

our bodies are not to be tortured, and undergo the suffering of penances; our petitions to the bountiful Benefactor of our lives, requires of us no long prayers; no tenth part to support a heartless priesthood. The vain and outward oblations of the earth have ceased and passed away—and now "My son give me thine heart," is the simple and reasonable requirement.

A single tear of repentance for sin, is all that is wanted. One heartfelt sigh for the desolating strides of sin, and the downfall of humanity,—one single breathing for divine holiness,—are all the offerings and sacrifices that our beloved Master requires us to make; and is that which he will bear to the Father of our spirits, as coming from the altar of the pure in heart.—*Primitive Expounder.*

The Bible Christian.

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THE MORAL RESULTS OF UNRESTRICTED COMMERCE.

The principles of Free Trade have been signally successful in Great Britain. Since the issue of our last sheet, the intelligence of the passing of a measure repealing the Corn Laws has reached this country. All must admit that commerce is a prominent agent and instrument of Providence in advancing the civilization and improvement of the human race. If this be so, then every thing materially affecting its interests and prospects should bear a proportionate importance in our eyes. As philanthropists and Christians, we should not,—we cannot,—be insensible to any circumstance or event having a bearing, however remote, upon the general welfare of the great family of man. We find it has fallen to the lot of a country with which we are closely connected to take the first great step towards the removal of the general system of commercial restriction. The change in the Corn Laws of Great Britain, to which we have just referred, must be regarded by every contemplative mind with profound interest. This change will, of course, appear differently to differently constituted and differently trained minds. Some view it with alarm, as fatal to the glory and well-being of the country; others hail it with joy, as the pledge and security of the nation's real greatness. Its expediency, as a matter of political economy,—whether it will make Britain richer or poorer, augment or decrease her influence as a nation,—is still an open question, which we have no desire to discuss here. But there are moral aspects in which it may be viewed; and to these we would briefly direct attention.

The first thing that strikes us in looking at the repeal of the Corn Laws in Great Britain is the effect it will have in that country of cheapening the food of its immense working population. This we may reasonably expect will be followed by great moral results. Hitherto we know that the energy of the British masses has been expended to obtain the bare necessities of life from day to day. They have toiled in the mine and in the mill,—in the warehouse and in the work-shop,—sometimes like beasts of burden, and sometimes like mere machines; and all to obtain their daily bread. And this state of things still continues. The father of the family is old long before his time with hard and incessant toil. The mother, too, worn in her prime within the walls of a factory, is worn still more with the growing cares of womanhood, in circumstances of hopeless penury. The young man, with his parents' condition before him as his own in prospect, plies his daily task, in sluggish thoughtlessness of the future, or in dogged submission to his lot. The young woman, too, pressed by the necessities of her position, spends her health and strength in the vitiated atmosphere of the crowded working room. And even the child of tender years (for wherever there is a mouth it has to be filled, and food is dear) is placed at his daily task—made to commence his thinking life in monotonous toil, as if work,—work—incessant and unchanging, were his sole mission to this world.

In such a condition of things, it is evident that humanity is wronged and degraded. It

was ordained, we know, that man should work, and hands were given him for that purpose. But he has intellectual and moral powers to be cultivated and improved—he has a soul to be saved and prepared for its destiny in an endless life. Man, then, should have time for the improvement of his higher nature, and any arrangement which deprives him of this does him an injury. To whatever extent the necessity for constant toil is removed, it will result in his moral benefit. In cheapened food we see that which will to some extent remove it, for a smaller quantity of labour will be sufficient to procure the requisite necessities of life. When the parent is enabled by his own reasonable labour to provide not only for the physical wants of his offspring, but also to minister to the necessities of their intellectual nature—when he is enabled to furnish them with both food and education—it will be a happy time, and productive of glorious results. Who in these days requires to be told of the advantages of education, or reminded of the fearful evils which flow from its neglect? By moderating the amount of their labour, time will be given to the working classes generally for the improvement of the mind. By a proper attention to this, their character and condition will be elevated, and this will lead to the elevation of the character and condition of the nation, of which they form a constituent part.

The history of the manufacturing districts of Britain frequently furnishes us with the painful spectacle of masses of the people pushed to desperation by the circumstances of their position. Willing to work, it may be that they cannot obtain any, owing to some unfavourable fluctuation in trade, or it may be that while they do work they can barely satisfy their daily wants. They soon perceive the disparity between their own condition and that of others around them. They know that they are men, like their more favoured fellows, formed by the same Creator, filled with the same passions, gifted with the same powers, and made heirs of the same hopes. Feeling that they are so, and feeling the hard pressure of want upon them, their pent-up passions seek vent in the violence of a popular outbreak. This is not to be wondered at. It is the only way they have of giving emphatic expression to their wants—their only method of uttering a terrible protest against the wrong they endure. We shall cease to wonder at such violence when we remember that those engaged therein are generally hungry men urged almost to madness by the piteous demands of their famishing families. Cheapen the food of the people, we say. Cheapen it as cheap as you can. Give them wherewith to satisfy the gnawing demands of hunger. Every human heart that beats right must surely respond in affirmation to this. And the moral result of such a course will be to make the people less disposed to be envious of the more favoured classes, more contented with their own lot, more likely to welcome any means of mental improvement, more willing to avail themselves of its advantages.

Leaving the particular case, let us look for a moment at the moral result of the general principle of unrestricted commerce. We find that nations the most remote are linked together by its bonds. In proportion to the extent of its ramifications, will the people of distant countries be thus made to know and feel interested in each other. And as they are thus made to know each other, and understand that it is for their mutual advantage to carry on a mutual traffic, they will be less disposed to quarrel and degrade themselves by fighting. Hence the progress of commerce is sure to check the prevalence of war, that awful scourge which has so frequently overtaken nations, turning men into demons, and spilling human blood like water, and spreading desolation and misery everywhere around. In the lately-apprehended war between Great Britain and our neighbours of the United States, we know that public opinion in the latter country was much divided on the subject. Some were ready to second every

movement made towards a war, while others deprecated it at every step. And if we look at the position and pursuits of those parties respectively, we shall discover an illustration of the remark just offered. We do not find that it was the people of the seacoast—it was not the men of Boston or New York, who were eager to urge on hostilities, but the people in the interior of the country—those who were far removed from any intercourse with Britain. They had no interest involved. They were discouraged from having any intercourse, for the produce of their fertile valleys was prohibited in the British market except under a heavy tax. They had no opportunity of knowing or cultivating a good understanding with the British people. They knew them only at a great distance, and were as willing to be at war with them as at peace. But if they had been in the habit of exchanging commodities with them, if the fruits of their industry had been freely received, an intercourse would have been established which they would not have been willing to interrupt for any light cause. We presume that if the question of peace or war had been left to be settled by a council of London and Liverpool merchants on the one side, and New York and Boston merchants on the other, there would have been but little danger of having the peace of the world further disturbed, and the improvement of the world retarded in its progress, by a war between Great Britain and the United States of America.

This, then, is surely an important aspect in which to view a general system of unrestricted commerce. If commerce, from its nature, be calculated to create a mutual interest and promote a mutual good understanding between the most distant nations—if its tendency be to repress the spirit of war and promote the cause of permanent and universal peace in the world—then certainly, we should say, let it go on without let or hindrance. Impose no restrictions upon it. Throw no fetters around it. Leave it to its freedom. Let it find its way everywhere. Hasten it in its onward and unfettered flight as it goes forth with healing on its wings, bearing the blessings of peace and mutual good-will to the ends of the earth.

When we think of the energy of the men from whom we are sprung—the men of the Anglo-Saxon race—the energy which has enabled them to gird the globe in every direction with their ships, and push their enterprise into every latitude—when we think of what they might have done through the instrumentality of their vast commercial relations thus established—and when we think how unfaithful they have been to their loftiest mission—it makes us sad. For they have been unfaithful. Professing Christianity themselves, what might they not have done towards Christianizing the world? Who can tell how far the blessings of the Gospel would have spread in lands where it is now hardly known, had they been true to their profession and their trust? Instead of a missionary here and there, raising his voice literally as "one in the wilderness," we might have seen communities of humble and faithful Christians enjoying the light and privileges of the Gospel. If professed Christian men, when they went amongst a pagan people, had acted as Christian men, they would have won them to an admiration of their religion which would have greatly facilitated their adoption of it. Professing a religion of peace and love, if they had gone amongst them in the spirit of peace and love—the professed worshippers of a God of truth and mercy, if they had always showed a fair respect for truth and mercy—they would have been influential and efficient missionaries of Christ. Had the enterprising Anglo-Saxons manifested their Christianity in practice wherever they went, their ships would indeed have been messengers of Providence, bearing light and blessedness to the benighted nations of the earth. But it was too often otherwise, and it is sad to reflect that it has been so. Too frequently have they outraged Christianity, and brought disgrace upon the Christian name, by their daring violations of every principle of justice, mercy, and truth. They have gone to the East for its treasures, and they have mowed down the men of that country with grapeshot. They came to this great continent of the West, and they debauched the red man whom they found here with their burning drinks—they bullied him and cheated him when they wanted his furs or his lands. They made their way to the burning regions of Africa, and, as if to show the enormous wickedness of which they were capable, they stole the native from his home, dragged the child from the parent and the husband from the wife, and stowed him in the hold of a ship like a barrel of flour or a bale of cotton, and the being whom God formed as a man they strove to transform into a beast. God sends his messengers in

ships,* but these were not his messengers: they were Satan's. And if God had not been wondrous in mercy, they would have been permitted to sink into the regions of Satan, with the tremendous weight of their accumulated guilt. Oh the Anglo-Saxons have incurred a fearful responsibility, for their privileges have been great; but they have sacrificed truth, justice, mercy, and right, at the shrine of their insatiable cupidity.

If Christian nations were true to their great trust, with the aid of their far-reaching commerce, they might be powerfully instrumental in evangelising the world. Hitherto they have committed capital errors in this respect. Where one man has been sent for the special purpose of preaching Christianity, a hundred have gone to deny it by their practice. Britain sends missionaries to India to preach a religion of peace, but she sends likewise soldiery, swords, and muskets, to carry on war. If Christian nations were themselves thoroughly Christianized—if the individuals thereof and the bodies politic had learned to give a due respect to the requirements of religion—then, with an unshackled commerce, at liberty, and encouraged, to visit every part of the earth, they might send Christian influences far and wide, and sow the seeds of the Gospel in countless human hearts.

"God made of one blood all nations of men." "Have we not all one Father? Hath not one God created us?" What though we be separated from each other here by the lofty mountain or the fathomless ocean, is the paternity of God less true, or the brotherhood of man? In considering the question of unrestricted commerce, we would strive to rise above the partial interests of nations to the general interests of religion and humanity. Let him that hath abundance of corn send to him that hath less, and let him that hath less gladly receive it. Let him that weaveth fine raiment send to him that requireth it, and let him that requireth it willingly accept it. And with this free exchange of outward commodities there will go forth a free exchange of kindly sympathy and mutual good-will to the ends of the earth. This will hasten the day—the day so much to be desired—when the selfish rivalry of nations shall be broken down, and none other known among them but the godlike rivalry of doing good.

* Ezek. xxx. 9.

THE FREAK OF THE BIGOT.

In our last number we had an opportunity to notice the Logic of the Bigot; and we have now to mention a freak of some others of the same stamp.—At a meeting of the Auxiliary of the British and Foreign Schools, held at Bristol, England, in June last, a resolution was moved and carried, at the instance of certain parties there, which virtually excluded Unitarians from coöperating in the management of the Lancasterian Schools of that town. Such a proceeding was in flat contradiction to the fundamental principles of the Society, which are perfectly broad and unsectarian. In these schools the Bible was to be used without note or comment. The fourth Rule of the Parent Society provides that "no peculiar religious tenets shall be taught in the school." On this principle the friends of sound moral and religious education entered into subscription, and started the schools, the Unitarians being originally large contributors, and amongst the prominent managers. But it appears now, that owing to the "increased earnestness in religious feeling" among certain of the parties, they can no longer coöperate with Unitarians. And this "increased earnestness in religious feeling" has raised them to an altitude of pietism so exalted that they can soar clear above the vulgar notions of morality. They pass a resolution concerning the sense of the fourth Rule, which completely nullifies it, and opens a way for teaching any or all of the doctrines of sectarian "Orthodoxy." In this way, the "saints," in the plenitude of their "saintship," pocket the hundreds of pounds contributed by Unitarians, and with a truly "saint-like" smile and bow, say that they "regret giving pain to any one," but must tell them they are not to have anything farther to do with the matter. Verily, as a London contemporary has said in reference to this affair, "great are the privileges of the saints!"

But their bigotry had blinded them, and run away with them. When they opened their eyes a little more clearly, and took a juster view, they perceived how grossly they had erred. Some judicious friend had probably persuaded them that no amount of "increased earnestness in religious feeling" could justify them before the public and before God in such a flagrant violation of decency and propriety. The meeting re-assembled, and a gentleman of the Church of England, who had always opposed the proceeding, moved that the former vote be rescinded, and