

Technical and Bibliographic Notes / Notes techniques et bibliographiques

The Institute has attempted to obtain the best original copy available for scanning. Features of this copy which may be bibliographically unique, which may alter any of the images in the reproduction, or which may significantly change the usual method of scanning are checked below.

- Coloured covers /
Couverture de couleur
- Covers damaged /
Couverture endommagée
- Covers restored and/or laminated /
Couverture restaurée et/ou pelliculée
- Cover title missing /
Le titre de couverture manque
- Coloured maps /
Cartes géographiques en couleur
- Coloured ink (i.e. other than blue or black) /
Encre de couleur (i.e. autre que bleue ou noire)
- Coloured plates and/or illustrations /
Planches et/ou illustrations en couleur
- Bound with other material /
Relié avec d'autres documents
- Only edition available /
Seule édition disponible
- Tight binding may cause shadows or distortion
along interior margin / La reliure serrée peut
causer de l'ombre ou de la distorsion le long de la
marge intérieure.

- Additional comments /
Commentaires supplémentaires:

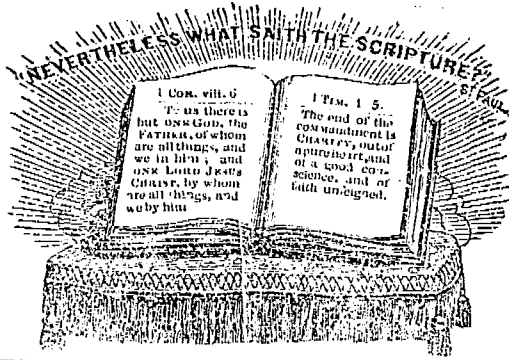
L'Institut a numérisé le meilleur exemplaire qu'il lui a été possible de se procurer. Les détails de cet exemplaire qui sont peut-être uniques du point de vue bibliographique, qui peuvent modifier une image reproduite, ou qui peuvent exiger une modification dans la méthode normale de numérisation sont indiqués ci-dessous.

- Coloured pages / Pages de couleur
- Pages damaged / Pages endommagées
- Pages restored and/or laminated /
Pages restaurées et/ou pelliculées
- Pages discoloured, stained or foxed/
Pages décolorées, tachetées ou piquées
- Pages detached / Pages détachées
- Showthrough / Transparence
- Quality of print varies /
Qualité inégale de l'impression

- Includes supplementary materials /
Comprend du matériel supplémentaire

- Blank leaves added during restorations may
appear within the text. Whenever possible, these
have been omitted from scanning / Il se peut que
certaines pages blanches ajoutées lors d'une
restauration apparaissent dans le texte, mais,
lorsque cela était possible, ces pages n'ont pas
été numérisées.

THE BIBLE



CHRISTIAN.

Truth, Holiness,

Liberty, Love.

VOL. III.

MONTREAL, FEBRUARY, 1846.

No. 2.

CHRIST THE FOUNDATION.

For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.—1 Cor. iii. 11.

Jesus is the foundation of the Church. It is built upon him as the chief cornerstone. This figure is not uncommon with the writers of the New Testament. In more than one instance they speak of the Church, or the company of believers, as a Temple, each believer one of the stones of which it is formed, and Jesus himself as the chief foundation, or corner stone. Agreeably to this idea, Jesus is represented in the text above quoted, as the only foundation on which the church can stand, and in which believers should trust.

The church is that society or collection of the good who have been brought home to God and been fitted for heaven, through the instrumentality of the dispensations of grace upon earth. It is a permanent body existing alike in all ages. It is one body though of many members. It must then have some common head, and common bond of union; and that is Christ. The members are united in him as the branches in the vine, and draw nourishment and support from one stock. If there be any other head, bond of union, source of nourishment and strength, it ceases to be the Church; and those individual members who abide not in him, are like branches severed from the vine, "cast forth and withered." Without him, they can do nothing. They can find neither life, nor light, nor support, nor the power to bring forth fruit.

The believers at Corinth seem not sufficiently to have considered this; and hence the apostle rebukes them as carnal. Instead of being satisfied with the authority of Christ, they separated from him and from one another in an unwise contention concerning the superiority of favorite teachers—whom they thoughtlessly exalted to be their masters, although admonished that "one only was their master." The reprimand of the apostle is here recorded as a warning to all who should afterwards believe. Yet by how many has it been unheeded! Every age has witnessed other men, and fallible men, set up at the head of the corner, instead of that elect and precious One whom God appointed. As the Samaritans erected a temple on Gerizem in opposition to that at Jerusalem, so the sects in christendom have often erected some authority in preference to that of Christ. There is still too much of this. "I am of Paul, and I of Apollos, and I of Cephas," is still a cry too frequently heard. Faith is yet established on the speculations of fallible men, and the salvation of the soul rested on the teachings of human wisdom.

This is an error frequently and pointedly censured by Jesus and his Apostles. It is virtually, though not professedly, a renunciation of his authority, a rejection of his rule, a rebellion against his government. The man who surrenders his judgment to the dictation of other men, instead of appealing to the written word of Christ's instruction; and the church, which fetters itself by articles drawn up in language which man's wisdom teaches, instead of walking in the wide liberty of the charter of God's truth,—have laid another foundation than that which is laid, and are obnoxious to heavy rebuke.—*Rev. H. Ware.*

THE DEATH-BEDS OF THE GREAT AND THE GOOD.

It has been said of the Unitarian faith, that it was a good religion to live by, but not to die by. The palpable inconsistency of the two terms of such a proposition wholly destroys its truth, and renders it an absurdity. For certainly the faith that is not good to live by, cannot for that reason be good to die by. And on the other hand, the faith that is good to live by, must therefore be the one that is good to die by; and the converse statement must hold equally good, that the faith for death must be the faith for life. What is sufficient for the temptations of life, must disarm the terrors of death. In this respect death and life are one; what prepares man for one, prepares him for the other; and what unfits him for one, also disqualifies him for the other. The good men to live are the good men to die, and the bad men to live are the bad men to die; though they may be under the influence of the drugs they take as medicines, or the almost equally intoxicating excitement of cer-

tain religious views and the conversation and prayers of zealous friends, and they may die in a species of unreal elation of mind, and kind of insane transport. So likewise on the other side, the effects of the disorder under which they suffer and expire, is sometimes such as to dim the intellect and distress the heart of the best men. Dr. Johnson thought of dying with horror, and Professor Charles Simon shrank from the last conflict with the great conqueror of all, with undissolved fear. Temperament, early education, disease, medicine, the physical state of the system,—many causes like these may intervene to determine the state of the departing, independently of faith, or life, sin or holiness.

But when all this has been conceded, there yet remains a testimony from the last hours of great and good men, which ought not to be forgotten. When the soul has been about to cut loose from the shores of time, and sail forth into unknown seas, it has often uttered itself sublimely and devoutly. It has summed up a whole life of godliness in a few immortal words, and drawn its mantle around it with dignity, as it retired from the present stage of being.

Nor have there been wanting to that faith which is every where spoken against, noble examples of all that was resigned in death, as of all that was holy and beautiful in life.

To a friend, Leake said, when in expectation of death, "This life is a scene of vanity, which soon passes away, and affords no solid satisfaction, but in the consciousness of doing well, and in the hopes of another life. This is what I can say from experience; and what you will find to be true, when you come to make up the account." To one sitting by his bedside, the day before his death, he remarked that "he had lived long enough, and thanked God for having passed his days so comfortably." So departed the great English philosopher.

So too did Sir Isaac Newton die; for when subject to the severest paroxysms of the disease of which he died, he was never heard to utter the least complaint, nor to express the least impatience. Dr. Doddridge gave him the credit of manifesting his firm faith in the divine revelation, in the most genuine fruits of substantial virtue and piety.

Milton was long a severe sufferer by the gout, but a cotemporary states that he was very cheerful in his fits of pain, and sang; and when he departed, it was quietly and silently on the Sabbath: which has been the last day to not a few of the great and good in history.

Dr. Bowditch died in the most happy frame of mind. To his saddened friends he said, "I feel no gloom within me: why should you wear it on your faces?" To one bidding him good night, he replied, "No, say not, good night, but good morning, for the next time we meet will be on the morning of the resurrection." When in the act of dying, he called his family around his bedside, and said, addressing each one by name, "You see I can distinguish you all; and I now give you all my parting blessing. The time is come, Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy Word;" and the last whisper that was audible as he sank away, was "beautiful."

Dr. Parker when asked what he should do, if he was certain of dying in three or four days, answered, "Just what I am doing now, and intend to do tomorrow;" and when brought to the decisive hour, he expired in great distress of body, though in great quietness, and even cheerfulness of spirit. His conduct during his last days was described by a friend in these words—"All was natural, all was himself, his every-day self; yet there was a dignity and solemnity which was felt, if it were not seen by the common eye."

Dr. Worcester requested one of his brethren to pray with him that "he might have no will of his own;" and a short time before his death, hearing the clock strike seven, he enquired whether it were morning or evening, and learning that it was the latter, he answered "I hope I shall be in heaven before seven in the morning." And he requested the account of the death of Christ to be read to him from the Gospel of Matthew, which were the last words he heard on earth.

The restless nights of the dying Bancroft were soothed by his repeating the poet's words—

"If piety has marked my steps,
And love my actions formed,
And purity possessed my heart,
And truth my lips adorned;
If I've grown old in serving Him,
My Father and my God,
I need not fear the closing scene,
Nor dread the appointed road."

"Give them (his family and people) my dying love," said Dr. Thayer to his daughter, when he felt the sudden hand of death, far from home while on a journey: "tell them I cheerfully submit. I die in the faith I have preached. I die in peace, and in the hopes of the Gospel."

When Dr. Ware, Jr., felt himself drawing near the close of life, he called on one of his daughters to repeat that beautiful hymn by Milman, beginning,

"Brother, thou art gone before us."

And the last passage of the Scriptures he was able to hear, was the 23d Psalm—"The Lord is my shepherd." &c. During his sickness, he remarked that "his mind was crowded with thoughts, precious thoughts of death and immortality."

And when the great spirit of Channing was in its last hour on earth, he requested that the Beatitudes of Christ might be read to him, and expired in the act of prayer to God.

The last sickness of Bernard Whitman was made beautiful by his holy trust and perfect submission to the will of God. To a friend who said to him, "Your heaven has already commenced," he replied, "Yes, I have indeed a foretaste of heaven; I have communion with heavenly spirits. Some of my dreams have been most delightful. When I leave my friends on earth I shall go to a larger family in heaven. One short line expresses all I feel and wish to say, 'Father, thy will be done!'" When he perceived himself to be dying, he said, "O Father, receive my spirit. I die in peace with all. My firm faith in Christ supports me now."

The last words of Judge Story were those in which he commended himself in prayer to Almighty God. His deathbed was illuminated with the Christian hope, full of immortality.

Judge Smith found pleasure in repeating, by night, while suffering severely in his last sickness, the beautiful lines,

"God of my life look gently down:
Behold the pains I feel;
But I am dumb before thy throne,
Nor dare dispute thy will."

"I have long," he said "considered myself a minute man, like the soldiers in our revolutionary war, ready to go at a moment's warning." When the verse was repeated to him,

"Jesus can make a dying bed
Seem soft as downy pillows are,
While on his breast I lean my head,
And breathe my life out sweetly there,"

he repeatedly inclined his head in assent, and smiled with evident pleasure, though he was unable to speak.

Dr. Priestley, the day before his death, while his son was reading to him the 11th chapter of John, dwelt some time on the advantage he had derived from reading the Scriptures daily, and that it had been to him a source of the purest pleasure. To a friend coming in, he said, "We shall all meet again in another and better world." And when his grand-children were brought to his bedside, before they retired for the night, he said to them, "I am going to sleep as well as you: for death is only a long, sound sleep in the grave, and we shall meet again."

So has the faith as it is in Jesus Christ, in its unadulterated simplicity, sustained the great and the good in the final struggle: good to live by, it has been also good, yea, glorious to die by. These are a very few cases out of many. They might be multiplied by countless instances, in humbler life, and among private Christians of those who have fallen asleep in Jesus, and the blessed hopes of his Gospel, with a courage unappalled by the darkness of the grave, and proof against the sting and terror of death.

"Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his:" but we must pray and labor that the life of the righteous may be ours, before we can hope that such may be our death.—*Unitarian Annual Register.*

GIVE US ARGUMENT—NOT PITY.

One method of attack upon liberal Christianity is to awaken sentiments of pity and horror against it. I am not about to deny that this is very honestly done; but I do say that it is an unworthy mode of assault: that it appeals not to the judgment, but to the passions; and that it is very apt to be the strongest, in the weakest hands. To put on a solemn countenance, to speak in sepulchral tones of awe and lamentation, to warn men against this doctrine, is easy. But, alas! for the weakness of men, if it is an instrument easily wielded, it is also an instrument of terrible power with the superstitious, the timid, and unreflecting. A considerate man, a man who respects the minds and consciences of those he has to deal with, will be cautious how he takes hold of such a weapon as this—a weapon which prevails chiefly with human weakness, which strikes the very part of our nature that most needs to be supported, which wounds only the infirm, and overwhelms only the prostrate. For I need not say, that it is precisely with minds in this situation that tones of pity and horror have the greatest influence. A man of independent thought and vigorous understanding, who could better afford to bear this sort of influence, is the very person who will not yield to it. He will say indignantly, "That is nothing to the purpose. That does not satisfy me. I did not ask you to warn me, but to enlighten me. I did not ask you to weep, but to reason. No doubt you feel as you say, and very sincerely feel thus; it is not your sincerity that I question, but your argument. You degrade my understanding, when you attempt to work upon it in this manner. I was made to think. The Lord of conscience has given me liberty to enquire; and I will not be subject to any other influence. God has called me to liberty; and man shall not lay me under bondage."

Nor is this all. Pity and horror prove nothing, indeed; but it is moreover a matter of history, that truth—whether our doctrine be true or not—that Truth has always made its progress amidst the pity and horror of men. Yes; it has come thus, amidst sighings, and doubtings, and shakings of the head, and warnings of danger, and forebodings of evil. Yes; it has held its way, through tokens like these; with dark countenances about it, and loud denunciations, and woeful anathemas. It has stood up and spoken in the person of its great Teacher; and men have "gnashed their teeth and rent their garments," at its voice. It has gone forth into the world, with its devoted apostles, and been accounted "the offscourings of all things." It has prophesied in sackcloth, with its faithful witnesses, and borne the cross of ignominy and reproach. The angry Sanhedrim, the bloody Inquisition, the dungeon, the rack, the martyr's stake, have testified to the abhorrence of men against the truth!

I do not say that the truth I hold is worthy of this glorious fellowship. But I say that its being joined in any measure to this fellowship does not prove it false. And if it be true, as I solemnly believe it is, then let not its advocates claim entire exemption from the trials of their elder brethren. It will go on, and men will speak evil of it, and they will struggle against it, and they will lament and weep;—but it will be as if they lifted up their voice to withstand the rolling seasons, or struggled against the chariot wheels of the morning, or poured out vain tears upon the mighty stream that is to bear all before it. I say this more in sorrow, I hope, than in scorn. I am sorry for those who cannot see this matter as I think they ought to see it. I am sorry for the unhappiness, for the honest grief, which a misplaced pity, and an uncharitable zeal, and a spirit of reproach and condemnation, give them. But their grief, save for its own sake, moves me not at all. I consider it as a penance for their mistaken hostility to truth, rather, than a fair admonition of error. I believe, and can believe no less, that this unhappiness is simply the fruit of error. Uncharitableness must be unhappy; anger must be painful; exclusion, and anathematizing, and dooming sincere brethren to perdition, must be works of bitterness and grief. I wonder not, that a man should weep while he is doing them; my only wonder is, that he can ever do them, and not weep!—*Dr. Dewey.*

SCRIPTURAL REASONS
for Disbelieving
THE DOCTRINE OF THE TRINITY.

We draw from the Sacred Volume the following reasons for rejecting the Doctrine of the Trinity :

I. The terms which are necessary to the very statement of the doctrine, and which cannot well be avoided by those who hold it, are not found in Scripture. The words Trinity—trium—Jehovah Jesus—God—man—are not in the Scripture. We nowhere find the expression *God the Son*, but always the *Son of God*; nowhere *God the Holy Spirit*, but the *Spirit of God*, or the *Holy Spirit*. The expressions first person, second person, third person, three persons, are not found. Now if the very words, which are necessary to express the doctrine, are not in the Scriptures, how can we suppose the doctrine itself to be there? If the sacred writers meant to teach this doctrine, how is it possible they should not sometimes have used the words which are used in regard to it?

II. The doctrine of the Trinity is nowhere stated in express terms, while that of the *sole divinity of the Father* is taught in language the most explicit and direct. There are only three texts which speak of the Father, Son, and Spirit, in formal connexion; and neither of these declares them to be three equal persons in the Divinity. How is this possible if the doctrine were true? that the Apostles should never name them together but three times, and then not speak of their being one God?

Indeed I am wrong, to say three texts; there are only two; for one of the three passages to which I referred is well known to be no part of the Bible—viz. 1 John v. 7. "There are three that bear record in heaven, the Father the Word, and the Holy Ghost; and these three are one." This verse, every body knows, was never written by St. John, but has been added to this epistle since his day. John wrote in Greek; but the old manuscripts of the Greek Testament do not contain it. It is found only in the Latin. It has therefore, no right to a place in the New Testament, and ought to be rejected. It is rejected by all impartial scholars of every denomination, who have inquired concerning it. There are, therefore, only two texts which formally name the Father, Son, and Spirit, in connexion.

The first is the form of Baptism, (Matthew xxviii. 19) "Baptizing them into the name of the Father, the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Here the three are placed in connexion. But observe the mode of expression. Does it say, that they are three persons?—No: it does not say that they are persons at all. Does it assert, that they constitute one God?—No. Does it say that each is God?—No such thing. Does it say that they are all equal?—No such thing. Does it say they are all to be worshipped? No. Then it does not teach the doctrine of the Trinity. If it neither declares them to be three persons, nor equal to each other, nor each to be God, nor each to be worshipped, then it does not teach the doctrine in question.

The same is true of the other text, (2 Cor. xiii. 14.) "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost be with you all." It is not here said that each is God, nor that all are equal, nor that all are to be worshipped, nor that all together constitute one. Therefore it does not teach the doctrine of the Trinity. Nay, it virtually denies it. For as you observe, it does not speak of the *Father, Son, and Spirit*; but of *Jesus Christ, and God*, and the *Holy Spirit*. Observe the difference, and consider what it implies. Would a Trinitarian express himself in these words and in this order, when intending to express his doctrine? If it were *Father, Son, and Spirit*, we should of course regard them as three, and not one, unless expressly instructed to the contrary; how much more where the words run, *Jesus Christ—and God—and the Holy Spirit*. So that there is only one text which unites the terms *Father, Son, and Spirit*; and that one says nothing of the doctrine of the Trinity. Now I ask seriously, if it had been intended to teach that doctrine, is it possible that this should be the case?

It is thus plain, that this doctrine is nowhere taught in express terms. You then say, it is perhaps taught indirectly and by necessary implication. I answer, it is impossible this should be, because the doctrine that *the Father alone is God* is taught in the most direct and absolute terms that language will admit: so as positively to put out of the question every other doctrine, and to take away the liberty of inferring any other from indirect expressions. That this is so, may be seen at once from a few plain and explicit texts, which seem to be perfectly decisive.

(1) John xvii. 3. "This is life eternal, that they might know *Thee, the only true God—and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.*"—This is the language of our Lord himself in prayer. Now that he was at prayer proves that he himself could not be God; for God never prays. But, besides this, he strongly asserts, that the Father *only* is God. It could not be asserted more strongly.

(2) Mark xiii. 32. "But of that day and hour knoweth no man; no, not the angels which are in heaven; *neither the Son; but the Father.*"—This is the language of our Lord. He declares that he does not know the time of that day and hour; that the Father only knows. Therefore the Father only can be God; for God knows all things.

(3) 1 Timothy ii. 5. "There is one God—and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus."—What can assert more positively than this, that Jesus is not the one God?

(4) 1 Cor. viii. 6. "But to us there is but *One God, the Father*, of whom are all things, and we in Him; and *one Lord, Jesus Christ*, by whom are all things, and we by him."—This text is very positive. It declares that Jesus is our Lord, but that the Father only is our God. Can language be devised which shall declare it more positively?

(5) Ephesians iv. 5, 6. "*One Lord, one faith, one baptism, One God and Father of all*, who is above all, and through all, and in you all."—What can the Apostle mean by this separation of our Lord, from the one God and Father of all, if it do not intimate the Father's complete and unrivalled supremacy? What words can speak it, if such words as these mean anything else?

Ask you then, seriously—in the fear and presence of Almighty God, and in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord—if these five positive explicit assertions that the Father only is God, ought not to set the question at rest in our minds? While we have these plain and intelligible declarations of the divine word—which never have been, and never can be, made consistent with the doctrine of three equal persons in the Godhead—ought we to be turned from our faith by any arguments which might be drawn from more obscure passages? Ought we to take up the opposite doctrine, because it may be ingeniously inferred from difficult and controverted texts? Are we not bound by these plain declarations? And, while they stand in our Bibles, uncontroverted and unrefuted, shall it be said that we reject the testimony of God, and depart from the oracles of truth? For myself, so long as the glorious doctrine of the Divine Unity is built up on these *Five Sacred Pillars*, I must confide in it as the truth of God. If the Holy Oracle can announce any truth plainly and unequivocally, it has so announced this. To my ear it speaks in language the most unambiguous and the least susceptible of perversion. While I abide by it in these plain texts, I know what I believe; I have the sure word of truth. If I forsake these for the sake of reasoning out another doctrine from more difficult passages, I am not sure that my reason may not deceive me in the process, and lead me to wrong conclusions. I am safer, therefore, to abide by the testimony inscribed on these *Five Pillars*, which I can read as I run.

III. As these fundamental texts most plainly teach the Supremacy of the Father, so there are equally decisive texts respecting the character and offices of Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit, which go to confirm it. Let us attend to these.

(1) Let us consider, first, the language which is commonly used respecting our Lord Jesus. Is it such as implies that he is the same with Almighty God? Take his testimony respecting himself. "I came not to do mine own will." "I can of myself do nothing." "The Son can do nothing of himself." "The Father that is in me, he doth the works."—He calls himself, "He whom the Father hath sanctified and sent." He says, "I am come in my Father's name." And after his resurrection he says, "I ascend to my Father and your Father, and to my God and your God."—Ponder these expressions; weigh these words: and say whether they be the words of one who would represent himself as the independent God.

Take the testimony of the Apostles. "Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God, by signs and wonders which God did by him." "Appointed to be a Prince and Saviour."—"at the right hand of God exalted"—"made both Lord and Christ." Because of his obedience unto death, "God hath highly exalted him, and given him a name above every name." In the end he shall "deliver up the kingdom to God, even the Father, that God may be all in all." Weigh these expressions deliberately, and consider whether it be possible that they should be constantly used concerning Almighty God. But such as these are applied to Jesus, in every part of the New Testament.

Consider the terms of faith in him which were required of his disciples. Were they such as implied his supreme divinity? Remember the confession of Peter, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God:" and

with this, Jesus was satisfied. Remember the confession of Martha, "I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God;" and he required no more. Remember the reason which John gives for writing his Gospel. "These are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God." Who does John say is born of God? "Whoso believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God." Who does he say overcomes the world? "He that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God." What was the preaching of the Apostles? Look through the book of Acts, and you will find the burden of it to be, "Reasoning from the Scriptures, and testifying that Jesus is the Christ." Now, is it possible, that in all which is thus said of the necessity and value of faith in Jesus, when believers were to be received into the church, and their immortal interests were depending—is it possible, that they should not have been required to believe him the Almighty God, if he were so? Would he and the Apostles have so solemnly assured them, that faith in him as the *Son of God* was sufficient, if in truth he had been the eternal God?

2. The same conclusion may be as decisively drawn from the language perpetually used respecting the *Holy Spirit*—language wholly inconsistent with the idea of a divine person distinct from the Father, and equal with him. The Spirit is said to be *poured out—shed—given—given without measure*; men are said to be *baptized* with it, *filled* with it, to *partake* of it. But this cannot be said of a person. It signifies evidently a divine influence; and that may descend from the person of the Father, as well as from some distinct person. God does not become another person, because he gives his spirit to men. When Paul visited Ephesus, he found certain Christians there, and asked them if they had received the Holy Ghost. They answered, *We have no so much as heard whether here be any Holy Ghost*. How is this? The Holy Ghost a person in the Godhead, equal with the Father, and essential to salvation to know him, and yet these disciples never heard of him! Impossible—and therefore impossible that it should be a third person in the Deity distinct from the Father, and equal in power and glory. No—the holy Spirit is the Spirit of God. Paul tells us what it is, when he says, "As no man knoweth the things of a man save the spirit of man which is in him; so the things of God knoweth no man, but the spirit of God." The spirit of God is God himself, just as the spirit of a man is the man himself, and not a separate person. And thus the single supremacy of the Father remains unaffected.

3. There are also many expressions respecting *Jesus and the Holy Spirit* in connexion with each other, which confirm the evidence that the Father alone is God. It will be sufficient to cite these without comment; since the mere reading of them will show how utterly irreconcilable they are with the idea of three persons, alike equal and supreme. "God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the holy Spirit and with power." "Jesus received of the Father the promise of the holy Ghost." "God giveth not the spirit by measure unto him." "He that raised up Christ from the dead, shall also quicken your mortal bodies by the spirit that dwelleth in you." Consider what each of these passages must mean if the doctrine of the Trinity be true, and you will perceive them to be utterly irreconcilable with it.

IV. Thus far we have looked at the testimony of Scripture, as exhibited in particular classes of texts. We may now turn to some considerations drawn from the general style of the New Testament. Here we shall find that the doctrine of the Divine Unity so pervades and gives a complexion to the New Testament, that if we could conceive the doctrine of the Trinity to be true, it would alter the complexion of the whole. It would not be such as it is, if that doctrine were true.

This might be illustrated from the devotional character of the New Testament, in which we find that the Apostles employed no expressions intimating that they worshipped God in three persons; but, on the contrary, went on in the worship of *the one God* as before their conversion—from the conduct of the disciples towards their Lord; for they never treated him as if they believed him to be the Supreme Being;—from the conduct of the Jews towards him and towards them; for, even on his trial for blasphemy, they never accused him of teaching his own divinity; but only of saying, that he could raise up the temple in three days; nor did they ever assert, that the disciples taught a doctrine which they would have regarded as so monstrous and abominable;—and from the controversies which arose in that age; wherein we find not a single answer to any objection urged against the doctrine of the Trinity; and yet no doctrine was so likely to call forth objections; there is none against which both Jews and Gentiles would have so strenuously protested.

From all these circumstances we argue, that the doctrine of the Trinity was not known in the days of the Apostles; and, therefore, that it is not true.—Rev. H. Ware.

TABLE EXHIBITING AT ONE VIEW THE NUMBER OF INSTANCES IN THE SEVERAL BOOKS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT, IN WHICH THE APPELLATION GOD IS APPLIED TO THE ALMIGHTY, AND TO HIS SON JESUS CHRIST.

ACCORDING TO THE AUTHORIZED VERSION, THE WORD GOD IS APPLIED					
In the following Books.	To a Being distinct from Christ.	To Christ himself.	To Divine Persons or Things.		
			As an epithet of strength or excellence.	In the singular or plural.	In the titles or names.
Matthew	55	1			
Mark	52				
Luke	124 & 1 s.			1 pr.	
John	81 & 1 s.	1 al.	2		
Acts	166 & 2 s.	1 s.			8
Romans	160 & 1 s.	1 al.		1	
1 Corin.	106 & 1 s.			3	2
2 Corin.	74				1
Galatians	31				1
Ephes.	32				
Philipp.	22				1
Coloss.	22				
1 Thess.	37 & 1 s.			1	
2 Thess.	18				
1 Tim.	21	1 al.			
2 Tim.	14 & 1 s.				
Titus	12 or 13	1 am.			
Philemon	2				
Hebrews	70 & 1 s.	1			
James	17				
1 Peter	39 & 1 s.				
2 Peter	6 or 7.	1 am.			
1 John	62 or 63	1 al.			
2 John	4				
3 John	2				
Jude	5				
Revela.	98				
TOTAL	1326	13*	3†	6‡	13§

* MARKS.—s. denotes supplied; pr. probably; al. alleged; am. ambiguous.

† Matt. i. 23. John i. 1; x. 33; xx. 28. Acts vii. 59; xx. 28. Rom. ix. 5. 1 Tim. iii. 16. Titus ii. 13. Heb. i. 8. 2 Peter i. 1. 1 John iii. 16; v. 20. 1 John x. 34. 35. 2 Thess. ii. 4. Luke ii. 30. Rom. i. 16. 1 Cor. i. 18. 24. 2 Thess. iv. 16.—There are probably several other instances in which the word *God* is used in the Christian Scriptures as an epithet denoting intensity, power, or excellence. ‡ Acts vii. 40. 43; xii. 22; xiv. 11; xvii. 18. 23; xix. 27; xxviii. 6. 1 Cor. vii. 52. 2 Cor. iv. 4. Gal. iv. 8. Phil. iii. 19.

§ Had the Table been constructed from any other reputable version of the New Testament, it would have differed in several of the particulars, and been probably more correct. The important inference, however, should have remained the same; namely, that *one divine person, THE FATHER*, is generally distinguished by the title *God*, from all other persons or beings in the universe.—Wilson's Scripture Proofs.

The Bible Christian.

MONTREAL, FEBRUARY, 1846.

SETTLED OPINIONS.

On some topics we may be innocently indifferent. But with others it is not so. When the subject is of exalted importance to ourselves—intimately connected with grave questions of faith and morals—we are bound to give it reasonable, and reverent attention. We claim for religion the highest place in man's consideration. It is closely linked with his highest hopes and deepest fears. It is his monitor with regard to present duty, his instructor respecting future destiny.

In religion, as we understand it, there are three great leading ideas—God, Christ, and man;—God the Author of all, the Father and Ruler of mankind,—Christ his Son, the revealer of his will and the messenger of his mercy,—and man, the creature of his hands, the object of his care, and the subject of his moral government. Various and manifold have been the opinions which have been asserted and maintained from time to time concerning God, and Christ, and man. What they are in themselves—what their nature and attributes—what the nature of the relations they severally sustain to one another—these have been topics of discussion and disputation from very early ages of Christianity. With regard to God, the questions raised have been,—how does He exist, in one person only, or in three persons? How does He govern his creatures? Does He occupy the throne of the universe as a stern unbending Judge; or does he occupy that exalted seat as a tender and merciful Parent. In other words, will He forgive transgression, or can He forgive transgression, without satisfaction having been made to His offended justice? or will He, and can He pardon the sinner who turns to him and repents, and enters on a

THE BIBLE CHRISTIAN.

life of new obedience? With regard to Christ, the great questions have been,—what is his nature? is he the supreme God, or an exalted but subordinate agent of the Supreme God? Is he really the same with the Being who sent him, or a distinct and different being from him? What is his office? What the peculiar benefits of his mission? Was his office to communicate truth and exemplify it in his life, labours, and death: or is his death alone to be selected as the great central fact of Christianity? With regard to man, the great questions have been,—is he a free moral agent, or is he not? Is he by nature capable of doing good, or is he by nature totally corrupt? Is he subject to an uncontrollable decree as to his eternal destiny, or is that destiny made to depend on the character he forms?

It will be perceived that all those questions are of the last importance to themselves, and that on the replies made to them the greatest practical results depend. If God exist in one person only; then one person only is to be the object of our worship. If He exist in three persons, then three persons are to be the objects of our worship. If God sit on the throne of the universe demanding satisfaction for a violated law, *fear* must be the prevailing idea which occupies our mind as we contemplate him. If he be there clothed with the appearance of a tender parent, then we must regard him chiefly with feelings of *love*. If Christ be the Supreme God, then all our highest adoration should be directed to him. But if his dignity be that of the Son and Messenger of the Supreme God, this should not be, but we will be touched with love and reverence towards him, for all that he has done, and taught, and suffered for us in that character. If his office was to communicate truth and exemplify it to the world, then we should spare no exertion in imbibing his doctrine and imitating his example. But if the fact of his death be our sole reliance for salvation and escape from the consequences of sin, then his doctrine and example will appear to our minds in diminished importance. If man is not a free agent—if he is subject to a decree in regard to his destiny, uncontrollable and irreversible, then his powers must be cramped,—he must passively, perhaps hopelessly, resign himself to his fate. If he is by nature totally corrupt, and incapable of any good, then he need not attempt it, nor should we expect it from him. If on the other hand, he is a free moral agent, capable of good as well as evil, then he may attempt good, and we should expect it at his hands. Such is the nature of the practical consequences which depend on the opinions we form on the great questions at issue in the Christian world.

It is obvious that they are of the last importance. We are bound, therefore, to give the matter serious attention. Can we, consistently with our duty as rational and religious beings, overlook the fact, that great and striking diversities of opinion exist among men on the subjects just referred to? Shall we be justified in setting aside matters of such grave moment, as things which concern us not? Shall our minds remain quiescent and indolent while such subjects are presented to them—content with some dim and shadowy apprehension, instead of a clear, well defined idea? Is it right they should? We say most assuredly not. We say that duty requires us to look at those diversities of opinion, to ascertain as far as possible the grounds and reasons for them, and thus by our own exertion and investigation, obtain settled opinions for ourselves.

It is not our aim here to plead for any particular class of opinions. We are simply reminding our readers, of the necessity and importance of having definite and decided views on the one side or the other. But there are multitudes of every class and condition in life, who have no settled opinions. They appear perfectly satisfied to travel with a certain company in religious matters, because accident cast them there, or because they happen to be connected by some common sympathies or associations. How frequent is the case that a person born and brought up in a church or community of believers, is contented to remain there, without giving himself any trouble to ascertain what that church teaches to be believed. There are thousands in the

Church of England, who are strangers to the thirty-nine articles, and thousands in the Calvinistic Presbyterian Church, who know but little of the Westminster Confession of Faith. Hence the existence every where of so many people who could give no proper answer if they were asked to give a reason for the hope that is in them. Their minds have never for a moment been brought seriously to think on the question—what is worthy of belief and what is not? Religious truth has never been apprehended by them as a clear well defined set of ideas. Their connection with any community of Christians is the result of some other thing than sound rational conviction.

Several causes are constantly at work which operate against the formation of settled opinions in a large class of minds. We can merely mention them here. To dwell upon them would exhaust more time and space than we can spare at present. Religious indifference, and mental indolence, are sad obstacles to the progress of truth. There is too frequently, also, the dread of an unwelcome result which deters men from a thorough and impartial effort to obtain decided views. And then, again, there is the influence of early prejudice. No fabled enchanter that ever graced an eastern tale, could hold his subjects more securely spell-bound, than it can. It diffuses through the mind an undefined and undefinable fear of any thing that seems to clash with what it favours. It can find no reason for what it does, yet it causes the victim it besets to kick the beam against the weightiest and soundest arguments that can be offered in opposition to it. Multitudes of weak minds, many of them amiable too, are held in dim obscurity of belief by its grasp, even while the glorious sunlight of ascertained truth is shining clearly in their view.

We have introduced this important subject to our readers, not with the view of enlarging on it to any extent, still less did we propose to exhaust it, but rather to recommend it to their own serious and candid consideration. And whatever may be the settled opinions to which they arrive we must not fail to remind them, that they are to be held in candour, and with perfect charity towards all others.

NEW GERMAN-CATHOLIC CHURCH.

“A pamphlet has lately been put forth by Dr. Gunther of Jena, containing a collection of all the Articles or Creeds of the New German Catholic Church; which, placing in juxtaposition the different formulæ of belief adopted by the various communities which have followed the reform movement, enables us to gain a good insight into its nature and spirit. That they should differ very materially in the boldness of their tone, and in the latitude of their doctrines, is but to be expected, and is perhaps the best proof of the separation being the result of conviction rather than of party spirit. In some few, a lingering attachment is shown to the old tenets and institutions, such as Transubstantiation and the Mass; in the majority these are boldly and explicitly rejected; and it is a remarkable fact, that whilst the *negations* contained in all the creeds express the withdrawal of their allegiance from the Church of Rome, the *affirmations* do not, we believe, assert a single one of what may be called the prominent and Orthodox doctrines of the English Protestant Church beyond what are implied in the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds. (The latter being adopted by only three of the communities.) *In none of them stands any recognition of the Trinity, the Atonement, or Original Sin: whilst in all, the Scriptures are emphatically pronounced to be “the only true and safe source of Christian Faith.”*”

The foregoing paragraph is taken from the *London Inquirer*. We have marked part of the last sentence in italics because we think it mentions a fact worthy of being particularly noted. The German Reformers have nobly thrown aside the trammels of the old church authority and come to the Scriptures to read them with their own eyes. But they have not seen therein the doctrine of the Trinity, the common doctrine of Atonement, or that of Original Sin. The fact speaks volumes. A certain Calvinistic church has, we understand, furnished the German Reformers with translations of its authorised symbols of faith. To this there can be no possible objection. Let the seekers after truth gain all the light they can. But we venture to predict they will not fall in love with Calvinism. They have opened their eyes in a different age of the world from that in which the Calvinistic theology took its rise.

LIBERALITY.—CHRISTIAN UNION.

The subjoined paragraphs are from the pen of the editor of the *Baltimore Methodist Protestant*. In some prior articles, he had given expression to sentiments which were regarded as too liberal by some of his readers. He had ventured to say there were good and worthy Christians in various sects out of the pale of conventional ‘orthodoxy.’ The idea that any Catholics or Unitarians could be good Christians was not received well by some of his correspondents: and we know that such an idea is sufficient to alarm many worthy ‘orthodox’ people in more places than Baltimore. The discussion originated in the present movement for ‘Christian Union’ that is going on in this country and elsewhere.—The editor of the *Methodist Protestant* thought that it was proceeding on too narrow a basis. And so must every one think who consistently maintains the right of private judgment and the sufficiency of the Scriptures as a rule of faith. Talk of catholicity, indeed, in such a movement! It is sheer sectarianism,—this enlarging of the circle, inch by inch, until a precise and favored number get within it, to exchange congratulations and look satisfied, as if they represented the entire Christian world. The circle may indeed be enlarged, but it is a sectarian circle still: and those who press within it are as remote from the true principle of Christian catholicity as they were before they ventured beyond the pale of their respective sectarian organizations. It may do good, however, to a certain extent. It may bring together sects widely differing in opinion, cause them to know each other and appreciate each other's good qualities, and lead them into the practice of setting doctrinal differences in the background when more general interests are to be served. Wesleyanism and Calvinism are widely apart: Wesley has said of a favorite doctrine of Calvin, that it is worse than “all the absurd opinions of all the Romanists in the world.” Now it is well to see those sects coming together, and for the time sinking their wide differences. It affords ground to hope that the essential spirit of Christianity is working its way in the world; and the Liberal Christian always rejoices in the prospect of the time when it shall have triumphed over mere abstract dogmas, and effected a perfect “Christian union” between man and man, and a complete reconciliation between man and God. If mankind were thoroughly pervaded by the spirit of Christianity,—fully imbued with the all-comprehending charity of the Gospel,—there would be no exception taken to the following sentiments of the Methodist editor of Baltimore—they would be welcomed everywhere:—

“CHRISTIAN UNION AGAIN.—It seems that our remarks upon this subject are considered to have been too liberal. We give above two letters of disapprobation, which will show the other side of the question. Our readers have the privilege to think and act for themselves. We hold that it is our duty and privilege to be as orthodox as close, persevering, prayerful study can make us to be; but, also, to acknowledge the fruits of the Spirit, wherever they are visible; no matter how heterodox we may suppose the fruit-bearer to be. It must not be understood, that we have advocated, or that we teach or believe Unitarianism; for we have done, and intend to do no such thing; as we believe that system to come short of a proper exposition of the Bible. But, wherever a Unitarian *acts like a Christian*, it is the best evidence, to us, that he is one: and we gladly grasp his hand as that of a Christian brother. If, as J. W. does, it be questioned that a Unitarian can *act like a Christian*, we have only to say, that we have known, personally, two or three Unitarians, who were not excelled in Christian character, to judge by Galatians v. 22, 23, 24, and 1 John iii, 14, &c.; by any of the multitudinous ministers and laity around them; so far as we had opportunity to observe; and our opportunity was ample.

“So with Papists. One of the most precious Christians we ever knew, was a member of the Roman Catholic Church, in this city; and many a time have we knelt by her side at the venerable St. Peter's which has recently been torn down to afford a site to the Calvert Hall. So with the Quakers. Some charming members of Christ's Body have we fellowshiped among the peaceable, benovolent, excellent Quakers. Since we have been in the ministry even, we have attended service

in the Papal Church, and the Friends' Meeting House; and have ventured to occupy the pulpit of a beloved Unitarian brother. And yet, our own sentiments have remained unchanged, while our love for our variant brethren has increased.

“Our good brother J. W. will do well to remember that a man may hold doctrines that we detest, and yet be a good Christian. To our own mind, Calvinism is one of the most abhorrent systems, so far as it relates to Election, that has ever been presented to our consideration. It is infinitely erroneous; and in our humble opinion, of most fatal tendency. But yet, so many and so great and good Christians have held it, that we have never ventured to abuse it as some Arminians have done. Dr. Payson, who was one of the best and most useful men that ever lived, was so thorough a Calvinist that he could not, without violating his conscience, assist at the installation of an Arminian minister. We have heard Arminians say, frequently, that they would rather be Universalists than Calvinists; and yet probably, these very men would associate with Calvinists and reject the social overtures of Universalists.

“But there is no need of such detail. To sum up the whole matter, it is *our duty*, we think, to advocate orthodoxy and to oppose error: regulating the affairs of our own Church in our own way. But, we must allow freedom of thought, speech and action to other communities, who, holding the Bible to be the word of God, and Jesus Christ to be the Savior of the world, construct their creeds, and endeavour to vindicate their own speculative Theology. As we cannot see the heart, we should leave that to God; and be content with believing that he who *acts like a Christian is one.*”

LECTURES ON CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE.

The course of Sunday Evening Lectures announced in our last, is now in progress of delivery, in the Unitarian Church of this city. At the time we write four have been given, which were listened to by numerous and attentive audiences. We reprint the list of subjects:—

The existence of a God: Christianity a revelation from God: The Christian Scriptures an authentic and perfect record of the Christian revelation; The Scriptures given to reasonable beings and designed to be interpreted on reasonable principles; What the Scriptures teach concerning God, his unity and paternal character: What the Scriptures teach concerning Christ, his person, and his office; What the Scriptures teach concerning man, his nature, his duty, and his destiny.

NOTE TO OUR FRIENDS IN CARLTON PLACE.

The *Universalist Watchman*, published in Montpelier, Vermont, speaks of a “letter written from Carlton Place, West Canada,” setting forth the want of a preacher of liberal Christianity for that place and the neighbouring district. Our cotemporary alludes, we presume, to the communication which appeared in our columns a short time since. Perhaps not, however, for he is quite silent concerning our agency in the matter. But we are anxious to let our friends in that quarter know, that the editor says, if they address a letter to him he thinks he can find a suitable preacher for them. We shall be gratified if we can in any way be instrumental in aiding them to get a minister suited to their position and wants.

BOOKS FOR SALE.

THE ENTIRE WORKS OF WM. E. CHANNING, D. D., in Two Vols. 8vo. Cloth, Lettered. Price 10s.

THE ENTIRE WORKS OF O. DEWEY, D. D., Pastor of the Church of the Messiah, New York, in One Vol. 8vo. Cloth, Lettered. pp 887. Price 10s.

COMMENTARY ON THE FOUR GOSPELS, by Rev. A. A. LIVERMORE, in One Vol. Belfast Edition. Price 5s.

The above Books may be had at Mr. McKay's Book Store, Notre Dame Street, and at Mr. Bayson's, St. Francois Xavier Street.

GREENWOOD'S HYMNS

For Sale at Mr. Bayson's Bookstore, St. Francois Xavier Street.

LETTERS TO RELATIVES AND FRIENDS, chiefly in Reply to Arguments in support of the Doctrine of the Trinity.

BY MARY S. B. DANA, Author of “The Southern & Northern Harps,” “The Parted Family,” &c.

A Supply of the above Received, and for Sale at the Book-Store of C. BRVSON, Montreal.

NOTICE.

The hours of Public Worship on Sundays, in the Unitarian Church, Montreal, are—ELEVEN in the forenoon, and SEVEN in the evening.—Free Sitings are provided for Strangers.

WHAT IS UNITARIANISM?

It is often asked, in these days of enquiry, and the frequent change and commingling of opinions, what Unitarianism is? What do Unitarian Christians believe? What are their views of God, of Jesus Christ, of the Atonement, of the Holy Spirit, of the Bible, of the new birth, of religion generally?

I am not going to enter into any argument in defence of Unitarianism. I am not going to be controversial. I would simply offer a brief reply to the question stated.

Something of this kind, it is believed, is called for by the many misapprehensions which exist on the subject. The faith of Unitarians is often misunderstood and misrepresented; it may be permitted to say, calumniated. It is often denounced in the pulpit, and from the press, and in private and social meetings. People are warned against it as a soul-destroying error. There is a portion of the community which has a strong prejudice against it, without knowing precisely what it is, or why they should be afraid of it; only they are told, that they must have nothing to do with it; they must not hear its preachers, nor read the books of the denomination.

Now to such, could my voice reach them, I would say, in the language which was once used, when the question was asked "Can any good come out of Nazareth?"—"Come and see." Come and see what Unitarianism is. Understand before you judge; then receive or reject it. If it appear to be the truth of God,—if it appear to embrace the simple truths of the Gospel—then do not hesitate to acknowledge it as such. Do not be frightened by a name; do not allow yourselves to be influenced by what men say; fear God rather than man. Reverence the truth wherever you find it. Come and see what Unitarianism is, before you allow yourselves to cry out against it. Do not condemn it unheard. Do not allow yourselves to form your opinion of it from the imperfect and distorted representations of its enemies. This is what I would say, could my voice reach those who denounce it.

Unitarianism takes its name from its distinguishing tenet, the strict personal unity of God, which Unitarians hold in opposition to the doctrine which teaches that God exists in three persons. Unitarians maintain that God is one mind, one person, one individual being; that the Father alone is entitled to be called God in the highest sense; that He alone possesses the attribute of infinite, undivided Divinity, and is the only proper object of supreme worship and love. They believe that Jesus Christ is a distinct being from Him, and possesses only derived attributes; that he is not the supreme God himself, but his Son, and the medium through which he has chosen to impart the richest blessings of his love to a sinning world.

This may be called the great leading doctrine, the distinguishing, and properly speaking, the only distinguishing feature of Unitarianism. Unitarians hold the supremacy of the Father, and the inferior and derived nature of the Son. This is their sole discriminating article of faith.

On several other points they differ more or less among themselves. Professing little reverence for human creeds, having no common standard but the Bible, and allowing in the fullest extent freedom of thought, and the liberty of every Christian to interpret the records of divine Revelation for himself, they look for diversity of opinion as the necessary result. They see not how this is to be avoided without a violation of the grand Protestant principle of individual faith and liberty. They claim to be thorough and consistent Protestants.

There are certain general views however, in which they are mostly agreed, which they regard as flowing from the great discriminating article of faith above-named, or intimately connected with it, or which they feel compelled to adopt on a diligent examination of the sacred volume.

I begin with the character of God. Unitarians, as I said, hold his strict personal unity. They are accustomed, too, to dwell with peculiar emphasis on his moral perfections, his equity, his holiness, and especially his paternal love and mercy. They regard it as one of the chief glories of Christianity that it contains a clear assertion and full illustration of the doctrine that God is our Father. They give to this doctrine a prominence in their teachings, as one peculiarly dear to their hearts, one intimately interwoven with their conceptions of a true, cheerful, and elevating piety, and the obligations and encouragements to repentance, prayer, and an obedient life. It is the office of religion, as they view it, to purify the soul of man, to enkindle in it holy desires and affections, and become to it a source of light, strength, comfort, peace; and the paternal character of God, his infinite love, tenderness, pity, united with the holiness of his nature, is the great idea which must lie at the foundation of all such religion in the soul.

They believe that the mercy of God is not confined to a few, arbitrarily chosen out of the great mass of beings equally sinful in his sight; but that he yearns with a father's tenderness and pity towards the whole offspring of Adam. They believe that he earnestly desires their repentance and holiness; that his infinite overflowing love led him miraculously to raise up and send Jesus to be their spiritual deliverer, to purify their souls from sin, to restore them to communion with himself, and fit them for pardon and everlasting life in his presence; in a word, to reconcile man to God, and earth to heaven.

They believe that the Gospel of Jesus thus originated in the exhaustless and unbought love of the Father; that it is intended to operate on man, and not on God; that the only obstacle which exists, or which ever has existed on the part of God, to the forgiveness of the sinner is found in the heart of the sinner himself: that the life, teachings, sufferings, and resurrection of Jesus become an instrument of pardon, as they are the appointed means of turning man from sin to holiness, of breathing into his soul new moral and spiritual life, and elevating it to a union with the Father. They believe that the cross of Christ was not needed to render God merciful; that Jesus suffered, not as a victim of God's wrath, or to satisfy his justice. They think that this view obscures the glory of the divine character, is repugnant to God's equity, veils his loveliest attributes, and is injurious to a spirit of filial, trusting piety. Thus all, in their view, is to be referred primarily to the boundless and unpurchased love of the Father, whose wisdom chose this method of bringing man within reach of his pardoning mercy, by redeeming him from the power of sin, and establishing in his heart his kingdom of righteousness and peace.

I now proceed to speak of Jesus Christ. As before said, Unitarians believe him to be a distinct being from God and subordinate to him. The following may serve as a specimen of the processes of thought, views, and impressions, through which they arrive at this conclusion. I state them it will be observed, not by way of argument. I shall use no more of argument. I repeat, then is necessary to explain fully what Unitarianism is, and how it sustains itself,—on what foundation it professes to rest.

Unitarians do not rely exclusively, or chiefly, on what they conceive to be the intrinsic incredibility of the doctrine to which they stand opposed. They take the Bible in their hands, as they say, and sitting down to read it, as plain unlettered Christians, and with prayer for divine illumination, they find that the general tenor of its language either distinctly asserts, or necessarily implies the supremacy of the Father, and teaches the inferior and derived nature of the Son. In proof of this they appeal to such passages as the following:—"This is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent"—John xvii. 3. "For there is one God, and one mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus."—1 Tim. ii. 5. "My Father is greater than I."—John xiv. 28. "My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me."—John vii. 16. "I speak not of myself."—John xiv. 10. "I can of mine own self do nothing."—John v. 30. "The Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works."—John xiv. 10. "God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye crucified, both Lord and Christ."—Acts ii. 36. "Him hath God exalted with his right hand, to be a Prince and a Saviour."—Acts v. 31.

They appeal to such passages, and generally to all those in which Jesus Christ is called, not God himself, but the Son of God; in which he is spoken of as sent, and the Father as sending, appointing him a kingdom, "giving" him authority, giving him to be head over all things to the church. Such passages, they contend, show derived power and authority.

Again; when the Son is represented as praying to the Father, and the Father as hearing and granting his prayer, how, ask they, can the plain, serious reader resist the conviction that he who prays is a different being from him to whom he prays? Does a being pray to himself?

Unitarians urge that passages like those above referred to, occurring promiscuously, are fair specimens of the language in which Jesus is spoken of in the New Testament; that such is the common language of the Bible, and that it is wholly irreconcilable with the idea that Jesus was regarded by those with whom he lived and conversed, as the Infinite and Supreme God, or that the Bible was meant to teach any such doctrine. They do not find, they say, that the deportment of the disciples and of the multitude towards Jesus, the questions they asked him, and the character of their intercourse with him, indicated any such belief on their part, or any suspicion that he was the Infinite Jehovah. We meet, say they, with no marks of the surprise and astonishment which they must have expressed, on being first made acquainted with the doctrine,—on being first told that he who stood before them, who ate and drank with them, who slept and waked, who was capable of fatigue and sensible to pain, was, in truth, the Infinite and Immutible One, the Preserver and Governor of nature.

They contend that the passages generally adduced to prove the Supreme Deity of Jesus Christ, fail of their object; that without violence they will receive a different construction; that such construction is often absolutely required by the language itself, or the connexion in which it stands; that most of those passages, carefully examined, far from disproving, clearly show the distinct nature and inferiority of the Son. They notice the fact as a remarkable one, that of all the proof texts of the Trinity, as they are called, there is not one on which eminent Trinitarian critics have not put a Unitarian construction, and that they say that Unitarianism may be proved from the concessions of Trinitarians themselves. It is certainly a very extraordinary fact, that there is not a single text of Scripture commonly adduced as proving the Trinity, which distinguished Trinitarian critics have not abandoned to the Unitarians.

Unitarians find difficulties of another sort in the way of believing in a tri-personal Deity. They object to the inherent incredibility of the doctrine in itself considered. They say, that they cannot receive the doctrine, because in asserting

that there are three persons in the Deity, it teaches, according to any conception they can form on the subject, that there are three beings, three minds, three conscious agents, and thus it makes three Gods, and to assert that these three are one, is a manifest contradiction.

So too with regard to the Saviour,—to affirm that the same being is both finite and infinite, man and God, they say, appears to them to be a contradiction and an absurdity. If Jesus Christ possessed two natures, two wills, two minds, a finite and an infinite, they maintain that he must be two persons, two beings.

In regard to his metaphysical nature and rank, and the time at which his existence commenced, Unitarians undoubtedly differ in opinion. Some hold his pre-existence, and others suppose that his existence commenced at the time of his entrance into the world. The question of his nature they do not consider as important. Some take this view. They think that the testimony of the apostles, the original witnesses, to whom we are indebted for our knowledge of him, bears only on his birth, miracles, teachings, life, death, resurrection, and ascension; that is, on his character and offices, and that beyond these we need not go; that these are all which it is important that we should know or believe; that the rest is speculation, hypothesis, with which, as practical Christians, we have no concern; that neither our comfort, our hope, nor our security of pardon and eternal life depends upon our knowledge or belief of it.

At the same time, all entertain exalted views of his character and offices. In a reverence for these they profess to yield to no class of Christians. The divinity which others ascribe to his person they think may with more propriety be referred to these. "We believe firmly," says one of the most eminent writers of the denomination, "in the divinity of Christ's mission and office, that he spoke with divine authority, and was a bright image of the divine perfections. We believe that Jesus Christ was the most glorious display, expression, and representative of God to mankind, so that in seeing and knowing him, we see and know the invisible Father; so that when Christ came, God visited the world and dwelt with men more conspicuously than at any former period. In Christ's words we hear God speaking; in his miracles we behold God acting; in his character and life we see an unsullied image of God's purity and love. We believe, then, in the divinity of Christ, as this term is often and properly used."

Unitarians do not think that they thus detract from the true glory of the Son. They regard him as one with God in affection, will, and purpose. This union, they think, is explained by the words of the Saviour himself. "Be ye also one," says he to his disciples, "even as I and my Father are one;" not one in nature, but in purpose, affection, and act. Through him Christians are brought near to the Father, and their hearts are penetrated with divine love. By union with him as the true vine, they are nurtured in the spiritual life. In his teachings they find revelations of holy truth. They ascribe peculiar power and significance to his cross. To that emblem of self-sacrificing love, they turn with emotions which language is too poor to express.

The cross is connected in the minds of Christians with the Atonement. On this subject Unitarians feel constrained to differ from some of their fellow Christians. They do not reject the Atonement in what they conceive to be the scriptural meaning of the term. While, however, they gratefully acknowledge the mediation of Christ, and believe that through the channel of his gospel are conveyed to them the most precious blessings of a Father's mercy, they object strongly to the views frequently expressed, of the connexion of the death of Christ with the forgiveness of sin. They do not believe that the sufferings of Christ were penal—designed to satisfy a principle of stern justice, for justice, say they, does not inflict suffering on the innocent that the guilty may go free. And besides, they believe that God's justice is in perfect harmony with his mercy, that to separate them, even in thought, is greatly to dishonour him. They believe that however the cross stands connected with the forgiveness of sin, that connexion, as before said, is to be explained by the effects wrought on man, and not on God.

They believe that in thus teaching, they do not rob the cross of its power, nor take away from the sinner his ground of hope. To the objection, that sin requires an infinite atonement, and that none but an infinite being can make that atonement, they reply by saying, that they find in their Bibles not one word of this infinite atonement, and besides, that no act of a finite being, a frail, sinning child of dust, can possess a character of infinity, or merit an infinite punishment; that it is an abuse of language so to speak; and further, that if an infinite sufferer were necessary to make due atonement for sin, no such atonement could ever be made, for infinite cannot suffer; that God is unchangeable, and it is both absurd and impious to ascribe suffering to him; God cannot die; and admitting Jesus to have been God as well as man, only his human nature suffered; that there was no infinite sufferer in the case; that thus the theory of the infinite atonement proves a fallacy, and the whole fabric falls to the ground. Still is not the sinner left without hope, because he leans on the original and unchanging love and compassion of the Father, to whom as the primary fountain, we trace back all gospel means and influences, and who is ever ready to pardon those, who through Christ and his cross are brought to repentance for sin, and holiness of heart and life.

By the Holy Spirit, Unitarians suppose is

meant not a person, but an influence, and hence it is spoken of as "poured out," "given" and we hear of the "anointing" with the holy spirit, phrases which they contend, preclude the idea of a person. It was given miraculously to the first disciples, and gently, as the gathering dews of evening, distills upon the hearts of the followers of Jesus in all ages, helping their infirmity, ministering to their renewal, and ever strengthening and comforting them. It is given in answer to prayer. As Christ said, "If ye being evil," imperfect beings, "know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father who is in heaven give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him."—Luke xi. 13.

Unitarians believe that salvation through the gospel is offered to all, on such terms as all, by God's help, which he will never withhold from any who earnestly strive to know and do his will, and lead a pure, humble, and benevolent life, have power to accept. They reject the doctrine of native total depravity, but they assert that man is born weak and in possession of appetites and propensities, by the abuse of which all become actual sinners, and they believe in the necessity of what is figuratively expressed by the "new birth," that is, the becoming spiritual and holy, being led by that spirit of truth and love which Jesus came to introduce into the souls of his followers. This change is significantly called the coming of the kingdom of heaven in the heart, without which, as they teach, the pardon of sin were it possible, would confer no happiness, and the songs of paradise would fall with harsh dissonance on the ear.

While they earnestly inculcate the necessity of a holy heart and a pure and benevolent life, they deny that man is to be saved by his own merit, or works, except as a condition to which the mercy of God has been pleased to annex the gift of eternal life and felicity.

There is nothing peculiar in the sentiments which Unitarians, as a body, entertain of the Bible, which distinguishes them from other sects. They go to it as the fountain of inspired truth. They regard the several books which compose the volume, as the records of a Divine Revelation. They make it their standard, their rule of faith and life, interpreting it as they think consistency and the principles of a sound and approved criticism require. In proof of their veneration for the scriptures, they appeal to the fact that several of the best defences of Christianity against the attacks of infidels, have come from the hands of Unitarians,—a fact which no one acquainted with the theological literature of modern times, from the Reformation down to the present day, will call in question.

Unitarians have been accused of unduly exalting human reason. To this they reply, that the Bible is addressed to us as reasonable beings; that reverence for its records, and respect for the natures which God has bestowed on us, makes it our duty to use our understandings and the best lights which are afforded us, for ascertaining its meaning; that God cannot contradict in one way what he reveals in another; that his word and works must utter a consistent language; that if the Bible be his gift, it cannot be at war with nature and human reason; that if we discard reason in its interpretation, there is no absurdity we may not deduce from it; that we cannot do it greater dishonour than to admit that it will not stand the scrutiny of reason; that if our faculties are not worthy of trust, if they are so distempered by the fall that we can no longer repose any confidence in their veracity, then revelation itself cannot benefit us, for we have no means left of judging of its evidences or import, and are reduced to a state of utter scepticism.

Unitarians sometimes speak of reverence for human nature,—of reverence for the soul. They reverence it as God's work, formed for undying growth and improvement. They believe that it possesses powers capable of receiving the highest truths. They believe that God, in various ways, makes revelations of truth and duty to the human soul; that in various ways he quickens it—kindles in it holy thoughts and aspirations, and inspires it by his life giving presence. They believe that however darkened and degraded, it is capable of being regenerated, renewed, by the means and influences which he provides. They believe that it is not so darkened by the fall, but that some good, some power, some capacity of spiritual life, is left in it. But they acknowledge that it has need of help; that it has need to be breathed upon by the divine spirit. They believe that there is nothing in their peculiar mode of viewing Christianity which encourages presumption,—encourages pride and self exaltation. They believe that the heart which knows itself will be ever humble. They feel that they must perpetually look to God for aid. They teach the necessity of prayer, and a diligent use of the means of devout culture. They do not then teach reverence for human nature in any such sense they urge, as would countenance the idea that man is sufficient to save himself without God. They pray to Him for illumination; pray that he will more and more communicate of himself to their souls. They teach the fighting influences of sin. They believe that in the universe which God has formed, this is the only essential evil, and that to rescue the human soul from its power, to win it back to the love of God, is the noblest work which religion can achieve, and worth all the blood and tears which were poured out by Jesus in the days of his humiliation.

PRINTED FOR THE COMMITTEE OF
The Montreal Unitarian Society,
And published Monthly by them, at their Office, Hay-
market, St. Gill Street.—All Communications to be sent
free of expense.