

MONTREAL, JUNE, 1848.

BOSTON ANNIVERSARIES.

It will be observed that we devote a large portion of space in our present number to an account of the Boston Anniversaries, which we have selected and abridged from the Boston periodicals and newspapers connected with the Unitarian denomination. Some of our readers may probably think that we give them a disproportionate share, yet we believe the majority will think otherwise. It will be seen that the topics treated of are various, and we are persuaded that the account of these meetings will be welcomed by our readers generally as interesting and instructive intelligence.—When we remember that this little sheet has its circulation for the most part in quarters where liberal Christianity is but slightly known and but little respected—that it goes forth to remote regions of Canada where the movements of liberal religionists are even less known than in this city—we consider it of some importance that those of our brethren of the faith who are thus scattered abroad, and who do not enjoy the advantage which we in Montreal enjoy, of being brought together into a worshiping Society, should be enabled to form some idea of the life, and vigor, and influence of our denomination in other places. This should give them additional encouragement and hope, for although they may now stand isolated, alone, and outcast, in their respective communities, they may be assured that there is a wholesome and purifying leaven at work in the world, which will one day impregnate the mass, and render it more liberal, more truthful, more charitable, more properly Christian in its modes of thinking and acting.

Besides those meetings, which were exclusively Unitarian, such as the Book and Pamphlet Society, the American Unitarian Association, and the Sunday School Society, we give an account of the Massachusetts Bible Society, and the American Peace Society, both of which organizations have Unitarian Christians among their most prominent and influential supporters. It is one of the pleasant characteristics of Boston—the co-operation of the various classes of Christians for common purposes of general good. This we do not hesitate to attribute to the extensive influence which Unitarians exercise in that particular community. We rarely find it any where else. For the most part, orthodoxy, as it is called, makes a merit of excluding Unitarians from all co-operation in philanthropic movements and measures. It constantly aims to tyrannize over freedom of thought by a system of social exclusion. As if conscious of its want of power to defeat Unitarianism by fair and legitimate argument, it has ever been its studied policy to adopt this system, and thus make Unitarianism seem too dreadful a thing to come into contact with. In this way—by this device, worthy of the most palmy days of priestcraft—it effectually frightens the timid and the ignorant. We have sometimes witnessed little inconsistencies in connection with certain parties of the orthodox school in passing from this community to that of Boston. Strange as it may sound to some of our readers we have seen men side by side with Unitarians on the platform of the Bible Society in Boston, and even consenting to speak after them, who would have made a merit of frowning on any unfortunate heretic of a like stamp if he had encountered him in a similar relation in this good city of Montreal. It is satisfactory to know that even rigid orthodoxy can be temporarily mollified in certain degrees of latitude. We have likewise known of reputable orthodox men of this city even preaching in the pulpits of Unitarians in Boston, who would take good care to keep themselves clear of all contact with Unitarians when they came home. But we must have patience with such men. We must have patience with their system. We must have faith in the progress of more enlightened views of

of Christian truth and freedom. Many signs are abroad foreshadowing the "good time coming."

Among the many meetings connected with the Unitarian denomination in Boston during the anniversary week, not the least important were the Conference and Prayer Meetings, held in the mornings. At these meetings brief and earnest addresses were made by various parties, the general aim of which was to quicken pious feeling, and incite to a heavenward progress. The opening address by the Rev. C. Brooks, of Boston, was mainly a pointed and fervent appeal on behalf of family religion. He earnestly urged the usefulness and high value of regular domestic devotion. Besides such addresses, prayers were offered by different persons, and the whole was interspersed with devotional singing, which imparted a delightful variety to the exercises.

As usual the whole of the Unitarian Anniversary Meetings were closed by a special one for the commemoration of the Saviour's death. This was held on Thursday evening in the Federal Street Church, when the floor of the building was entirely occupied by communicants, some being obliged to sit in the aisles owing to the crowded state of the pews. The sermon on the occasion was preached by the Rev. J. W. Thompson, of Salem, Mass., and the address at the table, and the elements distributed by the Rev. E. B. Hall, of Providence, R. I. The whole service was highly satisfactory, and a fitting close to a very interesting season.

JOHN QUINCY ADAMS' LETTERS ON THE BIBLE.

We continue to give these letters to our readers. The fifth will be found in our present sheet. In doing so, however, we think it proper to say that we have seen it stated in the Boston *Christian Register* that they were published in the New York *Tribune* (from which quarter they come to us) without the knowledge or sanction of Mr. Adams' family, and that they contain some errors. Even if we had not seen this statement, we would not have it understood that we give them as faultless documents. We regard them as highly valuable letters, but not free from mistakes. Much light has been thrown on the Bible—on its history and criticism—since Mr. Adams wrote those epistles—some five and thirty years ago.

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nations, and of individuals; and epochs belong to progress. What if a pastor should say to his people at the close of the year, for instance, Let us meet and devote this week to the consideration of our duties and responsibilities. Let us repent of past neglects, and redeem the time. Would it not be right and well to do so?

Dr. Dewey spoke of liturgical helps, of family prayer, of preaching, of the Reform movements, and closed with the expression of his feelings that we must, with diversity of mode, it may be, but with a strong hand, help on the great work of humanity.

SUNDAY SCHOOL SOCIETY.

The Anniversary Meeting of this Society was held at Dr. Gannett's Church, on Wednesday evening, May 31st. A hymn was sung by the choir; a fervent prayer was then offered by Rev. C. T. Brooks of Newport. After the singing of another hymn, the Annual Report was read by the Corresponding Secretary, Rev. Charles Brooks. The Report commenced with an allusion to the great importance of the spiritual nurture of the young and the great deficiency of this culture at the present day and in our country. The great difficulty Rev. Mr. B. thought to arise mainly out of the prevalent modes of general education, which enlist the passions under the intellect and not under the conscience. In the vicinity of Boston and in our State generally, and perhaps in some other favored portions of the Union, there may be exceptions to the rule. But it is too palpable a fact to be controverted, that the general American system of education is calculated to make a giant of the intellect and a dwarf of the conscience. The Report was chiefly occupied with a statement of this great evil and the remedy to be applied. Christ as "the way, the truth and the life," must be pressed home to men's hearts. The Sunday School must arouse itself to new and God-like labor, and supply, as best it may, the defect of our common system of education.

The Report contained addresses to teachers in our common schools, to legislators, to parents, and School teachers (which were omitted in the reading,) and closed with a summary of the whole subject. It was an able production, and will soon be printed and circulated widely.

The Agents of the Society, during the past year, have visited 58 towns, 73 schools—having 1,129 teachers and 7,023 pupils,—and delivered 93 addresses, to about 14,000 persons. Thirteen new life members have been added to the Society. A large number of copies of the last Annual Report and some new tracts have been printed and widely circulated.

Remarks of an interesting nature were offered by Rev. Mr. Palfrey, of Belfast, Rev. Mr. Osgood, of Providence, Rev. Mr. Fuller, of Manchester, Rev. Mr. Dorr, of East Lexington, Rev. Mr. Dall, of Needham, and Rev. Mr. Waterston, of Boston, and by the President of the Society, Hon. Stephen C. Phillips.

The remarks were interspersed with hymns sung by a choir of children, and the services were closed with a benediction by Rev. Mr. Allen of Northboro'.

This was one of the most important and interesting anniversaries of the week. We want our Sunday Schools to be the nurseries of the church, and we must use our utmost efforts to raise their standard high above the ordinary pursuits of the world. We want teachers who shall be wise, who shall be Christians, and who shall have that ability in imparting Christian knowledge which shall so interest our pupils, that they shall remain in our schools after they shall have reached the age of twelve or fourteen years. Here is our weak point, and here must we use our utmost endeavors to gain strength. We want enlightened, reflecting, earnest, Christian Sabbath school teachers, before we can thoroughly interest all our pupils. God grant that many such may be raised up among us. And may He strengthen those whose hearts and hands are already in the work.

CHRISTIAN UNITY.

Perhaps we cherish extravagant expectations of the degree of religious unity which may yet be realized; but we do not base one of our hopes upon the direct efforts which are often made to secure it. We rejoice to see such efforts. They indicate the aspiration of the hour—the impulse which the Father is awakening in the heart of the world. We regard every such wide-spread impulse of human hearts, under His providence, as really a prophecy of the blessing for which it seeks. Nevertheless; we have no special confidence in any endeavors to file away the sharp points of varying breeds, so that men may not goad each other beyond endurance, by clashing thoughts, as they stand side by side. Such attempts often create as many quarrels as they heal.

Many of the best things in this world are gained when we do not directly seek them. Indeed, almost all the best things come by that indirect process. Perhaps we should rather say, that while we seek one thing, it may be with throbs of desire, Providence is all the while giving us something infinitely better.

It is the great method of the soul's development. Man seeks present results, for instance, in his daily toils. But the soul is gaining a fidelity, a manly energy, a self-subsisting power and life, for which it did not directly seek. The heart seeks present joy in the intercourse of friendship and affection. It gains an intense, an increasing power to love, which enlarges its whole capacity of being. \* \* \* The pure and ever blessed love of God himself does not come so much by direct and conscious cultivation, as by the indirect influence of the manifestations of Himself, which he hath spread around us. \* \* \*

We have no faith in the maxim, in any application, "that we can conquer a peace." We can enforce submission in many way, and in many things. Perhaps we can, in argument, annihilate another's creed. We have gained no unity then; perhaps we have not taken a step toward it. But if any common aim can make our hearts flow together, if anything can make our religion itself mingle its aspirations and its labors, no power in the universe can separate us any more. What do we need but mutual knowledge of each other's hearts all over the world, to make the whole world gradually more peaceful, with its varied children continually drawing more closely together into a wide-spread brotherhood! Then we shall see that fidelity and love, and self-sacrifice, and unreserved devotion to God and man, are the same thing everywhere. Those who speak of them, shall seem to all, to speak in the tongue in which they were born. And we shall become of one heart and one soul.

Honor, then, to the Christian movements of the times, not only for their present achievements, but much more, for their higher issues. Honor be given them for the charities they impart. Honor them even more for the charity they create. And while thankfulness ascends for both, still adore that higher Providence which exalted above all thoughts of men, develops through their action its serene and eternal purposes.—*Christian Inquirer.*

CHRISTIAN TRUTH.

What do divines understand by Christian Truth? The answer at first appears obvious. "Christian Truth (it will be said) is what Christ and his apostles knew and taught concerning salvation under the gospel." Thus far we find no difficulty; but, let me ask again, where does this exist as an object external to our minds? The answer appears no less obvious than the former: "In the Bible." Still I must ask, is the material Bible the Christian Truth about which Christians dispute? "No (it will be readily said), not the material Bible, but the sense of the Bible." Now, I beg to know, is the sense of the Bible, an object external to our mind? Does any sense of the Bible, accessible to man, exist anywhere but in the mind of each man who receives it from the words he reads? The Divine Mind certainly knows in what sense those words were used; but as we cannot compare our mental impressions with that model and original of all truth, it is clear that by the sense of the Bible we must mean our own sense of its meaning. When, therefore, any man declares his intention to defend Christian Truth, he only expresses his determination to defend his own notions, as produced by the words of the Bible. No other Christian Truth exists for us in our present state.—*Joseph B. White.*

AN ALLEGORY.—When God created man he commanded his angels to visit him on earth, and guide him in his ways, so that he might foretaste the bliss of the life to come. But lustful man sought after sensual joys in preference to those of heaven, and growing greedy of worldly fruits, began to quarrel with his brethren for the possession of them; and the guardian angels wept among themselves.—But when the strong oppressed the weak and took from them by force the produce of their soil, Justice rose up sorrowing, and leaving earth flew back to heaven. And when the weak overcame the strong with falsehood and deceit, and got from them by cunning what they feared to take by force, Truth rose up sorrowing, and leaving earth, flew back to heaven. Thus each bad act scared some good angel from the world, until Forgiveness—the most beautiful of all—alone remained behind.

And when she heard Anger and Revenge whisper dark deeds in man's ears, and counsel them to repeat the wrong that had been done to them, she rose up sorrowing, and said, "I will not leave the earth. While my sister angels were here, I might have rested in my Father's bosom, for man needed me not. But now that they have fled, I will seek to make him listen to my voice, telling him that, as he cherishes forgiveness here, so will forgiveness cherish him hereafter." So the loveliest child of heaven remained on earth; and Peace and Love, repenting, flew back, and followed in her train.