

possible, however, to provide by specific enactment for every case of ritual transgression and impurity, arising from inadvertence or necessity. Scarcely could it be expected that the courts of worship themselves would escape defilement, from imperfections in the offerings, or unconscious disqualification in people or in priest. To clear off the whole invisible residue of such sins, an annual "day of atonement" was appointed. The people thronged the avenues and approaches of the tabernacle. In their presence a kid was slain for their own transgressions, and for the high-priest the more dignified expiation of a heifer. Charged with the blood of each successively, he sprinkled not only the exterior altar, open to the sky, but, passing through the first and holy chamber into the Holy of Holies, (never entered else,) he touched, with finger dipped in blood, the sacred lid (the Mercy-seat) and fore- and of the Ark.* At that moment, while he yet lingers behind the veil, the purification is complete: on no worshipper of Israel does legal unholiness rest; and were it possible for the high priest to remain in that interior retreat of Jehovah, still protracting the expiatory act, so long would this national purity continue, and the debt of ordinances be effaced as it arose. But he must return; the sanctifying right must end; the people be dismissed; the priests resume the daily ministrations; the law opens its stern account afresh; and in the mixture of national exaltitude and neglects, defilements multiply again till the recurring anniversary lifts off the burden once more. Every year, then, the necessity comes round of "making atonement for the Holy sanctuary," "for the tabernacle," "for the altar," "for the priests and for all the people of the congregation." Yet, though requiring periodical renewal, the rite, so far as it went, had an efficacy which no Hebrew could deny; for ceremonial sins, unconscious or inevitable (to which all atonement was limited),† it was accepted as an indemnity; and put it beyond doubt that Mosaic obedience was commutable.—*J. Martineau.*

* Lev. xvi. ; xxiii. 26-32; Ex. xxx. 10; Num. 7-11. † In three or four instances, it is true, a sin-offering is demanded from the perpetrator of some act of moral wrong. But in all these cases a suitable punishment was ordained also; a circumstance inconsistent with the idea, that the expiation procured remission of guilt. The sacrifice appended to the *penal infliction*, indicates the two-fold character of the act: at once a ceremonial defilement and a crime; and requiring, to remedy the one, an atoning rite,—to chastise the other, a judicial penalty.

THE FATE OF GENIUS.

Who has not heard of Richard Brinsley Sheridan, the Dramatist, Poet and Orator, before whose towering genius, (Irish tho' it was,) the whole people of Great Britain, including even royalty itself, bowed in profound deference, and admiration? Who has not almost coveted his fame? Yet it is a fame obscured by a blot, which all the waters of time cannot wash out: he lived and died a drunkard! In his sixty-fifth year, after twenty-five years of confirmed drunkenness, he died neglected and destitute, in the heart of the metropolis of Great Britain, and in the neighbourhood of the aristocratic wealth, beauty and fashion, who had hung delighted on his superhuman eloquence on the trial of Warren Hastings. That a man, of whose eloquence the younger Pitt, a political enemy, would say, it surpassed all the eloquence of ancient or modern times, and possessed everything that genius and art could furnish to agitate or control the human mind, should have been a drunkard, and should have so died, is indeed a sad commentary on the weakness of human nature! It seems, however, that he was first intoxicated by praise, and afterwards by the bottle. But if he had not by fashionable indulgence contracted the habit of drink, the latter would not have been necessary to take the place of the other. The love of virtuous praise is a great incentive to right action. It never can, in a sober man, lead to vice. But in a man whose brain is on fire from the influence of intoxicating drink, it may well be as it was in the case of poor Sheridan,—when senates ceased to applaud, the bottle was necessary to make him still think he was the same godlike man, who, with an angel's tongue, told the story of the suffering Begums!

The foundation of Sheridan's ruin was, that he was the loved wit, who could set the table in a roar, and who was the cherished, and sought companion of every idle sprig of aristocracy, from the Prince of Wales, downwards. In such society he acquired the habit of moderate drinking. His first glass of wine was the beginning of the many days and nights of social indulgence, which at last ended in a flood-tide of drunkenness. Mooney, who has lately published a most interesting History of Ireland, and which ought to be in the hands of every one to whom the story of Ireland's wrongs, sufferings, ancient fame, and surpassing merit, may be in any degree interesting, says of Sheridan:—"The life of this extraordinary man is perhaps the most striking evidence

in history of the dreadful evils of intemperance. Here was, indeed, a noble mind overthrown by alcohol! Nor was it all effected at once. Sheridan was at first a moderate drinker, by turns the hospitable host, or welcome guest. He drank to make others happy around him, to increase a mutual pleasure. Fatal disposition! At thirty years of age, he was, as we have seen, the first literary man in England,—Orator, Dramatist, Minstrel, and all,—blessed with a wife, the paragon of conjugal love, one who was gifted with the highest musical talents, and other kindred attainments, calculated to heighten the happiness of him she loved so well! At forty, he was a confirmed drunkard and a ruined man—his brain suffocated or diseased, incapable of conceiving, and his body enfeebled, incapable of exertion; his wealth spent, his character lost, his friends avoiding him, and he tottering down to the steps of taverns into the deepest slough of poverty and debasement; that tongue, under the spell of whose accents senates sat entranced, now incoherent and inarticulate: that eye, beaming with the fire of genius, whose recognitions, in the street or palace, was once sought for by Peers and Prelates, now dimmed or dilated into phrenzy; that brain, whose conceptions and creations filled congregated thousands in theatres with joy, or melted them into tears, now the habitation of a thousand demons! O, it sickens the heart to contemplate so grand a spirit overthrown, so splendid and so mournful a ruin. Let the eye of rising genius but rest upon the pages of this man's life, and take a warning from the moral which it so forcibly inculcates.—*S. C. Temperance Advocate.*

TO CORRESPONDENTS.—The lines of "Z." are unavoidably omitted. They will appear in our next number.

The Bible Christian.

MONTREAL, OCTOBER, 1846.

"THE EVANGELICAL ALLIANCE."

During the past month, the papers coming from the other side of the Atlantic have brought us an account of the sittings of what is termed "the Evangelical Alliance."—This is a combination of clergymen and others, of various denominations, for the purpose of promoting Christian union. The meetings took place in London, in August last, and were largely attended. It is said that fifty or sixty Americans were there, and some of the Protestant Churches of the continent of Europe were likewise represented.

The promotion of Christian union is a noble purpose, and the Alliance may carry it forward to some extent; but that cannot be very far. They have departed from the comprehensive principles of union laid down by our Saviour, and therefore cannot possibly succeed to the full extent required by Christianity. It is palpably a sectarian organization, and must be circumscribed within sectarian limits. "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples," said Christ, "if ye have love one towards another." Love, therefore, is the true Gospel bond of union, as stated by the great Gospel Messenger,—the Son of God. But what say the founders of the Alliance?—"You must believe in the Trinity, and the utter depravity of human nature, else we will not recognize you as Christian disciples, or permit you unite with us." It is clear, therefore, that their basis is narrower than that of Christianity. On it may stand Calvinists, Wesleyans, some Episcopalians, and some Baptists. Among these, mutual asperities may be softened, and mutual distrust removed, and a closer union effected. To whatever extent this is done, good will be accomplished. But if the Alliance really desire to promote a union of all Christians, they must abolish their sectarian barriers. No doubt they think themselves very wise, as the "children of this generation" are generally apt to do; but they are not so wise as Jesus Christ. Nor is it seemly in them to make pretensions to any higher wisdom, than his, by setting forth a more stringent test of fellowship than he did.

The fundamental articles of the Alliance are somewhat remarkable. They are nine

in number, of which here are four:—The Divine inspiration, authority, and sufficiency of Holy Scripture; The right and duty of private judgment in the interpretation of Holy Scripture; The unity of the Godhead, and the trinity of persons therein; The utter depravity of human nature in consequence of the fall.—Was ever anything so anomalous and contradictory? Here we are reminded that it is our right and our duty to judge for ourselves in the interpretation of the Scriptures, but we are told at the same time what we must find in them, and believe, before we begin to inquire at all. What a mockery! It is like telling a man that he is free to go at large, and at the same time putting fetters upon him. In no other science save the much abused science of theology, would such anomalies and contradictions be tolerated. A certain class of theologians seem to consider themselves entitled to set consistency and common sense at defiance. But in this they may find themselves mistaken, and their mistake may be made evident more speedily than they dream of. Popular opinion is beginning to look dogmatic theology straight in the face.

Concerning some of the specified articles of union, it is notorious that the members of the sects conventionally termed "Evangelical" do not agree among themselves. It is mere pretence, then, to speak so loudly of identity of opinion on what they call "fundamentals," while they put widely different constructions on the same form of words. If certain speculative doctrines be absolutely essential to salvation, it is reasonable to expect that they should be defined with precision. There are various theories of the Trinity extant, all propounded by orthodox men. There is the naked tritheism of Sherlock, and the mere modalism of Wallis. These theories are distinct and different. But which has the saving truth in it? This is what we should be given to know, if our eternal salvation be indeed staked on the correctness of the speculative opinion. Again: With regard to Baptism. Since they give this ordinance a prominent position, why do they not tell us what it is? Do we not all know that the Baptists attach a very different signification to this term, from that of the other denominations? If a belief in the authority and perpetuity of this rite be necessary to qualify for Christian fellowship, and to secure salvation, surely we should have been told whether the sprinkling of an infant be really a valid baptism or not. Since it is made a vital point, it should have been carefully defined. Or, again: with regard to the Atonement,—the "central truth" of the Gospel. Why did they not state what they meant by it? Our readers may exclaim, surely they fully agree, and understand each other on that point! We rejoice—they surely do no such thing, and we have the proof at hand to shew that they entertain, and teach, widely differing notions on that head, and misunderstand each other woefully. Our testimony is Dr. Cox of Brooklyn, N.Y., one of the clergymen who went over from America and joined the Alliance. Here are his own words, from his own pen:—"I have heard great sermons from distinguished men; and it seems there is some deplorable want of manly, discriminating, and thorough-going views, even on fundamental points. The doctrine of the Atonement is one of them. They are hampered, and strained, and self-contradictory often; because they lack clear and correct conceptions of that sublime and glorious transaction. They are not resolved as to its extent; and this with me is a sure sign they misunderstand its nature. I never knew an exception." Such is the evidence of an "evangelical" witness, touching the "evangelical" preachers and preaching of Great Britain. And yet Dr. Cox, and those concerning whom he bears this testimony, come together and proclaim to the world the identity of their belief in fundamentals, because they assent alike to a certain naked proposition in which the word "Atonement" holds a prominent place. But in this word it is quite obvious they attach very diverse ideas. It is manifest, therefore, that the agreement of the "Evangelical Al-

liance" even in what they regard as essential articles, is merely a semblance, not a reality.

Concerning the prospects of the Alliance various opinions are entertained. Some are very sanguine as to the benefits likely to result from it, whilst others regard it as very doubtful whether it will accomplish any permanent or extensive good. We are of those who think that it has not within itself the true elements of coherence, and is therefore deficient in that which is essential to an earnest and permanent coöperation. The members of the Alliance, we may presume, like union 'well,' but many of them, we may also presume, like their own sectarian canons 'better.' Though a Baptist, Congregationalist, or Methodist minister had the tongue of an angel, and were as orthodox as Paul, he would not be suffered by some of his ministerial brethren of the Alliance to let his voice or his doctrine be heard before their congregations. The pulpits of the Churches of England and Scotland are alike barred against him. We do not mean to say here that a free exchange of pulpits is absolutely essential to Christian union; but we do say, that where sectarianism is permitted to obtrude, and peremptorily forbid such fraternal intercourse, there is a serious obstacle raised to hearty sympathy and coöperation. "True friendship," saith the ancient adage, "can subsist only among equals." There is a real truth at the bottom of the saying.—Or, again, would the members of the Alliance sit down to the Lord's Supper together? Why was not this proposed some time during their sittings? What could have been more appropriate and beautiful among men who had come together from widely distant parts as disciples of Jesus Christ? "Do this in remembrance of me," said our Saviour. What an impressive symbol of sympathy and union it would have been to have partaken together of that delightful Christian rite! But would they have done so? we ask again.—Would the close-communication Baptist have sat down with the Methodist? Would the Episcopalian have sat down with the Independent? If so, we should be glad to hear it; but we believe they would not. Sectarianism interferes here again, and raises its voice against it.

How, under such circumstances, can we believe a real, whole-souled Christian union to subsist? Their union, then, cannot be thorough, heart-felt, and real. Nor can there be any real Christian union based upon a sectarian foundation, such as theirs. Such a union cannot stand on a narrower basis, than the broad and generous platform of the Christianity of Christ.

CZERSKI, THE GERMAN REFORMER.

This celebrated individual came to London for the purpose of attending the "Evangelical Alliance." He had been invited to attend, but whether the invitation was an official one or not, we cannot undertake to say. We remember his reply. He stated, at first, that he could not attend, alleging as one reason his inability to bear the expenso of the journey. We did not hear anything more of his intentions regarding the matter until we saw it announced that he had arrived in London.

Czerski, it appears, had seceded from the Church of Rome, about four weeks prior to the appearance of Ronge's well known letters concerning the 'holy coat' of Treves. In the exercise of an independent judgment he had gone to the Sacred Scriptures, and stood upon the doctrines he found there. But he was not able to reconcile the various parts of the problem of the "Evangelical Alliance." It appears he could not find in the Scriptures exactly what the Alliance commanded, and required. So that he was refused admittance. He was heterodox in their eyes. We have not yet been able to ascertain wherein his heterodoxy consisted.

Such was the treatment which Johannes Czerski received at the hands of this so-called "Evangelical Alliance." "Czerski," says the *Morning Advertiser*, "has been suf-