

foretell. We must hope that the condition of the Christian population will somehow be ameliorated, though we may doubt if the Czar took the best means of bringing about this end, for undoubtedly the military prestige of the Turks has been increased, and the Sultan, unless his creditors "foreclose" and sell up the Sublime Porte itself, will be found to be less squeezable than ever by Notes, Protocols, and remonstrances. It seems, however, safe to predict "amidst all this uncertainty that Montenegro will be found, whenever peace is established, to have obtained more complete autonomy and to have at last achieved a well-earned independence from Turkish interference. Rude and barbarous their customs may be, but no one can withhold his admiration and respect from the gallant little band of mountaineers who for centuries have maintained a quasi independence against enormous odds, and who through many generations have sacrificed everything, with life itself, to their love of liberty.

In the "International Review," Dr. Rigg, a well-known Wesleyan Minister, gave lately his views on the Disestablishment of the Church of England, and they differ *toto caelo* from those which Nonconformist ministers are usually credited with holding. He repudiates altogether the assumption that the State has a right to touch the revenues of the Church, claiming that the tithe is in no sense a public tax. As to endowments, he says "they differ in no respect as to their nature from the endowments which have, during the last two centuries, come into the possession of other Christian denominations in this country." He also maintains that during the last twenty years the churches of the various Congregational denominations have declined in influence and in numbers, and in many places have declined altogether, and he stigmatizes their agitation against the Church as "wanting in largeness of view, in statesmanlike handling and character, as too narrow, heated, and partizan."

If we are doing all that we can for the Church by contributing to it a proper proportion of our substance, we shall always be glad to hear of others doing the same. If our contributions fall short of our duty, the narration of what is being done by others may incite us to increased exertions. At Sierra Leone the local contributions for Church purposes have, for six years, averaged £2,650 a year. In the new colony of Lagos the native Pastorate Association £800 during the first year of its existence. The ex-king of Lago has, with others, subscribed £300 for a new church. In Trinidad the Episcopal Endowment Fund has already reached £7,500, and it is hoped that it may be yet further largely increased.

#### THE NINETEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

THE Christian's conquest over sin with the aid of the Holy Spirit, through the mediation of Christ, and in the use of His

own appointed means, now forms our subject. And according to Revelation, sin is the one great master evil, the one mightiest antagonist of God, that which is opposition to God in His essence, that which would, if it could, annihilate Him, that which God, by the necessary law of His nature, hates and must hate. What the world calls sin, however, is not that which counteracts the law of God, but that which interferes with the comfort and well being of Society. Thus it is that in this narrow and untrue view of sin, it is at times unjustly lax, and at times unjustly severe. It does not believe in its heart that God will really punish. It asks again and again, with the scoffers of St. Peter's time, Where is the promise of his coming? It tells us again and again: Ye shall not surely die.

As brought before us in the Epistle and Gospel the conquest over sin comes under two aspects—the forsaking of sin and the forgiveness of sin. Neither of these would be of any service without the other. The former is dwelt upon in the Epistle to the Ephesians as resulting from a new moral nature, implanted by the Divine Spirit in the new relationship obtained by the one baptism into the one faith of the one body, of the One Lord. The closeness of this relationship of Christ with His Church is emphatically likened to the marriage bond, as indicating the depth of the affection subsisting, the intimacy of the connection, and the nurture and grace derived from the Head. In this Epistle, St. Paul represents all spiritual blessings as flowing to the individual in the ministrations of the Church, and in the use of those instrumentalities by which, age after age, she has been kept up in the world. The doctrine that we can worship God just as well at home and alone as we can with His Church in His Temple, or that we can be very good Christians without availing ourselves of the ministrations of Christ's ambassadors, finds no support from the teaching of St. Paul in this Epistle. His most touching, as well as most effective, illustration is employed in showing the union betwixt Christ and His Church. All his rich eloquence is called into exercise in contemplating and expressing the glory in the Church by Christ Jesus when his converts shall come to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge, and when they shall be filled with all the fulness of God. Nor is the grandeur of his conceptions, or the vigour of his expressions, at all diminished when his powerful intellect seizes upon the ultimate object for which Christ ascended up to the Heavenly world, which was that the work of the ministry might be carried on in order to secure the perfecting of the saints, and the edifying of the body of Christ till—in his own magnificent language—"we all come into the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man unto the measure of the age of the fulness of Christ."

In the Gospel we have also the change from the old to the new nature in man illustrated by the healing of the paralytic man, whose limbs were restored to soundness after the Saviour had announced to him the comfort-

ing words: Thy sins are forgiven thee. And the forgiveness of sin is as important a doctrine of Christianity as the forsaking of it. Without forgiveness of the past the most unsullied future would never atone for sin already committed; nor would the salvation be worth much which would be procured by striking a balance between the good and the bad actions of a man's life. We see also in the circumstances attending the miracle two further illustrations of the relation between our Lord and His people. First, in His words: "Thy [sins are forgiven thee]," he shows that his forgiveness secures the highest good that can be desired on earth; and that although He may also see fit to grant the restoration or the continuance of health with other temporal blessings, the blessing of forgiveness is to be sought before all others. Secondly, His peculiar expression that "the Son of Man hath power on earth to forgive sins," shows that this power, which originates in the Godhead, (as the Scribes truly taught), extended to the human nature of our Lord—that sins might be forgiven *on earth* as well as at the last judgment before the throne of God. The words therefore involve the principle contained in the Absolution Christ has commissioned His ministers to give to the repentant and believing.

#### FREE THOUGHT AND THE BIBLE.

WHILE some people are frightened out of all decency if they happen to find Church services carried on in a tone more ecclesiastical than that they have been accustomed to, or with the use of any decidedly Christian symbol, the wily enemy of God and man may well be content to find their attention diverted to a warfare against these minor details of Christian propriety, while his emissaries are scattering poison broadcast over the land, and undermining the very foundations on which all religion and piety can be constructed. The advocates of what they call Free Thought are now making most persistent and unusual efforts in Canada to propagate their system, if system that can be called which consists of little else than a denial of everything—a protestantism pure and simple—which denies the existence of a Revelation from Heaven, questions the being of a God, and would deprive us of our most cherished hopes of a glorious immortality when this painful life is ended—leaving us nothing in the shape of comfort, present happiness, or future expectancy, but such pitiful consolations as can be gathered from a cultivation of the operations and changes connected with the world of material nature. The free thinking of this system is entirely in one direction, runs in one unvarying channel, and has just as many trammels as any that can be named under the sun.

The statements made in the pamphlets just issued by the advocates of "free thought" are, some of them at least, of so indefinite a character that it is not easy to say in what direction a reply should be given. As, for instance, in a passage where the following sentences occur: "We can safely put Lyell or Agassiz, Huxley or Haeckel against Moses,