

powers are small: the range of my observation is limited: the vastness of the subject places it utterly beyond my reach: But surely it would be extreme folly, if, on this account I relinquished, denied, or doubted those great principles, which are not less determined than my own existence, nor less universal than the works of God, nor less luminous than the path of the sun; which are the first principles of all virtue and happiness. It is a necessary condition of human trial that we are often compelled to act upon the knowledge or belief of facts, which we are not competent fully to explain. It is a principle, which every day applies to the ordinary actions of human life. Shall I refuse food, because I am not able to explain in what way it will contribute to the support and nourishment of my body? Shall the husbandman neglect to cast the seed into the ground, because he cannot describe or conceive the manner in which this dry kernel is to be reared into a plant? No, my brethren, it is none but the fool, who hath said in his heart, there is no God; and may I never distrust the great principles of religion, because the limitations of my mind and condition render me incompetent to explain fully the facts on which they are grounded. All life and nature are full of mystery; and it becomes me to bow with deep reverence and adoration before that incomprehensibility, which arises from the greatness of God.—*Colman.*

UNITARIAN CHRISTIANITY:
ITS ADAPTATION TO WOMAN.

Unitarian Christianity has achieved much for woman. It has come to fortify her, precisely in those departments of her constitution which expose her to her greatest dangers; while at the same time it possesses resources which amply respond to the religious tenderness and generosity of her nature. Under other systems, the voice of usurped authority has found in woman a too unquestioning and unresisting subject: she has yielded submissively to arrogant pretension; she has trembled slavishly before unwarranted denunciation, she has surrendered her imagination and her affections to theatrical, fantastic, imposing forms, or extreme principles, of religion; she has prostrated her faculties in helpless despair before perplexing doctrines, which forbade and condemned the very use of her reason; she has listened to too predominant exhibitions of the terrific, until distraction and suicide have hastened to close the scene. In these circumstances, the female nature has almost cried aloud instinctively for aid, and has found it more than any where else in the genius of Unitarian Christianity. There is a modesty and fairness in the very manner by which Unitarianism asserts its authority over the mind, which not only appeals to woman's delicate sympathy, but at once raises her from the dust, and awakens her to the fact of her own significance. It bids her to be calm—to reflect—to receive a revelation through the medium of her reason, as well as of her imagination and affections.

Yet whilst this system presents just enough of poise and negation to restore woman to her lost equilibrium, it retains, as we have hinted, sufficient positiveness and warmth to satisfy the demands of her earnestly religious constitution. It gives her, in the Eternal Father of spirits, an object of profound adoration, combining in himself whatever glorious, awful, and endearing attributes or agencies can possibly be ascribed to the Trinity of the middle ages; while, by demonstrating the singleness and simplicity of his being, it quiets her narrowed faculties, fixes her distracted vision, and raises her faith from a state of abject prostration to a serene, enlightened, and confiding repose. In the innocent babe upon her knee, she no longer beholds a mass of total depravity, a viperous enemy of God, a vessel of eternal wrath and torment—but a hopeful subject of the kingdom of heaven, whose immortal powers are in part to be unfolded by her own prayerful vigilance and faithful exertions. In the Scriptural view of the Atonement which she is now called upon to adopt, she is not bewildered by the dramatic representation of one Divine being possessing all the justice, and another all the mercy; nor is she baffled by the contradictions which incessantly spring up between the alleged necessity that a Divine being should be sacrificed, and the allowed impossibility that he could die, coupled with the freshly puzzling fact that after all only a human being endured the sacrifice required. She rather sees in the Atonement a great scheme of reconciliation—a series of healing and restoring influences, contemplated from eternity by a God whose justice and mercy well knew how to temper

and co-exist with each other, and at length introduced by the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world—a scheme, thus truly worthy to be illustrated, and even prefigured, by the types and shadows of the Mosaic dispensation. In her prospect of the retributions of futurity, her imagination is no longer either pampered or revolted by presentments too over-powering for human nature; but it is wholesomely stimulated by that solemn indistinctness, yet awakening certainty of result,—the heaven of happiness and progress all above her, the hell of darkness and misery all below her,—which are every where characteristic of the moral government of God. In Jesus Christ, as presented by the same system, the chief among ten thousand and the one altogether lovely, the chosen of the Father from the bosom of a past eternity, she recognises the link which unites the human and Divine—the realized ideal of her most exalted imaginings—the perfect archetype of her purely aspiring affections. While the perplexing metaphysics of a falsely styled orthodoxy had taken away her Lord, and buried his identity in a mass of contradiction and mystery, Unitarian Christianity has restored him to her in his original proportions: it has rescued from artificial clouds and darkness the great subject of the New Testament biography; she can now venture to approach him again as a being whose heart beats in unison with her own—to bathe his feet with her tears, and to wipe them with the hair of her head.

Accordingly, woman in return has effected much for Unitarian Christianity. In the critical transition-period when a change was in progress from a complicated and humanly devised to a purer and simpler faith—when the spirit of reform was necessarily more or less analytical, negative, and defensive—when charges of coldness and unbelief rang from all the camps of Orthodoxy,—woman was found ready, in a full-proportioned representation, to partake of the enlightening process. She perceived, by her characteristic intuition, much that was positive and profoundly religious in the system that was unfolded anew, and she acted upon it by anticipation. The moment that Unitarianism respected, appealed to, and convinced her understanding, she accepted it with all its consequences—discerning and despising the hollowness of the spasmodic outcry raised against it. The Divine authority of Jesus and his religion she at once and honestly felt could be no cold negation, no isolated or empty fact, no dictate of infidelity or deism; but, from the very terms of the question, a principle deep as the wants, lofty as the hopes, and wide as the workings of the human soul. Therefore it has been, that in the darkest and most laborious periods of his career, the Unitarian reformer has been invariably cheered and supported by her countenance and adhesion. Part of his reproach her manifest faith and piety have turned away, and the rest she has cheerfully borne along with him. When, with an anxious heart, he has first spread the table of his Master, and invited the guests to come, she, if few or none else, was near, to partake of the speaking memorials. How often, in the hour of death, has her deliberate testimony and ripe preparation put to silence and shame the solemn but silly saying, so widely circulated, that Unitarianism is a poor religion to die by! How often, in the battle of life, has she sustained with a heavenly composure the lowering odium of excited communities! And how often have her quiet smile and pungent remark refuted the extravagant dogmas, or retorted the menacing artillery of bigotry and fanaticism! With her "willing hands" she has toiled to uphold and adorn the ark of her faith, as it rose amidst sad discouragements and difficulties; and even now, wherever that faith, no longer struggling and militant has become triumphant and commanding, many of its golden fruits, its spontaneous emanations, are started into life, or carried into larger effect, by her fostering and benignant enterprise. Religious charities and amenities spring up all around her home; while the missionary, supported by her exertions and bounties, transplants to the distant wilderness the truths and principles which her experience assures her are from above. It is unquestionably the peculiar blessings of every Unitarian Minister in the land, that he can gratefully point to the female portion of his congregation, as unsurpassed for intelligence, refinement, virtue, and attachment to religious institutions.—*Boston Christian Examiner.*

PRAYER.

The practice of devotion is a sign of spiritual life, and a means of preserving it. No one prays heartily without some deep religious sentiment to actuate him. This sentiment may be but occasionally felt: it may be transient in duration; but the exercise of it in acts of devotion tends to render it habitual and permanent, and its frequent exercise causes the mind at length to exist always in a devout posture. He who truly prays, feels, during the act, a sense of God's presence, authority,

and love; of his own obligations and unworthiness; of his need of being better. He feels grateful, humble, resigned, anxious for improvement. He who prays often, often has these feelings, and by frequent repetition they become customary and constant. And thus prayer operates as an active, steady, powerful means of Christian progress.—*H. Ware.*

OBSTACLES TO HUMAN PROGRESS.

It is a well known historical fact, that every great discovery in astronomy, in natural history, in chemistry, or in any of the physical sciences—that everything which has made us better acquainted with the heavens, with the earth, and with human nature—that every acquisition of knowledge which has tended to elevate humanity, every attempt at free inquiry, every effort to shake off the trammels of authority, has been successively attacked by the ignorant and narrow-minded, as leading to infidelity. Under this malignant and accursed plea some of the greatest spirits of the human race have been persecuted and slain. Socrates was put to death as an infidel; he who first said there were Antipodes was burnt. The followers of Copernicus were persecuted as disbelievers, and the great Galileo on bended knees was compelled to assert that the earth was immovable. Bacon and Descartes were taxed with irreligion; the doctrines of Locke were said to lead to materialism; Newton was accused of dethroning the Deity by the discovery of the law of gravitation; a similar charge was made against Franklin for explaining the nature of the thunderbolt; Priestley's library was burnt and his person endangered on account of his religious opinions; and, in our own days, Buckland, Sedgwick, and the other geologists are accused of overturning revelation by their discoveries with regard to the past existence of the earth. In short, in all ages, and amongst all nations, infidelity has ever been the war cry which the base, the ignorant, the intolerant, and the canting tribe have raised against the great, the noble, and the generous spirits of the human race.—*Sir W. Molesworth.*

UNITARIANISM IN TRANSYLVANIA.

From some statistics which have just been published, it would appear that the churches founded by the Socini, and their followers, the *Poloni fratres*, are in a flourishing state. In 1766, the number of Unitarians in Transylvania was only 28,647—in 1789, they had increased to 31,921. In 1818, they amounted to 40,000; at the present time (1845) the estimate is 51,700; so that, within 80 years, the Unitarians have, in Transylvania, almost doubled their numbers. They have three colleges—one at Clausenburgh, of which the most reverend Alexander Szekeley is the head. This gentleman is called 'General Notary,' 'Clerical Vice President,' &c., and his office appears similar to that of an archbishop. The number of students at Clausenburgh is 220. Another college is at Thorda; it contains 174 students. A third college is at Szekeley, Keresztur; it contains 184 students. The capital of the Transylvania Unitarian Church is—in money, 30,000 florins; in landed and real property 40,000 florins; total 70,000. With this sum, it would appear, they are able to defray the whole of their church expenses, and put by annually 200 florins for contingencies. The professors of this faith enjoy all the rights of citizenship in the principality; among them are advocates, judges, censors of the press, registrars, and privy-councillors.

ANECDOTE OF JOHN WESLEY.

The following anecdote of John Wesley and an old woman who was one of his disciples, is related by one who had been minister in his connection, some years before he became an Unitarian:—The old woman lived at a distance of five miles from the Wesleyan chapel she belonged to, which she was seldom able to attend, on account of the distance. At a short distance from her dwelling there was an Unitarian chapel, the only place of worship in the neighborhood, which she had been in the habit of attending regularly, when she was not able to go to her own, as she considered it to be her duty to attend some place of worship every Sunday, when she could. In process of time, an Independent Chapel was built near the Unitarian Chapel. When this was the case, doubts arose in her mind whether she should go to the Unitarian chapel, or to the Independents': she therefore determined to lay the case, the first opportunity, before Mr. Wesley, to resolve her doubts. "Go," said he, "where you have been used to go, for the Unitarians will give you a dry crust of morality; but if you go to the Calvinists, they will give you rank poison."

Just Published.

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BY THE REV. DR. GANNETT, Minister of the Federal Street Church, Boston.

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The Bible Christian.

MONTREAL, NOVEMBER, 1845.

THE UNITY OF GOD,

THE DISTINGUISHING FEATURE OF THE JEWISH FAITH.

On another page of our present sheet we give our readers the principal part of a discourse delivered by Rev. Dr. Raphall in the Jewish synagogue, Birmingham, of which he is the regular preacher. It was written at the request of one of the Unitarian Ministers of that town, with the view of laying before the public an authentic statement of the Jewish faith, respecting the Divine Unity. The fact that such an idea as that of a three-fold division of God was unknown to the patriarchs, to Moses and the prophets, bears, we think, most powerfully against the popular dogma of the Trinity. For let any reflecting man consider a moment the circumstances of the case. Through successive ages and centuries the Deity manifested himself in a peculiar and intimate manner, to the ancient Hebrew people. He raised up legislators and prophets, and great religious reformers in their midst. Through these He proclaimed himself One, "and his name One." To give them a suitable knowledge of himself, and to win them to His own service was the great aim of all His revelations to them. Is it credible then, that under such circumstances He should have left His faithful prophets and chosen people in error, or in the dark, respecting such a doctrine as that of His triune existence? There was no such thing as triune existence, and that is the simple and only way of accounting for the absence of all knowledge of the doctrine, or belief in it. The Hebrew people of old maintained the absolute unity of God in opposition to the idolatry of the world, and their descendants at the present day vindicate the same grand doctrine against those who would divide and describe the indivisible and incomprehensible One.

So long as the Jewish people deny the divine mission of Jesus of Nazareth there must of course be a "great wall of separation" between them and all Christians. But we must remember, that, prior to the Christian dispensation, and from the remotest antiquity, the Israelites were made the depositaries of the true religion, and their testimony concerning the doctrine in question is of the highest value. The division of God into three persons is a comparatively modern error, and were it not that we are familiarised to the expression of it, by the common technical language of certain creeds of man's formation, it would fall upon our ears with the utmost discordance, and strike our minds as something profane. It was unknown in the first ages of Christianity. It took its rise from the subtleties of Platonic philosophy, and gradually progressed towards its present definite shape. According to Mosheim, himself a Trinitarian, the doctrine of the Trinity did not receive its "finishing touch" (we quote his own phrase) until the close of the fourth century. But many of the earlier fathers, as they are called, tinged with the fashionable philosophy of the time, were cautiously introducing it, much to the alarm of the plain, unlettered Christians who were the great body of believers. A single extract from a controversial work by Tertullian who wrote at the close of the second century, will shed a flood of light on this matter. "The simple," says he, (by which he means the plain unlearned mass of Christians) "who are always the greater part of believers—presume that the number and arrangement of a Trinity, is a division of the Unity, they therefore hold out that two, and even three Gods are taught