

THE LESSONS OF UNITARIANISM.

THE Unitarian body has a hard struggle for life in Canada. In Toronto, where circumstances seem to be as favorable as possible for the growth of this sect, it remains much in the condition it was in when that city had only one tenth of its present population. In 1881 there were only 2,100 Unitarians in the Dominion.

The average intellectual culture of the people is much higher now than it was twenty years ago, especially in the leading cities. In Toronto alone there are now over two thousand University students and graduates. The population is close upon 200,000, yet there is only one Unitarian chapel in the city, with a congregation less than half what gathers in several of our Churches. We have little to boast of in growth and extension, but in the last two years we have made great progress. The Church in Toronto is becoming alive to its duties and opportunities. The forces that made for strife have been, to a great extent, hushed by the Master's voice rebuking the tempest of party wrangling. Hence, on all sides, like a vigorous plant, the Church is throwing out fresh, strong shoots and roots. The Unitarian body has had no such party cancer to eat out its vitality as the Church has had to suffer and fight, yet it has remained stagnant. Minister after minister has taken charge of the local "cause;" genial, zealous, liberal-hearted leaders have done their best, but though the tide is ever rising higher and higher, filling with deep waters the channels all around, their little pool remains a little pool and nothing more. The good works of this body, its charities, its zeal for education, its earnest reachings out for sympathy, its efforts to make worship a delight, all these we know, we admire, we honor. But still there is no expansion. Their American brethren have been moved by this to come over to help them by a Conference, at which several very able defensive and aggressive addresses were made, challenging public attention.

It is to us a marvel how men so clever and so pious can rest satisfied in the position they occupy as deniers of the claims of Jesus Christ. We judge them not, for the human mind is so great a mystery, that the more we know of it the more are we charitable in judging men's opinions. But we can express the difficulty we feel over accepting the apologies for Unitarianism without questioning the sincerity of those who seem to us to use language in regard to Jesus which is so glaringly inconsistent as to be fantastic. One speaker declared that they believed in "the true divinity of Jesus," but turned this into almost a quibble by saying that "all men are divine," in some sense. We have heard this before, it is quite antique, but age does wither, and custom stales its lack of variety. Another explained the claim made by Jesus in the saying, "I and My Father are one," as simply a mode of expressing the intimacy of the moral relationship between a good man and God! Thus importing into the

language of a Jewish carpenter, who was born nineteen centuries ago, the subtlety of one phase of modern philosophy. Why should the Jews seek to stone Jesus for using language that meant no more than what might have been properly used by any sincere Israelite? And how can Jesus have been so one with the Father, in this sense, as He claimed to be, if all the time He was deceiving the people by asserting claims that really meant nothing? The same method was adopted with other of the Master's sayings. The Sonship of Jesus was explained to be, merely the common fact of all humanity, that we all are sons of God, for He is our Maker. All this appears to us bordering upon paltriness, it does not touch any of the great lines of argument which the champions of the Church have drawn around that impregnable fortress, the Trinity in Unity. We are not concerned now to walk about Zion and tell the towers thereof, but simply point out how utterly lacking in power of any kind is the Unitarian position. These men want Jesus to be as one of themselves, shorn of His Divine power over souls, which is the overwhelming demonstration of His Godhead, and yet to make Him, in some feeble way, an object of worship. They wish to believe every word of the Gospels true, except the distinct statements they contain concerning the Incarnation, and the miraculous works of Jesus. In plain language, they desire to be at one and the same time Christians and sceptics, believers and unbelievers, they seek to make the Gospel narratives, a mixture of divine truths and most undivine falsehoods. The power of Jesus over souls is the most stupendous fact in history. He declared, He, a poor working man, He, despised and rejected of men, that He would draw all men unto Him—and Jesus is fulfilling His own prophecy.

Unitarianism has lessons. Its condition shows that it is outside the Church of Christ. It is grafted on to the vine, but is not of it, the sap of divine life through the Sacraments does not flow into this artificial, this dead branch. We have recently been told that the great defect of the modern Church is "sacerdotalism," get rid of that, implied a speaker, and the flood gates of divine grace would be opened! But the Unitarian body prides itself in having no trace of sacerdotalism, and it is paralyzed—that lesson is plain enough.

By the same anti-Church teacher we have been told to the point of nausea by such constant iteration, that the laity can only be won by getting rid of sacramentarianism. Yet the Unitarians who have no Sacraments at all, fail abjectly and hopelessly in attracting the laity. Unitarianism is, therefore, a demonstration of the absolute falsity of the contentions of the anti-Church school.

No! the acuteness of rationalistic interpretations, the absence of sacerdotalism, even the charities of this sect are mere vanity as cures for the fatal, original, birth sin of Unitarianism—it has no sacramental union with the vine. The sect is a spectacle to the world of the absolute impossibility of building a Church on the name of a man, even such a man as this

sect allows Jesus to have been. He who said, "I will build My Church," knew that in Him dwelt the fulness of the Godhead, the Church of which He is Head is therefore Divine.

VISIT OF THE BISHOP OF JAPAN.

THE Church in Canada is seldom honoured with a visit from a Bishop labouring in a foreign Missionary Field. This is to be regretted as such visits would do good in stirring up the members of the Church to a deeper realization of the real nature and practical importance of Foreign Missionary work. Now that Canada has assumed the position of a great highway to the East, we may look forward to the more frequent visits such as that with which we have been this week favoured by Bishop Bickersteth, of Japan. All who heard his address at Trinity College, will join in hoping that Foreign Missionary Bishops will in future remember the Church in Canada, and the strength which their words bring to us, to themselves, and to their work.

It had been arranged that the Bishop should spend Sunday, Nov. 4th, at Trinity, preaching in the Chapel in the morning, and addressing the Theological and Missionary Association, as well as some city congregation, later in the day. Unfortunately the Bishop, who is in charge of a party of co-workers recently added to his staff, was obliged to press on, leaving himself but a few hours in Toronto.

His statements with regard to the extraordinary opening now before the Church in Japan, and the tokens of special blessing resting upon that work, are likely to produce good fruit. About two years ago, two young graduates of Trinity offered themselves to the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Board for Missionary work in Japan. The Board felt at that time, unable to accept the offer. During the visit of the Canadian Bishops to England, arrangements were made with the S.P.G. by which that Society undertook to "receive and place upon its list and pay out of the funds, contributed from Canada, any well qualified candidates who may be presented to it by the Canadian Church for work in India, Japan, and other heathen countries." This agreement has been confirmed by Resolution of the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Board of the Church in Canada at its recent meeting in St. John, N.B. It is expected that in answer to the Bishop's appeal a Mission from Trinity University may be sent to aid in the work connected with the University of Tokyo, or for such other similar work as the Bishop may designate. Such a band as the University of Cambridge sent some ten years since under the leadership of the Bishop himself (then the Rev. E. Bickersteth, Fellow and Lecturer of Pembroke College) to North India, might, under the Divine blessing, be almost an incalculable power for good in the present condition of Japanese life and thought. It would also be a fitting sequel to the good work done by another Trinity graduate of many years standing, the Venerable C. A. Shaw, M.A., now in charge of the pro-Cathe-