

by us; assuming that they are worshippers of One God." Well said by the plain, unlettered multitude of believers. But the subtleties of philosophising doctors marred their simple faith. Their one God was tripled.

Archbishop Tillotson said he wished the English Church was well rid of the Athanasian creed. Our wish is more extensive. It is, that the whole church of Christ was well rid of the doctrine of that creed. The Trinity, with its palpable inconsistencies and contradictions, has too long marred the simple fabric of Christianity.

DR. GANNETT'S DEDICATION SERMON.

We have great satisfaction in being able to lay before our readers the following notice of this discourse. It will be read with additional interest when they are informed that it is from the pen of a gentleman of well known attainments in this Province—a D. D. and in connection with the Scottish Church. The writer says, the sermon "most justly deserves the perusal of all those who profess to be guided in their religious conclusions, by the Holy Scriptures." We have said repeatedly that we only wish our opinions fairly understood in the community, and then we are willing to leave them to make their own impression. By an advertisement elsewhere in our present sheet it will be seen where the discourse can be procured.

*The Faith of the Unitarian Christian Explained, Justified, and Distinguished.—A Sermon, delivered at the Dedication of the Unitarian Church, Montreal, on Sunday 11th May, 1845. By Ezra S. Gannett, Minister of the Federal Street Church, Boston. Published by request. Svo. pp. 40.*

Dr. Gannett's discourse consists of three parts:—1. An exhibition of Unitarian belief in one God, the Maker, the Preserver, and the Judge of all; in Jesus Christ, the Son of his love, and Messenger of his grace; in the perpetual obligation of the Divine law, the law of Conscience and Morality; and finally in the immortal destiny of man, in which he will receive the necessary and unavoidable fruit of his actions whether good or evil, but without pretending to state the duration of the latter. 2. A statement of the grounds of this belief: First, in Reason, which God has given us to guide our opinions and actions, and which is not so utterly deficient for this purpose as many persons maintain; and secondly, in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments which God has graciously superadded to assist our natural understandings. 3. The distinction of Unitarians from numerous prevailing denominations among us; from Unbelievers of all grades and classes, by their belief in the supernatural mission of Christ; from Trinitarians by their belief in the perfect Unity of God; from Calvinists of every shade in respect to primitive human corruption; from the self-styled Orthodox, in regard to their doctrine of atonement; from the Episcopal Church, in regard to the office of the ministry; from the Baptists, in regard to ordinances; from the Universalist body, in regard to their view of retribution. Having thus amply, and with much good feeling, illustrated this wide field of argument, the Preacher draws to his conclusion by solemnly dedicating the building in which divine service was then first performed, to the holy works of praise, of instruction in religious knowledge, of charity and of humble prayer to the Father of all through Jesus Christ the Mediator:—"Father, Almighty" said he, "hear thou our desires and grant their fulfilment. To Thee, in the name of thy dear Son, we consecrate these walls, these seats, this altar. Thine be the glory of their fresh beauty, and thine the richer glory of their decay."

This is a most able discourse, and most justly deserves the perusal of all those who profess to be guided in their religious conclusions by the Holy Scriptures. It is very true, as announced in the body of this sermon, that the sentiments which it breathes and the truths which it embraces, are widely different from those followed by the great majority of those who hold themselves Christians. It is melancholy and afflicting to reflect that the great body of men professing to adopt the religion taught, and authoritatively confirmed by our Lord Jesus Christ, have for ages and centuries, diverged widely from the faith he introduced, and adopted numerous tenets which he never sanctioned. This circumstance has greatly retarded the progress, and defeated the influence of that divine and most philanthropic institution. It is therefore delightful to see at last a place of worship erected among us, by a society engaged to derive their faith from the Sacred Writings alone, without regard to the dictates of any human authority, to the accumulated errors of past ages, or the inventions that have been added to deface the truth.

CONVENTION OF UNITARIANS IN THE CITY OF NEW YORK.

The usual Autumnal Convention of Unitarian Christians, was held this year, in the City of New York. The attendance was full, and the proceedings in the highest degree satisfactory. The sessions were continued during three days, commencing on the evening of Tuesday, Oct. 21st, and closing on Thursday, the 23rd. The Convention first assembled in the Church of the Messiah, and was called to order by Rev. Dr. Dewey. On motion of Rev. Mr. Burnap, a committee was appointed for the nomination of officers, consisting of Rev. Mr. Peabody of New Bedford, Rev. Mr. Farley of Brooklyn, and Rev. Mr. Bellows of New York. The list of officers reported was as follows:—For President, Rev. Dr. Parkman of Boston; for Vice Presidents, Rev. Dr. Dewey of New York, Rev. Mr. Burnap of Baltimore, and Hon. Stephen Fairbanks of Boston; for Secretaries, Rev. Mr. Robbins of Boston, and Rev. Mr. Brooks of Newport, R. I.; for the Committee on the Business of the Convention, Rev. Dr. Putnam of Roxbury, Rev. Mr. Lothrop of Boston, Rev. Mr. Osgood of Providence, Seth Lowe, Esq. of Brooklyn, and George A. Crocker, Esq. of Taunton.

After the President had offered some remarks appropriate to the occasion of his taking the chair, it was announced that the evening would be occupied with religious services.

At this meeting the discourse was preached by Rev. Dr. Gannett of Boston. His text was from 1 Timothy i. 15; "This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners."

On their re-assembling next morning at 9 o'clock, in the Church of the Messiah, prayer was offered by the Rev. Mr. Hill of Worcester. Some Ministers of the 'Christian' denomination being present, and Rev. Mr. Taylor, a Methodist, they were invited to sit with the Convention, and accepted the invitation. After some discussion on certain resolutions presented to the Convention, carried on in a free, earnest and harmonious spirit, the body adjourned, and rose to attend the dedication of the new Church of the First Congregational Society of New York.

This we understand is a very fine building, capacious and elegant. It is called the "Church of the Divine Unity." The Rev. Mr. Bellows, minister of the church, preached the sermon of dedication. The text of the discourse was from Ezra vi. 5, 16. The other clergymen officiating on the occasion were Rev. Mr. Farley of Brooklyn, Rev. Mr. Furness of Philadelphia, Rev. Dr. Kendall of Plymouth, and Rev. Mr. Osgood of Providence.

In the afternoon, the members of the Convention, clerical and lay, with a large number of ladies, sat down to a collation beautifully prepared by the Unitarians of New York and Brooklyn, in the Apollo Hall. The company was very large,—between five and six hundred in number. A blessing was invoked by Rev. Mr. Lunt of Quincy. Appropriate sentiments were introduced by the President, Jonathan Goodhue, Esq. who was supported by Hon. M. H. Grinnell, and were responded to by Rev. Dr. Parkman, Rev. Dr. Dewey, Rev. E. T. Taylor of Boston, Rev. Mr. Farley, Rev. Mr. Hall, Rev. Dr. Kendall, Rev. Mr. Robbins, and David Reed and Samuel Greele, Esqrs. of Boston.

In the evening, religious services were again held in the Church of the Divine Unity. The introductory devotional exercises were performed by Rev. Mr. Huntington of Boston. The sermon was preached by Rev. Dr. Putnam of Roxbury, from the text John xviii. 37, "To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth."

On Thursday morning at 9 o'clock, the Committee was again called to order in the Church of the Messiah. Rev. Mr. Hall offered prayer. The discussions on the resolutions prepared by the Business Committee were resumed. An idea may be had of the nature of these discussions from the character of the resolutions which we subjoin:—

*Resolved*.—That Unitarian Christianity being derived solely and wholly from the Scrip-

tures, avoids alike the errors of hierarchical and traditional faith and discipline on the one hand, and of the rationalistic theory on the other.

*Resolved*.—That while we adopt our Theology on account of its Scriptural truth, we hold it pre-eminently valuable for the influences it is suited to exert upon the personal character.

*Resolved*.—That it is worthy of consideration whether the changes which have been adopted by some of our congregations in the mode of conducting public worship be expedient.

*Resolved*.—That the recent death of a venerable teacher of theology to many of the members of this convention, Dr. Henry Ware, Senior, of one of the former Presidents of the Unitarian Association, Mr. Justice Story, and of one of its Vice-Presidents, Hon. Leverett Saltonstall, calls for our solemn and affectionate commemoration of their Christian worth and valuable services in the cause of truth.

*Resolved*.—That while we steadfastly maintain the independence of the individual congregations, we cordially favor such modes of association and organization as may quicken the life and secure the purity of our Churches.

In the evening of Thursday, the services of the Convention were closed with much solemnity by divine worship in the Church of the Divine Unity. The devotional exercises were performed by Rev. Mr. Lothrop, of Boston. The sermon was then preached by Rev. Mr. Peabody of New Bedford, from the text 1 Corinthians xv. 14, 20: "And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is vain; . . . but now is Christ risen, and become the first fruits of them that slept."

The impression made by the Convention on the public mind in New York, must have been very favourable. That City, we know, is a great gathering place for the "Orthodox" sects, and it is satisfactory to know that our brethren of the faith, in holding their Convention there for the first time, did not suffer anything by comparison with others. The following paragraph on this point is from the *New York Post*, a journal in no way prepossessed in favor of Unitarianism:—

"There have been several ecclesiastical bodies gathered in this city during the week, to consider the affairs of their respective churches. All of these, so far as we have had an opportunity of observing them, have been more than respectable in the talent which they exhibited; but that, perhaps, which has left the deepest impression on the public mind, was the assembly of Unitarian divines, which met in Mr. Bellows's new church. There seemed to us to be an amount of intellectual force and culture collected in this body that has seldom, if ever, been surpassed in this region. Their proceedings, too, were conducted with great spirit, but at the same time with unusual dignity and self respect. But what was chiefly to be commended in their proceedings was the absence of those disgusting manifestations of sectarian exclusiveness and bigotry which too often mark meetings of this kind. There was, it is true, no want of a manly and decided expression, in the various addresses, of the peculiar views of this branch of Christianity; yet this was unaccompanied by wholesale denunciations of other forms of faith. Indeed, the general tone of the whole convention, was that which every honest right-minded Christian must have approved. We say this the more willingly, because, not professing any peculiar attachment to the religious tenets of the Unitarians, the writer feels more free to speak in terms of the warmest praise of the refinement, intelligence and liberality of their clergy."

CORRESPONDENCE.

To the Editor of the Bible Christian.

SIR,—Mr. McLeod, one of the deputation from the Established Church of Scotland, delivered an address, in the Methodist Chapel at this place yesterday. His object was to defend the conduct of the residuaries in the late disruption in the Scottish Church.

My interest was highly excited by the indubitable, though unintentional testimony which the speaker bore, to the truthfulness and ultimate triumph of Unitarian principles.

He laboured hard to impress upon the minds of his hearers the preeminent necessity of maintaining Church Establishments; and he succeeded so far as to prove to my satisfaction that the union of Church and State was the only safeguard which would prevent the Confession of Faith, or what he termed "Evangelical religion," from being entirely rejected by the people. In order to strengthen his position he quoted several cases from the Ecclesiastical history of the Free States of Germany, of Dissenters in England, Ireland,

and Scotland, and of the Christian Societies in the United States, wherein sometimes the majorities of churches embraced Unitarian principles; and he demonstrated the superiority of the Established system from the fact, that as long as the minister preached the religious doctrines established by civil law, he might retain his globe, manse, and stipend, even though his people should leave him altogether, which he evidently considered the chief guarantee for maintaining sound doctrines in the land. While we acknowledge the moral world to be under the providence of the God of Truth, it appears to me that all such arguments only prove that the doctrines they are designed to support must be founded in error. With regard to the 'Confession of Faith,' do we not all know that it was compiled two hundred years ago, when the moral and intellectual world was yet encumbered with the remains of the long night of barbarism and superstition from which it had just emerged.

Those must be blind indeed, who do not see in the signs of the times the approaching triumph of the Voluntary principle, which shall number among the things of the past, Church Establishments, Religious Tests, Confessions of Faith, and all such fetters forged by spiritual tyrants, to bind the freeborn spirit of man;—all except the Bible—which is our only spiritual authority, shall then be banished from Christian society:—then, according to the reasoning of Mr. McLeod, will the triumph of Unitarianism be complete.

Mr. McLeod seemed in speech a liberal and tolerant Christian man—taking a just view of God's goodness in giving us a Revelation, and man's rights in interpreting the record of it, but I regretted to find that he was neither liberal nor tolerant in reality. He told us that our Heavenly Father had sent the Bible, as a letter to every individual, and every person was bound to study it, and take nothing for truth but what he found clearly expressed therein. This, he said, was the right of private judgment, which each and every individual was bound to exercise; and it was nothing but the most arrogant presumption, one of the peculiar characteristics of Popery, that would induce one man to condemn another because he could not draw the same conclusions from that Book as he had done himself. Verily, Truth is a jewel wherever it may be found; but I had been too often deceived and disappointed before, by taking for granted that such men meant to act consistently with what they said when they uttered such sentiments. Too well was I convinced that Mr. McLeod never intended that those who had drawn such conclusions from the Letter of Heaven as I had done, should find any shelter beneath his spacious liberality. And of this I was fully convinced by a conversation which I had with him after he had closed his address. For notwithstanding all he had said concerning the sufficiency of the Bible as a rule of faith, and the right and duty of every one to read it for himself, whenever he heard that the careful study of the Sacred Scriptures had made me a Unitarian, he condemned me at once as unworthy the Christian name. Here was an exercise of pope-like authority, though on a small scale, worthy the Vatican itself. To me it seems that such a class of men only want the power of the pope to be as intolerant as the pope.

G. R.

Carlton Place, Sept. 16th, 1845.

[Our correspondent furnished us with the conversation in detail, which took place between himself and Mr. McLeod. Our limits, however, compel us to omit it.—Ed. B. C.]

Our friends will be gratified to learn that the sum of Fifty pounds, was realised by the late sale of useful and fancy articles, held by the ladies of the Unitarian Congregation of this city. The amount was given towards the liquidation of certain incidental expenses connected with furnishing the church. For their exertions in this matter, the Committee of the Society have passed a vote of thanks to the Ladies.

NOTICE TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Some communications are unavoidably held over, and some are under consideration.

GREENWOOD'S HYMNS, (the Collection used by the Montreal Unitarian Congregation,) FOR SALE, at the Bookstore of Mr. C. BRYSON, St. Francois Xavier St.

NOTICE.

The hours of Public Worship on Sundays, in the Unitarian Church, Montreal, are—ELEVEN in the forenoon, and SEVEN in the evening.—Free Sitings are provided for Strangers.

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