

The Bible Christian.

MONTREAL, DECEMBER, 1847.

THE CHRISTIANITY OF THE WORLD, NOT THE CHRISTIANITY OF CHRIST.

[The following remarks will not be entirely new to many of our readers. They formed (as will be found in reading them) the concluding portion of Mr. Cordner's Lectures, introductory to the Course now in progress of delivery on some prominent topics connected with social and moral Reform.]

We have already seen the character of the Christianity of Christ. Let us now look for a moment at the Christianity of the world. Cast your eyes around you into the community in which you live. But first purge your own mind of the leaven of worldliness that is in it, else you are incapable of attempting the survey. A jaundiced vision is imperfect, and unfit to judge of the harmony and completeness of the landscape. With a sober and earnest mind, cast your eyes calmly upon the community in which you live, and there you will see selfishness in all its forms, reigning far and wide. There you will see mind brought into conflict with mind, and its ruling aim is the aggrandizement of self. Mark the inequalities of worldly condition, and see this miserable selfishness at work to strengthen and perpetuate those inequalities. There, is a man who has more wealth than he knows how to dispose of, yet he burns with eagerness to accumulate more by any means and every means. There, is another man who has none at all—who asks "a brother man to give him leave to toil"—and can scarcely obtain the poor liberty. There, is a man who has a spacious and splendid mansion, amply stored from top to bottom with every conceivable comfort, and has heaps of gold besides. There, is another man who has not where to lay his head, whose stomach pines with hunger, whose limbs ache with cold, and who has not wherewithal to satisfy the first wants of a famishing wife and perishing children. In a lonely and vacant hut, some time since, and in the suburbs of our city, on one fearful night (oh, too fearful a night for us to describe) a destitute mother sank upon its freezing floor, with two or three of her perished offspring, and all closed their eyes in death. A death agonising to contemplate, but welcome to them, since it released them from such a world. On that same night, so fearful in that lonely and vacant hut, there was many a room in our city glittering with splendour, and groaning with superabundant luxury—there were a thousand votaries of Ostentation bowing at her shrine and paying untold gold upon her altar. In many a house in our city, on that night, there was more sacrificed to vanity and show, to fashion and folly, than would have provided for that destitute and dead mother and her starved children for a twelvemonth round. And all this in a community, which, in its Sunday services, professes respect for the Christian precept—"Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." All this in a community, which, in its Sunday services, says that it is a Christian duty to "do unto others as we would wish that they should do unto us." Are your eyes open? Is your vision clear? Are your minds free from the scum of worldliness? If so, I ask you is such Christianity any thing but a mockery?

And look, too, beyond the community in which you live—look throughout Christendom. How many thousands of our fellow-men are lying in dark and hopeless prisons—the unfortunate victims of vindictive punishment. Christendom has starved and degraded them—has set a mark upon poverty, that its victims are to be mistrusted and shunned—has elbowed them into the darkest corners and the narrowest lanes of its vast and splendid cities—has crowded them out of view, along with the filth of their streets—has left them there uneducated and neglected—and because they have come forth from their dens of dirt, and wretchedness, and ignorance, where vice, undisturbed, held undisputed sway, and where every form of it was rendered familiar, and have infringed the moral law, and transgressed the statute book of the country, they are seized, locked up, and punished, and rendered much more the children of hell, than before. All this is done in Christendom where men profess to admire the divine

beauty of that religion—the founder of which spoke words of kindness to the guilty soul, and sought to redeem it by the power of love. If Jesus was right in his mode of treating guilt, most certainly the world is wrong. But if he was wrong, then the world is right, and it should continue its vindictive punishment, nor ever utter a word of kindness or hope to the wretched offender, nor make any attempt for his reformation and improvement.

Nor is this all. Look throughout Christendom, and you will see millions of our fellow-men who never committed any offence against society, doomed to hopeless and cruel bondage. Men and women like ourselves, are bought as if they were beasts, sold as if they were beasts, worked as if they were beasts, and flogged as if they were beasts. In the colonial possessions of the various countries of Europe, with the exception of Britain, and I believe Denmark,—in those of France, of Spain, of Portugal, professing Christian countries all—the image of God is degraded in the person of humanity by men who profess to give God reverence. And on our own continent too, a neighbouring republic which reads freedom and equality in its Bible, and writes freedom and equality on its flag, stands with its foot on the neck of three millions of African slaves. *Did God make of one blood, all the nations of the earth? Are all the children of a common father? Yes, says the New Testament. And what do such nations mean, then, who profess the religion of the New Testament, and yet openly outrage its most prominent principles?*

Cast your eyes round Christendom again. Let me ask you rather to look beyond its bounds now. I ask you to look beyond its limits that you may see how Christian nations not only outrage the gospel on their soil, but carry their outrages far into Pagan lands. Look into Africa—look to the Algerine country. The cloud of smoke has hardly passed away from its horizon, which issued from a cave in which a vast multitude of men, women, and children were suffocated and roasted to death. The fiend who commanded this act was in the form of man, and was arrayed in the uniform of a soldier. He, and his companions in arms, were soldiers from the Christian country of France. Look now to Asia—find out India, and let your eye rest on the country of Scinde. Tall and gallant men are there, fine specimens of the human form, dark eyed mothers and maidens, innocent and playful children. See that river how it rolls—the Sutlej—but alas, alas, its banks are red with human blood. The message has not yet died away from our ears which came from that river's bank some eighteen months since. "The river was full of sinking men. For two hours volley after volley was poured in upon the human mass. The victors pressed the retreating multitudes on every side, and precipitated them in masses over the bridge. The river literally ran red with blood,—no quarter was given—no mercy was shown." The man who penned that message was a soldier too. He and his companions in arms—the men who thus shot down the fathers and brothers of India on their own soil—who gave no quarter and showed no mercy—were soldiers sent out there from the Christian country of Great Britain. And now come back to this continent again, and within the dominion of Christendom,—cast your eyes southward to the ancient country of Mexico. See its sacked and smoking cities—its ancient temples dismantled—its harmless natives flying from their homes in terror—multitudes of its people lying mangled and bleeding in their own streets. Look on that sad and sickening spectacle, and weep for humanity and Christianity, when you see that the agents of that barbarous work of devastation and death, are men—soldiers, sent for the purpose, by the Christian States of America. Thus it is that France, Britain, and America, three of the most highly civilized nations of the world—three nations that profess the religion of the Prince of Peace—put forth their power, far and wide, to carry on the barbarous and anti-Christian practice of war.

Thus to contemplate the contrast between the Christianity of the world, and the Christianity of Christ, is sufficient to fill us with sorrow. Very clearly may we perceive that the Divine Spirit of the Gospel is but indistinctly appreciated and feebly felt. The world is publicly setting Gospel precepts and Gospel principles at defiance, and seemingly unconscious of the outrage it is committing.

It requires to be aroused, awakened, and reminded what the Christianity of Christ is. It requires to be emphatically reminded that it is essentially a system of meekness and mercy, of forbearance and forgiveness, of love and peace. He who would undertake its reform, in ever so small a measure, must be prepared for a Herculean work. He sees that the principalities and powers of the world are arrayed direct against him. He sees that its high and mighty rulers have a supposed interest in perpetuating the existing order of things, involving oppression and bloodshed, and iniquity in its countless forms. He must pray therefore for the courage of an Apostle, that he may strive to do an Apostle's work. His struggle is to be "against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places." He must therefore take unto himself the whole armour of God. He must go forth, armed with Christian truth and Christian love, and bear testimony openly and fearlessly, against the public sins of the so-called Christian world.

It will be the aim of the few discourses to which these remarks are introductory, to direct attention more particularly to those glaring public evils which make the contrast so strong between the Christianity of the world and the Christianity of Christ. I propose to treat of *War, Slavery, Intemperance, and the Treatment of Criminals*. I invite your attendance and your attention to these topics. I ask your co-operation in the attempt which I am about to make to bring them more prominently into notice. Let us get mankind to think seriously and earnestly upon them, and on their inconsistency with the Gospel, and we shall prepare the way for their speedy downfall. I ask the co-operation of the man of matured mind, whose experience gives weight to his opinion. I ask the co-operation of the matron who can impress the value and beauty of Christian principle on the minds of the rising generation. I ask the co-operation of the young man who is just stepping forward into the activities of life. I ask the co-operation of the young woman with her warm and generous heart, and whose influence upon the forth-coming generation, none of us could venture to compute. I ask the co-operation of all, to secure permanent and universal peace for the world, freedom for the oppressed and ill-fated slave, reformation for the poor inebriate, and mercy for the criminal condemned. In heaven, or on earth, there can be no nobler or more glorious work than this. For it is a co-operation with God, and with Christ, for the elevation of humanity, and the Salvation of the world.

LECTURES IN THE UNITARIAN CHURCH.

The Course of Lectures announced in our last, is now in progress of delivery. The topics proposed are War, Slavery, Intemperance, and the Treatment of Criminals. At the time we now write, two have been delivered to numerous and attentive audiences. On the Sunday evening immediately subsequent to the issue of this sheet, there will be a continuation of the discourse on war. Service at the usual hour—7 o'clock.—Seats free.

EXCHANGE PAPERS.—We receive four papers from the United States; but owing, we presume, to the ill-starred dispute at present existing between the British and American Governments, concerning postage arrangements, two of them have lately fallen short. These are the Boston "Christian World," and the New York "Christian Inquirer." We have not received either of these journals for a month back. We consider them too valuable to be dispensed with, and we should therefore feel obliged to the Publishers if they would forward the missing numbers, and continue to furnish us with their papers, prepaying to the frontier, and we shall take the earliest opportunity of thanking them for their trouble, and reimbursing their outlay on our behalf.

Persons desiring to have books out of the Library of the Unitarian Church, can obtain them by application to the Librarian, after any of the services.

Persons desirous of obtaining Pews or Sitings in the Unitarian Church, are requested to make application to the Elders, after any of the public services.

DEDICATION IN BOSTON.

The Unitarian "Church of the Saviour," in Bedford-street, was dedicated this morning with appropriate services. The introductory prayer was by Rev. P. Parkman; the selection from the Scriptures was read by Rev. F. D. Huntington. There was then a chant from the choir. A dedication service was then read by the minister and people, alternately, the latter joining in the responses. A prayer by the Rev. E. S. Gannett followed; after which the following hymn written for the occasion by William C. Bryant, Esq. of New-York, was sung:

Ancient of Days! except thou deign  
Upon our finished task to smile,  
The workman's hand has toiled in vain,  
To hew the rock, and rear the pile.

O, let thy peace, the peace that tames  
The wayward heart, inhabit here;  
That quenches passion's fiercest flames,  
And thaws the deadly frost of fear.

And send thy love: the love that bears  
Meekly with hate, and scorn and wrong;  
And lends itself with generous cares;  
And toils, and hopes, and watches long.

Here may bold tongues thy truth proclaim,  
Unmingled with the dreams of men;  
As from His holy lips it came,  
Who died for us, and rose again.

To this the sermon by the Pastor of the Society, Rev. Mr. Waterston succeeded; after which the following hymn, by Rev. N. L. Frothingham, was sung, and the concluding prayer, by Rev. S. K. Lothrop, was offered.

O Saviour! whose immortal Word  
Forever lasts the same;  
Thy grace within the walls afford,  
Here builded to thy name

No other name is named below,  
No other sign unfurled,  
To lead our hope, or quell our woe,  
Or sanctify the world.

Here, many-tongued, thy truth be found,  
And mind and heart employ;  
Thy Law and Promise pour around  
Their terror and their joy.

Here may thy saints new progress make;  
Thy loitering ones be sped;  
And here thy mourners comfort take,  
And here thy poor be fed.

May God, thy God, his Spirit send;  
The word is else unblest;  
And fill this place from end to end,  
O ark of strength and rest!

—Boston Transcript.

CHRISTIAN COURTESY.

The *Eliot and the Mount Pleasant Congregational Societies in Roxbury*.—We announced a few months ago, with a feeling of gratification, that the Mount Pleasant (Unitarian) Congregational Society in Roxbury, had invited the Eliot Congregational (Orthodox) Society to worship in their Church while the Church of the Eliot Society was undergoing repairs. The invitation was accepted in the same frank and Christian spirit with which it was given. We are now highly gratified to announce another fact in unison with the above. Rev. Mr. Alger, Pastor of the Mount Pleasant Congregational Society, yesterday morning after the services, read from the pulpit a vote of thanks for the accommodation which the Eliot Congregational Society had received; also a letter from a Committee of that Society, accompanied with an elegant Silver Baptismal Font, with the following inscription:

FROM THE ELIOT CONGREGATIONAL SOCIETY,  
TO THE MOUNT PLEASANT CONGREGATIONAL  
SOCIETY IN ROXBURY, OCTOBER, 1847.

It is truly delightful to record such an interchange of kind and Christian feeling between religious societies, who in all things do not think alike.—Boston Journal.

The hours of Public Worship in the Montreal Unitarian Church are—ELEVEN o'clock a.m., and SEVEN, p.m.

BOOKS FOR SALE,

AT  
C. BRYSON'S BOOK-STORE,  
ST. FRANCOIS XAVIER STREET.

THE Entire Works of WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING, D.D., in two volumes.

The Entire Works of the Rev. ORVILLE DEWEY, D.D., Pastor of the Church of the Messiah, New York, one volume, 8vo. pp. 887.

A COMMENTARY ON THE FOUR GOSPELS. By the Rev. A. A. Livermore.

THE ESSENTIAL FAITH OF THE UNIVERSAL CHURCH, Deduced from the Sacred Records. By Harriet Martineau.

LA FOI DE L'EGLISE UNIVERSELLE; D'APRES LES SAINTES ECRITURES. Par Mlle. Martineau. Traduit de l'Anglais.

SCRIPTURE PROOFS AND SCRIPTURAL ILLUSTRATIONS OF UNITARIANISM. By John Wilson. 3rd Edition, revised and enlarged.

A COLLECTION OF PSALMS AND HYMNS for Christian Worship. By the Rev. F. W. P. Greenwood, D.D.

JUST RECEIVED,

A SUPPLY OF  
"WARE ON THE FORMATION OF THE CHRISTIAN CHARACTER."