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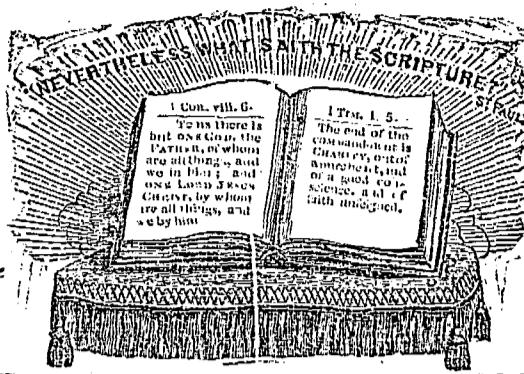
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PROGRESS AND PUBLICATION OF TRUTH.

BY HARRIET MARTINEAU.

It is as impossible for a man to prescribe to himself the faith of his future years, as for one age to prescribe the faith of a succeeding age: and for the same reasons. He may in his youth state an opinion in unambiguous terms, and with perfect sincerity, which, if he still hold, he cannot state in the same terms ten years after. The opinion may be substantially the same, and yet have such a bearing upon some other opinion, or may be so modified by some other opinion, that the same form of words may not express it fully, or perhaps correctly. It is yet more probable that the conceptions which are now attached to the terms are enlarged by his improved experience; so that, if he would declare the same truth, he must change his terms; or if he can conscientiously retain the terms, he must have modified his opinion. What enlightened, reflecting Christian understands exactly the same by any one parable, any one axiom, any one fact of Scripture that he did when he first admitted its truth? He believed it then; he believes it now,—but how differently since science has brought new evidence to light, since philosophy has developed its origin and tendencies, since experience has tested its truth, and faith invested it with a hallowed interest and an indelible beauty! How, therefore, is it possible for any one faithfully to engage that his views even of eternal truth shall never be modified? Witnessing, as every reflecting man does, the gradual evolution of truth from the vicissitudes of human experience, and from the successive dispensations and the progressive course of Providence, he may with safety declare that Gospel truth is immutable and divine; but he will avoid the presumption of supposing that all her rictives are already shed into his bosom, that her brightest light is poured upon his feeble eye. He will rather hope that his apprehension will continually become clearer, his powers invigorated, and his capacities enlarged, till his views of religious truth become as unlike what they were when first admitted, as the fair face of nature appears to the new-born infant and to the mighty poet. He will reject, as an infringement of his inalienable rights, every attempt to bind him down to engagements which it may not be in his power to fulfil. He will refuse to promise that his intellect shall remain stationary; and to permit that any individual, or council, or any church, shall usurp that spiritual influence which he trusts shall be immediately dispensed from the fountain of grace and truth. Desiring wisdom, he asks of God; not profaning and annulling his prayer by engaging to receive it only in certain measure; and if any church on earth interfere to prescribe the measure, he rejects the interference as unauthorised by the letter of the Gospel and condemned by its spirit.

Christian liberty comprehends an entire freedom from restraint in the publication of opinions. To his own master every man standeth or falleth, not only in the formation of his opinions, but in the use he makes of them when formed. According to his conscientiousness in seeking for truth, and not according to the accuracy of his judgment, will he be judged by God in forming his opinions; and when formed, he will be responsible, not for the rectitude of his influence, but for the rectitude of his intentions in exerting it. What a man believes to be the truth, it is his duty to declare in the method and degree which benevolence and prudence may point out to be the best. For what but this do we venerate the heroic Stephen, and every other martyr who bore witness to the truth in the early days of Christianity? Yet for what but this have Christians been led to the stake by Christians, age after age, under the pretended sanction of a religion of liberty and brotherly love? For what but this have Catholics and Protestants vied with each other in torturing in body and mind men whose conscience was omnipotent over the love of liberty and life, and who thus showed that, whether their intellect were or were not unfaithful, their souls were true to God? For

what but this are the lovers of truth even yet too often punished, directly or indirectly, for inviting others to participate in the benefits which they believe they have gained. Stephen was stoned because he was a heretic; Paul worshipped the God of his fathers according to a way which was then called heresy, and for which he was persecuted through life and unto death. Peter and John were brought before the high priest and rulers for publishing their heresy, and punished for refusing to cease to publish it. Yet has this their heresy prevailed; and thus shall every new truth prevail, and its promulgators be honoured, in despite of the wrath of man; while the more freely errors are canvassed, the sooner will they be exposed. What was once said with truth in relation to the Gospel of truth—"If this counsel or this work be of men, it will come to nought; but if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it"—may be said with equal wisdom of every other kind of truth: and the test of investigation is a much surer one than that which is furnished by the prejudices and the passions of men. There is no natural, no Divine law which sanctions the infliction of pain for the exercise of the intellect, or for communicating the results of that exercise; and that any human law or custom should have existed by which injury of mind, body, or estate is made the consequence of the formation and publication of opinions, is a proof that the natural rights of man have not been understood, and that the spirit of Christian liberty has not pervaded Christian society. As long as reproach is attached to the act of promulgating opinions (independent of the manner), as long as the holder of opinions is treated with the same reprobation as the opinions themselves, as long as he is prospectively consigned over to perdition as they are to detestation, as long as ideas of merit and demerit are associated with the convictions of the understanding, or blame is attached to the act of making those convictions known, not only will the subordinate principles of the Gospel remain in part unrecognised, but its essential principles will be violated; for it is clearly a duty of piety to reveal all that is believed to have been discovered of the works and ways of God; and of benevolence to communicate what, being conceived to be truth, is conceived to be intended for the universal benefit of the race.

(From the Monthly Miscellany.)

A SACRAMENTAL THOUGHT.

It was the Sabbath of the New Year, and the band of believers were gathered round the table of the Lord. A number made profession of their faith, received the water of Baptism and now were to partake of the sacred elements for the first time. A large number of the congregation, not members of the Church, remained during the Communion. Deep silence and solemnity pervaded the whole assembly.

The Pastor reminded them of the deep interest of the occasion. He spoke to the new communicants of the important meaning which this new year must have in their eyes. He then spoke of the warning which the season uttered, and the voice which came from the sacramental table. The beginning year tells of the flight of time and the perishableness of life and all earthly joys. The sacred elements speak of that which cannot die, they are the solemn symbol of the life that is eternal. The years, as they roll, sing the requiem of all human hopes, and mournful indeed must be the sound to those who cannot hear the voice of him who took from time and death the power to wound,—the voice which speaks from the Holy Emblems, with magic power to the believers' heart—"I am the Resurrection and the Life; whose liveth and believeth on me shall never die."—the voice which joins in with the sad dirge of departing years, and turns its sadness into sweet melody.

Hark, Hark! it seems to say
Turn from such joys away
To those which ne'er decay
Though life is ending.

Above and around us hung the festive garlands with which we had but lately

adorned our church in honor of the Lord's Nativity. And while we were partaking the emblems of the body broken, and the blood shed for our sakes, we could not but look with deepest feeling at the memorials of the birth of him whose last supper and death we were now commemorating. The Holy Child appeared before us, as if in the lowly manger. And we thought of the wonderful contrast between the three scenes—the Manger, the Supper, the Cross.

I. THE MANGER.

Here lay the world's Saviour, the Son of God, and yet a weak infant, a child of mortality, and doomed to share the lot of mortals.

For thou wert born of woman! thou did'st come,
Oh holiest! to this world of sin and gloom,
Not in thy dread omnipotent array;
And not by thunders strewed,
Was thy tempestuous road;
Nor indignation burnt before thee on thy way.
But thee, a soft and naked child,
Thy mother undefiled
In the rude manger laid to rest,
From off her virgin breast.

The Earth and Ocean were not hushed to hear
Bright harmony from every starry sphere;
Nor at thy presence broke the voice of song
From all the cherub choirs,
And seraph's burning lyres,
Pour'd through the host of Heaven the charm'd
clouds along.
One angel troop the strain began,
Of all the race of man
By simple shepherds heard alone
That soft Hosanna's tone.

As we gaze in imagination on the lowly child, shall we not pray that his life may be without sorrow? Shall we not ask of God, that the guileless heart may never know the world's iniquities, that brow may never be furrowed with life's cares, and those lips never be opened to answer any language except that of affection. Shall we not pray that the infant shall soon breathe its last in the arms of his mother, or if his life is to be prolonged, he may not be "a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief?"

No! such should not be our prayer. The child is God's delegated Messiah, and he must go forth to battle with the powers of darkness, and gain the great victory over sin.

II. THE SUPPER.

The lowly child of the manger has gone forth to the work of his mission. He has spoken the word given him to speak, and worked the work given him to do. The heart, so quiet in infancy, has been pained sorely by knowledge of the world's sin; that brow so placid and bright in childhood, now bears the furrows of life's cares, and the pensive shadows of man's unkindness;—the lips, that once replied but to the accents of love, have been often called to speak words of stern rebuke and solemn exhortation. The head, that once rested on a mother's bosom, has felt the storm's rude blast, and has often found no shelter.

But as we contrast the Master at the Last Supper with the Infant in the Manger, shall we mourn at the contrast? No. But rather rejoice.

The Master has known the world's evil, and yet is as unshaken as when an infant upon his mother's bosom. The heart, that has known the world's sins and the might of the powers of death and darkness, is yet blessed by a faith, more deep and joyous than the spontaneous faith of childhood. The brow marked by life's cares and shadowed by sad remembrances of unkindness, is yet calm with heavenly peace and shining with a light, not of this earth. The eyes, that have looked on so much wrong and misery are glowing with faith and love. The hand, that before was so helpless in the manger, has never been outstretched in anger or unkindness, and is now breaking the bread of life to the band of disciples. Those holy lips, more blessed than in quiet infancy, are now uttering those words of Heavenly Truth and Love, which have been the joy of the Church throughout the world. No! we will not mourn at the supper of the Lord; as we look at these festive garlands, that celebrate his birth. We will rather ex-

claim, "Now is the Son of Man glorified and God is glorified in him."

The Son of God has known the world, and risen above it. With the full experience of humanity and yet the innocence of infancy, he sits in the company of his disciples. We will love these emblems of his Last Supper, more than the glad garlands of his Nativity.

III. THE CROSS.

But as we think of the mournful Cross, shall we not pray that the cup might pass away from him? While we join in the sacred Supper, shall we not lament, that the feast of love was the prelude to his death? While we think of the pangless infant, shall we not shudder at his impending fate, and pray that his feet might be saved from sad Gethsemane and Calvary? No, we will utter no such prayer. We will glory in our crucified Redeemer.

Full mournfully does the vision of childhood's placid hour contrast with that scene of agony—that brow crowned with thorns and wet with blood—those hands, ever stretched forth to relieve suffering, and so lately breaking the bread of life, now mailed to the fatal cross, as if still outstretched to plead for man—those lips, ever speaking words of love, true even in death to their office, commending his mother to his disciples' care, and his enemies to God's forgiveness—the head, that once leaned on that mother's bosom, now bowed in death, and in death radiant with conquering faith, and commending to God the fleeting spirit.

Oh, no! we will not mourn in anguish even at the Cross. Here the great work was finished. Sin vanquished, immortality won. Love is shown mightier than death. The powers of darkness are conquered. Death is found to be the gate to heaven. Truly it is finished. Thoughts of holier joy fill our mind in contemplating the Cross of agony than the Manger of untired innocence, or the Supper of love. Here let us glory in the death of Christ, whose emblems we now partake. Its memory gives new gladness to those Christmas garlands and mystic meaning to this Sacramental hour.

MOSAIC SIN OFFERINGS.

The Mosaic sin offerings were of the nature of a *mutui* or acknowledgment rendered, for unconscious or inevitable disregard of ceremonial liabilities, and contraction of ceremonial uncleanness. Such uncleanness might be incurred from various causes; and while unre-moved by the appointed methods of purification, disqualified from attendance at the sanctuary, and "cut off" "the guilty" "from among the congregation." To touch a dead body, to enter a tent where a corpse lay, rendered a person "unclean for seven days;" to come in contact with a forbidden animal, a bone, a grave; to be next to any one struck with sudden death; to be afflicted with certain kinds of bodily disease and infirmity; unwittingly to lay a finger on a person unclean; occasioned defilement, and necessitated a purification or an atonement.* Independently of these offences, enforced upon the Israelite by the accidents of life, it was not easy for even the most cautious worshipper to keep pace with the complicated series of petty debts which the law of ordinances was always running up against him. If his offering had an invisible blemish; if he omitted a tithe, because "he wist it not;" or inadvertently fell into arrears, by a single day, with respect to a known liability; if absent from disease; he was compelled to let his ritual accumulate: "though it be hidden from him," he must "be guilty; and bear his iniquity;" and bring his victim.† On the birth of a child, the mother, after the lapse of a prescribed period, made her pilgrimage to the temple, presented her sin offering, and "the priest made atonement for her."‡ The poor leper, long banished from the face of men, and unclean by the nature of his disease, became a debtor to the sanctuary, and on return from his tedious quarantine, brought his lamb of atonement, and departed thence, clear from neglected obligations to his law.¶ It was im-

* Num. xix. 11-20; Lev. xx. 25, 26; Num. vi. 9-12.
† Lev. v. 14-19.
‡ Lev. xii. 1-8.
¶ Lev. xiv.

possible, however, to provide by specific enactment for every case of ritual transgression and impurity, arising from inadvertence or necessity. Scarcely could it be expected that the courts of worship themselves would escape defilement, from imperfections in the offerings, or unconscious disqualification in people or in priest. To clear off the whole invisible residue of such sins, an annual "day of atonement" was appointed. The people thronged the avenues and approaches of the tabernacle. In their presence a kid was slain for their own transgressions, and for the high-priest the more dignified expiation of a heifer. Charged with the blood of each successively, he sprinkled not only the exterior altar, open to the sky, but, passing through the first and holy chamber into the Holy of Holies, (never entered else,) he touched, with finger dipped in blood, the sacred lid (the Mercy-seat) and fore-ouid of the Ark.* At that moment, while he yet lingers behind the veil, the purification is complete: on no worshipper of Israel does legal unholiness rest; and were it possible for the high priest to remain in that interior retreat of Jehovah, still protracting the expiatory act, so long would this national purity continue, and the debt of ordinances be effaced as it arose. But he must return; the sanctifying right must end; the people be dismissed; the priests resume the daily ministrations; the law opens its stern account afresh; and in the mixture of national exaltitude and neglects, defilements multiply again till the recurring anniversary lifts off the burden once more. Every year, then, the necessity comes round of "making atonement for the Holy sanctuary," "for the tabernacle," "for the altar," "for the priests and for all the people of the congregation." Yet, though requiring periodical renewal, the rite, so far as it went, had an efficacy which no Hebrew could deny; for ceremonial sins, unconscious or inevitable (to which all atonement was limited),† it was accepted as an indemnity; and put it beyond doubt that Mosaic obedience was commutable.—*J. Martineau.*

* Lev. xvi. ; xxiii. 26-32; Ex. xxx. 10; Num. 7-11. † In three or four instances, it is true, a sin-offering is demanded from the perpetrator of some act of moral wrong. But in all these cases a suitable punishment was ordained also; a circumstance inconsistent with the idea, that the expiation procured remission of guilt. The sacrifice appended to the *penal infliction*, indicates the two-fold character of the act: at once a ceremonial defilement and a crime; and requiring, to remedy the one, an atoning rite,—to chastise the other, a judicial penalty.

THE FATE OF GENIUS.

Who has not heard of Richard Brinsley Sheridan, the Dramatist, Poet and Orator, before whose towering genius, (Irish tho' it was,) the whole people of Great Britain, including even royalty itself, bowed in profound deference, and admiration? Who has not almost coveted his fame? Yet it is a fame obscured by a blot, which all the waters of time cannot wash out: he lived and died a drunkard! In his sixty-fifth year, after twenty-five years of confirmed drunkenness, he died neglected and destitute, in the heart of the metropolis of Great Britain, and in the neighbourhood of the aristocratic wealth, beauty and fashion, who had hung delighted on his superhuman eloquence on the trial of Warren Hastings. That a man, of whose eloquence the younger Pitt, a political enemy, would say, it surpassed all the eloquence of ancient or modern times, and possessed everything that genius and art could furnish to agitate or control the human mind, should have been a drunkard, and should have so died, is indeed a sad commentary on the weakness of human nature! It seems, however, that he was first intoxicated by praise, and afterwards by the bottle. But if he had not by fashionable indulgence contracted the habit of drink, the latter would not have been necessary to take the place of the other. The love of virtuous praise is a great incentive to right action. It never can, in a sober man, lead to vice. But in a man whose brain is on fire from the influence of intoxicating drink, it may well be as it was in the case of poor Sheridan,—when senates ceased to applaud, the bottle was necessary to make him still think he was the same godlike man, who, with an angel's tongue, told the story of the suffering Begums!

The foundation of Sheridan's ruin was, that he was the loved wit, who could set the table in a roar, and who was the cherished, and sought companion of every idle sprig of aristocracy, from the Prince of Wales, downwards. In such society he acquired the habit of moderate drinking. His first glass of wine was the beginning of the many days and nights of social indulgence, which at last ended in a flood-tide of drunkenness. Mooney, who has lately published a most interesting History of Ireland, and which ought to be in the hands of every one to whom the story of Ireland's wrongs, sufferings, ancient fame, and surpassing merit, may be in any degree interesting, says of Sheridan:—"The life of this extraordinary man is perhaps the most striking evidence

in history of the dreadful evils of intemperance. Here was, indeed, a noble mind overthrown by alcohol! Nor was it all effected at once. Sheridan was at first a moderate drinker, by turns the hospitable host, or welcome guest. He drank to make others happy around him, to increase a mutual pleasure. Fatal disposition! At thirty years of age, he was, as we have seen, the first literary man in England,—Orator, Dramatist, Minstrel, and all,—blessed with a wife, the paragon of conjugal love, one who was gifted with the highest musical talents, and other kindred attainments, calculated to heighten the happiness of him she loved so well! At forty, he was a confirmed drunkard and a ruined man—his brain suffocated or diseased, incapable of conceiving, and his body enfeebled, incapable of exertion; his wealth spent, his character lost, his friends avoiding him, and he tottering down to the steps of taverns into the deepest slough of poverty and debasement; that tongue, under the spell of whose accents senates sat entranced, now incoherent and inarticulate: that eye, beaming with the fire of genius, whose recognitions, in the street or palace, was once sought for by Peers and Prelates, now dimmed or dilated into phrenzy; that brain, whose conceptions and creations filled congregated thousands in theatres with joy, or melted them into tears, now the habitation of a thousand demons! O, it sickens the heart to contemplate so grand a spirit overthrown, so splendid and so mournful a ruin. Let the eye of rising genius but rest upon the pages of this man's life, and take a warning from the moral which it so forcibly inculcates.—*S. C. Temperance Advocate.*

TO CORRESPONDENTS.—The lines of "Z." are unavoidably omitted. They will appear in our next number.

The Bible Christian.

MONTREAL, OCTOBER, 1846.

"THE EVANGELICAL ALLIANCE."

During the past month, the papers coming from the other side of the Atlantic have brought us an account of the sittings of what is termed "the Evangelical Alliance."—This is a combination of clergymen and others, of various denominations, for the purpose of promoting Christian union. The meetings took place in London, in August last, and were largely attended. It is said that fifty or sixty Americans were there, and some of the Protestant Churches of the continent of Europe were likewise represented.

The promotion of Christian union is a noble purpose, and the Alliance may carry it forward to some extent; but that cannot be very far. They have departed from the comprehensive principles of union laid down by our Saviour, and therefore cannot possibly succeed to the full extent required by Christianity. It is palpably a sectarian organization, and must be circumscribed within sectarian limits. "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples," said Christ, "if ye have love one towards another." Love, therefore, is the true Gospel bond of union, as stated by the great Gospel Messenger,—the Son of God. But what say the founders of the Alliance?—"You must believe in the Trinity, and the utter depravity of human nature, else we will not recognize you as Christian disciples, or permit you unite with us." It is clear, therefore, that their basis is narrower than that of Christianity. On it may stand Calvinists, Wesleyans, some Episcopalians, and some Baptists. Among these, mutual asperities may be softened, and mutual distrust removed, and a closer union effected. To whatever extent this is done, good will be accomplished. But if the Alliance really desire to promote a union of all Christians, they must abolish their sectarian barriers. No doubt they think themselves very wise, as the "children of this generation" are generally apt to do; but they are not so wise as Jesus Christ. Nor is it seemly in them to make pretensions to any higher wisdom, than his, by setting forth a more stringent test of fellowship than he did.

The fundamental articles of the Alliance are somewhat remarkable. They are nine

in number, of which here are four:—The Divine inspiration, authority, and sufficiency of Holy Scripture; The right and duty of private judgment in the interpretation of Holy Scripture; The unity of the Godhead, and the trinity of persons therein; The utter depravity of human nature in consequence of the fall.—Was ever anything so anomalous and contradictory? Here we are reminded that it is our right and our duty to judge for ourselves in the interpretation of the Scriptures, but we are told at the same time what we must find in them, and believe, before we begin to inquire at all. What a mockery! It is like telling a man that he is free to go at large, and at the same time putting fetters upon him. In no other science save the much abused science of theology, would such anomalies and contradictions be tolerated. A certain class of theologians seem to consider themselves entitled to set consistency and common sense at defiance. But in this they may find themselves mistaken, and their mistake may be made evident more speedily than they dream of. Popular opinion is beginning to look dogmatic theology straight in the face.

Concerning some of the specified articles of union, it is notorious that the members of the sects conventionally termed "Evangelical" do not agree among themselves. It is mere pretence, then, to speak so loudly of identity of opinion on what they call "fundamentals," while they put widely different constructions on the same form of words. If certain speculative doctrines be absolutely essential to salvation, it is reasonable to expect that they should be defined with precision. There are various theories of the Trinity extant, all propounded by orthodox men. There is the naked tritheism of Sherlock, and the mere modalism of Wallis. These theories are distinct and different. But which has the saving truth in it? This is what we should be given to know, if our eternal salvation be indeed staked on the correctness of the speculative opinion. Again: With regard to Baptism. Since they give this ordinance a prominent position, why do they not tell us what it is? Do we not all know that the Baptists attach a very different signification to this term, from that of the other denominations? If a belief in the authority and perpetuity of this rite be necessary to qualify for Christian fellowship, and to secure salvation, surely we should have been told whether the sprinkling of an infant be really a valid baptism or not. Since it is made a vital point, it should have been carefully defined. Or, again: with regard to the Atonement,—the "central truth" of the Gospel. Why did they not state what they meant by it? Our readers may exclaim, surely they fully agree, and understand each other on that point! We rejoice—they surely do no such thing, and we have the proof at hand to shew that they entertain, and teach, widely differing notions on that head, and misunderstand each other woefully. Our testimony is Dr. Cox of Brooklyn, N.Y., one of the clergymen who went over from America and joined the Alliance. Here are his own words, from his own pen:—"I have heard great sermons from distinguished men; and it seems there is some deplorable want of manly, discriminating, and thorough-going views, even on fundamental points. The doctrine of the Atonement is one of them. They are hampered, and strained, and self-contradictory often; because they lack clear and correct conceptions of that sublime and glorious transaction. They are not resolved as to its extent; and this with me is a sure sign they misunderstand its nature. I never knew an exception." Such is the evidence of an "evangelical" witness, touching the "evangelical" preachers and preaching of Great Britain. And yet Dr. Cox, and those concerning whom he bears this testimony, come together and proclaim to the world the identity of their belief in fundamentals, because they assent alike to a certain naked proposition in which the word "Atonement" holds a prominent place. But in this word it is quite obvious they attach very diverse ideas. It is manifest, therefore, that the agreement of the "Evangelical Al-

liance" even in what they regard as essential articles, is merely a semblance, not a reality.

Concerning the prospects of the Alliance various opinions are entertained. Some are very sanguine as to the benefits likely to result from it, whilst others regard it as very doubtful whether it will accomplish any permanent or extensive good. We are of those who think that it has not within itself the true elements of coherence, and is therefore deficient in that which is essential to an earnest and permanent coöperation. The members of the Alliance, we may presume, like union 'well,' but many of them, we may also presume, like their own sectarian canons 'better.' Though a Baptist, Congregationalist, or Methodist minister had the tongue of an angel, and were as orthodox as Paul, he would not be suffered by some of his ministerial brethren of the Alliance to let his voice or his doctrine be heard before their congregations. The pulpits of the Churches of England and Scotland are alike barred against him. We do not mean to say here that a free exchange of pulpits is absolutely essential to Christian union; but we do say, that where sectarianism is permitted to obtrude, and peremptorily forbid such fraternal intercourse, there is a serious obstacle raised to hearty sympathy and coöperation. "True friendship," saith the ancient adage, "can subsist only among equals." There is a real truth at the bottom of the saying.—Or, again, would the members of the Alliance sit down to the Lord's Supper together? Why was not this proposed some time during their sittings? What could have been more appropriate and beautiful among men who had come together from widely distant parts as disciples of Jesus Christ? "Do this in remembrance of me," said our Saviour. What an impressive symbol of sympathy and union it would have been to have partaken together of that delightful Christian rite! But would they have done so? we ask again.—Would the close-communication Baptist have sat down with the Methodist? Would the Episcopalian have sat down with the Independent? If so, we should be glad to hear it; but we believe they would not. Sectarianism interferes here again, and raises its voice against it.

How, under such circumstances, can we believe a real, whole-souled Christian union to subsist? Their union, then, cannot be thorough, heart-felt, and real. Nor can there be any real Christian union based upon a sectarian foundation, such as theirs. Such a union cannot stand on a narrower basis, than the broad and generous platform of the Christianity of Christ.

CZERSKI, THE GERMAN REFORMER.

This celebrated individual came to London for the purpose of attending the "Evangelical Alliance." He had been invited to attend, but whether the invitation was an official one or not, we cannot undertake to say. We remember his reply. He stated, at first, that he could not attend, alleging as one reason his inability to bear the expenso of the journey. We did not hear anything more of his intentions regarding the matter until we saw it announced that he had arrived in London.

Czerski, it appears, had seceded from the Church of Rome, about four weeks prior to the appearance of Ronge's well known letters concerning the 'holy coat' of Treves. In the exercise of an independent judgment he had gone to the Sacred Scriptures, and stood upon the doctrines he found there. But he was not able to reconcile the various parts of the problem of the "Evangelical Alliance." It appears he could not find in the Scriptures exactly what the Alliance commanded, and required. So that he was refused admittance. He was heterodox in their eyes. We have not yet been able to ascertain wherein his heterodoxy consisted.

Such was the treatment which Johannes Czerski received at the hands of this so-called "Evangelical Alliance." "Czerski," says the *Morning Advertiser*, "has been suf-

ferred to walk the streets of London without recognition. The Evangelical Alliance had no welcome to offer him. But for the friendly offices of the Rev. Mr. Hershell, a converted Jew, who stately preaches in the Edgeware Road, this eminent individual would have left our land, a broken-hearted man." Would it not be well if we had less self-styled "Evangelicism" in the world, and more real Christianity?

THE WORLD'S TEMPERANCE CONVENTION.

The session of this Convention commenced in London, on Tuesday, 5th Aug., and was attended by about three hundred delegates and visitors, from various parts of the world. It is believed that these meetings have done much good, by arousing amongst all classes a deeper interest in the cause of Temperance. The statistical evidence elicited and laid before the Convention was such as could scarcely fail to produce in the mind of every right-thinking member of the community, a strong conviction of the obligation resting upon him, to aid in the advancement of a cause so philanthropic in itself and so consonant with the spirit of Christianity.

In the course of the proceedings of the Convention, "An Appeal to the British Nation on the greatest Reform yet to be accomplished," was read and adopted. It is from the pen of Mr. Silk Buckingham; and the following extract from it, we have no doubt, will be read with interest:—

"Fellow-countrymen, the age in which we live is called the Age of Reform; and among the nations of the earth, England takes the foremost rank amongst reforms. The wise and the good in all countries look to it for example, and in most instances look to it with hope; but there is one giant evil yet to be reformed, in which its example is more pernicious than beneficial, and in which its national influence has created so vast an amount of injury, that all its energies should be put forth at once, and without an hour's delay, to remove the blot from its otherwise bright escutcheon. As a people, you are intelligent—the world admits it; but, much as you have learnt, and great as is the superiority you manifest in arts, in science, and in commerce, you are yet, as far as the majority of your members is concerned, steeped in the profoundest ignorance as to the extent of injury sustained by you all, in a greater or lesser degree, by what you deem the innocent and moderate use of intoxicating drinks. As a people, you are wealthy—no other people on the globe are your equals in this; but, in no country is so large a portion of that wealth utterly wasted and destroyed, as it is by usages and customs prevalent among you, in all ranks of society, from the cottage to the palace—by all ages, all professions, both sexes, and all conditions of men. As a people, you are courageous—your history has proved it: but there is one foe whom you have not courage to front, whom you shrink from attacking—and before whose sway you bend in dread and homage—the tyrant, Fashion. As a people, you are free—none, perhaps, really freer: but amidst all your boasted freedom, you are slaves to a habit which holds you in fetters more closely rivetted than those which manacle the African; for while you have broken his chains to pieces, you still wear your own, apparently unconscious of the bondage. As a people, you are benevolent, moral, religious; your numerous institutions and munificent subscriptions every where proclaim it: but you nevertheless seem to be unmoved by a sweeping torrent of destruction, rolling over every part of your otherwise beautiful and happy country, which mars your benevolence, outrages all morality, and is the greatest stumbling-block to pure religion that has ever obstructed its heavenly path. It has been proved by parliamentary evidence,—sifted, examined, and scrutinized, but never yet confuted or denied,—that the actual expenditure of money, in Great Britain alone, exclusive of all her colonies, in the mere purchase of intoxicating drinks, exceeds fifty millions sterling! a sum greater than the whole revenue of the kingdom, from every available source. Does this vast expenditure make any one stronger or healthier than if he abstained entirely from its use? The united intelligence of the most enlightened and eminent medical men of the country answer no!—and out of a long list of those who have so answered, by their signatures to public documents, it will be enough to mention the names of Sir

James Clarke, Sir J. Macgregor, Sir Benjamin Brodie, Sir William Burnett, Drs. Chambers, Paris, Bright, Copeland, Forbes, Latham, Bostock, Guy, Key, Elliotson, and a host of others, including the very heads of the medical profession. Does it make any one more industrious, or capable of enduring greater labour? The uniform testimonies of landed proprietors, merchants, manufacturers, and employers of large bodies of men, in agriculture, trade, mining, in fleets, in armies, in isolated labour, or in co-operative force, answer no! On the contrary, they prove that it produces idleness in such a degree, as that, on an average of the whole working community, one-sixth part of their time, or one day in every week, is wasted and expended by drinking usages and indulgences; and therefore that another fifty millions sterling is therefore lost to the whole nation by the suppression or stagnation of so much productive power: while the sickness and debility occasioned by intemperance, both parents and their progeny, adds considerably to this loss of efficient labour and production, great as it already is. Does it improve the intellect, or increase the skill of any living being? All experience answers no! It renders some stupid, others self-willed and obstinate, some vain and conceited, and others furious and demagogic: but of patient learning, practised skill, and calm and deliberate wisdom, it never imparted an atom. It makes present idiots and future lunatics, but it makes no man wiser or more competent to the discharge of any of the great duties of life. Does it make men more moral, women more chaste, or children more truthful and honest? Alas! in no one instance has it ever done this. Stimulating drink is every hour the exciting cause of nearly all the crimes that fill our prisons, that people our penal colonies, and that supply the executioner for the gallows. Strong drink is the parent of nearly all the mutinies in the navy, and insubordinations in the army; and almost all the tortures of flogging, and every species of naval and military punishment, is clearly traceable to this single cause. Stimulating drink is the powerful agent used to facilitate seductions, adulteries, and the daily violations of chastity, in thought, word, and deed; and the inmates of every female asylum, with one united voice will answer, that but for the use of reason-drowning drink, their betrayers would never have succeeded in depriving them of all that rendered life valuable—their hitherto unspotted honour; and that but for the same conscience-searing poison, they would have returned again, repentant, to the bosom of society, their expulsion from which, as outcasts, was owing to the criminal conduct of others, but, in the delirium produced by drink, they find their only solace, by steeping their unutterable woes in temporary oblivion. And for children—in every country emblems of purity and innocence, in every religion personifying angels of bliss and glory—oh! let it be written in burning tears of grief and shame—children are every day, in every town and village, in every hovel, and in every mansion, trained by their blind and unthinking parents, to acquire an appetite for this destroying poison every time it is given to them by the maternal hand—which should never dispense aught but blessings—as a reward for good behaviour—as something to gratify them and do them good!—or, when seating them at the table, and bidding them drink the healths of those around, to elevate them for the moment to the dignity of little men and women: never dreading that in after-life this taste, first sanctioned and fostered by parental example, and meant, no doubt, in kindness, may, by a subsequent vicious indulgence, bring these originally pure and innocent children to the last stage of dishonour and degradation, a drunkard's grave—a fate that never could befall them if they never tasted this insidious poison. Here, then, are fifty millions of money actually spent, and fifty millions' worth of valuable time and productive labour wasted, without adding to the health, strength, capacity, skill, intellect, wealth, virtue, morality, or religion, of any single being. Is this the nation calling itself wise? Will it be endured for a moment longer by a people calling themselves free? Shall it be quailed before as an unconquerable evil, by a people calling themselves brave? If so, let them abandon all these titles, and submit to be considered the weakest and feeblest of mankind."

ENGLISH OPERATIVES.

Elihu Burritt, the "Learned Blacksmith," of Worcester, Mass., who is now making a pedestrian tour of England, gives the following as a leaf from his journal:—

I was suddenly diverted from my contemplation of this magnificent scenery by a fall of heavy rain drops, as the prelude of an impending shower. Seeing a gate open, and

hearing a familiar clicking behind the hedge, I stepped through into a little blacksmith's shop, about as large as an American smoke-house for curing bacon. The first object that my eyes rested upon, was a full-grown man, nine years of age, and nearly three feet high, perched upon a stone of half that height, to raise his breast to the level of his father's anvil, at which he was at work, with all the vigor of his little short arms, making nails. I say a full-grown man, for I fear he can never grow any larger, physically or mentally. As I put my hand on his shoulder in a familiar way, to make myself at home with him, and to remove the timidity with which my sudden appearance seemed to inspire him, by a pleasant word or two of greeting, his flesh felt case-hardened into all the induration of toiling manhood, and as unsusceptible of growth as his anvil block. Fixed manhood had set in upon him in the greenness of his youth; and there he was, by his father's side, a stunted, premature man; with his childhood cut off; with no space to grow up between the cradle and the anvil block; chased, as soon as he could stand on his little legs, from the hearth-stone to the forge-stone, by iron necessity, that could not let him stop long enough to pick up a letter of the English alphabet on the way. O, Lord John Russell! think of it! Of this Englishman's son, placed by his mother, scarcely weaned, on a high, cold stone, barefooted, before the anvil; there to harden, sear, and blister its young hands by heating and hammering ragged nailrods, for the sustenance her breast can no longer supply! Lord John! look at those nails, as they lie hissing on the block. Know their meaning, use, and language? Please your Lordship, let me tell you—for I have made nails before now—they are iron exclamation points, which this unlettered, dwarfish boy is unconsciously arraying against you, against the British Government, and the ministry of British literature, for cutting him off without a letter of the English alphabet, when printing is done by steam! for incarcerating him, for no sin on his or his parents' side, but poverty, into a dark, six-by-eight prison of hard labour, a youthless being—think of it! an infant hardened, almost in its mother's arms, into a man, by toil that bows the sturdiest of the world's labourers who came to manhood through intervening years of childhood!

The boy's father was at work with his back towards me, when I entered. At my first word of salutation to the lad, he turned around and accosted me a little bashfully, as if unaccustomed to the sight of strangers in that place, or reluctance to let them into the scene and secret of his poverty. I sat down upon one end of his nail-bench, and told him I was an American blacksmith by trade, and that I had come in to see how he got on in the world; whether he was earning pretty good wages at his business, so that he could live comfortably, and send his children to school. As I said this, I glanced inquiringly toward the boy, who was looking steadily at me from his stone stool by the anvil. Two or three little crook-faced girls, from two to five years, had stolen in timidly, and a couple of young, frightened eyes were seen peering over the door-sill at me. They all looked as if some task were daily allotted them in the soot and cinders of their father's forge, even to the sharp-eyed baby at the door. The poor Englishman—he was as much an Englishman as the Duke of Wellington—looked at his bushy-headed, barefooted children, and said softly, with a melancholy shake of the head, that the times were rather hard with him. It troubled his heart, and many hours of the night he was kept awake by the thought of it, that he could not send his children to school, nor teach them himself to read. They were good children, he said, with a moist yearning in his eyes; they were all the wealth he had, and he loved them the more, the harder he had to work for them. The poorest part of the poverty that was on him, was that he could not give his children the letters. They were good children, for all the crook of the shop was on their faces, and their fingers were bent like eagles' claws with handling nails. He had been a poor man all his days, and he knew his children would be poor all their days, and poorer than he, if the nail business should grow worse. If he could only give them the letters, or the alphabet as they called it, it would make them the like of rich; for then they could read the Testament. He could read the Testament a little, for he had learned the letters by firelight. It was a good book, was the Testament; never saw any other book—heard tell of some in rich people's houses; but it mattered but little with him. The Testament, he was sure it was made for nailers and such like. It helped him wonderfully when the loaf was small on his table. He had but little time to read it when the sun was up, and it took him long to read a little, for he learned the letters when he was old. But he laid it beside his dish at dinner time and fed his heart with it, while the children were eating the bread that

fell to his share. And when he had spelt out a line of the shortest words, he read them aloud, and his eldest boy, the one on the block there, could say several whole verses he had learned in this way. It was a great comfort to him to think that James could take into his heart so many verses of the Testament, which he could not read. He intended to teach all his children in this way. It was all he could do for them; and this he had to do at meal times; for all the other hours he had to be at the anvil. The nailing business was growing harder, he was growing old, and his family large. He had to work from four o'clock in the morning till ten o'clock at night to earn eighteenpence. His wages averaged only about seven shillings a week; and there were five of them in the family to live on what they could earn. It was hard to make up the loss of an hour. Not one of their hands, however little, could be spared. Jimmy was going on nine years of age, and a helpful lad he was; and the poor man looked at him doatingly. Jimmy could work off a thousand nails a day, of the smallest size. The rent of their little shop, tenement, and garden, was five pounds a year; and a few pennies earned by the youngest of them was of great account.

UNITARIAN CONVENTION, U.S.—The Autumnal Convention will this year be held at Philadelphia, commencing on the 20th October inst.

IRISH PROTESTANT CHURCH IN BOSTON.—We find the following announcement in the Boston Christian World:—

"The Rev. J. Fisher, recently from the North of Ireland, formerly of the Synod of Ulster, will preach in the Hall in Purchase Street, lately vacated by the Episcopal Society, commencing on Sabbath next, Oct. 4th and continuing for successive Sabbaths, at the usual hours of public worship. With the Divine Blessing, it will be the endeavor of the preacher to gather a new congregation of Irish and other Dissenters, many of whom are not at present connected with any of the regular congregations of this city. The Irish Protestants, in particular, are desirous of having one of their own native preachers, whose sympathies and views are more in accordance with their own. All are cordially invited to attend."

THE ENGLISH CHURCH IN IRELAND.—The following is an extract from an article which appeared in the Eclectic Review for August last:—

"The population of Ireland is about eight millions, more than six millions of whom are Roman Catholics; whilst of the remainder, there are only about seven hundred thousand belonging to the established church! The functionaries of the state church are not confined to those localities where the main body of their adherents are found, but are fixed in places where they have few or none at all. There are no less than forty-one benefices in which there is not a single Protestant Episcopalian! There are ninety-nine where there are not twenty Protestants, and one hundred and twenty more, in which the number varies from twenty to fifty. There are fifty other parishes whose whole Protestant population consists of only five hundred and twenty-seven individuals. * * * In such facts lie the materials for discord, and of continual agitation. The immense revenues of the state, form another item in "the monster grievance." Their precise amount it is difficult to ascertain. We have made every attempt to do so, but without success. It is our firm belief that the full amount is known only to the recipients. The income of the primate is certainly not less than £20,000 per annum. The bench of bishops enjoy about £160,000 per annum. * * * And this, be it remembered, in a country proverbially poor—where, even according to government statistics, every fourth man is a pauper. * * * The incomes of some of the clergy, in places where they have little or no duty to perform, having few, if any, adherents, amount to a very large sum. We could name fifty parishes, containing only about one hundred and twenty-seven individuals professing the Protestant faith, whose united clerical revenues exceed £11,000.—Eclectic Review.

RELIGIOUS OPINIONS.—Among the Acts recently passed, is one entitled, "An Act to relieve Her Majesty's subjects from certain penalties and disabilities in regard to religious opinions." As a remarkable feature in the Bill, it may be mentioned that there is no preamble. It is at once declared that from and after the commencement of the Act, the various Statutes or Ordinances, and the several Acts or parts of Acts, recited, shall be repealed. At 'one fell swoop' it removes from the statute book twenty-six Acts of Parliament, from the 5th and 6th Edward VI. to the 33rd George III.—By the second provision, Jews are to be subject to the same laws as Protestant Dissenters in respect to schools and places of worship.—London Times.

Poetry.

DUTY.

BY W. J. LINTON.

Be thou no coward!
Life is a trust;
Thou art God's steward;
Dare to be just!
God's sun shines on all.

God is thy master;
Keep thy life whole;
Be thou no waster
Of body or soul!
God watcheth thy fall.

Care for God's children!
Faith ever thrive;
There is no wild'ring
Where there is love:
Love mastereth all.

"WHENCE CAME THE TARES?"

Whence crept the Trinity into the Christian fold? This question I shall now answer by giving as brief a sketch as possible of the history of the Trinity. But the first part of my history must be that of simple Unitarianism; for vestiges of no other form of doctrine can be traced back farther than the third century, nor can we find any evidence that the doctrine of three equal persons in the Godhead was maintained till late in the fourth century. I am prepared to state, without fear of contradiction, that the doctrine of the equality of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, cannot be found in any work of the first three centuries, and that there cannot be found, with reference to the divine nature, in any genuine Christian work of the first two centuries, any statement of doctrine, equivalent to, or approaching to, or consistent with, the modern doctrine of the Trinity. Is it said, that, because there was no controversy about this doctrine, it was passed over in silence? I reply, that, as the Christian fathers wrote chiefly about the divine nature, attributes, and will, if they had this idea, they could not have failed to use corresponding phraseology; for Trinitarian phraseology is now used by Trinitarians, not only in controversial writings, but in prayers and in practical sermons, and has been freely used during ages when the doctrine was received without opposition or dissent.

Yet farther, it is certain as any fact in history, that the Trinity was not in primitive times the doctrine of the whole church, even if we were to admit that it was held by a part of the church. No ecclesiastical historian denies or doubts that the Judaizing Christians of Palestine, who formed distinct sects early in the second century, were Unitarians. There were two sects of these Christians—the Ebionites and the Nazarenes. The Ebionites believed Jesus to have been a mere man, the son of Joseph and Mary; they are confidently spoken of by the Orthodox fathers as heretics. The Nazarenes believed in the miraculous birth and superhuman dignity of Jesus, but regarded him as a created and finite being; and they seem to have been regarded as Orthodox in the earliest times, and are not spoken of as heretics till the fourth century. For these facts, it may be sufficient to refer you to the ecclesiastical history of Mosheim, himself a Trinitarian. Now could the Trinity have been believed by the great body of the church during the first three centuries, and these Nazarenes have been left without anathema and obloquy?

There is yet another remark of importance to be made with regard to the early Christian writings. They consisted not only of works for the edification of those within the church, but many of them were written for the defence and propagation of the new faith, and were addre sed to Jews and Pagans—to the opposers and persecutors of the church. In writings of this class, the most important doctrine of the whole Christian system could not have been passed over in silence. It must needs have been clearly stated and expounded, for the benefit of the uninitiated, and elaborately defended against doubts and objections. Let us see, then, what sort of language the early advocates of Christianity used in propagating and defending their religion.

On the day of Pentecost, Peter addressed a confused, skeptical, and mocking multitude, many of whom had come from afar, and were utter strangers to the new religion. Hear his simple statement, which made, we are told, three thousand converts. "Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you, by miracles, and wonders, and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know; him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and

by wicked hands have crucified and slain, whom God hath raised up." Hear also in what terms Paul preached Jesus for the first time before the superstitious and idolatrous Athenians. "He hath appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness, by that man whom he hath ordained, whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead."† Hear also St. Paul's synopsis of his own preaching, in that bold, manly defence before Agrippa, in which you will all feel that it was infinitely beneath the apostle's character to have used concealment or equivocation. "I continue unto this day, witnessing both to small and great, saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come: that Christ should suffer, and that he should be the first that should rise from the dead, and should show light unto the people, and to the Gentiles."‡ "Saying none other things,"—could St. Paul honestly have made such a denial as this, if he had preached so novel and momentous a view of the divine nature as the Trinity unfolds, especially when it is considered that this must have been an entirely unknown doctrine to Agrippa?

The only other Christian apologist, whom I have time to quote, is Justin Martyr, who addressed a defence of Christianity to Antoninus Pius about the year 140, and about the same time wrote a defence of Christianity against Jewish objections, in the form of a dialogue with Trypho the Jew. Justin, I remark in passing, has always held an unquestioned rank amongst the Orthodox fathers. Speaking of Jesus (in the dialogue with Trypho), he says: "The Father is the author to him, both of his existence, and of his being powerful, and of his being Lord and divine." "He was subordinate to the Father and a minister to his will."

I will now offer you a few extracts from the fathers of the first three or four centuries, premising that I shall quote from no reputed heretic, but only from those whom the Trinitarians regard as representatives of the Orthodoxy of their times. I shall have no difficulty, I think, in showing you that these fathers were what we now call Unitarians.

Clement of Rome, a personal friend of St. Paul, (believed to be the Clement mentioned by St. Paul in the epistle to the Philippians,) styles Jesus "the sceptre of the Majesty of God." We find, towards the close of his epistle to the Corinthians, the following doxology,—could a Trinitarian have written it? "Now God, the Inspector of all things, the Father of all spirits, and the Lord of all flesh, who has chosen our Lord Jesus Christ, and us by him, his peculiar people, grant to every soul of man that calleth upon his glorious and holy name, faith, fear, peace, long-suffering, patience, temperance, holiness, and sobriety, who all well-pleasing in his sight, through our High Priest and Protector, Christ Jesus, by whom he glory, and majesty, and power, and honor unto him, now and forever."

Clement of Alexandria, who wrote near the beginning of the third century, says: "The Mediator performs the will of the Father. The Word is the Mediator, being common to both, the Seal of God and the Saviour of Men, God's Servant and our Instructor."

Origen, the most learned of the fathers, wrote about the year 225. He says: "The Father only is the God; and the Saviour, as he is the image of the invisible God, so is he the image of his goodness." "If we know what prayer is, we must not pray to any created being, not to Christ himself, but only to God, the Father of all, to whom our Saviour himself prayed." "We are not to pray to a brother, who has the same Father with ourselves, Jesus himself saying, that we must pray to the Father through the Son." If this is not Unitarianism, what is it?

Eusebius, the father of ecclesiastical history, who wrote about the year 320, says: "There is one God, and the only-begotten comes out of him." "Christ, being neither the Supreme God, nor an angel, is of a middle nature between them; and being neither the Supreme God, nor a man, but the Mediator, is in the middle between them, the only-begotten Son of God." "Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, and the first-born of every creature, teaches us to call his Father the true God, and commands us to worship him only."

I had marked for quotation many more extracts from the same and other fathers of the church; but I omit them for the sake of brevity. And now let me ask, could these fathers have been Trinitarians, in the modern sense of that word? Could a modern Trinitarian have written the passages which I have now quoted? Had I quoted them, without naming their authors, would you not have taken them for extracts from the writings of Unitarian divines? I trust that there is no need of my saying, that I have endeavoured to represent the opinions of

* Acts ii. 22-24. † Acts xvii. 31. ‡ Acts xvi. 22-23. § Philippians iv. 3.

those times impartially. During the second and third centuries, from a source which I shall shortly indicate, there was a gradual introduction of Trinitarian phraseology into the church. But I no more believe that I myself am a Unitarian, than I do that the Christian fathers of the first three centuries, whose works have come down to us, were all of them virtually Unitarians. Though, from the time of Justin downward, there was a gradual departure from the simplicity of the gospel, and a tendency towards mystical views of the divine nature, and towards the recognition of a threefold distinction therein, yet I believe, that, down to the end of the second century at least, if not of the third, the doctrine of three equal persons in the Godhead would have been deemed as grossly heretical, as that of the undivided unity of God is anywhere regarded at the present time.

We have now reached the period of the Arian controversy, and the celebrated Council of Nice. The Arian controversy was on this wise. Alexander, bishop of Alexandria, in an assembly of his presbyters, maintained that the Son was of the same essence with the Father. This assertion was opposed by Arius, one of his presbyters, who maintained that the Son was totally and essentially distinct from the Father, being the first and noblest of his creatures. The dispute waxed warm, each side finding strong and determined champions, until at length Alexander summoned a numerous council, and deposed Arius and his adherents from their offices in the church. Upon this, the controversy spread like wildfire, inflamed the whole church, and finally led to the summoning of the Council of Nice, which met in the year 325, condemned by vote of the majority the doctrine of Arius, procured his banishment into Illyria, and established what is called the Nicene creed,—a creed not strictly Trinitarian, though strongly tending that way. This creed applies the title of God to our Saviour; but calls him God out of, or derived from God, and thus does not make him a self-existent and independent being, so that this last step towards the full development of the Trinity still remained to be taken. There was a large minority of the Council that dissented from this creed, though it was backed by the authority of the emperor Constantine, who took an active part in the session. Only five years afterwards, the emperor, having become an Arian, repealed the laws against Arius, and instituted a series of oppressive measures against the partisans of the Nicene creed. Ten years after the session of the Council of Nice, the Council of Tyre deposed Athanasius, Alexander's successor, and reinstated Arius and his adherents in their former offices and honors in the Alexandrian church. From this time, for a period of more than forty years, the Arian party generally had the supremacy; and the Nicene creed could not, therefore, have been called the creed of the church until near the close of the fourth century.

The Athanasian creed is the oldest monument extant of the doctrine of three literally equal persons in the Godhead. This was probably written by Hilary, who died in the latter part of the fourth century. It has been recognized in the Romish church as an authentic compend of faith, since the ninth or tenth century. It is retained in the English book of common prayer; and its exclusion from the service of the American Episcopal church was assented to with great reluctance by their transatlantic brethren. It is a very long and prolix document, and I cannot burden you with the whole of it; yet I am going to give you a pretty long extract from it, for two reasons, first, that you may see in its own canonical language what absurdities and contradictions the doctrine of the Trinity involves; and, secondly, that you may contrast it, as I read it, with the "simplicity that is in Christ."

"We worship one God in Trinity, and Trinity in unity; neither confounding the persons, nor dividing the substance. For there is one person of the Father, another of the Son, and another of the Holy Spirit. But the Godhead of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit is all one, the glory equal, the majesty coeternal. Such as the Father is, such is the Son, and such is the Holy Spirit. The Father uncreate, the Son uncreate, and the Holy Spirit uncreate. The Father incomprehensible, the Son incomprehensible, and the Holy Spirit incomprehensible. The Father eternal, the Son eternal, and the Holy Spirit eternal. And yet there are not three eternals, but one eternal. As also there are not three incomprehensibles, nor three uncreated; but one uncreate and one incomprehensible. So likewise, the Father is Almighty, the Son Almighty, and the Holy Spirit Almighty. And yet there are not three Almighties; but one Almighty. So the Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Spirit is God. And yet there are not three Gods, but one God.

So likewise the Father is Lord, the Son Lord, and the Holy Spirit Lord: and yet not three Lords, but one Lord. For like as we are compelled by the Christian verity to acknowledge every person by himself to be God and Lord, so are we forbidden by the Catholic religion to say, There be three Gods or three Lords. And in this Trinity none is fore or after other; none is greater or less than another; but the whole three persons are coeternal together and coequal." Of all which, and much more like it, the creed in its sequel charitably asserts, and the good people of the English church are compelled by the rubric to hear on no less than thirteen Sundays and festivals in the year: "Which faith except every one do keep whole and undefiled, without doubt he shall perish everlastingly." The only appropriate response to this would be in the words of the apostles, "Who then can be saved?"

We have now seen that the doctrine of the Trinity is not taught in the Bible, and that it formed no part of the Christian system as maintained by the primitive church. Whence then came it? I have no hesitation in referring it to the Platonic philosophy. Plato had written much about three divine principles, which he had styled the One or the Good, Mind or Word, and Soul or Spirit. His followers had talked and written mystically about these same three principles, until the number three had become with them a sacred number, and a divine Trinity had assumed a prominent place among the doctrines of the later Platonists, in so much that it may be traced in all their works. In process of time many eminent Platonists became Christians. Justin Martyr was a devoted disciple of Plato. Alexandria, which, as we have seen, was the birth-place of the Christian Trinity, was the head-quarters of Platonism; and the early Trinitarian fathers were all Platonists, and were therefore Trinitarians before they became Christians. These fathers having been much and long in the schools of philosophy, could not come to Jesus with the simplicity of little children. They were unwilling to be disciples of Christ alone. They quoted Plato and Jesus Christ in the same breath, believed in both with equally hesitating assurance, incorporated the Platonic Trinity into their religious creed, remodeled the Christian system in the Platonic mould, and then complimented the memory of Plato on his having anticipated the essential doctrines of the gospel. That this statement is not exaggerated will appear from the fact, that, in their extant writings, the early Trinitarian fathers always quote Plato and his followers, as freely as they do the New Testament, on the subject of the Trinity. St. Augustine expressly says, that he was in the dark with regard to the Trinity, until he found the true doctrine concerning the divine Word in a Latin translation of some of the Platonic writings, which the providence of God had thrown in his way. I might, had I time, adduce numerous quotations from the Christian fathers to the same effect.

I have now accomplished, as far as possible within the limits of a single lecture, the work proposed. I have shown you, as I think, that the Trinity is not a doctrine of the Bible, that it was not believed or taught by the early Christian fathers, and that it derived its technical phraseology, its ideas, and its ultimate form, from the Platonic philosophy.

One word in conclusion. If the view which I have now presented be just, ours is no new doctrine, but the faith first delivered to the saints. What we believe, was the creed of the church in those days, when there were tongues of fire and hearts all zeal, when the word was quick and powerful, when the disciples offered their all upon the altar of their faith, and multitudes of such as should be saved were daily added to the company of the believers. Why may not the same creed bear like fruits now, and among us? May it not, God helping, if we are faithful to our light? Let us not, if we think that we have the truth, idly boast of our superior discernment; for it only makes our negligence and sluggishness the more blameworthy. Were we blind, we should have less sin. But now that we say, We see, our sin remains. If we have the light, let us walk as children of the light. If we deem ourselves, in our own views of religious doctrine, more faithful than our fellow Christians to the sublime declaration of Moses, "The Lord our God is one Lord," let us be no less faithful to the commandment, which he annexes to that declaration,—"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might,"—A. P. Peabody.