

THE BIBLE CHRISTIAN.

money, or by teaching him a trade, or by putting him in the way of business, so that he may earn an honest livelihood; and not be forced to the dreadful alternative of holding up his hand for charity. And to this scripture alludes, when it says, 'And if thy brother be waxen poor and fallen in decay with thee, then thou shalt support him; yea, though he be a stranger and a sojourner; that he may live with thee.'—Levit. xxv. 35. This is the highest step, and the summit of Charity's Golden Ladder.

The Bible Christian.

MONTREAL, JANUARY, 1848.

PUBLIC OPINION IN MONTREAL.

In the recently contested election for this city, one of the four gentlemen who presented themselves as candidates, was a member of the Unitarian denomination. This was Mr. Benj. Holmes. His fellow candidate on the Reform interest was Mr. LaFontaine, a lawyer and politician of some note in the Province, and connected with the Roman Catholic Church.

We notice the religious opinions of these gentlemen because the attempt was made by certain parties to influence the minds of some of the electors by sectarian considerations. One individual—a member, as we have been informed, of the Wesleyan body, and a relative of one of the Conservative candidates—was so inconsiderate as to stigmatize Mr. Holmes by the opprobrious name of Infidel, and to make an appeal to one of the Baptist Clergymen of the city, and ask him how he could, as a Christian Minister, support the pretensions of such a man. The Rev. Dr. Davies, the clergyman thus addressed, resisted the blind and ill-judged appeal, and expressed his opinion of the impropriety of dragging religious opinion in such a manner into the arena of political strife. He also, with a degree of candour and independence which does him credit, informed Mr. Holmes of the improper influence thus attempted to be exercised against him. When public reference was made to the transaction, an apology was drawn from the party who originally used the improper and offensive expression. This apology appears in the public prints in the form of a letter to Dr. Davies. The writer expresses his regret at having used such language; and he should, therefore, as we think, be freely forgiven.

We notice the circumstance as an indication of the state of public opinion in this community. There is, we know, much vulgar bigotry and narrow sectarianism around us; but it is equally evident that there is also a sound vein of public opinion with regard to religious rights, to which it gives us pleasure to make reference. We call public opinion sound in this matter when every individual, be his religious convictions what they may, is generously protected in his exercise of them from any insult, opprobrium, misrepresentation, or violation of social or civil privileges. We only repeat a truism when we say that a man's religious opinions should be left between himself and his Creator. It is obviously an affair in which each individual has the strongest personal interest at stake. No man can have any conceivable motive for remaining in dangerous error. Every motive should lead him to avoid it. It can only be the blindest and the most unreflecting bigotry, therefore, which can lead one man to abuse and vilify another on account of religious opinion. In the late contest we do not believe that the bulk of Mr. Holmes' opponents sympathized at all with such feelings and expressions. Certainly no portion of the press which we have seen has done so. To whatever extent vulgar sectarian influence was exercised, it was rather in a covert and underhand way. Even in the case now before the public, the writer of the apology to Dr. Davies, referring to that gentleman's honest and straightforward course, in communicating with Mr. Holmes, alludes to it as an "unhandsome use" which he made of his expressions; thus intimating clearly that he considered his very improper appeal and very objectionable language should have been kept, and permitted to work

their results, entirely "under the rose." Now we are of those who profess at least to admire uniformity and consistency in the character of a Christian. And in the imperfection of our Christian faith we consider that a man should neither do nor say any thing in private which he would be ashamed of in public. We certainly think that to apply opprobrious epithets concerning a man in his absence, which would cause shame or fear to the speaker when made known in his presence, is not exactly characteristic of a Christian. Our confessed heterodoxy, however, may have betrayed us into error in this respect, and we may be wrong in our conception of the Christian ideal.

We have no intention—not the slightest—of entering on a defence of Mr. Holmes's Christianity against the attacks of any ill-informed or inconsiderate persons who may exhibit their weakness and rashness by charging him with infidelity. He can afford to overlook such attacks, and so can we, and all Unitarians.—We have too much personal respect for Mr. Holmes to make any public remarks on his personal religion. For the sake of our friends at a distance, however, who may read this column and feel some interest in the matter, we may state that the gentleman who was thus charged gives a constant respect to the services and ordinances of Christian worship: That he is a Unitarian—a believer in one God in one Person: That he claims the name of Christian as a believer in Jesus Christ as the Son of God. How far he would lay claim to the character of Christian we could not undertake to assert. In this respect he would probably say what we should say if the question were proposed concerning ourselves—that we felt that we came far short of the pure and exalted ideal of Christian perfection.

Having been led in this way to make reference to the late election for this city, we may as well put on record our satisfaction at the successful return of Messrs. LaFontaine and Holmes. And if we are asked why? we shall state the reason very briefly. To us the long vexed University question possesses great interest. During the past year we saw that magnificent endowment for the education of the people of Canada placed in jeopardy. A scheme was openly promulgated, and extensively supported by the interested parties, to parcel it out to four influential sects, and in this way defraud all others. So daring an act of injustice and public plunder has rarely been attempted. In Messrs. Holmes and LaFontaine we see the conservators of this great public property, men who will do their utmost to have it faithfully applied to its original purpose—the education of the people of Canada, entirely irrespective of sectarian partialities and considerations. And here we add our hope that the Reform party will lose no time in bringing this most important question to a crisis. We do trust that they will not leave it in the power of any future politicians to offer a glittering bait of £1500 a-year to any body of ambitious or grasping religionists. Besides ruining all present prospect of a great national university, it would tend materially to unsettle the religious equality at present existing in Canada. And to do this, as every reasonable man knows, would be to inflict a lasting injury on the country.

PEWS IN THE UNITARIAN CHURCH.

From some expressions which we have heard, we find that an impression is abroad that it is difficult to obtain pews or sittings in the Unitarian Church. On enquiry, we find that this is not the case; and we think it of some importance that the mistake should be rectified. When the church was opened, about two years and a half since, the committee of management resolved not to let any pews on the gallery until the lower part of the building was fully occupied. At present, we believe that all the pews below are rented, either wholly or in part. For persons requiring a limited number of sittings, there is ample accommodation; and for those who should require entire pews, satisfactory arrangements could be immediately made.—We believe we only state the simple truth

when we say that the most generous feeling prevails among those who now hold pews. In many cases there are holders of pews whose families are not sufficiently large to occupy them fully; and several of these, we know, have placed their extra room at the disposal of the committee. Indeed, we have heard more than one of these parties declare that they did not consider their annual payment of pew rent in the light of an absolute purchase, for the time being, of so many square feet of the floor's surface, but rather simply as a contribution to the support of the Gospel as presented by liberal Christianity, and that they should be gratified to see other and kindred worshippers occupying their spare pew-room. This is a proper feeling, and we may add, the only proper feeling. For our own part, we could never very clearly see the use of doors on pews at all; certain it is they should never be fast bolted, or closed against a stranger; and as for having them locked, as in some churches, we regard it as entirely out of harmony with the spirit of Christianity. In the house of Christian worship, if any where, the largest hospitality should be exercised. Not even the appearance or shadow of exclusiveness should be seen there. Humility, generosity, and love, are the cardinal Christian graces; and if we are to look for their manifestation any where, we should certainly find it in the House of God, and among the congregation of His worshippers.

For the greater convenience of those who may require pews or sittings in the Montreal Unitarian Church, we are instructed to say that a plan of the pews may be seen at the office of Mr. Benjamin Workman, Druggist, St. Paul street, corner of Custom House Square, to whom application may, at any time, be made.

LECTURES IN THE UNITARIAN CHURCH.—

The course of lectures on topics connected with social and moral reform, as already announced and noticed in this paper, is still in progress of delivery, in the Unitarian Church of this city. On the Sunday evening immediately subsequent to the issue of this sheet, a discourse will be delivered on *Intemperance*. Service at the usual hour—Seven o'clock.—Seats free.

From the subjoined advertisement, which we take from the current secular papers, it will appear that some useful improvements are contemplated in the external appearance of the Montreal Unitarian Church:—

TENDERS will be received by the undersigned, until NOON of SATURDAY, the FIFTH of FEBRUARY, for the ERECTION and COMPLETION of a
PARSONAGE HOUSE,
to be built adjoining the UNITARIAN CHURCH.

—ALSO—

For ENCLOSING the CHURCH with a Wall with Cut Stone Coping, Cut Stone Piers, and Ornamental Iron Railing, with Gates to the same.
Plans and Specifications of the above may be seen on and after MONDAY, the 17th instant, at the Offices of
GOODLATTE R. BROWNE,
WILLIAM KINGSFORD,
Architects and Surveyors.
1, ST. LAWRENCE HILL, }
January 14, 1847. } 536

CORRESPONDENCE.

We have received a communication from New Glasgow, containing the following remarks on the meaning of the terms "immortal" and "immortality," as they are used in the scriptures. A letter accompanied them, in which the writer requested their insertion in the *Bible Christian*; and, as from its tenor we are led to believe that he is a serious student of the sacred volume, we will willingly make room for them. On the remarks themselves, we offer no opinion. In his letter he tells us he became a subscriber to the *Bible Christian* because he saw that it advocated the simple Unity of God. On one expression contained in his letter, we feel bound to offer an observation. He says that if refused a place for his remarks, he will not take our paper any more. From this it is evident that he quite misapprehends the na-

ture of the relation which subsists between us. It is only justice to himself, therefore, to inform him that we do not consider ourselves under any peculiar obligation by his taking the paper. The *Bible Christian* is sustained at some expense, and with some exertion, by a few friends of liberal Christianity, who are highly gratified in being able to furnish the believers in the simple Unity of God, scattered over this Province, with a periodical sheet giving expression to their views. Our subscription list, we are happy to say, is gradually increasing throughout the country; but we should hope that none of our subscribers would suppose for a moment that the threat of withdrawing his trifling annual subscription could influence us in any degree in the insertion of matter in our columns.

"IMMORTAL"—"IMMORTALITY."

Some speak as if all men were immortal; but I do not consider this a proper form of expression. Let us "hold fast the form of sound words." The word "immortal" is nowhere used in the Bible to denote merely eternal existence. Immortality implies, in addition to that, an existence in glory. Those who will never enter there, have no right to that term. It should never be applied to the wicked; and, therefore, we should never speak of the immortal soul, as such, because not all souls will ever attain to it: it is merely the portion of the righteous. The term immortal is used but once in the Bible, and is applied to God—"Unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God" (1 Tim. i. 17). The word "immortality" is applied four times:—1. It is applied to Christ—"Our Lord Jesus Christ, who only hath immortality" (1 Tim. vi. 14, 16). 2. It is mentioned as a blessing, for which we are to seek—"Seek for glory, and honor, and immortality" (Rom. ii. 7). 3. It is presented as something offered in the Gospel—"Hath brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel" (2 Tim. i. 10). 4. It is applied to the change which the saints will undergo at the sounding of the last trumpet—"This mortal must put on immortality" (1 Chro. xv. 53, 54). These are these only passages in which the term "immortal" or "immortality" occurs, and therefore the above are the only senses in which it is used. The sum of the whole is, the term is applied to God, to Christ, and to the Saints, when made like him at his coming, but never in the sense in which it obtains in the doctrinal creeds of the present day. The heirs of the Kingdom of Heaven are of two classes—the dead saints, and the mortal saints; and the Gospel discovers "life" for the former, and "immortality" for the latter, which they will actually receive at the appearing and Kingdom of Jesus Christ.

J. M.

BOOKS FOR SALE,

AT

C. BRYSON'S BOOK-STORE,

ST. FRANCOIS XAVIER STREET.

THE Entire Works of WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING, D.D., in two volumes.

The Entire Works of the Rev. ORVILLE DEWEY, D.D., Pastor of the Church of the Messiah, New York, one volume, 8vo. pp. 887.

A COMMENTARY ON THE FOUR GOSPELS. By the Rev. A. A. Livermore.

THE ESSENTIAL FAITH OF THE UNIVERSAL CHURCH, Deduced from the Sacred Records. By Harriet Martineau.

LA FOI DE L'EGLISE UNIVERSELLE; D'APRES LES SAINTES ECRITURES. Par Dlle. Martineau. Traduit de l'Anglais.

SCRIPTURE PROOFS AND SCRIPTURAL ILLUSTRATIONS OF UNITARIANISM. By John Wilson. 3rd Edition, revised and enlarged.

A COLLECTION OF PSALMS AND HYMNS for Christian Worship. By the Rev. F. W. P. Greenwood, D. D.

JUST RECEIVED,

A SUPPLY OF

WARE ON THE FORMATION OF THE CHRISTIAN CHARACTER.

THE CONCESSIONS OF TRINITARIANS; being a Selection of Extracts from the most eminent Biblical Critics and Commentators. By John Wilson.

HISTORIC AND ARTISTIC ILLUSTRATIONS OF THE TRINITY; showing the Rise, Progress, and Decline of the Doctrine, with Elucidatory Engravings. By the Rev. J. R. Board, D.D., of Manchester, England.