

Vishnu and Brahma were true, which they confessed. I forebore to press him with the consequences, which he seemed to feel, and so I told him what was my belief. The man grew quite mild, and said it was *chulabat*, (good words,) and asked me seriously at last what I thought—was idol worship true or false; I feel it a matter of thankfulness that I could make known the truth of God, though but a stammerer, and that I had declared it in the presence of a devil. And this I also learned, that the power of gentleness is irresistible."

The Bible Christian.

MONTREAL, DECEMBER, 1848.

"THE BIBLE CHRISTIAN."

The issue of the present sheet brings the fifth year of the existence of the *Bible Christian* to a close. Originally established in January, 1844, it had for its aim the explanation of Unitarian Christianity. At that time, it was found that the Unitarian Congregation of this City, then commencing to assume a permanent form, laboured under great disadvantages, owing to the mistaken opinions which so generally prevailed in the community concerning Unitarian principles. The unfounded prejudices of multitudes shut them out from any reasonable hope of ever hearing our views properly expounded from the pulpit, and if such persons were to be reached at all, it became evident that it must be done by some other method than oral teaching. The only other method was to be found in the use of the press, and hence the establishment of the *Bible Christian*.

Our commencement was very unpretending, and our course has been the same. Our purpose was both local and temporary. We had to act within a certain sphere, and upon minds furnished, and educated, and prejudiced after a certain fashion, and we have always endeavoured, in the selection of our materials, to keep our particular purpose as steadily as possible in view. We had to remove prejudices which existed against our distinguishing views of truth, and to impart further information for the benefit of persons who were disposed to receive those views. We have great faith in that principle of tactics which steadily directs power to one point, rather than diffusing it over an extensive surface. The well instructed engineer selects some particular stone in the strong wall, against which he directs his force knowing that if this stone can be shaken and dislodged, the downfall of the superstructure will speedily follow. Now if any of our readers have at any time considered that our range of topics was too limited—that we have dwelt too much on the mere peculiarities of Unitarianism—that we should have given more prominence to the great general questions of social and moral reform, or shown a greater interest in some of the more modern forms of speculation—we can only say that such an extension would not have comported with our original design, and that it would, moreover, have made a larger demand on our time and attention than we could conveniently afford. We have been fully sensible of the imperfections of this sheet since its commencement, and nothing should have induced us to continue its existence, but the hope that it was doing some good in the quarters where we intended it should act.

And it has done some good. We know that it has dissipated prejudice, and imparted instruction, and that many rejoice that it has fallen into their hands. But a variety of circumstances, which it would be tedious and useless to explain here, demand that some change be now made in its management and issue. It is right to state that this demand springs not in any way from a decrease of subscribers. Our subscription list is now as large as ever it was, although our finance committee have to regret that subscribers residing out of Montreal are so remiss in forwarding the trifling amount of their subscriptions. As a consequence of this neglect, the burthen of the expense of printing and publishing has been thrown, for the most part, on a few persons in this city.

The change which we propose to make, then, for the ensuing year is, that instead of appearing monthly as hitherto, the *Bible Christian*, will be issued as a Quarterly Tract in the months of February, May, August and

November. The design of the sheet will continue mainly the same:—to illustrate the doctrines of liberal Christianity. The gospel of Christ generously and correctly interpreted, read in the spirit of meekness and candor, and obeyed with sincerity and fidelity, we regard as the divine instrument by which man is to be redeemed from the ignorance, error, and sin, in which he is now involved, and raised to a state of salvation and celestial bliss. For such redemption and salvation should we not all labor and pray? And it is without any affectation of piety that we would now record our own desire and hope, that God will direct and bless the continuation of our humble efforts.

In connection with the change announced in the foregoing article, we would request our Subscribers to forward the amount of their Subscriptions as soon as possible, addressed—"BIBLE CHRISTIAN, MONTREAL."

We would also take this opportunity to express our thanks to the Publishers of various valuable weekly newspapers that have hitherto been exchanged with us.

A FABLE.

SOMEWHAT AFTER THE MANNER OF AESOP.

A company of men desired to raise a place for common shelter in the wilderness. Hitherto many of them had gone without any shelter at all, while others had sought it under rocks, trees, and the like, where they were not easy, nor comfortable. A few, more strong, willing, and hopeful than the rest, put their hands to the work, and induced others to join them. After some effort, a goodly tabernacle was constructed, very pleasant to rest in, and very comely to look upon. But the winds of the desert blew high, and the floods were frequent and strong, and the house, if not cared for, would be cast down and carried away. So some men were appointed to care for it—some to watch the foundations, others the timbers, others the roof, and so forth. But these were so engaged with their felling of wood, and their hunting, and their fishing, that they frequently forgot their task. So their tabernacle grew weak, and they perceived it not. A few strove to keep it strong, but they were not able. The wind at length came and shook it, and it fell to pieces.

And now all the men were very sorry, and many of them much ashamed. And they came together, and many voices were heard, and they said one to another, "if we had known that the timbers were weak, and the roof loose, we should have willingly put forth our hands." But while the men spake confusedly one to another, the clear voice of Wisdom was heard in their midst, saying, "Why did ye not know? Behold, each should have done his part diligently, and in season."

We trust that some of our readers, at least, will apprehend the moral.

The Annual Meeting of the Members of the "Montreal Unitarian Worshiping Society," is convened for Tuesday Evening the 26th instant, at 7 o'clock, in the basement of the Church.

THE PEACE SOCIETY.

The adherents of the Peace Society held a meeting in Exeter Hall, London, on the 31st October. Mr. Hindley, M. P., in the chair. Several excellent speeches were delivered by Messrs. Ewart M. P., Bowring M. P., Elihu Burritt, J. W. Alexander, Joseph Sturge, and H. Clapp; Revers. Dr. Burnett, Thomas Spencer, &c. In the course of the speeches it was stated that it was intended to hold the next Congress in Paris, in the month of August, and it was expected that the numbers would be swelled by a good delegation from the United States. It was proposed to expend 2000 francs in prizes for the best essays in defence of the peace principle. It was proposed, too, that, early in the next session of Parliament, the question should be brought forward in the shape probably of an address to the Queen, praying that she would direct her Ministers to insert in all treaties an arbitration clause.

On the 30th ultimo the deputation appointed at the recent Peace Congress held at Brussels in the course of last month, waited upon Lord John Russell, at the official residence, of the Premier,

in Downing-street, for the purpose of presenting to the noble lord an address which had been prepared and adopted at the congress. The deputation consisted of M. Visschers, Councillor of Mines to the Belgian Government, and who filled the office of president during the sittings and deliberations of the Peace Congress; Mr. William Ewart, M. P., vice-president for England; Mr. Elihu Burritt, vice-president for the United States; the Rev. Henry Richards, secretary of the Peace Society of Great Britain, and representing on this occasion M. Frisque Bouvet, member of the National Assembly of France, and vice-president of the Peace Society established in that Republic; and of Mr. John Scoble, representing M. Baron Suringar, vice-president for Holland. On being admitted to an audience with the noble premier, the members of the deputation were severally introduced to the noble lord by Mr. Ewart, who also communicated to his lordship the general character of the congress which the gentlemen present represented, and the scope and object of the address, with the presentation of which they were charged. The address, which was prepared in the French language, was then read at length by M. Visschers. It advocates the principle of universal peace among nations, and urges objections to recourse, under any circumstances, to war. The various arguments advanced in the address were pressed upon the noble lord by Mr. Elihu Burritt, who stated the efforts which had been made, and were still making, by the friends of peace in the United States, to indoctrinate the public mind with peace sentiments, and the policy of kindness and friendship which prevailed in the United States to this country. The Rev. Mr. Richards and Mr. Scoble also spoke, and tendered apologies for the unavoidable absence of their principals, MM. Bouvet and Suringar. Lord John Russell, who had received the deputation with the greatest courtesy, and had paid profound attention to the reading of the address, and to the speakers by whom he had been addressed, adverted to the several propositions embodied in the address, which, he said, should have his attention. His lordship also expressed the deep interest which he, in common with the other members of her Majesty's Government, had felt in the preservation of peace, and his belief that such assemblages as that lately held in Brussels were well calculated to produce a temper of moderation and kindness among the various nations of Europe. The deputation then took their departure highly gratified, not only with their reception, but also with the tone and character of the interview.

PROTESTANT SYNOD OF FRANCE.

This body, at its late sitting for the purpose of re-organizing the French Protestant Church, decided against the use of any authoritative written Creed. This we regard as a very important decision. The Protestant Church of France has taken its stand before the world as a community of Christian believers, free and untrammelled by any humanly devised authority. It is to all intents and purposes, a body of liberal Christians. In consequence of this decision, three Members—Mr. F. Monod, a pastor, and two laymen—withdrew from the Synod, for the purpose of forming a new "orthodox, evangelical body."

The following is a translation, according to the *London Patriot*, of the "Declaration" prepared by the Committee of Eight, appointed by Protestant Synod sitting in Paris. They were unanimous. The draft was adopted by the Synod on the 27th ult.; 73 voices being in its favour, 7 declining to vote, and not one voting against it:—

The General Assembly of Deputies of the Reformed Churches of France to the Members of those Churches:

PARIS, September 27, 1848.

"Dear and well-beloved brethren in Jesus Christ, our Lord.—From the beginning of their labours, your Deputies have satisfied the most sacred of all duties, and the prime wants of their own hearts, by prostrating themselves before the Author of all grace, to give Him thanks for having repaired the chain of our traditions, and called our Church, after an interruption of more than eighty years, to deliberate, through her representatives, upon her dearest interests. At the same time, we have besought Him to bless the work to which we have set our hands, that it may be productive of an abundant and lasting fruits; and, if it is true, as the Divine Word declares, that 'the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace,' we have confidence towards God that our prayer hath already been heard, for we have been kept in peace. You yourselves laid down the course of our proceedings; and we have but obeyed your wishes in taking our stand more especially upon the ground of the Christian life and ecclesiastical organization.

"But, thanks be to God, we have not contented ourselves with the attainment of a negative peace; we have, happily, met each other upon 'the only foundation that can be laid; that is, 'Jesus Christ and him crucified,' our adorable Redeemer. In him we have found, for every faithful member, as well as for the Church collectively, the true

source of life, and, at the same time, the most perfect of bonds. Without denying the glorious past of our Churches, their eminent doctors, their pious martyrs, and the venerable monuments of their faith, we have had no desire to diminish the no less glorious liberty of the children of God asserted by our father; or to proclaim any other authority than that of the Eternal Word. To us, Jesus Christ is, at once, the bulwark of true liberty, since he it is who makes free and delivers; and the bulwark of the faith, since he is its author and finisher. We, therefore, unite with true Christians of all ages who have confessed his name; we acknowledge him, with joy and love, as our only Master, our only Saviour, our only hope in heaven and on earth, where, 'to him every knee must bow, and every tongue confess that he is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.' We desire no other Mediator than he, no other rule than his Word, no other guide than his Spirit, no other life than that which he gives us, no other salvation than that of which he is the author; and we bless God, with overflowing hearts, for having 'so loved the world as to give his only son, that whosoever believeth in him might not perish, but have everlasting life.'

"With these sentiments it is, dear and well-beloved brethren, that we have put our hands to the work of ecclesiastical re-organization which you have confided to us; and with like sentiments it is for you to receive it, in order that it may be effectual and fruitful. The times in which we live are difficult: society totters on all sides upon its shaken foundations; all is passing, all changing, all being renovated around us: but the Word of God abideth firm, and Jesus Christ is still 'the same, yesterday, to-day, and for ever: in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily, and he is ever able to save them that come unto God by him.' Let us cleave to this Divine Deliverer; and, embracing him by faith and love, be changed by him into his own Divine image. Already, under his blessed influence, we have, in the course of our labours, experienced the dispersion of many clouds, the disappearance of many difficulties: may He finish among us and among you the work so happily begun, 'till we all come in the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the fulness of the measure of the stature of Christ.'

"The visible Church, which it is our object to re-construct and improve, is, after all, but the external covering of the Kingdom of God upon earth,—that Kingdom of which the Saviour hath said, that 'it is within us.' In our religious society, there will ever be the spots and imperfections inseparable from our sinful humanity: let it be recognized, at least, in the spirit which animates it, and in the fruits of righteousness, peace, and joy, which its Divine Head causeth it to bring forth.

"Let us unite in imploring that our humble labours, made fruitful by the blessing of Him who in all things giveth the increase, may contribute to this happy result, and be rendered subservient to the progress of truth and charity, to the advancement of the Gospel's reign, to the union of the churches and their members, to the sanctification and salvation of every soul.

"In this hope, dear and well-beloved brethren, we offer you, in conclusion, the cordial salutation of the Apostle: 'The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit, be with you all. Amen.'"

RONGE.—The Vienna Correspondent of the *London Daily News*, says: "Ronge is preaching his new doctrines here with unabated zeal, and with no slight success, his auditors in the Odcon being, every time he lectures, eight or nine thousand strong. He denounces the doctrines of the Trinity, Confessions, the Pope, the Calendar of Saints, Convents, and Monasteries, celibacy of the Clergy, and praying in an unknown tongue."

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