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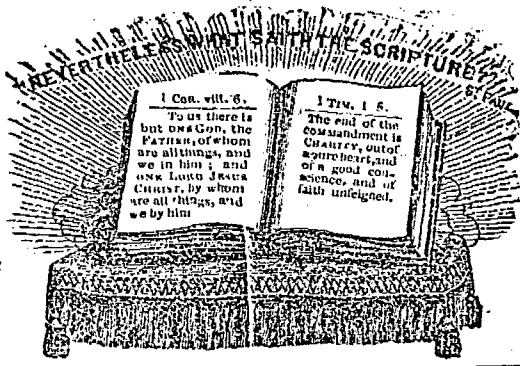
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THE BIBLE



CHRISTIAN.

TRUTH, HOLINESS,

LIBERTY, LOVE.

Vol. IV.

MONTREAL, APRIL, 1847.

No. 4.

SELECTIONS FROM JEREMY TAYLOR.

PRAYER.

Prayer is the peace of the spirit, the stillness of our thoughts, the evenness of recollection, the seat of meditation, the rest of our cares, and the calm of our temper; prayer is the issue of a quiet mind, of untroubled thoughts, it is the daughter of chastity, and the sister of meekness; and he that prays to God with an angry, that is, with a troubled and discomposed spirit, is like him that retires into a battle to meditate, and sets up his closet in the outer quarters of an army, and chooses a frontier garrison to be wise in. Anger is a perfect alienation of the mind from prayer, and therefore is contrary to that attention, which presents our prayers in a right line to God. For so have I seen a lark rising from his bed of grass, and soaring upwards, singing as he rises, and hopes to get to heaven, and climb above the clouds; but the poor bird was beaten back with the loud sighings of an easterly wind, and his motion made irregular and inconstant, descending more at every breath of the tempest, than it could recover by the liberation and frequent weighings of his wings; till the little creature was forced to sit down and pant, and stay till the storm was over, and then it made a prosperous flight, and did rise and sing, as if it had learned music and motion from an angel, as he passed sometimes through the air about his ministries here below.

So is the prayer of a good man; when his affairs have required business, and his business was matter of discipline; and his discipline was to pass upon a sinning person, or had a design of charity, his duty met with infirmities of a man, and anger was its instrument, and the instrument became stronger than the prime agent, and raised a tempest, and overruled the man; and then his prayer was broken, and his thoughts were troubled, and his words went up towards a cloud, and his thoughts pulled them back again, and made them without intention; and the good man sighs for his infirmity, but must be content to lose the prayer, and he must recover it when his anger is removed, and his spirit is becalmed, made even as the brow of Jesus, and smooth like the heart of God; and then it ascends to heaven upon the wings of the holy dove, and dwells with God, till it returns like the useful bee, laden with a blessing and the dew of heaven.

FEAR.

Fear is the great bridle of intemperance, the modesty of the spirit, and the restraint of gaieties and dissolutions; it is the girdle to the soul, and the handmaid to repentance, the arrest of sin; and the cure or antidote to the spirit of reprobation; it preserves our apprehensions of the divine majesty, and hinders our single actions from combining to sinful habits; it is the mother of consideration, and the nurse of sober counsels, and it puts the soul to fermentation and activity, making it to pass from trembling to caution, from caution to carefulness, from carefulness to watchfulness, from thence to prudence; and by the gates and progresses of repentance, it leads the soul on to love and to felicity, and to joys in God, that shall never cease again.

Fear is the guard of a man in the days of prosperity, and it stands upon the watch towers, and spies the approaching danger, and gives warning to them that laugh loud, and feast in the chambers of rejoicing, where a man cannot consider, by reason of the noises of wine, and jest, and music; and if prudence takes it by the hand and leads it on to duty; it is a state of grace, and a universal instrument to infant religion, and the only security of the less perfect persons; and in all senses is that homage we owe to God, who sends often to demand it, even then when he speaks in thunder, or smites by a plague, or awakens us by threatenings, or discomposes our easiness by sad thoughts, and tender eyes, and fearful hearts, and trembling considerations.

ZEAL.

However it be very easy to have our thoughts wander, yet it is our indifference and lukewarmness that makes it so natural; and you may observe it, that as long as the light shines bright, and the fires of devotion and desires flame out, so long the mind of man stands close to the altar, and waits upon the sacrifice; but as the fires die and desires decay, so the mind steals away, and walks abroad to see the little images of beauty and pleasure, which it beholds in the falling stars and little glow-worms of the world. The river that runs slow, and creeps by the banks, and begs leave of every turt to let it pass, is drawn into little hollownesses, and spends itself in small portions, and dies with diversion; but when it runs with vigorousness and a full stream, and breaks down every obstacle, making it even as its own brow, it stays not to be tempted with little avocations, and to creep into holes, but runs into the sea through full and useful channels.

So is a man's prayer, if it move upon the feet of an abated appetite, it wanders into the society of every trifling accident, and stays at the corners of the fancy, and talks with every object it meets, and cannot arrive at heaven; but when it is carried upon the wings of passion and strong desires, a swift motion and a hungry appetite, it passes on through all the intermedial region of clouds, and stays not till it dwells at the foot of the throne, where mercy sits, and thence sends holy showers of refreshment. I deny not but some little drops will turn aside, and fall from the full channel by the weakness of the banks, and hollowness of the passage; but the main course is still continued; and although the most earnest and devout persons feel and complain of some looseness of spirit, and unfixed attentions, yet their love and their desire secure the main portion, and make the prayer to be strong, fervent, and effectual.

"LACK OF OIL."

WANT OF RESERVED MORAL STRENGTH.

BY REV. DR. PUTNAM.

I have seen the young man who had stored himself with the intellectual qualifications necessary for a reputable life, with good intentions, generous impulses, honorable sentiments, with intelligence, and agreeable manners and an active spirit; he thought himself prepared for all that lay before him, equipped for a creditable, successful, self-governing career, and for as much virtue as would be requisite for safety and good repute in the world. So he stepped forth with confidence and alacrity upon the theatre of life. By and bye, of course, there came a stress upon his principles, a draft upon his moral resources, that he had not anticipated. Dangerous associates drew their wily and invisible nets about him. Pleasure plied him first gently and then stormily with its enchantments. New influences drew him by degrees from his industry, his fidelity, his probity. Confidence slipped mysteriously away from him. Evil predictions were whispered of him by the sagacious. The aims of life became gradually lowered in him, and the flame of good aspirations burned lower and lower. A reckless aspect stealthily came over him, that indescribable but unmistakable look. He fell away from his good endeavors, and his lamp went out, in a prodigal and worthless life, in the slough of indolence, and sensuality and moral enervation. There was a fatal deficiency at the outset, and it was sure to go out.

I have seen the maiden, who resembled her foolish prototypes in the parable. She entered upon life gaily. Her confidence was in her beauty, her taste, her accomplishments, her intellectual quickness, her social attractiveness, her social position and connexions, and in such store of romantic sentiments and fine-tongued sensibilities as might easily pass, for a time, for religious affluities and a semi-moral enthusiasm. By and bye the real cares and duties of life came. The illusions of youth passed away as they must. Accomplishments lost their charm, and beauty its lustre. The realities of life grew commonplace, as they always do. Life is not what it seemed in her young dream. Romance flies from the

domestic hearth. Suffering and sorrow come, and the stern trial of her strength and patience. Emotion, sweet before, grows acrid now. Sentiment turns into fretfulness, and enthusiasm to discontent and disappointment. Duty is burdensome, and home is insipid, and its ties a bondage, and society a mockery. All this bitter falling off is cloaked to the common eye under the show of good appearances, but the feeling of it is the more intense for that. Her life is a failure—her lamp has gone out; and well, it might go out—well it might—every page of Scripture and every lesson of human experience predicted that it would.

I have seen a man, who at the outset designed to be only prudent, industrious and enterprising, turn at length into a sordid miser, his soul smothered under his gains, his heart eaten up by the cankerous touch of his own gold, and the whole man, body and soul, bound hand and foot, a helpless slave to the goods of this world; no, not its goods, but the mocking shadow of its goods. His lamp has gone out; and how could it but go out, with such shallow outfit as he started with?

I have seen the man who had too much conscience to set out with the purpose to deceive and swindle,—he meant only to be shrewder, more vigilant than others. But in the drive of business, and amid growing excitements and larger baits, honesty faltered, and conscience grew accommodating, and opportunity more inviting. Integrity slipped away little by little, he knows not when or how, and now his whole heart is false, his whole character unstrung and demoralized. His lamp has gone out, and no wonder; as well might a pasteboard ship breast the surging waves of the sea.

So all around us, in every sphere of life, lamp after lamp goes out in moral stench and darkness. And why? of necessity and of course, for lack of oil, upon the same principle that any human purposes fail, that depend on forethought and accumulated resources and reserved power, as character does, more essentially, more universally than any thing else.

And now one inquiry more and I have done. Whence shall we derive those needful resources and that reserved strength, which are sure to be wanted? I answer, from among the moral elements of the soul and the spiritual influences of religion,—in early and vigorous self-culture, and that uplifting, sanctifying spirit that comes from God through Christ.

THE BENEVOLENCE OF CHRIST.

BY ARCHBISHOP NEWCOMB.

His benevolence appeared continually in the form of *mercy*, or kindness to the undeserving. He shewed great benignity to a woman who had been a sinner, by not disdainfully spurning her from him like a proud Pharisee; but by permitting her to anoint his feet, by commending her faith, and by reassuring her of forgiveness.

The benevolence of our Lord was exercised without regard to national or party distinctions. He performed three miracles on Gentiles; and often foretold, both in direct terms and in parables, their admission into his church and into his kingdom of glory.

The Samaritans were a people against whom the Jews entertained the strongest prejudices, and the sharpest religious enmity. But our Lord's mind was so far from being tinged with hatred towards them, that he shewed them the greatest humanity. At the well of Jacob he instructed a woman of Samaria, and unreservedly declared to her his Messiahship; he spake of the Samaritans as a part of his spiritual harvest; at their request he remained in their city two days; and during that interval gave them ample reason to conclude from his divine instructions that he was the Saviour of the world.

When he related the beautiful parable of the wounded Jewish traveller, a Samaritan was represented as softening and binding up his wounds, and taking the most tender care of him; and was accordingly proposed as a perfect example of compassion and beneficence to his hearers, and to his disciples in all ages.

When the Samaritans refused to receive him and his apostles, because they were journeying to Jerusalem, and James and John, full of natural animosity towards them,

asked permission to consume them by fire from heaven, our Lord reproved their intemperate zeal in these instructive words: "Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of: for the Son of Man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them."

When the Samaritan leper "glorified God with a loud voice" for his recovery, "and fell down at Jesus' feet, giving him thanks," our Lord placed his gratitude in the fullest light: "Were there not ten cleansed? but where are the nine? There are not found, that returned to give glory to God, save this stranger."

And though, when our Lord sent out the twelve, he forbade them to go into the way of the Gentiles, or to enter into a city of the Samaritans, who were of Gentile origin, it being the privilege of the Jews that the Gospel should be first preached to them; yet he showed how superior he was to the malevolence of the times, and how attentive to remove it from others, when, immediately before his ascension, he thus addressed the apostles: "Ye shall be witnesses unto me, both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

UNITARIANISM IN GENEVA.

The Geneva is a national church, represented by a body designated, La Venerable Compagnie des Pasteurs de l'Eglise Genevoise, which consists of thirty clerical members, who govern the University as well as the Church. This venerable company has no formal confession of faith. The greater number of its members have given up the old ecclesiastical doctrines. The ministers assume no other obligation in regard to their teachings than is involved in these words,— "I swear to preach purely and fully the Word of God, as it is contained in the Holy Scriptures."

Generally among Swiss Protestants, the old doctrines find few adherents among the clergy or the people. Without falling into extreme rationalism, the ministers, especially the older ministers, have quietly abandoned the ancient church doctrines, while the younger men educated in part at German Universities, particularly Berlin and Bonn, have brought home the views of Schleiermacher under several modifications. The native Swiss Universities, Zurich, Basle, and Bern, hold a moderate Biblical theology remote from extremes in doctrine and speculation. The clergy are devoted more to practical than theoretical religion, with which their numerous and burdensome duties do not allow them to become familiar. The Protestant population of Switzerland amounts to 1,292,871.

Specimens of the preaching of the Genevese established clergy, may be found in the sermons of Messrs. Cellerier, Jun, Duby, Munnier, &c.

In a letter recently written to the Rev. G. Armstrong, B. A., of Bristol, (England), by Dr. Chenevierre, of Geneva, that eminent divine and excellent man remarks;—"In our city the Orthodox and Methodists give themselves much trouble in order to make the multitude see as they see; they hold frequent meetings; they bring hither ministers from foreign parts. But the mass of the population do not share their principles and their exclusiveness. The public service of the national church is very well attended. I have no anxiety as to the final issue."—*Beard's Unitarianism.*

UNITARIANISM IN FRANCE.

Rev. N. Poulain, of Havre, says:—"I belong to that class of Christians which they call anti-orthodox (M. Coquerel's 'New orthodoxy') in France;—Unitarianism in England and America. On one side I stand aloof from the German Rationalism, because it despoils Christianity of the divine elements which constitute its strength; and on the other side, from the doctrines of pretended orthodoxy regarding the radical corruption of man, grace, the Trinity, &c.—because, in my mind, they are but human traditions, and because they serve only to keep from the Gospel many persons who would with love accept it, if they knew it in its purity and noble simplicity.

"In France the liberal or tolerant party

constitute the majority among the ministers, and much more so in the flocks. Our hearers generally entertain a strong repugnance for the exclusive or orthodox doctrines.

"The orthodox have, in general, the advantage of being well organized, and have near the government certain politicians who give them support. The liberal party has the advantage of numbers, but it does not act with the same unity; nevertheless, improvements in this respect have taken place. Our friends in the South of France form a numerous and compact mass, which with much success resists the efforts of exclusiveness."

The French Protestant Church, in regard to its outward relations, consists of two divisions, the Reformed Church and the Lutheran Church; a distinction which is founded in historical considerations, which have now nearly lost their importance. Of these two, comprising about 2,000,000 of souls, the Reformed is by far the larger, having 485 ministers, while the Lutheran division has 214. How many have renounced the Trinity, we have not the means to determine with exactness. Facts, however, within our knowledge, give us reason to think that not more than 200 of these clergymen still hold the doctrine in any form.—*Beard's Unitarianism.*

CHRISTIAN FESTIVALS.

We, Unitarians, are exceedingly jealous of forms and usages. Perhaps too much so. For ourselves, speaking as individuals, we should be glad, because we believe they may be made and in fact often are of positive utility, to see a few of the chief festivals and fasts which have for ages been commonly observed in the Christian world, brought again into universal observance. We refer especially to the seasons of Advent and of Lent, to Christmas Day and Good Friday, to Easter Sunday and Whitsunday. We do not mean that we would have them or either of them observed in form precisely as they are in any of the churches around us; but that the great points in the life of the Saviour should be made more distinctly the subjects of pious meditation, by associating them with certain dates in the calendar, and making the occasions of special religious services. We are persuaded that they may thus become helps to the growth of the devotional and religious spirit. It cannot be that the great body of Christendom is utterly wrong in such observances. We know the dangerous tendencies which are involved in them. We are fully aware how apt men are to substitute forms for realities, the letter for the spirit. We should shrink as quickly as any from the burdensome and unnecessary and superstitious multiplication of such observances which obtain in the Roman church, and to which apparently some would lead the Protestant Episcopal communion. We should deprecate anything which should induce Christians to think they were doing God or Christ service by constantly going to the temple to pray, while they neglected closet and family prayer. And yet even this we are willing to say; there is something delightful in the thought which strikes one so forcibly in Catholic countries, that the sanctuary is always open; so that the bowed and stricken, the contrite and penitent, the joyous and grateful heart, may at any moment, as the divine impulse prompts, turn aside from the great thoroughfares and whirl of life, and amid the solemn silence and "religious light" of the consecrated place seek its God. We have no fears that any among us will be too devout, too much given to prayer, too intent on the great concerns of the soul, too free of worldiness. And therefore it is, that in addition to the weekly Sabbath, that most holy and blessed provision of God for tired and struggling humanity, we should be glad to see all the professed followers of Jesus keep religiously the seasons of his Nativity, his Passion, his Resurrection, his Ascension, and the abundant outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the Apostolic Church.—*N. Y. Christian Inquirer.*

THOUGHTS OF CHANNING.

[From a Selection by Rev. H. A. Miles.]

True religion is a life unfolded within, not something forced on us from abroad.
 We never know a great character until something congenial to it has grown up within ourselves.
 No punishment is so terrible as prosperous guilt.
 Statesmen work in the dark, until the idea of right towers above expediency or wealth.
 Every man is a volume, if you know how to read him.
 Great effort from great motives, is the best definition of a happy life.
 We cannot be happy beyond our love.
 The Spirit of Society, not an outward institution, is the mighty power by which the hard lot of man is to be meliorated.
 This country has the best materials for an army in a righteous cause, and the worst in a wicked one.

CHRISTIANITY ATTESTED BY MIRACLES.—We accept the evidence of Christian miracles, then, because they harmonize throughout with what we know of the history of divine Providence as manifest in the Universe. The book of nature and the book of revelation, the written word and the law stamped on the heart, are not at variance with each other, but contain essentially the same doctrine; one goes beyond, but does not contradict the other; it is the complement, but not the substitute, or its predecessor. It is a vain and foolish doctrine, then, that the miracles are useful only as evidences of Christianity, and may therefore safely be put aside if we have testimony enough without them. It is not so. Christianity is itself a miracle—the greatest of miracles—a special revelation from heaven—the authentic record of the latest visible appearance of God on earth—a direct interposition in the former order of events for the noblest of all ends. If it be not so, then is our faith vain, and these teachings also are vain. If our religion does not come from above, if it is not specially attested by the broad seal of heaven, then it is of no authority and no worth. It is no religion at all; for there is no conceivable distinction between a philosophical system of man's device, and a religion properly so called, but this, that the latter comes directly from God, while the former is the mere invention of a frail and erring being like ourselves. Nay, more, if Christianity is not miraculous and divine in its origin, it is an imposition, and its founder was a cheat; for no declaration was more decidedly made by him, no assertion is more frequently written out in the gospels, that he was the Christ, the Son of the living God, the Messiah spoken of in the Scriptures, and waited for by the people, who came to make known the will of the Father, and to save mankind from their sins. In proof of this special commission and divine authority, he pointed to the wonderful works which he did; so that they who deny those works, who say that a miraculous event is incredible, and that it is foolish to suppose that any were ever specially commissioned by the Deity for any purpose, do in fact deny the claims which he put forth, and heap the coarsest reproach upon his memory.—*N. American Review.*

"Read not to contradict and confute, nor to believe and take for granted, nor to find talk and discourse, but to weigh and consider. Some books are to be tasted, others to be swallowed, and some few to be chewed and digested; that is, some books are to be read only in parts; other to be read, but not curiously; and some few to be read wholly, and with diligence and attention. Reading maketh a full man; conference, a ready man; and writing, an exact man. And, therefore, if a man write little, he had need have a great memory; if he confer little, he need have a present wit; and if he read little, he had need have much cunning, to seem to know that he doth not. Histories make men wise; poets, witty; the mathematics, subtle; natural philosophy, deep; morals, grave; logic and rhetoric, able to contend. *Abcunt studeo moros.* (Studies become habits.)"—*Lord Bacon.*

A MOMENTOUS CHOICE.—God offers to every mind his choice between truth and repose. Take which you please, you can never have both. Between these, as a pendulum, man oscillates over. He in whom the love of repose predominates will accept the first creed, the first philosophy, the first political party he meets,—most likely his father's. He gets rest, commodity and reputation; but he shuts the door of truth. He in whom the love of truth predominates will keep himself aloof from all moorings and keep afloat. He will abstain from dogmatism, and recognize all the opposite negations between which, as walls, his being is swung. He submits to the inconvenience of suspense and imperfect opinions; but he is a candidate for truth, as the other is not, and respects the highest law of his being.—*R. W. Emerson.*

SERMONS.—"It amazes me ministers don't write better sermons—I am sick of the dull, prosy affairs," said a lady in the presence of a minister.
 "But it is no easy matter, my good woman, to write good sermons," suggested the minister.
 "Yes," rejoined the lady, "but you are so long about it, I could write one in half the time if I only had the text."
 "Oh, if a text is all you want," said the parson, "I will furnish that. Take this one from Solomon—'It is better to dwell in a corner of a housetop, than in a wide house with a brawling woman.'"
 "Do you mean me, sir," inquired the lady quickly.
 "Oh, my good woman," was the grave response, "you will never make a good sermonizer; you are too soon in your application."—*Christian Inquirer.*

NOTICE.

The First Quarterly Meeting of the SOCIAL UNION in connection with the Montreal Unitarian Society, will be held on the evening of Monday, the 26th inst.—Chair to be taken at Half-past Seven o'clock.

Books may be obtained on loan from the Unitarian Congregational Library, on application to the Librarian, after any of the public services.

The Bible Christian.

MONTREAL, APRIL, 1847.

DECLENSION OF CALVINISM.

Not long ago a religious convention was held at Syracuse, New York, at which there were twenty-four delegates, the representatives of ten churches. The object of the meeting was to establish some visible bond of union different from the creed and polity of Calvinistic Presbyterianism, to which it would seem they had formerly been subjected. In such a movement we perceive gratifying evidence of a growing love for religious freedom and theological progress. We subjoin an extract from one of the papers submitted to the Convention, and ordered to be printed, on the subject of doctrine. It will be seen to exhibit a marked declension from the usual standard of Calvinism. It shews, in fact, a renunciation of some of the prominent doctrines of that system:—

"OF DOCTRINES.—Educated from early childhood in the Assembly's Catechisms, we still have unwavering faith in very many of its statements and expositions of Scripture. But the removal of ancient materializing systems of philosophy, and the progress of Biblical research, have convinced a majority of the Presbyterian ministry, that their Directory, in not a few of its teachings, is untrue and hurtful to the souls of men; and though some of us were slow in reaching this conclusion, we have at length felt compelled to adopt it. It is now our conviction, that this Confession of faith ought no longer to be imposed on the churches, even 'for substance of doctrine,'—were such a kind of subscription to ecclesiastical standards, not in itself of doubtful propriety.

For example; the Presbyterian Confession teaches that all men are not only involved in the consequences of Adam's sin, according to what are our natural social liabilities, (which we hold as undoubted truth,) but that man's sin is literally reckoned by God to be our sin, and for it we are all justly exposed to eternal wrath; so that, for the first transgression committed in Eden, before we were conscious or capable of voluntary disobedience, God accounts us wicked, and sentences the whole human family to Hell. [Confession, chap. 6, § 2, 4, 5, 6.] It teaches further, that by the fall, our race have lost all ability to will that which is good, being 'disabled and made opposite,' as well as utterly indisposed;—so that human freedom upon this theory, consists in having the power to commit sin, but in having no ability of will to refrain from sin. Nor is it possible, according to the book, for one to choose what is spiritually good, when aided by the ordinary influences of the Spirit; to do this, requires 'special grace;' [chap. 3, § 4, and 9, § 2, 3.] Christ, it is said, died for only a part of mankind, or for the elect: Legitimately flowing from such views of original sin, is the statement that elect infants, dying young are saved; while others taken from the world in infancy go to hell: [chap. 10, § 3, 4.] Consistently with all this, is the doctrine of Reprobation,—which taken in its connexion, stands thus:—the whole human race are depraved and disabled, so that they cannot render spiritual obedience or choose what is good, without special grace; but this grace God withholds from the non-elect: and then fore-ordains them to eternal wrath for their sins; which sins, in the first instance, they did not commit, but it was imputed to them from Adam; and their sins afterwards, according to the book, they could not help: And this is the decree of Reprobation, which according to the Presbyterian standard, dooms unknown multitudes to hell for ever, that they may be to the praise of the glory of God's justice: [Chap. 3, § 6, and Catechism, Ques. 13.]

In exposing these dreadful dogmas, (and there are others inseparably connected with them, upon which we have not time to dwell,) it is not forgotten that some of our own fathers and mothers of blessed memory lived and died more or less imbued with such faith. But we suppose this came to pass through the influence of time-hallowed tradition, and a sensuous philosophy, which had become interwoven with the pure word, and seemed to leave no alternative, but to embrace these opinions, or reject the Bible. Now that clearer views of Scripture truth prevail throughout the Church, and since a large proportion of the Presbyterian Ministry themselves, utterly repudiate those dogmas, it seems wrong that such a book should remain the acknowledged standard of the denomination;—or that the mass of disciples, (who but very imperfectly understand its teachings,) should in any sort have their consciences bound by it. Sure we are, that if pains had been taken to spread among their congregations the Presbyterian Confession, and make them understand it,—not one quarter of those who have done so, would have joined that communion.

MISSIONARY EFFORTS IN CANADA.

[The following article on the subject of Unitarian Missions in Canada has been furnished by a very warm friend of the cause of liberal Christianity. We consider the topic one of great importance. The Unitarian congregation of this city has scarcely yet passed its infancy; so that we should hardly expect any extensive missionary operations to originate with it at present. We would willingly, however, keep our friends here in remembrance of the work that is before them, and let us hope that the day is not far distant when they shall find themselves both able and willing to engage in it.]

We should bear in mind, that for the last seventeen years, immigration by the St. Lawrence, and through the seaports of the United States, has added to the population of this province an average increase of more than 50,000 per annum. Of this increase, a portion are Unitarians. In this city, the Unitarians of European origin are, to the gross population, in a proportion of about four to a thousand.* Now taking the population of Upper Canada at 750,000, and assuming Unitarians to bear the same ratio in that province to the gross population, as those of European origin do to that of Montreal, we would have three thousand of our brethren without preachers. Three thousand Unitarians left destitute, obliged to join Episcopacy, Calvinism, or Methodism, or to remain without enjoying the ordinances of religion! Some of your readers may be startled at this calculated number of our destitute brethren in Upper Canada; and inclined to doubt its accuracy. But, let me ask you, is it probable that less than 3000 Unitarians came to our shores among the 900,000 immigrants that have arrived since 1827?

By missionary efforts, we would increase the number of our worshipping societies. In other Christian denominations, missionaries, in almost every instance, find congregations, and settle down as pastors. I have no doubt that such would be the result among us, if we were zealous enough to make the attempt; and that the sending forth of six missionaries would result in the establishment of six congregations within five years.

But it is not among the immigrant population only that missionaries would find hearers. Among the native Canadians, speaking the English language, many Unitarians exist. This class of our population is distinguished for candid, enquiring minds. They are deserting the antiquated errors of the prevalent sects, and it may be truly said that in Upper Canada, and among the Protestant portion of Lower Canada, the current of public opinion is flowing successfully in the channels of reformation, and bearing to oblivion the antiquated doctrines of prevalent orthodoxy. Within a limited number of years about forty congregations have been gathered together, who, under various denominational titles, have rejected the doctrine of the Trinity. There is a readiness to hear on the part of the people,—a desire to judge for themselves,—and a decided partiality towards the Bible as the only rule of faith and practice,—which invites us to spread God's pure truth before them. This favorable state of public sentiment ought to be attended to; and let us see that we do not rest satisfied with merely saying it ought to be done, but that we bestir ourselves to do it.

It would greatly facilitate the progress of Unitarianism in Canada, if we could bring pious young men, natives of the colony, into the ministry. We must look forward in the hope that such persons may be easily found. The Meadville Theological School offers a favourable means of ministerial education. Let us endeavour to find such young men and send them into the field, trusting to God for his blessing and his increase.

Let not Unitarians be deterred from missionary efforts by the smallness of their numbers. It is frequently the mission of small numbers to achieve great ends. Look at the Baptist denomination, one of the smallest sects in Canada, and, from the exclusiveness of their discipline, likely to remain so, and yet they have erected a college, one of the handsomest or-

* The Unitarians of all origins in Montreal stand in the proportion of upwards of six to a thousand.—*Ed. B. C.*

nements of our city. Their zeal is throughout the land, and their Missionaries on all its borders. Shall Unitarians not stand forth, and shew another example of smallness of numbers and efficiency of efforts? Yes, I would reply, we can do it if we will. But if we would succeed, we must give up negativism (if I may be permitted the use of such a word), and have less of mere polemics. If we will talk less of what we are not, and shew by zeal in the cause of God what we are, we can do it. It costs nothing but breath to say I am not a Trinitarian, I am not a believer in a vicarious atonement, I am not an advocate for the infallibility of the Church, &c. &c. It costs us nothing but breath to talk of the errors of other sects; and such a religion of negations is about as fleeting as the breath that gives it utterance. If this be its sum total, its usefulness must be very limited. But if we are willing to shew the world what we are, as well as to tell them what we are not, we must labour for God and his truth,—for man and his eternal welfare; we must be instant, in season and out of season; we must resolve to do, as well as to speak; and if so, I flatter myself that we shall, with one heart and one mind, give our earnest efforts to promote the diffusion of liberal Christianity in Canada.

UNITARIANISM IN NEW YORK.

Our friends in the principal city of the Empire State have lately given evidence of increased exertions in behalf of liberal Christianity. The congregation under the pastoral charge of the Rev. Mr. Bellows has recently erected the new and very elegant "Church of the Divine Unity," on Broadway. This edifice, we believe, cost about ninety thousand dollars, and as the society, on the whole, is not remarkable for its wealth, some persons felt anxious for its welfare under the pressure of so heavy a burden as it was thought so costly a church would necessarily entail. The sale of pews, when the church was finished, did not realize within twenty-three thousand dollars of the outlay of the building. Certainly this did not seem favourable, but downright earnestness of purpose can work wonders. The congregation saw the difficulty, and instead of dallying with it, promptly met it. A certain number came together, opened a subscription, and extinguished the debt. This was the true plan. It cost some present sacrifice, to be sure, but only think what an amount of future weight and weariness it has saved!

A Unitarian Association has likewise been established in New York, independent of that in Boston. Under the auspices of this Association, an excellent weekly newspaper—the "Christian Inquirer"—has recently been established. It success hitherto has been quite promising, but the laudable zeal of our New York friends has induced them to propose a plan to the Unitarian public, by which the circulation of their paper might be quintupled with every advantage to all parties. The method proposed will be seen in the circular which we here subjoin. We recommend it to the consideration of our friends in this quarter:—

TO THE FRIENDS OF UNITARIAN CHRISTIANITY.

DEAR SIR:—The Directors of the "Unitarian Association of the State of New York," after much consideration, have concluded, that a well conducted Newspaper which shall maintain the views of Unitarian Christianity, will be of great service to the whole country; as it will make known what the belief and doctrines of Unitarians are, and thus supply a want that has long existed. They therefore propose to increase the circulation of the "Christian Inquirer," now published in this city, from its present number of 1000 copies to 5000 copies weekly,—by reducing the price of the same from \$2.00 per annum, to \$1.50 per annum, (provided the 5000 copies are subscribed for).

The Directors feel sure that if 4000 additional copies of the paper can be circulated, weekly, great good will be effected—and it will be one of the surest methods to be adopted, of forming strong religious societies in this and other States. There has never been a publication offered at so low a price; and the intrinsic value of the paper, as mere reading matter, is far above the sum proposed to be charged.

But to establish this great circulation of the paper, much depends on the co-operation of the

clergymen of the denomination, and we therefore request you to bring this subject before your Society at an early day; the result of which will, we trust, be the awakening of a hearty zeal for the cause and this enterprise, so that we may be able to give to the multitude, if they will read them, the proof of the sentiments we, as Unitarians, cherish and advance.

Will you be pleased to let us know by the 1st of May, how many copies can be disposed of in your Society, and to whose address they shall be sent.—By going in a package to some one person, much labour will be spared here, and a saving be made in the postage.

We remain, dear Sir,

Your obedient servants,

RICHARD TARRIN,

WILLIAM H. GATY,

WILLIAM D. ADGER,

Committee.

New York, March 1st, 1847.

LETTER FROM MR. HASSALL.

The following extract from a letter written by Mr. Hassall to a friend in this city has been put into our hands. It was not intended by the writer for publication, but as the insertion of it will be gratifying to some of his friends here, we gladly give it a place. Mr. H. is known to many of our readers as the Minister of the Methodist New Connexion who renounced the Trinity, and some of its kindred doctrines, in this city about a year ago. He is now at the Meadville Theological School for the improvement of his professional education. His letter is dated from that place. He speaks of the utility of social meetings for mutual improvement, conference, and prayer, and continues:—

"I shrink from any thing like gloom in connection with religion; I would shun, too, a canting hypocrisy; but I would not, to avoid these, be silent on those subjects calculated to awaken higher aspirations, to strengthen for fresh spiritual conflict, and to fit for a loftier order of thought, and feeling, and action. I would not be cold or formal, to avoid being gloomy or fanatical. No, but I would let my moderation be seen in all things." The too general tendency, however, is to be too thoughtless, worldly, and selfish; situated as we are, we are too apt to err on this side rather than on the other. Yet how cautious, how fearful, how tremblingly, we take every step, lest we should go too far in religion, and acquire the name of "Enthusiasts!" Would to God we were as much afraid of religious indifference and spiritual inactivity! Then, with our simple, rational, and soul-inspiring views of Christianity, we should arise and shine, and by example and effort spread in every direction the light and power of truth.

"I should like to be with you in your meetings, at Montreal. I frequently think of you in my rambles and in my study; nor do I forget you at the Throne of Grace. If you prosper, in the great city of Canada, amid all the prejudice and opposition you have had to encounter, there can be no fear of the ultimate success of the efforts of liberal Christians throughout every part of Canada. For one, I feel deeply interested in the spread of true views of religion, not only in the land which I left for this, but throughout the world. Yet to accomplish what remains to be done for this purpose, there must be more self-denying and active exertion than there has been. But we shrink from this: it is a cross, and a cross hard to bear. We are not all willing to leave our occupations, our homes, and our comforts, to preach from house to house, for the interest of souls and the glory of God. We want more of the spirit of Christ and His Apostles. We rely too much on the truthfulness and purity of our views, and rest satisfied with the assurance that they must eventually prevail. We do not think that the truer and purer our views are, the greater is the obligation laid upon us to labor for their diffusion;—that the heart and mind of the world require it, and that God and Christ, and love and reason, and conscience call for their efficient propagation. We, we look too much to the future; we are too much inclined to be prophetic, instead of self-denying actors."

'THE SNOW-BIRD OR JUVENILE MAGAZINE.'

This is the title of a monthly periodical just established in this city, and published by Messrs. Lovell & Gibson. As its title indicates, it is intended more especially for youthful readers. The Editors say that "their object will be to interest the minds of the young, by furnishing them with reading at once attractive and useful; to develop their intellectual tastes; to stimulate a desire for progress and improvement." We have seen the first number, which was issued in the beginning of the present month, and have been much gratified by its perusal. We consider it well adapted to the end proposed, and would recommend it to the favourable consideration of our readers. The terms of subscription are one dollar per year.

It is proposed to hold the usual half-yearly communion of the Montreal Unitarian Church on Sunday morning the 9th of May next.

"WARE ON THE FORMATION OF CHRISTIAN CHARACTER."—Mr. Bryson, of St. Francois Xavier Street, has received a supply of this excellent little work. We recommend our readers to procure it, and give it a careful perusal.

The "junior members of the Montreal Unitarian congregation" have recently presented their Pastor, the Rev. John Cordner, with a miniature of himself painted on ivory. It is of an extra size, and enclosed in a moose-wood case. It was given "as a token of the estimation in which he is held" by the donors.

RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCE.

[From the Boston Monthly Magazine.]

ORDINATION AT SALEM, MASS.—Mr. Octavius Brooks Frothingham, recently of the Cambridge Divinity School, was ordained as Minister of the North Church, in Salem, formerly under the charge of Rev. Dr. Brewer, on the tenth of March, 1847. The usual preliminaries having been adjusted by an exceptionally large Council, the exercises proceeded in the following order,—interspersed with the singing of some excellent hymns:—Introductory Prayer and Reading of the Scriptures, by Rev. Dr. Flint of Salem; Sermon, by Rev. Dr. Frothingham (Father of the candidate) of Boston; Prayer of Ordination, by Rev. Dr. Parkman of Boston; Right Hand of Fellowship, by Rev. Mr. Stone of Salem; Charge, by Rev. Dr. Putnam of Roxbury; Concluding Prayer, by Rev. Mr. Thompson of Salem.

The Sermon was on the Right Administration of Christian Truth, and was very able, discriminating and fair, as well as timely, presentation of the several departments of that really difficult subject. Besides a great deal of valuable discussion, it contained, at the close, a few local and personal allusions, of peculiar interest. It showed those fine qualities of style, which are every where known to belong, in an eminent degree, to its author,—terseness, classical purity, and elegant exactness, combined with a certain delicate mastery over a whole kingdom of compressed, suggestive and poetic imagery.

ORDINATION AT EAST BOSTON, MASS.—The Unitarian Society recently gathered at East Boston, being duly organized, and in a very promising and sound condition, Mr. Leonard J. Livermore, recently of the Cambridge Divinity School, was ordained there, on the evening of March 24, 1847. —Sermon by Rev. Dr. Putnam, of Roxbury.

DEDICATION AT WESTPORT, MASS.—The First Congregational (Unitarian) Society in Westport having remodelled their church, it was dedicated anew to its sacred purpose, January 7, 1847. —The sermon was preached by Rev. Mr. White, of Hallowell, from Psalm xx. 2.

SEMI-CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION AT BROOKLINE, MASS.—The Rev. John Pierce, D. D., of Brookline, is widely, we had almost venued to write universally, known in New England, as a long-aboring and faithful minister of the Gospel, and a Liberal Christian; as a man of remarkable powers of memory and an extraordinary fondness for statistical investigations, especially in the realm of genealogical, ecclesiastical, and local-historical knowledge; of a most charitable and kindly heart; of pure, frank and cordial manners; of industrious and wholesome habits, and of a singularly sound, active and vigorous physical constitution. He had been fifty years in the ministry over one parish, since his ordination, on the fifteenth of March, 1817. It was fit that on such a day, as such an occasion, should be paid the honor of a public testimonial and gratulation. Two citizens of Brookline recognized the propriety of the act, and arranged an entertainment, which was conducted and consummated with entire success. Exercises were held in the afternoon in the church. Religious services were performed by the ministers of the Baptist and Ordination societies. An Address was delivered by Mr. Pierce, crowded from beginning to end with abundant evidence of a most extraordinary amount of local and biographical information, and presenting an array of facts formidable enough to intimidate any ordinary memory. In the evening a highly agreeable collation was provided in a spacious hall, where several hundreds of ladies and gentlemen, of Brookline, Boston, and the vicinity, passed some hours with the greatest satisfaction and good feeling. Dr. Wild acted as the presiding officer. Sentiments were offered, and were responded to in appropriate and spirited speeches by Rev. Dr. Codman of Dorchester, G. F. Thayer, Esq., school-teacher, of Boston, Hon. Josiah Quincy, late President of Harvard University, Rev. Dr. Sharp of Boston, Rev. Messrs. Shailer and Haven of Brookline, Rev. Dr. Putnam of Roxbury, Hon. James Savage of Boston, Rev. Prof. Sears of Newton Theological Seminary, and Rev. Mr. Choules of Jamaica Plain. Several hymns and songs were sung. In the course of the evening, several rich gifts were presented to the venerable guest, among which was a splendid service of silver plate, which we understood to be from members of the Society, and a beautiful silver vase with flowers offered by the hands of a young daughter of Rev. Mr. Shailer,

in an exceedingly interesting and delightful manner, in behalf of the ladies of the Baptist Society. Indeed, one of the most striking, not to say most pleasing, features of the whole occasion, was the evidence of the harmony prevailing, not only at the moment, but during previous years, with no exception or interruption, between the various religious denominations in the town; a circumstance to be noted, because it is too rare among us, and because it reflects great credit on all the parties.—We close with wishing prosperity to Brookline, and prolonged health and peace to Dr. Pierce; and if it were not cruel towards him, we should say, for the sake of the community amidst which he moves, may he live fifty years more.

BOOKS FOR SALE,

AT G. DRYSON'S BOOK-STORE, ST. FRANCOIS XAVIER STREET.

THE ENTIRE WORKS OF WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING, D.D., in two volumes.

The Entire Works of the Rev. ORVILLE DEMERY, D.D., Pastor of the Church of the Messiah, New York, one volume, 8vo. pp. 387.

A COMMENTARY ON THE FOUR GOSPELS. By the Rev. A. A. Livermore.

THE ESSENTIAL PARTS OF THE UNIVERSAL CATECHISM, Deduced from the Sacred Records. By Harriet Martineau.

LA VOIE DE L'ÉCOLE UNIVERSELLE; D'ÉCRIVER LES SAUVAGES. Par Dlle. Martineau. Traduit de l'Anglais.

SCRIPTURES PROOF AND SCRIPTURAL ILLUSTRATIONS OF UNITARIANISM. By John Wilson. 3rd Edition, revised and enlarged.

"Every text connected with the Trinitarian controversy on both sides of the question, is noticed in this volume. It is a book which will be read by all Unitarians; and the second edition is a valuable evidence for Trinitarianism." In the first part, he has gathered the texts as they appear in the original Greek, Latin, and Syriac. Mr. Wilson furnishes us, in many cases, with a variety of renderings, by scholars of acknowledged eminence; and throughout the whole he presents us with a series of candid and pertinent remarks of his own. In the second part, he not only cites the controverted texts in full, but also gives "obscure texts" to throw light on the meaning of the prominent terms which appear in them. — Boston Christian Register.

THE CONFESSIONS OF TRINITARIANS; being a Selection of Extracts from the most eminent Biblical Critics and Commentators. By John Wilson.

"We cannot conceive a Trinitarian looking this book in the face, without feeling sinking of the heart,—without, indeed, the ground, which he had been so long and so solidly occupying for or for him,—that the arbitrary speculation 'Have you room for friends?' For here are six hundred pages of refutation of Trinitarianism, by Trinitarians themselves, drawn from over two hundred eminent writers of last generation. In other words, it is a volume of extracts from celebrated orthodox writers of all ages of the world, in which they have given their own explanation of the Trinitarian doctrine. And it is a pity, from examining the work,—what, indeed, has often been loosely reported,—that these extracts are not all of the passages in the Bible which favour the support of the doctrine of the Trinity, which, by one or more Trinitarian writers, has not been given up to their opponents, as admitting or requiring a Unitarian interpretation. These, therefore, we have a perfect armoury of weapons for the destruction of the Great Error, furnished by the believers and defenders of the error themselves."

HISTORIC AND ARTISTIC ILLUSTRATIONS OF THE TRINITY; showing the Pico, Progress, and Decline of the Doctrine, with Elucidatory Engravings. By the Rev. J. R. Beard, D.D., of Manchester, England.

LETTERS FOR THE USE OF CHRISTIAN FAMILIES. With a Preface recommending the Practice of Family Worship. By the Rev. J. Scott Green.

LECTURES ON CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE. By the Rev. A. Peabody, Pastor of the South Congregational Church, Portsmouth, N. H.

THE APOLOGY OF THE REV. THEOPHILUS LEE, M. A., on resigning the Vicarage of Catterick, Yorkshire.

THE PENITENTIANCE OF A UNITARIAN. Addressed to the Right Rev. Thomas Burgess, D.D., Lord Bishop of St. Davids. By Capt. James Gifford, R.M.

THE ATONING SACRIFICE—a Display of Love, not of Wrath. By the Rev. Noah Worcester.

LETTERS ADDRESSED TO RELATIVES AND FRIENDS, chiefly in Reply to Arguments in Support of the Doctrine of the Trinity. By Mary S. B. Dana, author of the "Southern and Northern Harps," "The Parted Family," &c.

THE RECOLLECTIONS OF JOTHAM ANDERSON. By the late Rev. H. Ware, Jr., of Cambridge University, New England.

SERMONS. By the Rev. F. W. P. Greenwood, D.D., Minister of King's Chapel, Boston. In two volumes.

A COLLECTION OF PSALMS AND HYMNS for Christian Worship. By the Rev. F. W. P. Greenwood, D.D. Montreal, December, 1846.

JUST RECEIVED,

A SUPPLY OF "WARE ON THE FORMATION OF THE CHRISTIAN CHARACTER."

Doctr.

CHARITY.

In the hour of keenest sorrow,
In the hour of deepest woe,
Wait not for the coming morrow,
To the sad and suffering go.
To the sad and suffering go.
Make it thy sincerest pleasure
To administer relief,—
Freely opening thy treasure
To assuage a brother's grief.

Go, and seek the orphan sighing,—
Seek the widow in her tears;
As on Mercy's pinions flying,
Go, dispel their darkest fears;
Seek the stranger, sad and weary,
Pass not on the other side,
Though the task be sad and dreary,
Heeding not the scorn of pride.

Go, with manners unassuming—
In a meek and quiet way—
O'er the fallen ne'er presuming,
Though thy brother sadly stray,
'Tis a Saviour's kind compassion—
'Tis his righteousness alone,
All unmerited salvation
That around thy path has shone.

When thy heart is warmly glowing,
With the sacred love of prayer,
Be thy works of kindness flowing
Not as with a miser's care;
Duty e'er should be thy watchword,
Pity drop the balmy tear,
Always toward the fallen cherish
Sympathy and love sincere.

A PLAIN LETTER.

[From Jonathan Farr's Plain Letters.]

DEAR SIR,—I find that you have, for some time, been halting between Unitarianism and Trinitarianism. When I conversed with you, you seemed to have many fears, doubts and scruples. You knew not what was right, and what you should believe.

Now let me tell you, you have not taken a right course to remove your doubts and anxieties. You have not repaired to the proper source. You have been swayed too much by earthly motives. You have consulted your own feelings, ease and worldly interest. You have regarded the opinions and assertions of frail, arrogant and bigoted men, rather than the word of God. If you really love God, you will love the Bible better than any other book. If you desire the truth, as it is in Jesus, you will learn of Jesus himself. If you would follow the teachings of the Scriptures, you would feel no hesitation about giving up the doctrine of the Trinity. Neither the word, nor the doctrine is found expressly and plainly in the Bible, which ought to contain the religion of Protestants. The Scriptures teach us to ask the Father for the holy spirit; not to say, O God, the Holy Ghost! They teach us to ask the Father in the name of Christ—to do all things in the name of the Lord Jesus; giving thanks to God, even the Father by him; not to say, O God, the Son. They teach us to do every thing to the glory of God the Father; not to talk of paying equal and undivided honors to the triune God.

You spoke of the beginning of the first chapter of John's gospel. But did not your conversation seem to cast a dishonorable reflection on the evangelist? You will insinuate that he contradicted himself. He tells you near the end of his gospel, which doctrine he professed to teach concerning Christ. He tells you plainly, that these things are written, that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; not the opposite doctrine.

And admitting that you cannot understand other passages, this declaration ought to silence and satisfy you. If you put any confidence in the apostle, you must believe that even could you understand these dark places perfectly, they would not contradict this positive assertion, 'these things are written that ye might believe &c. and that believing, ye might have life through his name.' Yes, he speaks of this view of the character of Christ, as a live-giving faith; these considerations ought to set your doubts at rest. The apostle Paul seems to say that Christ is equal to God; but still he speaks of every thing's being done to the glory of the Father; and Christ himself, when charged with making himself equal with God, refutes the charge, and disclaims any such pretensions. The word 'equal' in Philip. 6, does not mean a perfect equality in every respect; it would be better rendered likeness, or resemblance, here. I will quote only three passages, which it seems to me, are of themselves enough to silence the fears and doubts of any rational and pious mind. The apostle says,—'It is manifest that he

(God) is excepted, which did put all things under him.' 1 Cor. xv. Christ says, 'I can do nothing of myself. My Father is greater than I: my Father is greater than all.' The Father says, 'This is my beloved Son.' It seems to me, that you would show both your wisdom and piety by receiving these and similar instructions, to the rejection of strange and opposing doctrines, taught by fallible men. I would recommend books, which treat on these subjects; but you observed, you had little time to read. I hope, however, that you are not so immersed in the cares of the world, but that you can read some in your Bible, every day, and that you devote the sabbath to moral and religious improvement and to the worship of God. I saw Calvinistic and Trinitarian papers and tracts in your house. If you can read them, why can you not read on the other side? Is yours one of those houses, where any thing can be tolerated but Unitarian Christianity? where he, who, by the laws of nature, of nations, and of God, should be the head, is in fact, the most abject thing belonging to the family?

I think I discover where your difficulty lies. You are slavishly afraid of your wife, who shows her religion by assuming an authority, which both the Old Testament and the New would tell her, would she have respect to all God's commandments, is improper and usurped! Slavishly afraid of your wife, whose ignorance of the doctrine is as great as her prejudice against them! You are afraid for your money. It would cost you some time, trouble, and money, if you adopted the Unitarian faith. You are afraid of some officious friends and neighbors, whose favor depends upon your submission to them in your religious sentiments. You may think me severe; but I suspect it is only the severity of truth, when I say, you seem to love the praise, and dread the censure of men, more than you love the praise, and dread the displeasure of God.

If you would be a Christian, go to Christ, in his gospel, for doctrines and precepts. Study the scriptures without fear of man.

If you have had the folly or misfortune, to be disturbed or perplexed by Trinitarians; have the courage and honesty now to listen with equal candor to the arguments of Unitarians; and oh! consider, that it is gospel truth, that it is the truth as it is in Jesus, which you want, to make you holy and free; and that the fashions and opinions of this world are swiftly passing away!

Your wife may be offended at what I have said in regard to her. I am confident she will see the time, either in this world or the next, when she will acknowledge, that my reproof, though pointed, was just. In what way, many wives can reconcile their conduct towards their husbands, with their marriage vows, with their belief in revelation, and their professions of godliness, I know not. If they would read their Bible, they would find some precepts especially addressed to them, to which they have not paid that solemn attention, reasonably expected from those, who trust they are born of the Spirit. I know this is a delicate subject; but I know, also, that there is often a false delicacy about it, if religion is true. How much of this sin I am alluding to, will be laid to the charge of those religious teachers, who have encouraged it either through a gross ignorance, or ambition, I am not to say. That you may belong to the household of faith, is the sincere desire of your friend.

HUMAN DEPRAVITY.

BY EDWARD Q. SEWALL.

*** The Scriptures afford us a far different view of human nature from that presented by the doctrine we have attempted to refute. They everywhere take it for granted, that a man is a sinner only through his own act and choice. 'The soul that sinneth, it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father. The righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him. Every tree is known by its own fruit. He that committeth sin, transgresseth the law. Know ye not that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness. He that doeth righteousness is righteous.'

The sacred volume contains many severe *Rebukes* pointed at offenders. But rebuke is unjust where the offence could not be avoided, and is the consequence of something else, and not our own choice.

There are also numerous pathetic *Lamentations* and *Remonstrances* addressed in the name of God, to his erring creatures. 'Turn ye from your evil ways, and keep my commandments. Turn ye, for why will ye die? What could I have done more for my vineyard that I have not done? How often would I have gathered thy children together, as a bird gathereth her brood under her wings, and ye would not. O that thou hadst known! My people will not consider!

Now such language as this, is mere mockery of human woe, unless it was by their own conduct the guilt lamented was incurred, and unless they had power to do otherwise. Why lament an evil which he himself had caused, by bringing them into the world with a depraved nature, and which none but he can ever cure? It is impossible to reconcile these expostulations with the idea, that, at any moment, the occasion might instantly have been removed by the Divine power, and that without a special interposition on the part of God, there was no possibility of its removal. We ought to consider them as sincere; and if we do, we must conclude that the people concerned then had been the authors of their own ruin, and always possessed the ability to prevent it.

The Bible abounds with *Precepts*. For whom? A being, who, by his nature, is utterly unable to observe them?

The views of future *Retribution*, exhibited in the same volume, are so many contradictions to native depravity. We are taught that we shall be judged by our *deeds*. And they only, who have *done* evil, shall arise to condemnation. But what influence have our deeds upon that sentence, which was passed ages ago on the whole race, and by which we are 'liable to the pains of hell?' The judgment is already completed, when we begin the race of life, and cannot be reversed by all we may perform. Is this being rewarded according to our deeds?

All men are represented as alike interested in the blessings of Christianity, and its invitations are accordingly addressed to all with the same earnestness. Jesus knew what was in man, both our strength and our weakness. He was without guile. He ever spake the truth. If, then, these calls of divine goodness were not designed for every one's acceptance, or if none had power to comply with them, would he not have said so? He might have lamented our blindness, but he could not have asked, 'Why even of yourselves judge ye not what is right?' He might have been anxious for our unbelief, but could not have inquired, 'Why do ye not believe?' He might have exhorted us to wait patiently for the coming of the Holy Ghost, but could not have upbraided us for a guilt which that coming only could terminate. He might have expatiated on the miseries of our condition, but could not have held up the promises which concerned none but the elect, to a dying world; thus adding fresh anguish to their helpless woes.

But we are *not* taught in the New Testament that our nature is depraved. Our Lord once exclaimed, 'How can ye believe, who seek honor one of another,' but never, 'How can ye believe, who were altogether born in sin.' He uniformly ascribes the ruin of the wicked to their own immediate fault, and not to any foreign cause, least of all to one prior to their existence. There are no words in the Bible, by which a bare statement of the doctrine we oppose, can be made out with even a show of fairness. From a few passages it has been extorted, however; and the candid reader of Scripture may justly express surpris at the manner in which a sentiment, so inconsistent with its whole spirit and instructions, has been drawn from it. As I have before observed, most of the passages relied upon in the argument, contain vivid and striking descriptions of the vices of particular men, communities, or generations. Some only declare the general truth, 'There is no man that liveth and sinneth not.' And scarce one can, even by force, be made to allude to human nature itself, abstractly considered.

Three texts are cited always on this occasion; and they are all which I shall now notice; both because the mode of interpretation which applies to these may apply to every other which is referred to, and because the constant use of these, shows the dearth of good proof sufficiently to indicate the weakness of the cause they are supposed to establish.

One of these passages lies in the 51st Psalm. David is there giving utterance to some very strong emotions of his heart, excited by the recollections of his own crimes. The whole piece is an exercise of private, personal devotion, and should be interpreted as such. Shall we take up his words and analyze them, as if they were the language, not of emotion, but cold philosophy? Shall we read his Psalm as a lecture, instead of an humble prayer of private penitence? If any one supposes David designed to be understood literally, when he says, 'I was shapen in iniquity; then let him be consistent, and equally literal in such sentences as the following: 'The wicked go astray as soon as they are born, speaking lies.' That is, infants speak as soon as they come into the world, and they speak lies too. 'Rivers of water run down mine eyes.' Here you may imagine his cheeks two channels or beds of rivers. 'Purge me with hyssop.' That is, take the herb

hyssop and cleanse me. 'Break the teeth of the young lions.' 'There is no soundness in my flesh, because of my sins.' It is easily seen to what absurdities we are led by this mode of interpretation; yet no reason exists for applying it to the words of the penitential hymn, which does not equally require its use in those just recited. The truth is, all these passages are properly regarded as the expressions which naturally suggest themselves to the mind of an Oriental poet, in a state of strong emotion; but not as literal representations of fact or opinion.

Ephesians ii. 3, is another text much relied upon in this argument. 'And were, by nature, children of wrath, even as others.' To whom is this said? To persons recently converted from *idolatry*; who had, in times past, 'walked according to the prince of the power of the air, who were Gentiles in the flesh, and aliens from the commonwealth of Israel.' This heathenish state with its attendant vices, Paul contrasts with the condition into which Christianity had brought them. The phrase, 'by nature,' occurs in another Epistle, in a manner which illustrates its meaning here. 'We, who are Jews by nature, and not sinners of the Gentiles.' Now it is certain, Paul does not intend their nature as human beings, for that is peculiar to no nation, and makes us simply *men*, not Jews nor Gentiles. The latter clause proves that we are to understand the former thus, if any proof were needed. For sin, as an attribute of man, is surely not limited by national divisions, and the phrase, 'sinners of the Gentiles' would have no sense, if we did not know that by this title, the Jews were accustomed to distinguish idolaters from their own people. To be a Jew by nature, is to be one by parentage, education, and affinity. 'Children of wrath, children of disobedience,' are terms significant of the actual character of those to whom they apply, a character acquired by themselves, when they 'gave themselves over to the lasciviousness, and walked according to the course of this world.' So Peter styles similar characters, 'cursed children,' indicating their liability to punishment for their vices. And, in like manner, virtuous Christians walk as 'children of the light.' If any one prefers to understand the Apostle as affirming that the Ephesians were proper subjects of divine wrath, on account of their birth simply, without any regard to their own subsequent conduct, he may enjoy his opinion. But he turns aside entirely from the argument of the writer, to hang a fond notion of his own upon the naked words.

The only remaining passage I shall notice, lies in the Epistle to the Corinthians. 'The natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit of God.' A wrong translation alone, occasions the least mistake here. The Greek word does not signify what the English term implies. Its true meaning is expressed in Jude xix, 'sensual.' So also in James iii. 15, 'sensual' is the rendering. It is found in three places in this Epistle besides the passage just quoted. Paul, speaking of the human frame, says, it is 'sown a natural body.' He means, 'a fleshly body.' This expresses his sentiment more clearly; for 'flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom.' The Apostle in the chapter containing the words under discussion, declares, respecting the future happiness of the good, that 'eye hath not seen the things which God hath prepared for them that love him; but God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit. In reference to the same things, he afterwards says, the natural or sensual man, he who is immersed in sensual indulgences, receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; that is, the things which he hath revealed unto us by the Spirit. 'They are foolishness unto him.' Why? Because spiritual joys, the bliss of virtue, has no charms for the sensualist. 'Neither can he know them.' Why? 'Because they are spiritually discerned.' They are of a purely intellectual and spiritual nature; they are not to be understood or valued by one whose gross mind is bound to the earth, and who has never experienced a felicity which has no relation to the gratifications of sense. His moral perceptions and taste are blunted, obscure, perverse. He sees no attractions in the prospect of a happiness, whose nature he cannot comprehend,—whose worth he is incapable of appreciating. Let his mind be spiritualized—let it be restored to purity and virtue, he will then discern spiritual things.

The mind of man is capable of strange things, and many an honest soul has travelled to heaven by a most circuitous route.—*Rev. Dr. Gannell.*

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