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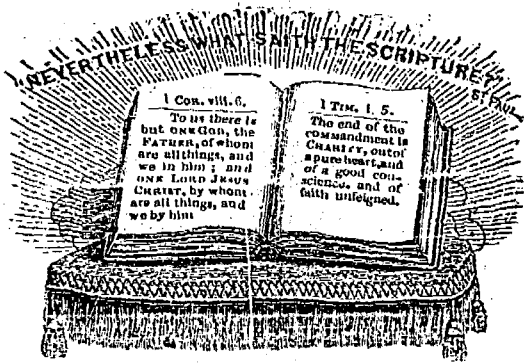
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THE BIBLE

TRUTH, HOLINESS,



CHRISTIAN

LIBERTY, LOVE.

Vol. V.

MONTREAL, JUNE, 1848.

No. 6

Poetry.

MUTUAL FORGIVENESS.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

THE KEY OF THE COFFIN.

FROM THE GERMAN OF JEAN PAUL.

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

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

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

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

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

ANNIVERSARY WEEK IN BOSTON.

BOOK AND PAMPHLET SOCIETY.

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

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

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

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

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

PUBLIC MEETING OF THE MASSACHUSETTS BIBLE SOCIETY.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

THE BIBLE CHRISTIAN.

He became a Christian, and soon perceived that diversities of belief were from the darkness in the human heart. He learned to be charitable. If the Bible were read more, there would be more charity. The Word of God is calculated to heal all dissensions. Then, if one spoke ill of another fellow-Christian, it would be replied to him, you do not speak according to the book. That inculcates charity.

Mr. Woart spoke of reading the Scriptures more in Churches—a custom particularly observed in his own Church; also of the force of example in recommending the Bible, if Christians would only live up to its precepts. In this we are all most defective. If there was more real brotherhood among Christians, the Bible would be more received.

The meeting was then adjourned with singing the Doxology, and with the Benediction by the President.

THE AMERICAN PEACE SOCIETY.

At the business meeting held in the upper Vestry of the Winter St. Church, on Monday afternoon, 4 o'clock, the officers were duly elected.

The public meeting was held in the body of the Church, in the evening, at half-past seven o'clock. Prayer was offered, and selections from the Scriptures read by Rev. Dr. Jenks. Extracts from the Annual Report were read by the Corresponding Secretary, Rev. Mr. Beckwith. Rev. Dr. Dewey delivered the address.

Dr. Dewey introduced his subject with presenting a statistical view of the evils of war.—The number of men that had fallen in battle, according to the computation of Dr. Dick, was fourteen thousand millions. No man can comprehend this immense amount of evil. Dr. Dewey presented a computation from the duration of the world, and showed how many would then have fallen every week, every day, of the world's existence. He measured it by the number of years it takes a ray of light to come from the most distant star. But still the mind could not grasp it.—If we were shut up in this city, and thirty thousand shells thrown into our midst, exploding in the bosom of our families—our streets running with blood—desolation and pillage following—then might we know something about what we are talking.

Nor is such a fate a mere dream of the past. Within a year, even, something of it has been exhibited to us in Monterey and Vera Cruz.

This subject of War is very far from being exhausted.—We were counting on the world's being at peace—we had looked for the fruits of peace in free intercourse of nation with nation. But recent events had broken up the dream; and Europe may be on the verge of that fearful War which Canning [the British Statesman] predicted would one day come. The cause of peace had seemed to languish for want of an antagonist. Within a year past, a spirit has arisen that offers antagonism enough.

I have thought, said Dr. D., what would be the feelings of the inhabitants of distant worlds, if they could survey this earth and behold what is here doing—the besieging and burning of cities; the millions slain; the fiery craters of human passions opened; they would think our world the Hell of the universe, and that wicked Spirits were sent here to work out the doom of the damned.

Take the simple view that it is good to live; to feel the brightness of day; to cherish the chosen sentiments of the soul—how many such lives have been sacrificed—consider the dreadfulness of death by war. If a scaffold were to be erected in your midst, this evening, and one whose life is cheapest should here be executed before you, what a sensation of horror would run through this assembly. But the reality belongs to war!

The speaker remarked that he had travelled over the fields whereon had been piled heaps of the slain in battle. No flushings of parting day, nor softer beams of moonlight, than fell on Waterloo. But he looked away from this to the field of humanity. Why sinks the condition of the laborer? Because the land has to pay everywhere the war-tax. Because English labor has to pay, every year, 140 millions of dollars, as interest on her national debt, incurred in war. But for the withdrawal of labor occasioned by war, and the waste of treasure and life, the earth might have been a garden, filled with Churches, and the nations had learned universal love.

How shall we solve this problem of war? It is one of stupendous significance. It is not the misery alone. Suffering may come as a discipline to perfect the soul. But human hands have produced this misery of war. The old fable of the giants, turning up mountains in contending with each other, is but a symbol of war. What then is the solution of this problem? Is man a fighting animal? Is war necessary to self-defence?

Every battle is the embodiment of an opinion. One nation says, You have got my lands, or seized my citizens on board ship. The other says, I have not. What do they do? They adopt the maxim that might is right. It is opinion against opinion, to be settled—how? Just as two farmers, contending

about a strip of land, or two manufacturers about a water privilege, should determine to fight it out! Dr. Dewey here alluded to Daniel Webster's letters, which had done more to settle the difficulty between England and this nation, than a thousand battles.

So long as the custom of war continues, there can be no such thing as civilized society. As individuals we might be civilized, but as a nation we are barbarous.

Dr. Dewey conceded that in old time, it may have been well in certain cases, to resist rather than succumb. If in a high and heroic spirit man can suffer wrong, better. But this vision of true heroism had not dawned on the heathen, through the gospel, and no nation can arise without seeing something better placed before it, as a standard. But the time will come when war between two nations will be regarded like a brutal fight between two men.

Still the question returns, may not a nation resist? Look to Italy. May she not strike a blow for freedom? If a nation like Russia should appear on our frontiers, threatening to come down in devastation upon us, we all know what would be the feeling of the country. Still, would it be right? Dr. Dewey would give two answers.

And first, he would say that such sudden and occasional outbreaks were not the ordinary manifestations of resistance. He would not, however, deny the right of absolute self-defence. What then limits it? That which limits every right—justice, wisdom. Some of the advocates of peace make a distinction—that we may resist with pen, but not with sword. But why not with sword as well as with pen? The pen draws no blood, but it can kill soul and body both. There are weapons as hateful as the sword, which men are daily using—weapons against character. What then shall we say? That instruments of defence are lawful, but that justice, and truth, and humanity are to be our law of guidance.

He would remark *secondly*, that in the case of political oppression he would counsel forbearance rather than resistance by war. I think, said he, that the time has come to rely on the moral sentiments of the age. He alluded to the Irish Repeal, and said there was coming to be a sentiment, beneath which every government trembles that undertakes to do wrong. Nor could he forbear mentioning that our religion is a religion of love. If the precepts given to man in his individual capacity, not to resist, do not always apply to governments, yet the spirit of these precepts is always in force. If an army must take its stand; if in no other way can a nation act, then let there be no beating of drum, nor unfurled banner, nor waving plume, but let the army go forth arrayed in sackcloth. This only should be Christian fighting, if there can be such a thing.

What is the profession of the soldier? It is to kill men for a livelihood—to fight battles, whether right or wrong, at another's dictation. He doubted whether any human being had a right to enter into such a compact. He would not bind a child to such a profession, by educating him at a national military school, lest he should subject him to a conflict afterwards between his conscience and the course his country should bid him pursue.

What is the character of the wars that Christian nations have been engaged in? Russia against the Afghans, England against the Chinese, France against Algiers, the Americans against the Mexicans—they have rushed forth like beasts of prey. And what is the plea for such onsets? The best has been no more than that some lawless savages have rushed out to commit depredations, and now we will sweep away the whole tribe.

If we would spread civilization, said Dr. D., we want not these bloody measures. Give us the tenth part of the one thousand millions of dollars the war-spirit costs every year, and we will send forth noble and wise men everywhere on a mission of peace and well-doing, and the nations would say, the world is full of brothers. The kingdom of God shall come on earth as it is in heaven.

Dr. Dewey spoke of the need of changing public sentiment in regard to the absurd and unchristian idea of national honor. He would say, too, let those who decree wars, do the fighting. If our President and his Cabinet; if both houses of Congress, had been obliged to go forth, and not the paid soldier instead, we should never have heard of this miserable Mexican War.

But better times, said Dr. D., in conclusion, are coming. When the Almighty hand formed this planet, and sent it forward in its course, he left its inhabitants to work out their own destiny. Slowly have they passed through ignorance and through wretchedness. The morning drum-beat has kept peace with the circling hours, the martial trumpet has summoned forth to bloody strife. But as the earth arose from chaos, so shall men emerge from the darkness and tumult of evil, the flood of misery shall abate, man no more corrupt his way on earth, and the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea. [Dr. D. quoted Is. xi; 6—9.]

UNITARIAN COLLATION.

In the vast Hall adjacent to the Depot of the Boston and Worcester Railroad, at 2 o'clock on Tuesday, May 30, some nine hundred persons, ladies and gentlemen, sat down to a most hospitable and joyful feast, prepared by the generosity of the Liberal laymen of Boston. In behalf of these, Eben Dale, Esq., offered some appropriate and spirited introductory remarks, when Charles G. Loring, Esq., the President, rose and announced that a blessing would be invoked by Rev. Chandler Robbins. After the abundant dinner had been zealously partaken of, thanks to Heaven were returned by Rev. C. A. Bartol. Mr. Loring then drew the attention of the company by a few eloquent and timely observations, touching on the beauty and nobleness of a large-hearted Christian charity, and the superiority of a spirit of goodness to any sectarian peculiarities, relating an interesting anecdote of Whitefield's preaching, and concluding with a graceful acknowledgment of the presence of the ladies. Rev. Dr. Pierce read the first original hymn, which was sung congregationally. Dr. Pierce then told some entertaining stories showing most conclusively that he is not so old a man as some others, and giving from a friend this excellent maxim as a recipe for longevity: "Rise early; live temperately; work hard; continue cheerful." Rev. Dr. Kendall of Plymouth pleasantly contrasted the days of his settlement with the present. Lieutenant Governor Reed avowed his satisfaction at the recent rapid growth and diffusion of the sentiment that the Bible is the only legitimate creed of Christians, and a sufficient rule of faith and practice, making special reference to the manly and catholic views of Dr. Bushnell. Mr. Congdon of New Bedford cited amusing authority from a Quaker neighbour in favor of brevity. Rev. Mr. Fisher, of the Irish Protestant Society in Boston, introduced Rev. Henry Giles who advocated, by energetic and pointed appeals, the claims of Rev. Mr. Fisher's parish to the sympathy of the Liberal public, feelingly alluding to the humble beginnings of Christianity itself. Here the Chairman read a very interesting letter from Judge Cranch of Washington. After a hymn was sung, Rev. Charles Brooks paid a warm tribute to M. Coquerel of Paris, now a member of the French National Assembly, whom he designated as the most eloquent preacher in Europe, having the satire of Juvenal, the rhetoric of Burke, and the spirit of Channing, and whose theological opinions are entirely in harmony with ours. Rev. S. D. Robbins then referred to the recent publication of the Memoirs of Channing, and gave some expression to personal reminiscences of that eminent teacher of Truth. The Chairman then spoke cordially and with deep emotion of the recent death of two honored and trusted men, who had both preceded him, within four years, as presiding officers, at this table, John Quincy Adams and Jonathan Chapin. A brief but eloquent eulogy on the character of the latter was added by Rev. Dr. Parkman. After solemn music, Rev. Mr. Waterston reminded the company of the labors of our brethren at the West, and of the presence of other brethren of the Christian connexion, whose missionary ardor and self-sacrificing exertions are so deserving of our admiration. Rev. Mr. Dean (Christian) responded earnestly to Mr. Waterston's call, testified to the immense influence of Channing's writings even on the borders of the wilderness, and gave some striking passages from his own experience.

Moses Grant, Esq., presented the exposed moral condition of young men in the city, as a subject of intense interest to every Christian. Rev. F. W. Holland called attention to a devoted minister in Galena, Illinois, who absolutely cannot find a place where to preach the Word, to a waiting congregation, for want of eight hundred dollars. A cordial letter was read from Hon. J. G. Palfrey, which from its author's noble position in Congress and his high character generally, elicited repeated applause. Rev. Mr. Huntoon thought highly of this feast, more highly of nature in general, and more highly still of woman. The Chairman put a motion, offered by Moses Grant, Esq., re-appointing the existing Committee of Arrangements, and it was passed with enthusiasm; thanks were voted for the use of the Hall, and after concluding observations from the Chair, and the singing of the Doxology, the company separated in excellent spirits.

The business meeting was held at the Chapel of the Church of the Savior on Tuesday, at 9 o'clock, A. M., and was opened with prayer by Rev. Dr. Parkman. The Record of the proceedings of the last year was read and accepted. A vote of thanks was passed to the Hon. Stephen Fairbanks for his voluntary services in procuring a subscription among the citizens of Boston, which paid the debt under which the Association was then suffering. George W. Warren, Esq., Rev. Messrs. G. W. Briggs

AMERICAN UNITARIAN ASSOCIATION.

The business meeting was held at the Chapel of the Church of the Savior on Tuesday, at 9 o'clock, A. M., and was opened with prayer by Rev. Dr. Parkman. The Record of the proceedings of the last year was read and accepted. A vote of thanks was passed to the Hon. Stephen Fairbanks for his voluntary services in procuring a subscription among the citizens of Boston, which paid the debt under which the Association was then suffering. George W. Warren, Esq., Rev. Messrs. G. W. Briggs

and C. Stetson, were appointed a Committee to nominate officers of the Association for the next year. An amendment to the by-law, concerning the annual subscription for membership, requiring the money to be paid in before the first day of May, was adopted. The following gentlemen were elected officers:—

Rev. E. S. Gannett, D. D., President; Rev. S. K. Lothrop, and Hon. Stephen Fairbanks, Vice-Presidents; Rev. Messrs. J. W. Thompson, Alonzo Hill, Charles Brooks, and J. Bangs and A. Peering, Esqs., Directors; Henry P. Fairbanks, Esq., Treasurer; Rev. F. W. Holland, Secretary. A discussion ensued on a motion offered by G. W. A. Barrett, Esq., to leave the annual meeting entirely open to voluntary discussions. The motion was lost. A vote was passed, approving of the action of the Executive Committee in filling the office of Secretary. It was voted also that the Executive Committee be requested to issue Circulars, inviting a full representation of the Auxiliaries at the Annual Meeting of the Association. It was also voted that the Report of the Secretary be hereafter read at the business meeting. Rev. C. Briggs was appointed by the Executive Committee to perform, the duties of a Home Secretary.

THE PUBLIC MEETING was held on Tuesday evening at half-past seven o'clock, in the Federal Street Church.—Rev. Dr. Gannett, the President of the Association, introduced the services by stating the arrangements which had been made for the present meeting, and the Rev. Mr. Corder, of Montreal, offered the prayer. The Secretary then proceeded to read a synopsis of his Report, which was succinct and effective and was received with manifestations of great satisfaction.

There were four methods by which the Association acted. (1) by Correspondence, (2) Auxiliaries, (3) Missionaries, (4) Tracts. There had been printed and circulated 12 new tracts of 6,000 each, and 6 of the 35 that have entirely disappeared. The stock has become reduced so that 2,000 dollars are needed to replace it—certainly a great change from the former overstocked shelves of the Depository. The demand for our publications, said Mr. H., was never so pressing as now. 9,000 sets of Channing's Works had been welcomed. A new edition of 3,000 containing 18,000 volumes, had just been taken up. The press had the last year circulated, of our publications, what was equivalent to two and a-half millions of four page tracts, and they promise a glorious harvest.

Of the Address by Rev. Dr. Dewey our space utterly forbids any more, this week, than a brief sketch. Having spoken of the spirit of self-criticism in which he thought Unitarians had indulged, quite to their disadvantage, he passed to his subject which was, *our position, our prospects, and our duties, as a religious body.*

This, then, said he, I hold to be our position. In common with all other Christians; we believe in God; in Christ; in the Bible, and in the doctrines and duties which it teaches. But we believe in God, as one, not three self-conscious beings; in Christ as in a peculiar sense the Son of God, and that he died to bring us nigh unto God, not to reconcile God to man; in regeneration, but not in the passivity of the subject of it; in retribution, but not in the literal eternity of its duration. Is not this a clear, definite, unequivocal position? Have our adversaries been fighting, 30 years, against no opinions? Is there any wavering on these points. I do not see it. There is no body of believers more united than we—not indeed by consistency or articles, but by affection. This Association is not our bond, but the symbol of it. Our bond is love to Christ, and neither persecution, nor peril, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall separate those held together by that bond.

But some have said, We stand, but stand still. It is alleged that our faith is not spreading. Dr. D. examined this. He spoke of our two theological schools instead of one, he said that 10 or 15 years ago, we were the only Unitarians; now the Universalists and the Christians unite with us in declaration of the unity of God.

Forty years ago, and there were not three avowed Unitarian Churches; now there are 3000, and a million of Christians are holding our opinions. If this, said Dr. D., is standing still, then he would like to know what is progress?

Dr. Dewey examined the alleged looseness of Unitarians in respect to the Bible, and showed that it is not a fact; spoke of preaching as never better than now; and of the Christian life as not decreasing or dying out.

But he would say, from doing to more doing; and a great deal more is to be done. He proceeded to speak of the condition and means of progress and improvement; of the need of our demonstrating the reality and blessedness of a righteous and holy life. This our religion wants more than wealth or seminaries.

The Church is a school, a kind of Christian Institute, in which to learn her history, and the biography of those that have illustrated her doctrines. And why, too, should there not be revivals? There are epochs in the history of

BOSTON ANNIVERSARIES.

It will be observed that we devote a large portion of space in our present number to an account of the Boston Anniversaries, which we have selected and abridged from the Boston periodicals and newspapers connected with the Unitarian denomination. Some of our readers may probably think that we give them a disproportionate share, yet we believe the majority will think otherwise. It will be seen that the topics treated of are various, and we are persuaded that the account of these meetings will be welcomed by our readers generally as interesting and instructive intelligence.—When we remember that this little sheet has its circulation for the most part in quarters where liberal Christianity is but slightly known and but little respected—that it goes forth to remote regions of Canada where the movements of liberal religionists are even less known than in this city—we consider it of some importance that those of our brethren of the faith who are thus scattered abroad, and who do not enjoy the advantage which we in Montreal enjoy, of being brought together into a worshiping Society, should be enabled to form some idea of the life, and vigor, and influence of our denomination in other places. This should give them additional encouragement and hope, for although they may now stand isolated, alone, and outcast, in their respective communities, they may be assured that there is a wholesome and purifying leaven at work in the world, which will one day impregnate the mass, and render it more liberal, more truthful, more charitable, more properly Christian in its modes of thinking and acting.

Besides those meetings, which were exclusively Unitarian, such as the Book and Pamphlet Society, the American Unitarian Association, and the Sunday School Society, we give an account of the Massachusetts Bible Society, and the American Peace Society, both of which organizations have Unitarian Christians among their most prominent and influential supporters. It is one of the pleasant characteristics of Boston—the co-operation of the various classes of Christians for common purposes of general good. This we do not hesitate to attribute to the extensive influence which Unitarians exercise in that particular community. We rarely find it any where else. For the most part, orthodoxy, as it is called, makes a merit of excluding Unitarians from all co-operation in philanthropic movements and measures. It constantly aims to tyrannize over freedom of thought by a system of social exclusion. As if conscious of its want of power to defeat Unitarianism by fair and legitimate argument, it has ever been its studied policy to adopt this system, and thus make Unitarianism seem too dreadful a thing to come into contact with. In this way—by this device, worthy of the most palmy days of priestcraft—it effectually frightens the timid and the ignorant. We have sometimes witnessed little inconsistencies in connection with certain parties of the orthodox school in passing from this community to that of Boston. Strange as it may sound to some of our readers we have seen men side by side with Unitarians on the platform of the Bible Society in Boston, and even consenting to speak after them, who would have made a merit of frowning on any unfortunate heretic of a like stamp if he had encountered him in a similar relation in this good city of Montreal. It is satisfactory to know that even rigid orthodoxy can be temporarily mollified in certain degrees of latitude. We have likewise known of reputable orthodox men of this city even preaching in the pulpits of Unitarians in Boston, who would take good care to keep themselves clear of all contact with Unitarians when they came home. But we must have patience with such men. We must have patience with their system. We must have faith in the progress of more enlightened views of

of Christian truth and freedom. Many signs are abroad foreshadowing the "good time coming."

Among the many meetings connected with the Unitarian denomination in Boston during the anniversary week, not the least important were the Conference and Prayer Meetings, held in the mornings. At these meetings brief and earnest addresses were made by various parties, the general aim of which was to quicken pious feeling, and incite to a heavenward progress. The opening address by the Rev. C. Brooks, of Boston, was mainly a pointed and fervent appeal on behalf of family religion. He earnestly urged the usefulness and high value of regular domestic devotion. Besides such addresses, prayers were offered by different persons, and the whole was interspersed with devotional singing, which imparted a delightful variety to the exercises.

As usual the whole of the Unitarian Anniversary Meetings were closed by a special one for the commemoration of the Saviour's death. This was held on Thursday evening in the Federal Street Church, when the floor of the building was entirely occupied by communicants, some being obliged to sit in the aisles owing to the crowded state of the pews. The sermon on the occasion was preached by the Rev. J. W. Thompson, of Salem, Mass., and the address at the table, and the elements distributed by the Rev. E. B. Hall, of Providence, R. I. The whole service was highly satisfactory, and a fitting close to a very interesting season.

JOHN QUINCY ADAMS' LETTERS ON THE BIBLE.

We continue to give these letters to our readers. The fifth will be found in our present sheet. In doing so, however, we think it proper to say that we have seen it stated in the Boston *Christian Register* that they were published in the New York *Tribune* (from which quarter they come to us) without the knowledge or sanction of Mr. Adams' family, and that they contain some errors. Even if we had not seen this statement, we would not have it understood that we give them as faultless documents. We regard them as highly valuable letters, but not free from mistakes. Much light has been thrown on the Bible—on its history and criticism—since Mr. Adams wrote those epistles—some five and thirty years ago.

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nations, and of individuals; and epochs belong to progress. What if a pastor should say to his people at the close of the year, for instance, Let us meet and devote this week to the consideration of our duties and responsibilities. Let us repent of past neglects, and redeem the time. Would it not be right and well to do so?

Dr. Dewey spoke of liturgical helps, of family prayer, of preaching, of the Reform movements, and closed with the expression of his feelings that we must, with diversity of mode, it may be, but with a strong hand, help on the great work of humanity.

SUNDAY SCHOOL SOCIETY.

The Anniversary Meeting of this Society was held at Dr. Gannett's Church, on Wednesday evening, May 31st. A hymn was sung by the choir; a fervent prayer was then offered by Rev. C. T. Brooks of Newport. After the singing of another hymn, the Annual Report was read by the Corresponding Secretary, Rev. Charles Brooks. The Report commenced with an allusion to the great importance of the spiritual nurture of the young and the great deficiency of this culture at the present day and in our country. The great difficulty Mr. B. thought to arise mainly out of the prevalent modes of general education, which enlist the passions under the intellect and not under the conscience. In the vicinity of Boston and in our State generally, and perhaps in some other favored portions of the Union, there may be exceptions to the rule. But it is too palpable a fact to be controverted, that the general American system of education is calculated to make a giant of the intellect and a dwarf of the conscience. The Report was chiefly occupied with a statement of this great evil and the remedy to be applied. Christ as "the way, the truth and the life," must be pressed home to men's hearts. The Sunday School must arouse itself to new and God-like labor, and supply, as best it may, the defect of our common system of education.

The Report contained addresses to teachers in our common schools, to legislators, to parents, and School teachers (which were omitted in the reading,) and closed with a summary of the whole subject. It was an able production, and will soon be printed and circulated widely.

The Agents of the Society, during the past year, have visited 58 towns, 73 schools—having 1,129 teachers and 7,023 pupils,—and delivered 93 addresses, to about 14,000 persons. Thirteen new life members have been added to the Society. A large number of copies of the last Annual Report and some new tracts have been printed and widely circulated.

Remarks of an interesting nature were offered by Rev. Mr. Palfrey, of Belfast, Rev. Mr. Osgood, of Providence, Rev. Mr. Fuller, of Manchester, Rev. Mr. Dorr, of East Lexington, Rev. Mr. Dall, of Needham, and Rev. Mr. Waterston, of Boston, and by the President of the Society, Hon. Stephen C. Phillips.

The remarks were interspersed with hymns sung by a choir of children, and the services were closed with a benediction by Rev. Mr. Allen of Northboro'.

This was one of the most important and interesting anniversaries of the week. We want our Sunday Schools to be the nurseries of the church, and we must use our utmost efforts to raise their standard high above the ordinary pursuits of the world. We want teachers who shall be wise, who shall be Christians, and who shall have that ability in imparting Christian knowledge which shall so interest our pupils, that they shall remain in our schools after they shall have reached the age of twelve or fourteen years. Here is our weak point, and here must we use our utmost endeavors to gain strength. We want enlightened, reflecting, earnest, Christian Sabbath school teachers, before we can thoroughly interest all our pupils. God grant that many such may be raised up among us. And may He strengthen those whose hearts and hands are already in the work.

CHRISTIAN UNITY.

Perhaps we cherish extravagant expectations of the degree of religious unity which may yet be realized; but we do not base one of our hopes upon the direct efforts which are often made to secure it. We rejoice to see such efforts. They indicate the aspiration of the hour—the impulse which the Father is awakening in the heart of the world. We regard every such wide-spread impulse of human hearts, under His providence, as really a prophecy of the blessing for which it seeks. Nevertheless; we have no special confidence in any endeavors to file away the sharp points of varying breeds, so that men may not goad each other beyond endurance, by clashing thoughts, as they stand side by side. Such attempts often create as many quarrels as they heal.

Many of the best things in this world are gained when we do not directly seek them. Indeed, almost all the best things come by that indirect process. Perhaps we should rather say, that while we seek one thing, it may be with throbs of desire, Providence is all the while giving us something infinitely better.

It is the great method of the soul's development. Man seeks present results, for instance, in his daily toils. But the soul is gaining a fidelity, a manly energy, a self-subsisting power and life, for which it did not directly seek. The heart seeks present joy in the intercourse of friendship and affection. It gains an intense, an increasing power to love, which enlarges its whole capacity of being. * * * The pure and ever blessed love of God himself does not come so much by direct and conscious cultivation, as by the indirect influence of the manifestations of Himself, which he hath spread around us. * * *

We have no faith in the maxim, in any application, "that we can conquer a peace." We can enforce submission in many ways, and in many things. Perhaps we can, in argument, annihilate another's creed. We have gained no unity then; perhaps we have not taken a step toward it. But if any common aim can make our hearts flow together, if anything can make our religion itself mingle its aspirations and its labors, no power in the universe can separate us any more. What do we need but mutual knowledge of each other's hearts all over the world, to make the whole world gradually more peaceful, with its varied children continually drawing more closely together into a wide-spread brotherhood! Then we shall see that fidelity and love, and self-sacrifice, and unreserved devotion to God and man, are the same thing everywhere. Those who speak of them, shall seem to all, to speak in the tongue in which they were born. And we shall become of one heart and one soul.

Honor, then, to the Christian movements of the times, not only for their present achievements, but much more, for their higher issues. Honor be given them for the charities they impart. Honor them even more for the charity they create. And while thankfulness ascends for both, still adore that higher Providence which exalted above all thoughts of men, develops through their action its serene and eternal purposes.—*Christian Inquirer.*

CHRISTIAN TRUTH.

What do divines understand by Christian Truth? The answer at first appears obvious. "Christian Truth (it will be said) is what Christ and his apostles knew and taught concerning salvation under the gospel." Thus far we find no difficulty; but, let me ask again, where does this exist as an object external to our minds? The answer appears no less obvious than the former: "In the Bible." Still I must ask, is the material Bible the Christian Truth about which Christians dispute? "No (it will be readily said), not the material Bible, but the sense of the Bible." Now, I beg to know, is the sense of the Bible, an object external to our mind? Does any sense of the Bible, accessible to man, exist anywhere but in the mind of each man who receives it from the words he reads? The Divine Mind certainly knows in what sense those words were used; but as we cannot compare our mental impressions with that model and original of all truth, it is clear that by the sense of the Bible we must mean our own sense of its meaning. When, therefore, any man declares his intention to defend Christian Truth, he only expresses his determination to defend his own notions, as produced by the words of the Bible. No other Christian Truth exists for us in our present state.—*Joseph B. White.*

AN ALLEGORY.—When God created man he commanded his angels to visit him on earth, and guide him in his ways, so that he might foretaste the bliss of the life to come. But lustful man sought after sensual joys in preference to those of heaven, and growing greedy of worldly fruits, began to quarrel with his brethren for the possession of them; and the guardian angels wept among themselves.—But when the strong oppressed the weak and took from them by force the produce of their soil, Justice rose up sorrowing, and leaving earth flew back to heaven. And when the weak overcame the strong with falsehood and deceit, and got from them by cunning what they feared to take by force, Truth rose up sorrowing, and leaving earth, flew back to heaven. Thus each bad act scared some good angel from the world, until Forgiveness—the most beautiful of all—alone remained behind.

And when she heard Anger and Revenge whisper dark deeds in man's ears, and counsel them to repeat the wrong that had been done to them, she rose up sorrowing, and said, "I will not leave the earth. While my sister angels were here, I might have rested in my Father's bosom, for man needed me not. But now that they have fled, I will seek to make him listen to my voice, telling him that, as he cherishes forgiveness here, so will forgiveness cherish him hereafter." So the loveliest child of heaven remained on earth; and Peace and Love, repenting, flew back, and followed in her train.

LETTERS FROM THE HON. JOHN Q. ADAMS TO HIS SON, ON THE BIBLE AND ITS TEACHINGS.

LETTER V.

In the promise with which my last letter to you upon the Bible was concluded, I undertook a task from the performance of which I have been hitherto deterred by its very magnitude and importance: the more I reflected upon the subject, the more sensibly did I feel my incompetency to do it justice, and by a weakness so common in the world from the apprehension of inability to accomplish as much as I ought, I have hitherto been withheld from the attempt to accomplish anything at all. Thus more than a year has elapsed, leaving me still burdened with the load of my promise; and in now undertaking to discharge it, I must premise that you are only to expect the desultory and indigested thoughts which I have not the means of combining into a regular and systematic work. I shall not entangle myself in the controversy which has sometimes been discussed with a temper not very congenial either to the nature of the question itself or the undoubted principles of Christianity, whether the Bible, like all other systems of morality, lays the ultimate basis of all human duties in self-love, or whether it enjoins duties on the principle of perfect and disinterested benevolence. Whether the obligations are sanctioned by a promise of reward or a menace of punishment, the ultimate motives for its fulfillment may justly be attributed to the selfish considerations. But if obedience to the will of God be the universal and only foundation of all moral duty, special injunctions may be binding upon the consciences of men, although their performance should not be secured either by the impulse of hope or fear.

The law given from Sinai was a civil and municipal as well as a moral and religious code; it contained many statutes adapted to that time only, and to the particular circumstances of the nation to whom it was given; they could, of course, be binding upon them, and only upon them, until abrogated by the same authority which enacted them, as they afterward were by the Christian dispensation; but many others were of universal application, laws essential to the existence of men in society, and most of which have been enacted by every nation which ever professed any code of laws. But the Levitical was given by God himself; it extended to a great variety of objects of infinite importance to the welfare of men, but which could not come within the reach of human legislation; it combined the temporal and spiritual authorities together, and regulated not only the actions but the passions of those to whom it was given. Human legislators can undertake only to prescribe the actions of men; they acknowledge their inability to govern and direct the sentiments of the heart; the very law itself is a rule of civil conduct, not of internal principles, and there is no crime in the power of an individual to perpetrate which he may not design, project and fully intend without incurring guilt in the eye of human law. It is one of the greatest marks of divine favor bestowed upon the children of Israel, that the Legislator gave them rules not only of action but for the government of the heart. There were, occasionally, a few short sententious principles of morality issued from the oracles of Greece; among them, and undoubtedly the most excellent of them, was that of self-knowledge, which one of the purest moralists and finest poets of Rome expressly says came from heaven. But if you would remark the distinguishing characteristics between true and false religion, compare the manner in which the ten commandments were proclaimed by the voice of the Almighty God, from Mount Sinai, with thunder and lightning, and earthquake, by the sound of the trumpet, and in the hearing of six hundred thousand souls, with the studied secrecy, and mystery, and mummerly with which the Delphic and other oracles of the Grecian gods were delivered. The miraculous interpositions of Divine power recorded in every part of the Bible were invariably marked with grandeur and sublimity worthy of the Creator of the world, and before which the gods of Homer, not excepting his Jupiter, dwindle into the most contemptible pigmies; but on no occasion was the manifestation of the Deity so solemn, so awful, so calculated to make indelible impressions upon the imaginations and souls of the mortals to whom He revealed Himself, as when He appeared in the character of their Lawgiver.

The law thus dispensed was, however, imperfect; it was destined to be partly suspended and improved into absolute perfection many ages afterward by the appearance of Jesus Christ upon earth. But to judge of its excellence as a system of laws, it must be compared with human codes which existed or were promulgated at nearly the same age of the world in other nations. Remember that the Law was given 1,490 years before

Christ was born, at the time the Assyrian and Egyptian monarchies existed; but of their government and laws we know scarcely anything save what is collected from the Bible. Of the Phrygian, Lydian, and Trojan States at the same period, little more is known. The President Gorget, in a very elaborate and ingenious work on the origin of letters, arts and sciences among the ancient nations, says that "the maxims, the civil and political laws of these people are absolutely unknown; that not even an idea of them can be formed, with the single exception of the Lydians, of whom Herodotus asserts, that their laws were the same as the Greeks." The same author contrasts the total darkness and oblivion into which all the institutions of these mighty empires have fallen, with the fullness and clearness, and admirable composition of the Hebrew code, which has not only descended to us entire, but still continues the national code of the Jews (scattered as they are over the whole face of the earth), and enters so largely into the legislation of almost every civilized nation upon the globe. He observes "that these laws have been prescribed by God himself: the merely human laws of other cotemporary nations cannot bear any comparison with them. But my motive in forming the comparison, is to present to your reflection as a proof—and to my mind a very strong proof—of the reality of their divine origin. For how is it that the whole system of government and administration, the municipal, political, ecclesiastical, military and moral laws and institutions which bound in society the numberless myriads of human beings who formed for many successive ages the stupendous monarchies of Africa and Asia, should have perished entirely and been obliterated from the memory of mankind, while the laws of a paltry tribe of shepherds, characterized by Tacitus, and the sneering infidelity of Gibbon, as "the most despised portion of their slaves," should not only have survived the wreck of those empires, but remain to this day rules of faith and practice to every enlightened nation of the world, and perishable only with it? The reason is obvious: it is their intrinsic excellence which has preserved them from the destruction which befalls all the works of mortal man. The precepts of the decalogue alone (says Gorget) disclose more sublime truth, more maxims essentially suited to the happiness of man, than all the writings of profane antiquity put together can furnish. The more you meditate on the laws of Moses, the more striking and brighter does their wisdom appear. It would be a laborious but not unprofitable investigation, to reduce into a regular classification, like that of the Institutes of Justinian or the Commentaries of Blackstone, the whole Code of Moses, which embraces not only all the ordinary subjects of Legislation, together with the principles of religion and morality, but laws of ecclesiastical directions concerning the minutest actions and dress of individuals. This, however, would lead me too far from my present purpose, which is merely to consider the Bible as a system of morality; I shall therefore notice those parts of the law which may be referred particularly to that class, and at present must confine myself to a few remarks upon the decalogue itself, which, having been spoken by the voice, and twice written upon the stone tables by the finger of God, may be considered as the foundation of the whole system—of the ten commandments, emphatically so called, for the extraordinary and miraculous distinction by which they were promulgated.

The first four are religious laws. The fifth and tenth are property and peculiarly moral and domestic rules. The other four are of the criminal department of municipal laws. The unity of the Godhead, the prohibition of making graven images to worship, that of taking lightly (or in vain) as the English translation expresses it) the name of the Deity, and the injunction to observe the Sabbath as a day sanctified and set apart for His worship, were all intended to inculcate the reverence for the one only and true God—that profound and penetrating sentiment of piety which, in a former letter, I urged as the great and only immovable foundation of all human virtue. Next to the duties toward the Creator, that of honoring the earthly parents is enjoined. It is to them that every individual owes the greatest obligations; and to them that he is consequently bound by the first and strongest of all earthly ties. The following commands, applying to the relations between man and his fellow mortals, are all negative, as their application was universal to every human being; i. e. it was not required that any positive acts of beneficence toward them should be performed, but only to abstain from wronging them; either: 1st—in their persons; 2nd—in their property; 3rd—in their conjugal rights; 4th—in their good name; after which, all the essential enjoyments of life being thus guarded from voluntary injury, the tenth and closing commandment goes to the very source of all human actions—the heart—and positively forbids all those desires which first prompt and lead to every transgression upon the property and right of our fellow-creatures. Vain indeed would be the search among the writings of profane antiquity (not merely of that remote antiquity, but even in

the most refined and philosophical ages of Greece and Rome,) to find so broad, so complete and so solid a basis for morality, as this decalogue lays down. Yet I have said it was imperfect—its sanctions, its rewards, its punishments, had reference only to the present life, and it had no injunctions of positive beneficence toward our neighbors. Of these the law was not entirely destitute in its other parts; but, both in this respect and in the other, it was to be perfected by Him who brought life and immortality to light in the gospel. Upon which subject you shall hear more.

From your affectionate Father
JOHN QUINCY ADAMS.

REGENERATION.

BY DR. CHANNING.

"Is a man a Christian by his first birth, or do his early propensities impel him to the cultivation of Christian virtues in proportion as they are known? Do sensual and earthly desires hear the voice of conscience, shrink at once within the limits which reason assigns, and leave the throne of the heart to the Creator? How many desires and habits which conscience forbids are indulged! How many deviations from the path of God's commands are registered in the memory of every man who practises the duty of self-recollection! A religious character, then, is an acquisition, and implies a change; a change which requires labor and prayer—which requires aid and strength from heaven; a change so great and important that it deserves to be called a "new birth." The Christian is a new man. Once the dictates of conscience might have been heard; now they are obeyed. Once an occasional gratitude might have shed a transient glow through his heart; now the Divine goodness is a cherished thought, and he labors to requite it by an obedient life. Once his passions were his lords; now he bows to the authority, and waits to hear the will of God. Once human opinion was his guide, and human favor the reward he proposed; now he feels that another eye is upon him, that his heart and life are naked before God, and to approve himself to this righteous and unerring witness and judge his highest ambition. Once he was ready to repine and despond when his wishes and labors were crossed; now he sees a providence in life's vicissitudes, the discipline of a father in his sufferings, and bears his burdens, and performs his duties, with cheerful resignation to Him who assigns them. Once he was sufficiently satisfied with himself, or unwilling to feel his deficiencies; now he is humble, conscious of having sinned, desirous to discover his errors, contrite in his acknowledgments, earnest in his application to Divine mercy, and resolute in his opposition to temptation. Once the thought of a Saviour suffering for human pardon, and rising from the dead to confer immortality, excited little interest; now the promises, love, cross, and resurrection of Jesus come home to him with power, and awaken gratitude and hope. Once he lived chiefly for himself; now he has learnt to love his fellow-beings with a sincere and an efficient kindness, to lose sight of himself in the prosecution of benevolent designs, to feel for the misery, for the sins, of those around him, and to endure labors and sacrifices, that he may give relief to the frail body, and peace and health to the immortal mind. To conclude,—once he was alive to injury, and suffered anger and revenge to direct his treatment of an enemy; now his indignation is tempered by mercy, and he is ready to forgive.

From this brief sketch, from this comparison of the Christian character with that to which our nature is so prone, do we not see that a great change is required to make men Christians? I do not say that the same change is required in all. I do not say that education has no influence. I do not say that Christianity, now that it is so widely diffused, and so early enforced on the mind, may not check many passions before they have grown up into habits. But after all the benefits of discipline, we see our nature still weak, erring, yielding to temptation, negligent of known duty. Still, to be Christians, all have much to put off, to subdue, to correct, to renounce; and all have much to put on, to acquire, to cherish. So that the Christian character may still be called a second birth. The best Christians can ordinarily look back to the period, when they were governed by inferior and unworthy principles; when the world was more powerful than conscience and God; or at least when the sense of duty was comparatively faint and uninfluential. By the precepts, doctrines, motives, promises of Christianity, and by the secret influences of God's spirit on the heart, they have been raised to a faith, hope, and love, which may be called a new life. They have been born again.

The fact is, there is a general resemblance between birth and the production of the Christian character. By both, a being is

brought into a new state, and a most interesting change is produced in his conduct. Here, indeed, the analogy stops. The difference between the two changes which are here compared, proves that the mode and circumstances of their production must be very different. Scripture and experience lead us to believe that the change which makes a man a Christian is gradual, progressive. The Scriptures are very far from speaking of regeneration and conversion, in the language of human systems, as effects, which take place in a moment. On the contrary, regeneration and conversion are spoken of as if they were taking place through the whole of life. The Christian is continually experiencing the change which is expressed by these and similar terms.

"I consider that experience as well as Scripture proves the gradual production of the change of heart, or the new birth. Our observation will teach us that great changes are not often suddenly produced in the human character. There are, indeed, instances of men who are suddenly stopped in a career of sin, and seem almost in a moment to turn back and retrace their steps. But religion is generally introduced and formed in us by a gentler operation. Where religious instruction has been given in early years, there is always some conviction of duty to God, some sensibility to sin, some uneasiness at neglect of religion, some vague purpose of improvement. This seems to be the first stage of the religious character; and some never pass beyond this, beyond a feeble and deceitful purpose of being better. Others as they advance, have their attention in various methods, drawn to religion and a future life. Perhaps some gross sin, into which they are hurried, startles their consciences and forces on them the thought of their exposure to God's dreadful displeasure. Perhaps some religious companion or good example wins their affections, impresses them with the loveliness and importance of Christian virtue, and shows them by contrast their own miserable deficiency. Perhaps some affliction throws a gloom over the present state, leads them to consider the emptiness of the world, and the need of Divine support, and directs their dejected minds to that Gospel which is the only comforter of human woe. Perhaps sudden, unexpected blessings recall powerfully to them their heavenly Benefactor, and fasten on them a painful sense of their ingratitude. Perhaps an alarming providence, dangerous sickness, the near approach of death, appals, compels them to look into eternity, and to feel the necessity of preparation for another life. Perhaps a serious discourse arrests their thoughts, and convinces them that the concerns of their souls are too weighty to be trifled with. By these and other means, their attention is awakened to religion. Attention produces solicitude; for none can think seriously on the subject without feeling that they have sinned to be forsaken, to be forgiven. This solicitude produces prayer; and prayer obtains the aid and influence of our merciful Father in heaven. The Scriptures are read with new seriousness; interest, self-application. The mediation and promises of Jesus Christ are embraced with new gratitude and hope. His example appears more amiable, excellent, worthy of imitation and obedience; gross sins are forsaken; irregular desires are checked; gradually the deliberate purpose is formed of following him; and at length this becomes the strongest and most settled purpose of the soul.

"This may be considered as an outline of the general method of regeneration. I am sensible that there is a great variety in the paths by which men are brought to God. No two minds resemble each other in all their feelings. The religious history of every man is in some measure his own, peculiar to himself. The experience of each is influenced by his education, his companions, the kind of instruction he hears, and by his natural temperament. The timid mind is awakened by the terrors of the Lord; the tender and affectionate is drawn by his mercies. Amidst this great variety, the multitude of Christians agree in this, that they can point to no particular moment when a change was wrought in their hearts. Their religion has grown up by degrees, very often, as silently and imperceptibly as the tree, to which is compared—sends forth its roots and branches."

HUMILITY.—Of all trees, I observe that God hath chosen the vine—a low plant that creeps upon the helpful wall; of all beasts, the soft and patient lamb; of all fowls, the mild and guileless dove. When God appeared to Moses it was not in the lofty cedar, nor the sturdy oak, nor the spreading palm, but in a bush—an humble, slender, abject bush. As if he would, by these selections, check the arrogance of man. Nothing procreth love like humility; nothing hate like pride. We confess small faults, in order to insinuate that we have no great ones.