

## THE BIBLE CHRISTIAN.

because we cannot believe what he believes. All we require to know is, that he is honest in his convictions, and earnest in his purpose to obey the commandments of his Heavenly Father. If we see good reason to think that these two conditions of mind have place in his life, we have no hesitation in regarding him as an acceptable servant of the Great Master.

The third class of religionists may be considered as comprising the various divisions of the Methodist body,—of whom the British Wesleyans are the most important in point of numbers, though probably not so in point of intelligence. I understand that on the very Sunday on which we entered the chapel vacated by this denomination, a very forcible allusion to our *heresy* was made from their pulpit; but I am not aware that there has been any repetition of the anathema. On the contrary, I can state,—and I do so with much pleasure,—that on the different occasions in which our congregation has had to transact business, in relation to the payment of the purchase of the chapel and its legal conveyance, the British Wesleyan trustees have acted in a most becoming and honorable manner.

The Canadian Wesleyans,—better known as the Ryersonians,—are the second great division of the Methodist body. Some months back, this denomination made a great effort to accomplish a spiritual revival, and, at considerable expense, retained the services of a preacher named Maffitt, a man of very great power as a popular declaimer, but altogether so eccentric in his general habits as a minister of the gospel, and so completely theatrical in his elocution and gesture, that his efforts proved quite fruitless. Unitarianism came in for a fair share of Mr. Maffitt's strictures; but, as usual, we found the results favorable to our progression and increase. The Canadian Wesleyans are much distracted in their present internal relations. I have no doubt that a schism in the body is an occurrence not far distant. The laity are ill at ease under the despotic rule of the Conference, and a claim to lay representation in that spiritual court is likely to be preferred by the congregations. The movement cannot fail to do good. Several of the members in this city are men of a superior spirit of independence, and of inquiring mental habits.

The third division of the Methodists are the Primitive Wesleyans,—a body characterized by their noisy demeanour in the church, though certainly, as far as I am aware, of most peaceable and inoffensive habits out of it. There is much less of priestly domination among the Primitives than is to be found with the other two sections; and I question very much whether a freer spirit of enquiry would not be found among them.

The fourth general division of religionists in Toronto, I should suppose, are the Congregationalists, who are under the pastoral care of a gentleman of superior shrewdness and much experience. Their organization is probably the most complete, and their discipline the most stringent, of any religious body here. They formerly occupied the house in which we now worship; and the fact, that they and the British Wesleyans both built up large congregations under this roof, operates as no trivial incentive to us, in our exertions to arrive at a similar result. We have been honored with frequent notices from the Congregational pulpit. If these attentions are continued, I look for a good result in course of time.—The Congregationalists have a Theological School here, for the training of young men for the ministry. I do not think that it is in a thriving condition, though I believe the members of the Congregational church in this city make great efforts in its behalf.

The fifth in rank amongst our city congregations is that of Knox's Church, better known as the "Free Church." This denomination, at the time of its secession, made an unusual effort in vindication of what they called religious liberty. What the result will finally prove is not for us to predict. It is pretty evident, however, that the "Free Church" in Toronto has very little pretensions to the name, in so far as the right of free enquiry is concerned. No religious community can be wrapped up within more impenetrable cerements of religious dogmatism. All the antiquated absurdities and monstrosities of the persecuting John Calvin and the stony-hearted Knox, are, in the midst of the nineteenth century, attempted to be resuscitated by the theological school of the Free Church. It is really ridiculous to hear, that, in this age of practical sense, there should be disputations as to whether the death of Christ was designed to benefit any except the *elect*! Such, however, is the fact, in this city of the west.—Of course, Unitarianism

has been honored with a full share of Free Church denunciation; and I can assure you, no agency at work here has done half so much to advance our cause.

The denomination which I place in the sixth class, should, with propriety have been placed second; but the truth is, the old or residuary Scotch Church is so quiet and unobtrusive an organization that I completely overlooked it. I cannot say what may be the condition of true, internal, religious feeling pervading this congregation. I dare say it is as good as that of some who make more noise. Their pastor is a very kind-hearted, unassuming young man, and takes no part in any of the great religious upheavals of the day.

The Scotch Secession Church falls into the seventh position. The members of this Church are, in Toronto, a very improved edition of Scottish Calvinism. Veneration for the doctrines of their forefathers contends hard with the promptings of their kinder natures. Their pastor is a man of most exemplary character: full of mildness, benevolence, and sincerity. His life is a more potent orator than he is himself in the pulpit; and as far as I know, his people bear the resemblance of their worthy exemplar. Few men in any community command more generally the esteem and good wishes of all denominations of his fellow-citizens than does the Rev. Mr. Jennings.

The Baptists constitute the eighth denomination; and are here, as elsewhere, a tolerably tight-laced class of people. Like all other sects who make some particular ceremonial form the corner-stone of their organization, they regard their brethren of other denominations with a consciousness of superiority by no means conducive to the growth of the most unalloyed humility. Their present pastor is a young man of considerable intellectual powers. I believe he is, in point of liberal sentiment, too far in advance of his flock to be able to effect much change in their old-fashioned prejudices.

A branch from the Baptist Society, called "The Disciples," has now a distinct existence here. Their leading characteristic is the repudiation of the pastoral office as a separate calling of life. Their services are conducted by their own lay members, and are of a character creditable to the intelligence and piety of their body. They have no distinguishing form of belief, nor any creeds or confessions of faith. They contend for the right of free inquiry and the full exercise of private judgment. They have however, as I conceive, committed one capital error in their discipline, which accounts for their limited extension: they have made the rite of baptism by immersion a test of membership; and I understand they will pertinaciously adhere to this prerequisite of discipleship.

Besides those which I have enumerated, I am not aware of any other religious bodies in this city, excepting our own. Your readers may now judge of our relative position; and they will rejoice to learn that we are successfully combating all opposition. We have a good church, and are not in debt; for, when we shall have received the full amount promised to us from our brethren in the United States and Eastern Canada, our treasury will be able to meet all demands upon it. We have paid the purchase of the church, and are getting the deed drawn up. Some of our members have acted very liberally, and have enabled us to anticipate the maturity of our promises of aid from abroad. The American Unitarian Association has already advised our Treasurer to draw for 600 dollars. This, added to the 400 given by the Montreal Society, places us in a position of comparative safety; and as we expect to receive 1000 dollars more from our United States brethren, before next August, we shall be under no pecuniary embarrassment, so far as the possession of a church is concerned. Our church was purchased for £396, and is considered worth £800. The ground on which it stands would readily bring £150, if not £200.

We would to celebrate the Lord's Supper early in the spring: we are not yet provided with a communion service. As there are a number of our members having children not yet baptized, we also purpose to appropriate some Lord's Day in April to a general observance of this rite, within the church.—We have distributed a large quantity of tracts, and are very anxious to receive more. We have, on sale, a choice selection of Unitarian works sent forward by James Munroe & Co. of Boston. I think there will be a great demand for "Mrs. Dana's Letters" here, when they have been read by some of our people. I know of no work ever written by a Unitarian convert, calculated to do more good than this of Mrs. Dana's.

We have heard of a good many Unitarians, scattered over various places in Western Canada. Surely some effort might be made towards the establishing of a mission, to visit and discover our brethren in this spiritual desert.

The great University movement is making good progress; and our Orthodox neighbours have so far descended from their high ground as to invite our pastor to aid them, as a member of the Central Committee. They will find him a valuable ally in the good work of advancing the cause of genuine University Reform.

Yours, B. C.

MRS. DANA'S LETTERS.—We are anxious to draw the attention of our readers once more to this book. Mr. Bryson has received a fresh supply of copies; and those desirous of procuring it, may do so at his book-store in St. Francois Xavier Street. We warmly recommended this volume on a former occasion, and we would now do so again.

### RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCE. UNITED KINGDOM.

DISCUSSION AT NEWCASTLE.—A correspondent of the London *Inquirer* states that not less than sixty persons have been gained to the Unitarian cause by the recent discussion between Joseph Barker and the Rev. Mr. Cooke, whilst it is not known that a single convert has been made to Trinitarianism. Among the number of those thus led to embrace Unitarian sentiments are two ministers of the Wesleyan denomination; and the *Inquirer's* correspondent further says, that the son-in-law of Mr. Cooke's chairman, who was so violent during the discussion that he laboured every night to interrupt Mr. Barker, has since been converted to Unitarianism, by reading the published report of that discussion.

UNITARIAN INSTITUTIONS IN BIRMINGHAM.—At the annual meeting of the Birmingham Unitarian Brotherly Society, held on the 4th January, the reports of the several institutions in connection with the society were presented, by which we rejoice to learn that they are all in a flourishing and rapidly increasing condition.—The number of pupils in the Sunday Schools, is—Males, 1,099, Females, 503, Total, 1,602; who are instructed by 250 Teachers.—Number of books in the Libraries, 4,837, which have been renewed and exchanged during the year to the extent of 20,260.—Number of depositors to the several Savings Clubs during the year, 807; deposits, £551; re-payments, £527.—The Brotherly Benefit Society has 306 members, and the payments to members in the time of sickness is larger than any other society in Birmingham. The total capital of the society now amounts to £3,041.—The Loan Fund, also in connection with all the schools, continues to prosper.

REV. DR. MONTGOMERY.—We read in the Belfast *Northern Whig*, that on the 1st January last, a large and most influential meeting was held in the Commercial Buildings, Belfast, Ireland, for the purpose of presenting the Rev. Dr. Montgomery with a splendid portrait of himself, by Knight, of London.—Dr. Montgomery is the Unitarian clergyman of Dunmurry, and has been known in his own country and elsewhere as the eloquent and efficient advocate of civil and religious liberty, during the last quarter of a century. Persons of different religious denominations and political parties were concerned in the presentation. At the meeting, the chair was occupied by Wm. Sharman Crawford, Esq. M.P., a member of the Church of England.—We understand that an engraving is to be made from the portrait and published by subscription.

### UNITED STATES.

REV. DR. DEWEY AT WASHINGTON.—The 22d February being the birth-day of George Washington, a sermon appropriate to the day, and the most touching and heart-searching I ever heard, was delivered in the Hall of the House of Representatives, by Rev. Dr. Dewey, Pastor of the Church of the Messiah, New-York. The Hall was crowded to overflowing, and every avenue of approach to the floor, in the galleries, aisles, and reporters' desks, was crowded. The Hall of the House has rarely been filled with so intellectual, numerous, and brilliant an audience,—nearly all the distinguished men now at the seat of Government being present. To many who were there, the opportunity was the first which had ever presented itself of hearing this eminent Unitarian minister. His sermon was practical enough to remove the doubts of the most skeptical, and Christian enough to satisfy all who love good principles more than sectarian creeds.—*New York Express.*

### INSTALLATIONS AND ORDINATIONS. UNITED STATES.

KING'S CHAPEL, BOSTON.—The Rev. Ephraim Peabody was installed as Minister of the Society worshipping in King's Chapel, on Sunday, 11th January. According to the custom of this church, the Ecclesiastical Council and the usual installation services were dispensed with. George Emerson, Esq., in behalf of the Wardens, read the papers relating to the invitation extended to Mr. Peabody, and his acceptance of the same. The proceedings were assented to *viva voce*, by the Wardens and Vestrymen on the one hand, and by the pastor elect on the other. Mr. Emerson presented to Mr. Peabody a copy of the Holy Scriptures, as containing the rules that were to regulate the relation then formed between Pastor and People, and as containing the Revelation of the Christian Faith. After this, a discourse was preached by Rev. Mr. Peabody, from the text, Acts ix. 6: "What wilt thou have me to do?"

MILTON, MASS.—The installation of Rev. John H. Morison, (formerly of New Bedford,) over the First Congregational Unitarian Church in Milton, took place on the 28th Jany.—Sermon by Rev. Dr. Gannett of Boston.

DEERFIELD, MASS.—The First Parish in Deerfield has been deprived within a short term of years, of two young, esteemed, and beloved pastors. The vacant place was again filled on the 28th Jany. by the ordination of Mr. J. F. Moors, recently of the Cambridge Theological School.—Sermon by Rev. Mr. Clarke of Boston.

HUBBARDSTON, MASS.—Rev. Samuel H. Lloyd, late a preacher of the Universalist connexion, from which he had withdrawn, was installed as pastor over the Unitarian Society in this place, on Wednesday, 4th Feby.—Sermon by Rev. Mr. Hill of Worcester.

SOMERVILLE, MASS.—On Wednesday, 18th Feby. Rev. John T. Sargent, recently minister of the Suffolk-street Chapel in Boston, was installed as minister of the new Unitarian Society in Somerville.—Sermon by Rev. Mr. Furness.

ROWE, MASS.—The new house of worship erected by the First Unitarian Society in Rowe, was dedicated, on Wednesday, the 21st January, to "God and his Christ."

AN 'ORTHODOX' EDITOR'S OPINION OF UNITARIAN PREACHING.—The Editor of the *New York Recorder* attended a service in the 'Church of the Saviour,' Brooklyn, a short time since. He heard Mr. Farley, the minister, preach; and this is his opinion of the sermon:—

"The positive teaching which he put forth would be mainly acceptable to all denominations of Christians, and, allowing somewhat for differences of phraseology, are such as are actually held forth from Sabbath to Sabbath, in the thousands of Trinitarian congregations of our land."

### LECTURES ON CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE, IN THE MONTREAL UNITARIAN CHURCH.

This Course of Lectures, noticed in two former numbers, is still in progress of delivery on Sunday evenings. At the time we now write eight have been delivered to large and attentive audiences.—We reprint the list of subjects, marking those in italics which yet remain to be treated on:—

The existence of a God: Christianity a revelation from God: The Christian Scriptures an authentic and perfect record of the Christian revelation; The Scriptures given to reasonable beings, and designed to be interpreted on reasonable principles: What the Scriptures teach concerning God, his unity and paternal character: *What the Scriptures teach concerning Christ, his person, and his office: What the Scriptures teach concerning Man, his nature, his duty, and his destiny.*

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