

The Christian Helper.

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"Not for that we have dominion over your faith, but are helpers of your joy." II. Cor. 1: 24.

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A PREDICTION.

Some one has been good enough to send us several copies of "The Rational Christian," a Unitarian journal published in Montreal by the "Liberal Christian Union." From appearances we conclude that our thanks for the courtesies are due to the editor himself. Intellectually considered, this sadly misnamed monthly is not without force; but were it mightier than the mightiest it would need to do better than its best to save the bad cause it represents from ultimate and utter extinction. We are no prophets, but we nevertheless venture to predict the downfall of Unitarianism.

What is this Unitarianism? The question is more easily put than answered. Unitarianism is Arianism or Socinianism, or a mixture of both;—or something worse than either. Now in any or all of these acceptations we predict the downfall of the system. In England Arianism is nearly extinct; and on this continent it is rapidly giving way to lower views of Christian doctrine. Socinianism is the "besom of destruction" to Arianism; and is itself an admirable preparation for infidelity. If this statement is questioned we are prepared to defend it. We have before us some tempting specimens of Unitarian testimony, but we need not their aid in elucidating our prediction. The Unitarian system has within it the elements of its own destruction. It makes no provision for the cardinal wants of fallen man. Men are sinners,—they need salvation, and Unitarianism has no salvation for them: therefore they must reject it. The tremendous defect in this "Rational Christianity" is that it denies the atonement of Christ, and substitutes human virtue as the ground of acceptance with God. It thus arrays itself in opposition to some of the commonest instincts of humanity. The apprehension that something more may be necessary to our

happiness hereafter than man is capable of performing was well expressed by Dr. Adam Smith in the first edition of his "Theory of Moral Sentiments," though the passage was for some unassigned reason subsequently suppressed. Having adverted to man's repentance and humiliation on account of past misconduct, Dr. Smith proceeds to observe: "He even distrusts the efficacy of all these; and naturally fears lest the wisdom of God should not, like the weakness of man, be prevailed upon to spare the crime by the most importunate lamentations of the criminal. Some other intercession—some other sacrifice—some other atonement—he imagines must be made for him, before the purity of divine justice can be reconciled to his manifold offences. The doctrines of revelation coincide in every respect, with these original anticipations of nature; and as they teach us how little we can depend upon the imperfection of our own virtue, so they show us at the same time, that the most powerful intercession has been made, and that the most dreadful atonement has been paid for our manifold transgressions and iniquities."

We offer no apology for presenting our readers with this choice extract from a great work. It is the language of truth, and contains an interesting testimony to the evangelical views of the author. Had Dr. Smith looked into the Bible as a Unitarian he would have found no *sacrifice*, no *intercession*, no *atonement*. According to the barren system of "Liberal Christianity," there is no meaning in the beautiful declaration, "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life." Nor can we derive any comfort from the convincing argument of Paul, "He that spared not His own Son but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things."

The religious system which is not, in the nature and extent of its provisions, commensurate with the wants of sinful humanity, may enjoy ephemeral success; but its days are numbered. Were there no Bible to pass sentence of condemnation on it, the necessities of our moral nature, with which it had wantonly trifled, would rush forward to sign its death war-

rant and to be its executioners. '*No sacrifice, no atonement, no intercession!*' men would cry in despair, 'Nay, we will not believe it; for God has assured us in His own word that the blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanseth us from all sin.'

POWER TO GIVE.

Many persons who know that money confers power are strangers to its highest and noblest power. It gives a man power to assume, to make himself of consequence, because of his possessions; it gives a man power to injure, to take advantage of others less wealthy than himself who are placed in a condition of more or less dependence on him; it gives a man power to acquire influence in society, by attaching importance to his opinions, and securing deference to his wishes; it gives a man power to suit his tastes and indulge his ambition, to gather round him all the sources of enjoyment by which he can soothe his vanity, and gratify his pride, or feed his lusts. But the highest power is—the *power to give*; the highest, purest, most perfect pleasure is the pleasure which is felt in giving. It is a blessing to have the power.

No man can question that, of two persons—the giver and the receiver—the giver has the power, the receiver the weakness; that the giver stands on the higher ground, the receiver on the lower. The act of receiving is a confession of weakness, a confession of inferiority; and no man of right mind would hesitate in the choice of the two conditions. He would rather have the power than the weakness, the superiority than the inferiority; he would rather have the ability to give, than be under the necessity of receiving.

But the ability to give will confer enjoyment only when it is accompanied by the disposition. Although a man may have money, and having it, is *able* to taste the pleasures of giving, those pleasures he can never taste unless his principles and inclinations prompt him to part with it from a sincere desire for the benefit of others. There is such a thing as giving to what are called benevolent objects, where the feelings and the heart do not go along with the gift. What is given, in some cases, is given from sheer ostenta-