

that mostly upon the score of opinions about religion. They have not been contented with the expressions of the *Holy Ghost*: they liked their own better. And when they were set up in the room of Scripture, and in the name of Scripture, submission was required, upon pain of worldly punishments. This dissatisfied curiosity, this unwarrantable,—what shall I say? This wanton search, has cost christendom dear, and poor England dearest of any part of it.

All this while, the head is set at work, not the heart; and that which Christ most insisted upon, is least concerned in this sort of faith and Christianity; and that is, "keeping his commandments." For it is opinion, not obedience; notion, and not regeneration, that such men pursue. This kind of religion leaveth them as bad as it findeth them, and worse; for they have something more to be proud of. Here is a *creed*, indeed, but of what? The *conclusions of men!* and what to do! To prove they believe in Christ, who, it seems, never made them. It had been happy for the world, that there had been no other *creeds*, than what he and his apostles gave and left; and it is not the least argument against their being needful to christian communion, that *Christ and his Apostles did not think so, who were not wanting to declare the whole counsel of God to the church.*

To conclude; if you desire peace, love truth, seek piety, and hate hypocrisy, lay by all those things called *articles of faith*, and *canons of the church*, that are not to be found in *express terms in Scripture*, or so plainly authorised by Scripture, as may with ease, be discerned by every honest and conscientious person. And in the room of those numerous and disputed opinions, made the bond of external communion, let some, *plain, general and necessary truths be laid down in Scripture terms, and let them be few.*

LIFE.

Solomon in his Ecclesiastes saith, that better "is the day of death than the day that one is born;" but no Christian must say it, for though it may be happier, man doth "not live by bread only," nor for happiness alone, but for probation. No! Life is not contemptible, is not odious; it is to be held as a trust, as a solemn gift, with the possession of which are linked high responsibilities. It is a greater thing to value, than to despise life; even as they are only the learned, who lament those inestimable manuscripts which the royal officers ignorantly burn for fuel, at that time when the abbey were suppressed. Life is no common-place matter; it may feel so, when we are disappointed, when we are wearied with labor, or are disgusted with meanness, and then we may say with the Jewish preacher, "Vanity of vanities, all is vanity!" But myself how often in my more cheerful moments, and at those more thoughtful seasons, when my awakened faculties have made me most truly man, have I been awe-stricken and breathless, whilst the great mystery of life has occurred to my mind in sudden vividness! In such moments what a miracle have I felt myself! Excepting God himself, what is there more wondrous than the existence of the finite amid the infinite? than this birth of feeling, thinking, and active life in our bosoms, which, a short while since, were inanimate, insensate dust! What thought is there more wondrous than this, that we are living souls, abroad and active on the face of a world, which was once "without form and void!" Well might the sons of God shout for joy, when the first man of our race stood up erect amid the trees of Eden. It was the birth of mortal spirit; and that Paradisaical wonder is repeated in the growth of every infant, and throughout the life of every man.

Man is of such a nature, and the surrounding world of such a character, that human life is more than animal; it being necessarily intellectual, moral, and religious. Man is environed with hostile elements, but in resisting their power he acquires a wisdom, which makes him mightier than they. Whilst discharging the duties, and enjoying the delights of childhood, neighborhood, friendship, and marriage, feelings are awakened in the human breast of such a character, affections are elicited of such purity, and modes of thinking are formed of such a noble nature, as in their aggregate are spirit. Also existence is religious. The loves and losses, the happy, the hard, and the awful experiences of life dispose men to religion. There is no savage but has some form of faith; blindly, but strongly does his heart urge him to seek the Lord, if so he may grope after him and find him.—Every man that stands in God's presence, doth feel a mysterious affinity with it. Into every human heart which God submits to the discipline of this life, there is inwrought a yearning what is life's purpose. Even in

the most sadly sullied spirit, there is a dim consciousness of its imprisoned state in this flesh. Whether ignorant or learned, there is in all men a constitutional conviction, that their lives are a scene, in which good and evil powers are struggling together for the mastery. There are necessitating causes for faith, there are the beginnings of religion in every created soul; and these religious beginnings, the circumstances of life are so adapted as to develope, and with evangelic help, to perfect.

Life is not to be lightly, but most solemnly esteemed. And the effect of "pure religion and undefiled" is to endear all participants of life, to make us love them, not grossly, but with a pure, reverential affection, such as readily passes into thanksgiving to the God and Father of all. Christianity saith to us, "the temple of God is holy, which ye are." The serf may be despicable in the esteem of the baron; nevertheless he is a truer tabernacle of the Godhead, than a church, a minister, or other temple made with hands; and from his heart there may ascend more welcome incense than was offered on the altar at Jerusalem. Done as under God's eye, the lowliest duty of a servant to her master, assumes then the character of a heavenly service; discharged religiously, the humblest office doth exalt the spirit like a high priesthood. Such power has religion to make the wilderness of life "glad and flourish as the rose; to put us on the side of God, thereby making our fight in the world a celestial service, instead of a selfish struggle; and by revealing their relation to heaven, thus beautifully doth the gospel transfigure in our eyes and glorify all earthly things.

Religion doth make us revere life, and rightly. For consider how the mind is formed. Is it not by the discipline of life; by our bodily necessities, and our social relations? An infant, secluded in a dark, closet, and duly fed, would grow up to manhood, but would be as helpless and simple as a babe. Every object a child sees doth increase its knowledge; and every accident which it bemoans doth correct its experience.—It is thus the knowledge, principles and character are formed. Even were our capacities to remain the same, and were the Almighty to diminish the facts and events which befall us, our knowledge and our worth would be diminished proportionately. By merely blinding us to the lessons of nature, could God reduce mankind to the ignorance of brutes. Nay! In a certain sense, this life is one long conference with the Deity, prior to our admittance into heaven. We, on our parts, pray; and God, on his, doth instruct, warn, remonstrate, and encourage us perpetually. The Gospel is his word; and the movements of nature, divine signs and symbols are they all for human instruction: the most trifling of them are solemn paragraphs of some providential lesson since not a sparrow even, "shall fall to the ground without your Father." Verily, the most impatient to quit life are the least fitted; since it is little experience they can have had of its moral design. Men would not be so hasty to abandon the world, either as monks or as suicides, did they but see the jewels of wisdom and faith which are scattered so plentifully along its paths; and lacking which, no soul can come again from beyond the grave to gather.—*Martyria.*

THE CHILD'S GOSPEL.

Beautiful is the form of the gospel considered as the religion of a child. To him Christianity is the tale of one who was once a child himself; who was nurtured on a mother's lap; whose increasing strength was exercised in a father's occupation; who had brethren after the flesh as well as after the spirit, the kindred of blood as well as of benevolence; who lived in a cottage-home, and was taken to worship in a metropolitan temple: who asked pertinent questions of the wise and aged, and made himself beloved of all, so that he grew in knowledge, and increased in stature and in favor both with God and man; of one who in maturity never disdained childhood, but had ever ready for it his smile, his blessing and his heart; who rebuked those that prevented children coming to him; who told his disciples to be like little children, in their simplicity, their innocence, and their docility; who was their protector, teacher and friend: who wrought wonders which the child has experience enough to know are wonderful; who took the little girl by the hand when she laid dead upon the couch, and said, Arise, and she did arise; whose miracles cannot but lay hold of the youthful imagination, while there is that in them which must sink into the youthful heart; a tale of one who was sent by the Great Being whom we cannot see, but who made us all; who was instructed by him to tell mankind of his love, and care, and kindness, to all his creatures; who showed that

Being in the beauty of the flower, and the brightness of the sun, and grandeur of sovereignty, and the affection of a Father; who told those touching parables, over which young eyes may weep, and young minds may wonder; who made that prayer to our Father in heaven, in which the child learns to pray; whom wicked men killed, but whom God made to live again; whom the good shall be made alive to meet and be happy with forever. This is Christian truth. This is the basis and substance of revealed theology. This is the child's gospel; this is a plain story for his comprehension; the world of divine knowledge, just as it looks when the first beams of intellect dawn upon it, with their new, and faint, but increasing light.—*W. J. Fox.*

DIFFERENCE OF OPINION BENEFICIAL.

Since I have more closely observed differences of opinion in the world, and have become acquainted with excellent men of great dissimilarity of views in religion, politics, and science, I have arrived at the conviction, that these differences, which often are merely like different boughs of the same tree, have their foundation in the designs of the Almighty with regard to us and life. He allows people to be born with dissimilar organs and under dissimilar influences, in order that they may take hold of the dissimilar sides of life and truth, and thus, by means of them, the whole manifold substance of truth may be developed, like links in the great chain of thought, like preparatory theses and anti-theses to the great synthesis. And it is precisely these differences which ought rightly to embrace, to advance, and to develope the only unity in which we all can fully become one, and become one with God. People say so much about unity; but I do not trouble myself with respect to any unbounded unity of form or appearance. Let us in Heaven's name be different. The combat is not the evil. It arouses and causes development. Bitterness and dishonesty in the combat are evil; and they must be done away with. The important thing is that we are honest, and in earnest in our search after truth; honest and chivalrous towards one another. Thus may we hope, upon whatever side of the question or the conviction we may find ourselves, that we may be instrumental in the hands of Providence for the advancement of the world-plan.

It is for the rest very difficult now-a-days to say who is a Christian and who is not, I know no better proof of this than the disposition and the fruit. Christian life has so penetrated the life of the world, that we are in the midst of its current, driven on by its knowledge even without our own consciousness of it. In manners, in laws, in social life, in literature, everywhere do we meet with its light, and its spirit. And he who loves this light, this spirit, and is guided by it, he is a Christian, although he should mistake its origin. And the voice which cried through the world, "Blessed are the pure in heart! the merciful! the peacemakers! they who hunger and thirst after righteousness!" has likewise pronounced a blessing on those nameless worshippers; yes, on all who, from the beginning of the world, have lived in love to truth and virtue. Why should we separate the beams of the sun from the sun, and deny that they are a part of his life? The word of God does not do so. It shows clearly how they are connected. Man as separated what God united. But if man universally acknowledged this divine connection, there would be a universal church established, and the scattered heaps would be assembled upon earth. Then would the invisible church, which was and which is, be made visible, and many would acknowledge themselves to be Christians, who now do not so. But wherever I see a man who lives in purity, and who labors in true love, there I see a member of that universal, eternal church, because I believe with the apostle, that "all they who are impelled by the Spirit of God are his children.—*Miss Bremer.*

PERSECUTION FOR NEW IDEAS.

Hervey, who first discovered the circulation of the blood, was styled, "vagabond or quack," and persecuted through life. Ambrose Pare, in the time of Francis I., introduced the *ligature* as a substitute for the painful mode of stanching the blood after the amputation of a limb—namely, by applying boiling pitch to the surface of the stump. He was, in consequence, persecuted with the most remorseless rancor by the Faculty of Physic, who ridiculed the idea of putting the life of a man upon a thread, when boiling pitch had stood the test for centuries. Paracelsus introduced antimony as a val-

uable medicine; he was persecuted for the innovation, and the French parliament passed an act, making it penal to prescribe it; whereas it is now one of the most important medicines in daily use.

The Jesuits of Peru introduced into Protestant England the Peruvian bark, (invaluable medicine,) but, being a remedy used by the Jesuits, the Protestant English at once rejected the drug as the invention of the devil.

In 1793, Dr. Greenuehl discovered the curative power of cantharides in dropsy. As soon as his cures began to be noised abroad, he was committed to Newgate by warrant of the President of the College of Physicians, for prescribing cantharides internally.

Lady Montague first introduced into England small pox inoculation, having seen its success in Turkey in greatly mitigating that terrible disease. The faculty all rose in arms against its introduction, foretelling the most disastrous consequences; yet it was in a few years generally adopted by the most eminent members of the profession.

Jenner, who introduced the still greater discovery of vaccination, was treated with ridicule and contempt, persecuted and oppressed by the Royal College of Physicians; yet he subsequently received large pecuniary grants from government for the benefit he had conferred on his country, by making known his valuable discovery; and at the present time its observance is very properly enjoined by the whole medical profession and the legislature.

It is a fact that the members of the House of Representatives of the United States in 1810, refused Robert Fulton the use of their Hall, to deliver a lecture on steam navigation, upon the ground that it was a visionary scheme.

The Bible Christian.

MONTREAL, NOVEMBER, 1848.

COMMON OBSTACLES TO THE PROGRESS OF THE PROTESTANT PRINCIPLE.

In the two last numbers of this sheet, we felt called on to offer some remarks on Protestantism. At the close of those observations we alluded to the indications of religious freedom and independence, which in this age are so generally manifested. Men, as they advance in intelligence and culture, naturally and properly become impatient of the authority of ecclesiastical organisations, and dogmatic creeds. They learn to reverence truth in itself, and on its own account. They come to understand more fully, the true value of the Protestant principle of the right of private judgment, and to insist more distinctly on its practical application.

It is only by the faithful, practical application of this principle, that the work commenced at the Reformation can be adequately carried out, and brought to produce its proper fruits. Every humanly written creed, authoritatively imposed on men, is an infraction of the fundamental Protestant principle. It follows, therefore, that the work of religious reform can be carried on effectually only by those churches which are free—that is untrammelled by human creeds. The denomination of Christians to which we belong is free. We have not cast off one form of bondage to adopt another; we have not merely cast off the authority of the pope to place ourselves in subjection to a creed of any man's forming. The only creed, or authoritative rule of faith which we acknowledge, is the sacred writings of the Prophets, Evangelists, and Apostles of the Lord. To these we appeal, and to these we urge and implore all to go, and read, and "judge for themselves what is right." Too long was the progress of religious reform cramped in the world after it was commenced. Some were satisfied with the opinions of Luther—others with those of Calvin. One party collected round a form of faith drawn up by some men