

chosen. Nevertheless, in spite of the many weighty considerations solemnly and feelingly urged by the prophet to dis-nade them from their purpose, they obstinately persisted, saying "nay, but we will have a king over us;" we have made up our minds to run all hazards; "we will be like all the nations;—we will have a king to judge us, and go out before us, and fight our battles."

In every age of the world there have appeared among men a few comparatively solitary individuals, who evinced a strong predilection to rule, and tyrannize over their fellow men; every age has had its Nimrod. Such, however, are the exceptions; it is a notorious fact that mankind in general prefer to be subjects rather than kings,—to be ruled, rather than to rule: were it not that this disposition to submit to authority is a human propensity, the history of the world had not furnished so many instances of a large proportion of the human race cringing under the despotic rule of a single fellow mortal. Only think of the Russian Autocrat with sixty millions or more at his beck,—with a territory larger than all the rest of Europe;—thousands of his servile subjects princes—rich men;—myriads of them able bodied, mighty men of valour. How has the Czar attained to such authority? He owes it to the servile disposition in man whose language is "we will have a king over us."

But, perhaps, the most striking instance that can be furnished is exemplified in the history of Britain. It is true a goodly proportion of her people have been for centuries the stern opponents of despotism, and the sincere lovers, and zealous assertors of true liberty both civil and religious. Once and again has the nation, prompted by the teachings of her noble, and generous sons, arisen in her might, and snapt asunder the chains of the despot. One who dared to try the experiment of governing without consulting the people's representatives contrary to the laws of the realm, was, after long forbearance, hurled from his throne, and made to atone for his temerity with his head. Many of Britain's sons were made to "cry out in those days because of the king which they had chosen;" and long, and sad, and bloody was the struggle it cost them to rid themselves of their infatuated king.

I have said the race generally have evinced a decided disposition to submit themselves to despotic authority; and here we meet with a very-remarkable anomaly, there being at the same time, in the human breast a love of liberty strong as the strongest principle that exists in human nature: for notwithstanding the servile disposition evinced by men generally, no sooner have they felt themselves entangled in the meshes of despotism than they have groaned for liberty as the dearest of earthly blessings, vicing in importance even with life itself:—so that it is no more certain that men will subject themselves to despotic rule than it is that they will cry out in the day

that they feel their thrall because of the king which they have chosen. It is frequently the case however, that when no hope of deliverance can be entertained, the poor victims of despotism settle down in a state of perfect callousness, with scarcely a lingering desire for emancipation.

Nor is it in civil matters only that the disposition in question is seen to develope itself. Would that it were! But though christianity be as much opposed to despotism as light is to darkness yet this servility of disposition in man has been manifested in religious or ecclesiastical affairs even more, if possible, than in civil matters. Even in the face of apostolic exhortations and admonitions church members cried "nay but we will have a king over us;" and owing to the servile propensity even in christian men, an ecclesiastical despotism was allowed to spring up and grow till it filled the world; and this the most horrid of all the despotisms that the world ever saw, was no doubt, in its first stages at least, cherished even by christian men, in their sad infatuation they said "we will have a king over us;" and alas! alas! many,—very many of the saints of the Most High were made to cry out during a long,—long,—dark and dreary night because of the king which their fathers had chosen.

In process of time God raised up a Luther, and other *Greuthearts* to assert the liberties of his church; and they did assert them successfully to a considerable extent; but what a struggle! And yet the king,—THE MAN OF SIN, maintains his sway over a great part of nominal christendom.

If we survey the present aspect of the christian church, with all the reformation effected;—if we listen to the reply to those who would exhort christians to "stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made them free, do we not hear the peremptory demand and resclution of the elders of Israel sounding and reiterating from every quarter "nay, but we will have a king over us?" "to judge us, and to go out before us, and to fight our battles;" and so it invariably happens those who will have such rulers, find them for the exceptions to the general rule are at all times sufficiently numerous to supply the demand.

Let no one imagine that we are favourable to anarchy either in civil or ecclesiastical affairs; or that we have the least objection to kingly government, if it be of a character similar to that under which we have the happiness to live; far from it; but we do hold it to be both impolitic and unwise for men whether as members of the body politic, or of Christ's body, the church, to set up over themselves rulers invested with *irresponsible* power.

Z. F.

#### CANADA BAPTIST UNION.

At the general meeting held in September last, the Superintendent of Colportage reported that an auspicious beginning had been made in the self-supporting