

drink deep in the spirit of Christ, and devote themselves as zealously and unreservedly to the work of spreading truth, and righteousness, and joy, among their fellow-men, as he did, and we shall before long see a revolution of such vastness, and of such worth and glory, as the world has not beheld for many ages. I am no wild dreamer; I expect no return of ancient miracles; I expect no personal coming of the Saviour; I look for no arbitrary or partial effusions of spiritual influences: but I read the signs of the times. I know the state and feelings of many of my fellow-men, both in this and other countries; I know what zealous, and faithful, and vigorous exertions in a good and godly cause can accomplish; I know something of the weakness of false orthodoxy; I know something of the miseries of infidelity; I know something of the power of simple preaching, and of a plentiful supply of plain and truthful tracts and books; and it is from these that I judge. And I repeat it: only let those who love the truth and long for a Christian reformation, labour and live as the Gospel requires, and as their leader toiled and lived before them, and there will as surely a brighter and holier age arise, as there is truth in the Gospel of Christ, or reason in the souls of men. But let me add: Only let those who have clearer light, put it under a bushel, or attempt to confine it to a circle of respectable or wealthy people,—only let those who have been favoured with clearer light become a separate caste or sect, and entertain the thought of enjoying their superior light alone, while they leave the masses of their fellow-men to darkness and oppression; and their light is as sure to go out, and their influence is as sure to be lost, and they themselves are as sure to become a proverb for contempt and infamy, as there is righteousness in heaven. Everything may be accomplished, if we are faithful; and nothing can be accomplished without. Let us do our duty, and we shall shake, and rouse, and regenerate the world; let us neglect our duty, and we shall come to nothing.

I say the working classes are prepared for the pure and primitive Gospel, and they ought to be supplied with it without delay. The working classes need the pure Gospel. They need it to promote the unfolding of their spiritual faculties,—they need it to preserve them from infidelity and profligacy,—they need it to lighten their toils, and to cheer them in their sorrows and afflictions,—they need it to fit them for the duties of home, and to prepare them for being useful to their country and to their kind. The Gospel is man's life; it is man's salvation; it is his strength, his freedom, his glory, and his bliss; and he ought to possess it in its fullest purity. He needs it both for life and death; for time and for eternity.

LIBERAL SENTIMENTS OF WESLEY.
(From the Boston Christian Register.)

In a letter on occasion of the conversion of a friend from the Protestant faith to the Catholic, he says, "I doubt not both—and you are in trouble because . . . has changed his religion." Nay, he has changed his opinions, and mode of worship, but that is not religion. Religion is quite another thing. It is faith working by love, producing righteousness, peace and joy. It is happiness in God, in the knowledge and love of God. It is a heart and life devoted to God. It is communion with God the Father, and [with] the Son. It is the mind that was in Jesus Christ, enabling us to walk as he walked. Now either he has this religion, or he has it not. If he has, he will not finally perish, notwithstanding the absurd, unscriptural opinions he has embraced, and the idolatrous modes of worship."—Vol. 10, p. 312.

Of Pelagius he says, "by all I can pick up from the ancient authors, I guess he was both a wise and a holy man, that we know nothing but his name, for his writings are all destroyed." So of the heretics of an earlier age—"By reflecting on an odd book which I read, I was fully convinced of what I had long suspected—that the Montanists in the second and third centuries were real scriptural Christians."—Journal, Aug. 1750.

He prefaces the life of Thomas Firmin in his magazine with these words: "I was exceedingly struck at reading the following life, having long settled it in my mind, that the entertaining wrong notions concerning the Trinity, was inconsistent with real piety. But I cannot argue against matter of fact. I dare not deny that Mr. Firmin was a pious man."—Southey's Wesley, vol. 2, p. 89.

Of a heathen philosopher he thus speaks—"I read to-day part of the meditations of Marcus Antoninus. What a strange Emperor! and what a strange heathen! giving thanks to God for all the good things he enjoyed; in particular for his good inspirations, and for twice revealing to him in dreams things whereby he was cured of otherwise incurable distempers. I make no doubt but this is one of those many who shall come from the East and the West, and sit down with

Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven."—Journal, October, 1745.

The following in regard to Calvinism, may possibly be regarded by Calvinists as not quite so Catholic. Concerning the Calvinistic doctrine of God's passing by, in his sovereignty, all save the elect, he says, "I could sooner be a Turk, a Deist, yea an Atheist, than I could believe this. It is less absurd to deny the very being of God, than to make him an Almighty Tyrant."—Vol. 10, p. 201.

Again. It "destroys all the divine attributes at once. It overturns his justice, mercy and truth. It represents the Most High God (he that hath ears to hear let him hear,) as more cruel, false, and unjust than the devil! This is the blasphemy clearly contained in the horrible decree of Predestination. Here I fix my foot. On this I join issue with every assorter of it.—But you say, you will prove it by Scripture.—Hold! Prove what? That God is worse than the devil? It cannot be. Whatever the Scripture proves, it never proves this. Whatever it mean beside, it cannot mean that the God of truth is a liar, that the judge of the world is unjust. No Scripture can mean that God is not love: that is, whatever it prove beside, it cannot prove Predestination."—Vol. 6, p. 122.

The principle of Wesley's argument at the close of the last passage, sustains the rejection also of a Tri-personal Godhead, a vicarious atonement, and whatever else under the name of "evangelical" religion, has been inferred from the Scriptures, while it has been contradictory to the reason. It is an argument occasionally adopted by every sect against doctrines which they have rejected, but which others have maintained. Those who judge liberal Christians as "exalting reason above Scripture," do the same thing which they condemn. And though the sects forbear to use the weapon in warring against liberal Christianity, they use it abundantly in contending with one another.

The Bible Christian.

MONTREAL, JUNE, 1846.

BOSTON ANNIVERSARIES.

The last week in May is always a season of great interest in the capital of New England. At that time, it is usual for the various religious and philanthropic Societies to hold their yearly meetings. At these meetings, the operations, progress, and prospects, of the several Societies, are set forth and discussed. From this annual "troubling of the waters," new health is derived, and fresh energy imparted.

The various anniversary meetings connected with the Unitarian denomination were pregnant with interest and importance. The attendance throughout was very numerous, and the subjects brought under review were discussed with remarkable earnestness and ability. The American Unitarian Association commenced their meetings for business on Tuesday morning May 26, in the chapel of the Church of the Saviour, in Bedford Street. This body formerly held their annual meetings in Berry-Street vestry, but they found it necessary this year to avail themselves of the superior accommodation afforded by the newly-erected chapel of the Church of the Saviour. At this session, the attention of the members was directed by Rev. S. May to the Address lately forwarded by the Irish Unitarian Society to the churches of their faith in the United States on the subject of Slavery. A Committee was then appointed to prepare a suitable reply; but on re-consideration, this appointment was rescinded. This step was taken on the ground that the Address was not sent to them as an Association; and it seemed to some more consistent with propriety that the reply should emanate from them (or such of them as sympathised with the Address) as individual Unitarians. To this end, at the close of the business meetings of the Association a special meeting was held for the purpose of taking the Address of the Irish Unitarian Association into consideration. At this meeting, a Committee was appointed to prepare a suitable reply.

In the afternoon of the same day, the annual festival given by the Unitarian Laymen of Boston to the Clergy of their denomination, took place. This entertainment was laid out in the new and spacious hall over the Maine Railroad Depot. There were about eleven

hundred persons, ladies and gentlemen, assembled round the tables, which were plentifully furnished and tastefully decorated. The Chair was occupied on the occasion by the Hon. Josiah Quincy, late President of Harvard University. After the repast, Mr. Quincy delivered an address on Unitarianism,—its meaning, its value, its dangers, and its duties. Several beautiful and appropriate original hymns were sung during the evening, and many animated addresses were delivered. Those who spoke at this delightful social gathering were principally friends from a distance. Here might be seen men, young and old, rising up to utter a fervent feeling, or speak a page of their experience—men, who, though separated from each other by many a lake and river, many a forest and prairie, are seen to be close to each other in faith, and labouring amidst similar obstacles for the promotion of the same great end.

The public and general meeting of the American Unitarian Association was held in the Federal-Street Church (Dr. Gannett's) on Tuesday evening, at half-past seven o'clock. The church was filled in every part. The Chair was taken by Hon. Samuel Hoar, one of the Vice-Presidents. A series of Resolutions were offered, which may be seen in another part of our present sheet. The speaking was very animated and impressive. The address of Mr. Hillard was universally and justly admired for its high moral tone and the elegance of its style.

The Anniversary Meeting of the Sunday-School Society was held in the same place on Wednesday evening. The Hon. Stephen C. Phillips, President of the Society, in the Chair. The attendance here was large also, and the addresses delivered were of a highly-useful and practical character.

On Thursday evening, the closing meeting was held in the same church for the administration of the Lord's Supper. On this occasion, likewise, the congregation was numerous. The discourse was preached by the Rev. A. P. Peabody of Portsmouth, and the Rev. A. A. Livermore of Keene performed the services at the table. It was a solemn and touching service—the fitting close to a season of so much interest and importance.

During the week, conference and prayer meetings were held regularly every morning, beginning at half-past seven o'clock. These were sometimes in the chapel of the Church of the Saviour, and sometimes in the large vestry of Mr. Gray's church in Bulfinch street. They were very numerous attended, and the exercises were marked throughout by great earnestness and fervency of spirit.

For the brief account of the proceedings of the Anniversary Meetings of some of the more prominent Societies in connexion with the Unitarian denomination, we have availed ourselves of the reports given in the *Monthly Religious Magazine*. To the same valuable periodical we are indebted for several other items under the head of "Religious Intelligence."

RENUNCIATION OF TRINITARIANISM.

On the evening of Sunday the 17th ultimo, the Rev. Robert Hassall, formerly a preacher of the Methodist New Connexion, made a statement of the reasons which induced him to reject the doctrine of the Trinity, in the Unitarian Church in this city. The Rev. gentleman chose for his text John viii. 14, "Though I bear record of myself, yet my record is true." He stated in the first place what his views had been respecting the doctrine of the Trinity, and what views he had adopted since he had rejected that doctrine. He then stated how he was led to the enquiry which terminated in a change of his opinions, and concluded by alluding to the influence which that change had upon his character and happiness.

Mr. Hassall is an Englishman, a native of Staffordshire, and was deeply impressed with the importance of religion very early in life. He entered upon a course of study preparatory to his undertaking the duties of a preacher of the Gospel, under the superintendence of a venerable, aged Minister of the Methodist New Connexion. Whilst pursuing his studies, he felt the want of evi-

dence in the Bible to sustain the doctrine of the Trinity. He was struck with the fact that nowhere in the four Gospels is it recorded that Christ taught, or even once named, the doctrine of a tri-personal Deity. For some time he was disturbed in mind, read several books in support of the Trinity, and a small work of Dr. Carpenter's in refutation of that doctrine. Not being able to find such kind of proof as he was searching for, he finally came to the conclusion that though the doctrine of the Trinity was unsupported by proof positive, it was nevertheless capable of being sustained by a chain of inferential argument. This settled his mind for the time, and he resolved to receive the dogma as an admitted truth, and as an essential part of the Christian's faith. How his mind was again brought to the consideration of this subject, after a lapse of years, is stated by himself in the following words:—

"One day (oh, never shall I forget it) whilst engaged in prayer to God with more than usual earnestness for the outpouring of his blessing upon me and the church, I was perplexed beyond description (as many others have been) in endeavouring to address the true God, or, in other words, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. My faith taught me that each Person of the Trinity was an object of worship, inasmuch as each person was God; yet I found that I could not worship one Person without separating it in my mind from the other two. But I knew if I divided them, I should make three objects of worship; and I knew too, that if I worshipped one Person, that would only be a part or third of the Divinity. Still I found it impossible so to unite the three Persons in one, as to worship the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit at the same time, or the Son and the Father at the same time. I say I found it impossible to do it, and I defy any human being under heaven to do it. If there be three Persons in the Deity, we can render supreme worship to one only at a time. From the constitution of the mind, it is impossible to do otherwise. Thus, then, I felt myself situated. I became agitated; I rose from my knees, and, in a state of confusion and perplexity, paced my room backwards and forwards. Question after question respecting my faith occurred to my mind. Can the Divine Being, I asked myself, be what I believe him to be? Is he divided into three Persons called Father, Son, and Holy Ghost? Is the Being of supreme worship such an one as to perplex the mind of the sincere worshipper? I doubted it. It appeared to me to be impossible. I resolved again, then, to examine the evidence of Scripture for the doctrine of the Trinity. That examination I believe was impartial, conducted with a simple desire for the truth. I read my Bible, and the best works I could find both for and against the doctrine; and the conclusion to which I felt myself obliged to come, as I have stated before, was, that it was not scriptural."

Mr. Hassall's case adds another to the numerous instances that have occurred of late of Trinitarian Ministers embracing Unitarianism. Frequently do the periodicals of our denomination bring us tidings of a similar kind. Nor is the progress of God's pure truth less perceptible among the laity. Every year adds to the number of those who have left the ranks of Trinitarianism, and especially the gloomy, unscriptural regions of Calvinism, and embraced liberal Christianity. Not a century ago, the American continent had not one avowed Anti-Trinitarian congregation within its bounds; now it has probably more than two thousand. Little more than a century ago, Emlyn was in chains in the common goal of the city of Dublin for avowing Anti-Trinitarian opinions. Now, Unitarianism has spread over the provinces of Ulster and Munster, has maintained its footing in the capital of the island, and two new houses of worship have been erected in the northern province within a year. In England, where Priestley's library, manuscripts, and meeting-house, were burned by a bigoted and infuriated mob, Unitarian congregations have been increased, and of late thousands have joined its ranks under the ministrations of Joseph Barker. The evidence of these events establishes the fact that the current of public opinion on matters of religion, in the present age, is setting in strongly from Trinitarianism towards liberal Christianity. May it continue so to make progress until God's pure truth takes the place of human-invented creeds, and mankind shall stand forth emancipated from the trammels of antiquated dogmatism and unscriptural opinions.

The Rev. Mr. Cordner, Pastor of the Unitarian Church of Montreal, left this city for Boston on the 20th ult. His pulpit is, during his absence, supplied by the Rev. Mr. Hassall, and ministers from the United States, travelling in Canada. Mr. Cordner is expected to return about the end of the present month.

RELIGIOUS SOCIETIES' RELIEF BILLS.—The several Bills for extending certain privileges to the "Unitarian Christians" of Toronto, to the "Christian" connexion and "Bible Christians" of Upper Canada, and to the "Christian Universalist Association," which were mentioned in our last as having passed the Legislative Assembly, were dropped in the Legislative Council, that body having decided on passing one Bill of a general nature for Upper Canada, authorizing ministers of all denominations to solemnize marriage, &c., and doing away with the necessity of individual Societies making application to the Legislature. This the Upper House did; and a Bill for that object, was sent down to the Assembly on the 23rd of May, but for want of time, it had only passed its first reading when the Legislature was prorogued. The attainment of the objects sought by these religious bodies was therefore for the present defeated. But it is gratifying to know, that not the slightest opposition was offered in either House, to granting to the petitioners the privileges they prayed for.