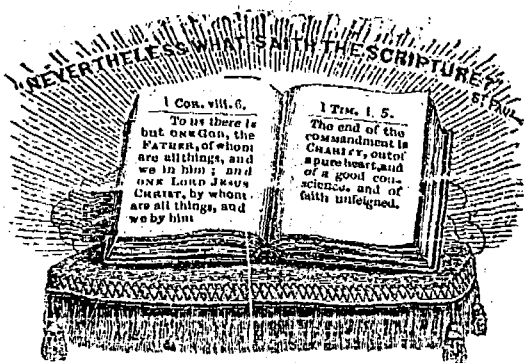


THE BIBLE

TRUTH, HOLINESS,



CHRISTIAN

LIBERTY, LOVE.

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Poetry.

MUTUAL FORGIVENESS.

"Then came Peter to Him, and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? * * * Until seventy times seven."—Matt. xviii. 21, 23.

Go, look across yon wide expanse,
Where ocean's countless waves extend,
Far as the straining eye can glance,
There seems nor bound nor end.

Look upwards to the heavenly plain,
Glistening with beauteous orbs, and bright;
Thou canst not count the starry train,
Nor tell their stretch of light.

So is the mercy, so the love
Of Him who made that deep, blue sea,
And bade the stars of glory rove
Throughout immensity.

Nay, infinite the wondrous reach
Of God's forgiving, healing love;
Beyond the grasp of human speech,
Or angel-tongue above.

Our mighty debt we cannot count,
God only can its fulness see;
Yet He remits the whole amount,
And speaks the debtor free.

How, then, can pardoned man restrain
Compassion's yearnings in his breast?
How bear to give his fellow pain,
Unblessing, and unblest?

No scanty measure he will know,
Who feels unnumber'd sins forgiven;
Nor seven times only mercy show,
But seventy times and seven.

Oft as his brother may transgress
Will pitying love assert her claim,
And bid him whisper penitence, and bless
All in a Saviour's name.

Father of mercy shed within
Each heart they love, and hope of Heaven;
May each forgive his brother's sin,
As he has been forgiven!

THE KEY OF THE COFFIN.

FROM THE GERMAN OF JEAN PAUL.

A mother knelt o'er her loved one's tomb,
And her eyes were red with weeping,
For her cherished flower in its morning bloom,
Was now in the cold earth sleeping.

The coffin's key was in her hand,
In her heart was deepest sadness;
And her spirit yearned for the better land,
Where grief would be turned to gladness.

"I will keep the key," she calmly said,
"Of thy dwelling dark and lonely,
So that none shall ever thy rest invade,
But the mother who loves thee only."

She turned her eyes to Heaven's bright dome,
Where the silent stars were beaming,—
And her spirit caught, in child-like tone,
These words of holiest meaning,—

"Throw away the key! O mother dear,
For the coffin holds not thy child,
He has risen from earth, and dwelleth here;
For the Savior upon him smiled.

ANNIVERSARY WEEK IN BOSTON.

BOOK AND PAMPHLET SOCIETY.

The public exercises in which Unitarian Christians are more particularly interested, on Anniversary Week, were opened with a sermon by Rev. G. W. Briggs, of Plymouth, before the Book and Pamphlet Society, at Federal Street Church, on Sunday evening

May 28. Mr. Briggs took for his text, 2 Cor. iv. 13—"We believe, and therefore speak."

In these words, said the preacher, Paul reveals the impulse which sent him onward in his career of proclaiming the gospel to the world. He had been called out of darkness into marvellous light; had been made to see the excellence and glory of spiritual things; had experienced in his own heart the power of the redemption of Jesus; and there was an inward moral necessity of uttering what he saw and felt, to his fellow-men. To this great spiritual principle contained in the text, the preacher first called the attention of his hearers, and then presented the claims of the Society for the promotion of those objects they were assembled.

Mr. Briggs having discussed the broad principle contained in his text, proceeded to the special object before him, which was to recommend the Book and Pamphlet Society, as an organization capable of effecting much good in a silent and unobtrusive way. He dwelt on the power and influence of the Press in modifying public sentiment, and referred to certain tokens of encouragement, which afforded good ground to hope for a wider extension of more enlarged and liberal views of religion.

After Mr. Briggs excellent discourse a collection was taken up in aid of the funds of the Society.

PUBLIC MEETING OF THE MASSACHUSETTS BIBLE SOCIETY.

The President, Rev. Dr. Pierce, opened the 39th annual meeting with a very appropriate and excellent address, in which he paid a passing tribute to the memory of officers of the Society who had deceased since they last met—Ex-President Adams, Hon. Samuel Haven, and Rev. Dr. Codman.

Bishop Eastburn followed with reading from the Scriptures, the sixtieth chapter of the prophecies of Isaiah.

The Corresponding Secretary, Rev. Dr. Parkman, next read the Annual Report; a document which was alluded to by several of the speakers during the meeting, as one of great excellence and value.

The Report was seconded by Rev. Mr. Huntington of Boston, who remarked that in compliance with a most appropriate custom, the Anniversaries of the week were introduced with a grateful acknowledgment to God for the gift of his Inspired Word. Most suitable is it to avow our indebtedness to it as the fountain of every good conception; the corner-stone of every charitable institution; the foundation of our whole religious system. Let this meeting, then, be like the invocation of a blessing upon the religious and philanthropic services of the week.

Among the various topics which the Report presented, said he, no point carried our convictions, and the assent of our feelings, more than the tribute to deceased members of the society. Mr. H., characterized this as simple, just, faithful and affectionate, and, as he passed along, added his own tribute, which was cordial, happy, and illustrative of the characters and virtues of those commemorated. Every good man's faith, said Mr. H., is a testimony to the Bible. What an impressive array might be gathered from all departments of human thought and human action; from statesmanship, jurisprudence, literature, reform, philanthropy, and from daily enterprise, in favor of the divineness of the Scriptures! What a vast amount of talent offers its homage to the Bible! To see a strong mind adorned with all accomplishments thus yielding its profound obedience to the precepts and doctrines of the Bible, proves that it is from God, the "Fountain Light of all our seeing."

The Scriptures diffuse their beauty over human life. It was by daily communion with the Scriptures that Adams was so faithful in his public duties,—the speaker was about to say, "faithful only he among the faithless,"—that Hubbard (the Secretary had added the name of Judge Hubbard to those mentioned by the President,) was so pure, and Codman so devoted and benevolent. For an idea of a perfect state of society, for a perfect standard of character, and for a perfect conception of God, we are indebted to the

Bible. Nothing approaches it, in all that has been devised and published by man, in all ancient or modern literature. Well did the great novelist say, at the close of a life devoted to most various reading, "There is no book but one for me." The Bible is older than the Fathers, truer than Tradition, wiser than Councils, more learned than Universities, more infallible than Popes. The doctrines of the Bible derive not authority from man; they rest upon the supernatural authority of our Lord Jesus Christ.

What most concerns us to know, is, that the Bible offers its blessedness, and imparts its influence, not more to the high than to the low. Its simplicity is its highest beauty. They mistake, who suppose its excellence consists in its grandeur of diction. It is, that it can be understood and appreciated by the humblest peasant. Mr. H., quoted a beautiful saying of Coleridge, that the fairest flower in cottage easement is not half so fair as the Bible gleaming through the lower panes of the window. The speaker also narrated a touching story of a fugitive slave whom he had seen, and who told him of his being taught to read by his little boy, at his hearth, with the light of torch; and when he could spell out one sentence for himself, he leaped up and shouted for joy.

Mr. Huntington concluded with asking, Who could be so indifferent and sluggish, as not to aid in the diffusion of the Bible? Who not pray for the swifter flight of the angel in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto every nation and people.

Rev. Rollin H. Neale, of the First Baptist Church in this city, was the next speaker, who offered the following resolution:—

Resolved,—That every new development of human nature, and every fresh page in human history, show forth the wisdom and beneficence of the word of God.

Mr. Neale then proceeded to speak on the resolution—which was the beneficence of the Bible in its adaptation to man.—It was needed for the support and regulation of States, as well as of man. Napoleon, who would change his religion with his uniform, was yet anxious, as Emperor of France, to introduce the Bible among the people. One of the early ministers of France said to Louis Philippe, France must have religion. The only true foundation of a nation is morality, and the foundation of morality is religion, and this again rests on the Bible.—The speaker also alluded to Mordecai M. Noah, the Jew, who having travelled much among nations where the Bible was not known, exclaimed on his return, I thank God that I am again in a Christian land. It is because the Bible has gained its way in the earth, that liberty is waking up among the nations. Happy for our own institutions, that they originated with men who were imbued with the spirit, and familiar with the truths, of the Bible. Let the Bible affect the lives of the people and no one could take their liberties from them—they would be for ever safe. Let the Bible be our guard, and it would prove a wall of fire round about our nation.

The Bible, said the speaker, was made for man. There is nothing good without it. This said he, is an age of reform. And we have a strange kind of reformers—men engaged in various enterprises of reform by which they seek to purify and elevate the land, and yet would discard the Bible. It reminded him of a lecture he once heard Dr. Sewall of Washington city deliver on the subject of Phrenology. The Doctor was no special friend to this science, and in the course of the lecture he observed that the head of Voltaire was remarkable for its development of reverence and conscientiousness. It was the answer of the Phrenologist, he said, that the reason why Voltaire became an infidel was, he had so much reverence that he was shocked at the representations made of the Deity in the Bible and in the Gospel of Christ.

At this point of his address, Mr. Neale paid a noble tribute to the memory of Channing, in which it was gratifying to see how fully the speaker could appreciate without jealousy, and declare with no stinted praise, all that was good in one who nevertheless differed from him in faith. Channing, said he, was the Prince of Reformers. He was the friend, not only of

the poor, and of the slave, but of every body. His great heart beat for all. His sympathies were well balanced. His kindness to one did not re-act in unkindness to others. His keen sense of wrong did not take the form of hatred of the wrong-doer. No bitterness was mixed up in his philanthropy. I recollect, said the speaker, hearing him in Faneuil Hall, in the midst of that excited throng who were gathered to decide whether liberty of discussion should live or be destroyed. He stood up, dignified and perfectly tranquil, his face beaming with benignity toward the men who were insulting him as he spoke. Whence this spirit? It was from the Bible, to which he gave the reference and homage of his soul. Differ, though I do, said the speaker, from some of the religious views of the distinguished individual of whom I am speaking, I cannot but accord to him the tribute of devotedness to the Bible.

One Niagara, said the speaker, is enough for a continent, or a world. The sound thereof, proclaiming the power and greatness of God, has gone through the earth. But still the innumerable fountains, and the silver streams flowing everywhere, better proclaim the infinite beneficence of God.

Rev. Dr. J. B. Waterbury, of Bowdoin St. Church in this city, next offered the following resolution:—

Resolved,—That whilst, as mere philanthropists, we rejoice in the incidental advantages of the Bible to the intellectual, social, and political condition of mankind; and for this reason should wish to see it universally diffused, yet, as Christians, our highest and most urgent motive in giving it general circulation, is its adaptability to save the soul from sin, and its fearful consequences.

The longer I have studied this Volume, said the speaker, the more toil, both mental and spiritual, I have concentrated upon it, the deeper is my reverence for the Bible. And instead of rising to make a eulogistic speech, I feel that I ought to veil my face, and exclaim, Holy, Holy, Holy!

The Bible bears the signature of the Divine Hand. The Law was written by the finger of God. At length He came who spake as never man spake, and what he spake, that the Holy Ghost has written.

Dr. Waterbury spoke forcibly and justly of the introduction of the Bible into schools. He lamented that there should be a question as to the propriety of its use. For his own part he would have his children familiar with the Bible—with the beautiful story of Joseph—with the sublime lyrics of David and Isaiah, with the teachings of Jesus that distilled like the dew. Still he would not forget that no abiding good comes until the heart is touched. He loved and revered the Bible for its various literary excellences, which he described, but still more because it was the power of God unto salvation through the faith that is in Christ Jesus.

Rev. Mr. Woart of Christ's Church in this city, concluded the series of addresses, by offering the following resolution:—

Resolved,—That union of effort consistent with principle, is of great efficiency in promoting the circulation of the Scriptures, especially when that principle is attended by a corresponding example.

Mr. Woart said, that while his whole soul was engaged in his own peculiar views of the ministry and in the way of salvation, and he would like to have them received by every body, yet he could cheerfully co-operate with others in the Bible enterprise because others were willing to spread that book, from which he drew his own opinions. It was sometimes remarked that because individuals thus united in behalf of a common object, they gave up their differences of opinion as unessential. For his own part he wished it to be understood that he felt his own religious opinions to be essential. He relinquished none of them, whether on the subject of the Ministry, the Church, the nature of the Son of God, or the way of salvation. True charity is love.

Mr. Woart said that he would not introduce here anything which might not be acceptable to all; but he would do it; however, elsewhere, for he held his faith, as contained in the Book of Common Prayer, to be essential.

The speaker related an anecdote of a seaman who assigned as a reason for his neglect of the Bible, that it was a fiddle to play any tune upon.