received this great behest on trust, that they are to dispense it for the good of the community, and that we are accountable for the manner in which we are to fulfil this trust. I would that we could see all Christians filled with a deep and abiding sense of their obligations in this respect, so that they should be continually asking, 'Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?' If they once feel as they ought, they will find the Sunday-school opening before them as one of the ways in which they may labour for Christ and for God. I think the remedy of the present state of things is to be found, not in appeals in behalf of Sunday-schools, but in so changing the whole tenor of feeling upon Christian obligation, that every Christian should feel constrained by the love of Christ to do something for the cause of religion in the world. When Christians shall feel as they ought to do on the subject, then will Sunday-schools and all missionary efforts flourish.

"As to the improvement of the teachers we have already enlisted, I would say that they must be continually reminded of the vast importance of the work in which they are engaged; of the lasting influence of any impressions, either good or bad, which they may make. Some have thought teachers' meetings all important. I think them a great help; but the teacher must not depend upon these, either to keep up his interest, or to qualify him for his work. He must seek his principal preparation in communion with God, with his own soul, and with nature; in the study of God's Word, and in the study of children. The teacher must make diligent preparation for each lesson. The greater the preparation made, the more interest will be felt. The very act of making preparation will of itself awaken interest."

AN ENTIRE CONGREGATION CONVERTED TO UNITARIANISM.

Among the many changes in religious opinion which are taking place on both sides of the Atlantic, that which is brought to light in the following communication seems well worthy of note. The letter (most of which is subjoined) is addressed by the Rev. Mr. McKean, a Unitarian Minister, to the Editor of the London Inquirer. In such manifestations as the following, we perceive the practical results of the diffusion of sound religious knowledge among the masses of England's working population:—

DEAR MR. EDITOR,—I beg to make you and your readers acquainted with a fact, which will be highly gratifying to their minds. For nearly two years there has been in this town [Oldbury] a religious society known by the name of "The Christian Chartist Church," which has regularly met for worship on Sundays and week-day evenings, and been edified by the ministrations of gifted men among themselves, and of brethren from sister congregations. They have persevered in the cheap education of the young, and been earnest in Sunday-school teaching. They have a chapel fitted up in an humble but convenient way, and have praiseworthy exerted themselves in their own improvement, and that of the rising generation. The doctrine they believed and taught was what was called Trinitarian Orthodoxy.

I must now introduce to your knowledge a brother and ardent friend of free inquiry and practical Christianity,—Silas Henn. I do

not say Mr., because I think he would prefer his simple name. Silas was formerly a local preacher in the Methodist New Connection, and an opponent of Joseph Barker, both by word and print, but he is now a fellow-worker with him in the cause of intelligible religious truth. He preaches and lectures unweariedly in the villages around, and distributes tracts in great numbers. He has frequently from three to four hundred attentive hearers in the open air, and seldom dismisses them without distributing among them a bundle of tracts. Through his exertions, much investigation of doctrine has been made in this district, and many souls enlightened. Some weeks ago, Silas preached to my congregation, and gave much satisfaction, and was afterwards invited to preach to the congregation named above. He did so; and, after the evening service, he was opposed by William Griffin (the person who most frequently preached to them), on the Godhead of Christ and Natural Depravity, and for a considerable time defended the doctrines he had taught. The result was, that a regular discussion was agreed on. W. Griffin undertook to prove that Jesus Christ is equal with God the Father; Silas undertook to prove the counter-proposition, that Jesus Christ is not equal with God the Father. Each was to speak four times, and the speeches were to be limited to fifteen minutes each. July 6th was the day appointed for the discussion. After each disputant had spoken four times, it was agreed that they should continue the debate another half hour. When this was done, Silas offered to meet his opponent three or four nights in succession. To this, W. Griffin would not consent, but afterwards agreed to meet him once more, on the following Monday evening. I was present myself on the second evening, and was much pleased with the "decency and order" of the meeting. The people were exhorted to refrain from outward applause or disapprobation, and the exhortation was very nearly obeyed. The discussion was held in their own place of worship, in the presence of some hundreds. People attended from Stourbridge, Fiveways, Brockmore, Gornal, Dudley, Gates-Hill, Dudley-Port, Tipton, Cosely, Hocker-Hill, and numerous other places, some walking a distance of eight or nine miles. I need not describe how the argument was conducted on either side: the result shews how. In a subsequent meeting of the managers of the place, the matter was considered; and, with but one dissentient, it was agreed that they should unite with "the Christian Brethren," for the promotion of Evangelical Reform principles; and Silas was requested to preach to them himself, and induce others from among his fellow-workers to aid in the good work. He preached on Sunday last, to good congregations; and Michael Moon (the newly appointed Unitarian school-master at Cosely) and myself will supply them next Sunday. Some of our brethren who now conduct worship at Walsall, I trust will also assist, and probably some from Birmingham, for the preachers among the "Christian Brethren" have at present full employment in their own societies, and in the villages around; so that it becomes our duty to help them as much as we can in the heat of this auspicious day.

IRISH COLLEGES.—Saunders's Dublin News-Letter states, that among the last acts of Sir Robert Peel's government was an official announcement that Roman Catholics and Unitarians were to be equally eligible with other denominations for professorships in the three new colleges of Ireland; and that one Unitarian would be put on the board of management and examination, with one Trinitarian Presbyterian.

CLERICAL HEROISM.—The Rev. G. G. Bacon, rector of Axbridge, has had the manliness, even with the fear of ecclesiastical censure before his eyes, to refuse to read the thanksgiving for our recent victories in India, appointed to be used in all churches. This is the only instance with which we are acquainted, of a clergyman protesting against the infamous proceeding; a proceeding which was scandalous to religion, a sarcasm on the common justice and benevolence of man, an attempt to associate human butchery with God.—English paper.

DONATION OF SERMONS AND PAMPHLETS.—Elder T. Henry has received from the Unitarian Association of New England, via Montreal, a large donation of Sermons and Pamphlets for the benefit of the Christian Cause in Canada, to be distributed gratuitously. There has, however, an expense occurred of six dollars for transportation, which our friends are requested to assist in meeting. Thanks are tendered to the said Association for their Christian liberality.—Oshawa Christian Luminary.