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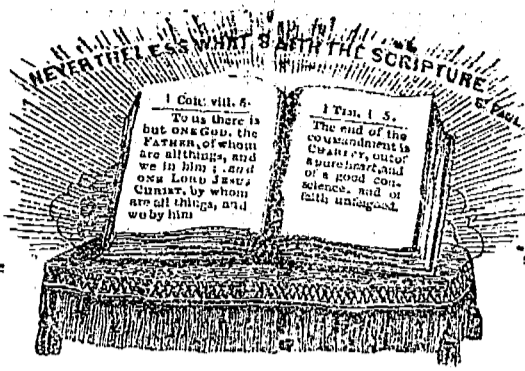
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THE BIBLE



CHRISTIAN

TRUTH, HOLINESS,

LIBERTY, LOVE.

Vol. V.]

MONTREAL, DECEMBER, 1848.

[No. 12.]

GOD OUR FATHER.

BY DR. CHANNING.

"When we conceive of God as a pure Spirit, and dwell on his incommunicable perfections, of which we see no image or resemblance in any beings around us, he alludes the feeble vision of our minds. It is then almost impossible that the affections can be excited and centered upon him. Such views of God furnish us no object on which we can rest, as on a reality. Now the Scriptures invest this pure and infinite Spirit with a character, relations, and qualities which we can comprehend,—such as are continually displayed around us, such as constantly address and touch our hearts, such as we can revolve in thought and meditate upon with ease and delight, such as are attractive and promise happiness; and thus they furnish us the best and most effectual means for exciting and cherishing the love of God. Of all the interesting characters and relations in which the Scriptures, especially the books of the New Testament, exhibit the Supreme Being, that of *Father* is the most common, prominent, striking.....

"No character could bring God so nigh as this of the *Father*. There is no relation which we know so familiarly as the parental. What name recalls so many thoughts and feelings, so many favors and tender remembrances, as that of parent? The Scripture, then in giving this view of God, place him before us in a clear, intelligible light. We are not called to dwell on perfections which are utterly incomprehensible, the names of which are sounds in the ear, but excite no ideas in the mind, and which have no tendency to interest the heart. God is our Father.....

"I fear it has been the influence of many speculations of ingenious men on the Divine character to divest God of that paternal tenderness which is of all views most suited to touch the heart. I fear we have learnt insensibly to view him as possessing only a general benevolence, which he extends over his wide creation, a benevolence neither very strong nor ardent, not descending to individuals, and not essential to the felicity of the Divine nature. Now this distant and almost indifferent benevolence will hardly seize on our affections. It may please us in moments of calm speculation. It will not inspire a love strong enough to curb our passions, to compose our sorrows, to influence our lives. For these ends we need to have other views frequently suggested to us,—those views of God's affection for us and for his wide family, which his parental relation to us suggests, and which the kindness of his providence compels us to receive.

"Let me now ask, why these views of God may not be cherished, and why we may not suppose that God has properly the feelings of a father towards us. It is objected, that the supposition implies that God is not infinitely happy in himself, but derives happiness from his creatures; and this derivation, we are told, is dishonorable to God. But I do not perceive that we dishonor God by believing that his creation is a real source of felicity to him, that he finds a real happiness in doing good, and in viewing with complacency obedient, virtuous, and happy children. To me there is no actor of a perfect man, that the happiness of others is his own, that he knows no higher joy than to confer and witness felicity, that his heart responds to the feelings of those around him? And if this is perfection in man, can it be an imperfection in God? Do we, indeed, exalt God, when we represent him as unaffected by the state of his creatures? Next to ascribing malignity to him, what can we say worse of him than this,—that he looks on the joys and sorrows of his own creatures without joy and without pity?.....

"We cannot see much to envy, in the felicity of a being who has no feeling of interest

and love extending beyond himself. Deprive God of the happiness of love, and we deprive him of that enjoyment which we have every reason to believe the most inexhaustible in the universe."

LOVE THE PRINCIPLE OF HARMONY IN THE UNIVERSE.

"The Christian possesses a great advantage in the contemplation of nature. He beholds *unity* in the midst of *variety*. He looks round on the *chanting scenery*, and in every leaf of the forest, every blade of grass, every hill, every valley, and every cloud of heaven, he discovers the traces of Divine benevolence. Creation is but a field spread before him for an infinitely varied display of *love*. This is the harmonizing principle which reduces to unity and simplicity the vast diversity of nature,—this is the perfection of the universe. It clothes in moral glory every object we contemplate. The Christian truly may be said to hear the music of the spheres. He hears suns and planets joining their melody in praise to their benignant Creator. His ear, and his ear, alone, is tuned to this heavenly harmony. His soul is *love*."

THE MERCY AND JUSTICE OF GOD.

"*Mercy* is an essential attribute of God, not an affection produced in him by a foreign cause. His blessings are free, and bestowed by another on those whose welfare he disregards. He really loves mankind; and this is the great motive, first cause, and highest spring of their redemption. Thus I have endeavored to place before you Divine goodness in the glory in which it shines in Scripture.

"But I must not stop here. This doctrine, whilst obscured by some, is carried to excess by others. There are those who, when they hear of the essential and infinite mercy of God towards even the sinful, imagine that God has no aversion towards sin, and cannot punish. Unhappily the minds of men are prone to run to extremes. They cannot be driven from one sentiment without vibrating to its opposite. Some men, as we have seen, array the divinity in darkness and terror.—God, according to them, is so holy, that he looks on sinners with no feelings but indignation. His anger burns; his sword is unsheathed; it falls more rapidly than the lightning; and nothing saves us from its sharp destruction but the merciful Son, who interposes between us and the descending ruin, receives it into his own breast, and thus appeases the wrathful Deity. When these representations are opposed as inconsistent with the character of Him whose name is Love, who created and who preserves us, the mind is then prone to reject all its former conceptions, and to form a deity altogether insensible to the distinction between good and evil, between holiness and sin,—incapable of feeling displeasure or of inflicting punishment.

"But the Scriptures forbid us to cherish these partial and mutilated views of the Divine character. They teach his essential, self-moved mercy; and this most affecting view of God I would always hold up to you, that you may love him with your whole hearts. Happy should I be, were I permitted to make them my only theme. Happy, indeed, could I hope that no other motive is needed than this,—that the goodness of God, whenever enforced, excites, in all who hear, the sentiments of gratitude, and the purpose of obedience. But there is reason to fear that some minds are so fallen, that this very doctrine which imposes such obligation is abused to licentiousness, and employed to produce the feeling of security in a sinful course. There are some who think, if they do not say, that, since God is so good, his laws may be broken with impunity. To guard against such a perversion of the doctrine I have enforced, let me repeat that his mercy is not an undistinguishing fondness; that whilst he compassionates the offending, and has appointed methods for their reformation and forgiveness, he is unchangeably the enemy of sin; that his very character, as the universal Father, requires him to punish and

humble the disobedient, selfish, unjust, proud, and impure, to redress every principle and practice opposed to the order and happiness and perfection of his creatures."

THE SPIRIT OF LIFE IN JESUS CHRIST.

"A man," says the Apostle Paul, "is the image and glory of God." And truly, it is from our own human nature, from its deep experiences, and earnest affections, that we form our conceptions of Deity, and become qualified to interpret the solemn intimations which creation and scripture afford to us respecting him. Without the stirrings of divine qualities within us, without some consciousness of that which we ascribe to the All-perfect, the names and descriptions by which he is made known to us would be empty words, as idly sent to us as treatises of sound to the deaf, or some "high discourse of reason" to the fool. All that we believe without us, we first feel within us; and it is the one sufficient proof of the grandeur and awfulness of our nature, that we have faith in God; for no merely finite being can possibly believe the infinite. The universe of which each man conceives exists primarily in his own mind; there dwell the Angel he enthrones in the height, and the Demon he covers with the deep; and vainly would he talk of shunning hell, who never felt its fires in his bosom; or he converse of heaven, whose soul was never pure and green as Paradise.

In virtue of this resemblance between the human and the divine mind, Christ is the representative and revealer of both. God, by the very immensity of his nature, is a stationary being, perfect and therefore unchangeable: and so far as Jesus Christ was "the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever;" so far as one uniform mind and power possessed him, as one sacred purpose was impressed upon his life; so far as he the emblem of Deity; affording us, in speech, in feeling, in will, in act, and idea of God, which nothing borrowed from the material creation or mortal life can at all approach. His unity of soul, the unalterable spirit pervading all his altering moods of thought,—in short, his identity with himself, is altogether divine. In so far, on the other hand, as he underwent vicissitudes of emotion; in so far as he spake, thought, acted differently in different periods of his career, and a changed hue of soul came over him, and threw across the world before him a brighter or a sadder shape; so far as he the ideal and picture of the mind of man. His self-variations are altogether human.

The casual vicissitudes of feeling in Christ, his alternations of anxiety and hope, of rejoicing and of tears, have often been appealed to, as traces of his having had a like nature with our own. The appeal is just; and shows us that he was impressed, as we are, by those outward incidents which may make the morning happy and the evening sad. But, besides these accidental agitations, which follow the complexion of our external lot, there is a far more important set of changes, which the affections and character undergo from internal causes; which occur in regular succession, marking and characterizing the different periods of mental, if not of physical life; and constitute the stages of moral development through which the noblest minds visibly pass to their perfection. The incidental fluctuations of emotion raised by the good or evil tidings of the hour, are but as the separate waves which the passing wind may soothe to a ripple or press into a storm; but the seasonable changes of character, of which I now speak, are rather the great tidal movements of the deep within us, depending on less capricious forces than the transient gale, and bearing on their surface the mere film of tempest or of calm. The succession is distinctly traceable in the mind of Christ, making his life a model of moral progressions the most impressive and sublime. He thus

becomes in a new sense the representative of our duty, our visible and outward conscience; revealing to us not only the end to which we must attain, but the successive steps by which our nature reaches it; the process as well as the result; the natural history of the affections which belongs to the true perfection of the will. He is the type of the pure religious life; all its developments being crowded, by the rapid ripening of his soul, into his brief experience: and we read in the gospel a divine allegory of humanity, symbolical of those profound and silent changes, of passion and speculation, of faith and love, through which a holy mind rises to its most godlike power.

The only incident recorded of the childhood of Jesus strikingly commences the analogy between his nature and ours, and happily introduces him to us as the representative of the great ideas of duty and God within the soul. The annual pilgrimage from his village to the holy city, which had hitherto been the child's holiday, full only of the wonder and delight of travel, seized hold, on one occasion, of deeper feelings, which absorbed him with their new intensity. The visit which had become conventional with others, appeared at once with its full meaning to him: and with the surprise of a fresh reverence, he turned from the gay streets, and the sunny excursion, and the social entertainment, to the quiet courts of the temple, where the ancient story of miracle was told, and the mystery of prophecy explained. Eager to prolong this new and solemn interest, he missed, you will remember, the opportunity of travelling back with the caravan of Nazareth: and when told by his parents, on their return in quest of him, "Thy father and mother have sought thee sorrowing," he replied, with a tone not altogether filial, "Know ye not that I must be about my Father's business?"

The answer is wonderfully expressive of the spirit of young piety, taking its first dignity as an independent principle of action in the mind. The lessons of devotion are, for a long time adopted passively, with listening faith; the great ideas dwindling, as they fall from the teacher's lips, to the dimensions of the infant mind receiving them. When the mother calls her children to her knees to speak to them of God, she is herself the greatest object in their affections. It is by her power over them that God becomes Venerable; by the purity of her eye that he becomes Holy; by the silence of the hour that he becomes Awful; by the tenderness of her tones that he becomes Dear. That the parents bend, with lowly look and serene result, before some invisible Presence, is the first and sufficient hint to the heart's latent faith; which therefore blends awhile with the domestic sympathies, simply mingling with them an element of mystery, and imparting to them a deeper and less earthly coloring. But the thoughts which constitute religion are too vast and solemn to remain subordinate. They are germs of a growth, which, with true nurture, must burst into independent life, and overshadow the whole soul. When the mind, beginning to be busy for itself, ponders the ideas of the infinite and eternal, it detects, as if by sudden inspiration, the immensity of the relations which it sustains to God and immortality: the old formulas of religious instruction break their husk, and give forth the seeds of wonder and of love; every thing that seemed before great and worthy is dwarfed; and human affections and duties sink into nothingness compared with the heavenly world which has been discovered. There is a period, when earnest spirits become thus possessed; disposed to contrast the grandeur of their new ideal with the littleness of all that is actual; and to look with a sublimated feeling, which in harsher nature passes into contempt, on pursuits and relations once sufficient, for the heart's reverence. At such a crisis it was that Jesus gave the answer to his parents; when his piety first broke into original and self-luminous power, and not only took the centre of his system, but threatened to put out those lesser and dependent lights which, when their place is truly understood, appear no less heavenly. He spake in the entrance

and exclusive spirit of young devotion. Well then may we bear with the rebukes which this earnest temper is sometimes impelled to administer: for by a mental necessity, all strong feeling must be exclusive, till wisdom and experience have trained it; till the worth of many things has been ascertained; till God is seen, not sitting aloof from his creation to show how contemptible it is, but pervading it to give it sanctity; till it is found how much that is human is also divine. None learned this so soon or so profoundly as Jesus. And even now, the very sight of home restored his household sympathies again; for when he went to Nazareth with his parents, "he was obedient unto them; and increased in favor" with man as well as God.—*James Martineau.*

NECESSITY OF A DEFINITE FAITH.

The present age, especially in the most liberal quarters, seems inclined to devote chief attention to that part of religion which is called its more spiritual and freer part—to the neglect of that which is doctrinal. There is a strong reaction against the prescriptions and dogmas of preceding ages. There is a weariness of formularies, whether of language or observances. The tendency is to cast into the lowest degree of esteem all articles of confession, all modes of describing what is to be believed. To define a faith, however largely, is imagined by many to imprison it, and to abridge unjustly the scope of thought. And to urge the importance of so defining it is looked upon with jealousy, as if one would thus turn dogmatist, and undertake to dictate to others' convictions. Now this feeling may easily be carried too far, and often is. It may take a mistaken direction, and often does. Can anything be more evident than that religion is a doctrine, as well as a sentiment, and must take some shape as such? Will any one deny that the Gospel is a belief, as well as an influence, and therefore presents some shape of what is to be believed? This shape, whether more or less comprehensive, whether of one or another outline, is precisely what we mean when we speak of a creed. It will be different to different minds. We cannot all see it in the same light or the same proportions. But there it must be, if we would profess anything, if we would discern anything. It is an intellectual necessity, and they who think the least of it cannot dispense with it. Just so far as you depart from it you are in skepticism. The individual that has it not, holds nothing that he can with any propriety call Christian truth; and the church or denomination that has it not may as well break up, for it has nothing to maintain, or to be maintained by.

Let us have a belief, therefore. How can we otherwise have any portion in the believer's rest or hope? Let us have a creed also. For who else can we tell or know what we believe? Only let it be held with humility, and seriousness, and charity. We need not ask too curiously how much there is of it, nor of what precise kind it is. We will not ask this of others at all, for it is their concern and not ours. But if their doctrine jostle or attack us, it may impose upon us an obligation to keep it aloof from our fellowship, and to be able to give to the world a reason for the different faith that we are attached to. A creed! It has been unreasonable. It has been despotic. It has canonized error. It has prolonged abuses. Who doubts this? And certainly the fact is repeated often enough to bring it within every one's knowledge. But we are not so often reminded that it is not necessarily connected either with a superstition or a tyranny;—that it has its foundation in the human mind, and not in arbitrary impositions; and that it has great uses still to subservise among the uneasy movements of both thoughtless and reflecting minds. It need not be formally propounded, and it cannot be compelled, but it should be able to speak itself out to the private conscience, and even to the ears of others when suitable occasion comes. We know that it makes nothing the truer; but it may help to impress us the more with what we acknowledge to be true. We know that it cannot hold within the articles that are the most carefully prepared the faith of a single human being. But we do not want it for that. Its aid is called in, not to restrain but to express the thought. One may not admit it; and then it is for others and not for him. Or he may admit it, but not honestly, evading it by some subterfuge of interpretation; and then it is for those who are less ingenious and more sincere. According to the view we are now taking of it, there is nothing in it implying that it must be narrow, minute, rigorous; that it must be technical

in its form, or abstruse and theological in its substance. It may leave all art to sectarian devisers, and all abstraction to the schools. Let it be as simple as it will, and as unincumbered, and as large in spirit. Only give it some existence. Allow it a place. Do not cast out its name as evil, on account of the mischiefs that have sprung up by the side of it and the hypocrisies to which it has been made to minister. Let it have a hand that can write. Let it have a tongue that can speak. Let it have something, however short, that it is willing to say and means to abide by.

The word creed takes its origin, as has been supposed, from the first one in that summary of doctrine which has been styled the Apostles' Creed; "Credo," I believe. Why should we be scrupulous about repeating it? "I believe" in the law that binds and the goodness that preserves me. "I believe" in the holy Providence of God that embraces me with all. "I believe" in a Divine Spirit, breathing through and governing a material world. "I believe" in the Gospel of a Redeemer, with its wonderful story, its grace and authority, its revelations of mercy and its promises of life. "I believe." Help, Lord, mine unbelief. We may be doubtful about many things, and sore perplexed. We may have but dim views before us sometimes, and carry drooping thoughts in our breasts. Be it so. This is nature's weakness. I could never prize a man's faith any the more for his rigid precision or his boastful confidence. But one thing at least is as clear as the light—that the Gospel can be of service only so far as it is accredited. If it have no sanction for us, it has no comforting trust for us. What it had no commission to teach, we need not thank it for telling. What it had no right to promise, we can have no reason to expect from it. Wherein it confers its salvation, it must do it through "belief and truth." Let us define that truth, each one for himself. Not too sharply and noways ungraciously. But that we may see it with greater distinctness, and imprint it with deeper strength upon our minds. We will not cramp it with any of our contractions. We will not affront so vast a principle by artificial distinctions and illiberal devices. But let us not be liberalized out of its pale and covenant. Let us mark where we stand, and stand there with a modest but firm persuasion, with a free yet a subject spirit. And may God bless to us his word, and make it a rule as well as a light, and include you and me among those who are "chosen to its salvation."—*N. L. Frothingham.*

CHRISTIANITY AND NATURE—POTENT IN SECRECY, SIMPLE IN INTRICACY.

From DeQuincey in Tait's Edinburg Magazine.

Forces, which are illimitable in their compass of affect, are often, for the same reason, obscure and untraceable in the steps of their movement. Growth, for instance, animal or vegetable, what eye can arrest its eternal increments? The hour hand of a watch, who can detect the separate fluxions of its advance? Judging by the past, and the change which is registered between that and the present, we know that it must awake; judging by the immediate appearances, we should say that it was always asleep. Gravitation, again, that works without holiday for ever, and searches every corner of the universe, what intellect can follow it to its fountains? And yet, slyer than gravitation, less to be counted than the fluxions of sun-dials, stealthier, than the growth of a forest, are the footsteps of Christianity amongst the political workings of man. Nothing, that the heart of man values, is so secret; nothing is so potent.

It is because Christianity works so secretly, that it works so potently; it is because Christianity burrows and hides itself, that it towers above the clouds; and hence partly it is that its working comes to be misapprehended, or even lost out of sight. It is dark to eyes touched with the films of human frailty; but it is "dark with excessive bright." Hence it has happened sometimes that minds of the highest order have entered into enmity with the Christian faith, have arraigned it as a curse to man, and have fought against it even upon Christian impulses, (impulses of benignity that could not have had a birth, except in Christianity.) All comes from the labyrinthine intricacy in which the social action of Christianity involves itself to the eye of a contemporary. Simplicity the most absolute, is reconcilable with intricacy the most elaborate. The weather—how simple would appear the laws of its oscillations, if we stood at their centre!

and yet, because we do not, to this hour the weather is a mystery. Human health—how transparent is its economy under ordinary circumstances! Abstinence and cleanliness, labor and rest, these simple laws, observed in just proportions, laws that may be engrossed upon a finger nail, are sufficient, on the whole, to maintain the equilibrium of pleasurable existence. Yet if once that equilibrium is disturbed, where is the science oftentimes deep enough to rectify the unfathomable watch-work? Even the simplicities of planetary motions do not escape distortion; nor is it easy to be convinced that the distortion is in the eye which beholds, not in the object beheld. Let a planet be wheeling with heavenly science, upon arches of divine geometry; suddenly, to us, it shall appear unaccountably retrograde; flying when none pursues; and unweaving its own work. Let this planet in its utmost elongations travel out of sight, and for us its course will become incoherent; because our sight is feeble, the beautiful curve of the planet shall be dislocated into segments, by a parenthesis of darkness; because our earth is in no true centre, the disorder of parallax shall trouble the laws of light; and, because we ourselves are wandering, the heavens shall seem fickle.

Exactly in the predicament of such a planet is Christianity; its motions are intermingled with other motions; crossed and thwarted, eclipsed and disguised, by counter-motions in man himself, and by disturbances that man cannot overrule. Upon lines that are direct, upon curves that are circuitous, Christianity is advancing for ever; but from our imperfect vision, or from our imperfect opportunities for applying even such a vision, we cannot trace it continuously. We lose it, we regain it; we see it doubtfully, we see it interruptedly; we see it in collision, we see it in combination; in collision with darkness that confounds, in combination with cross lights that perplex. And this in part is irremediable; so that no finite intellect will ever retrace the total curve upon which Christianity has moved, any more than eyes that are incarnate will ever see God.

ENCOURAGEMENT TO MINISTERS.

Encourage your own pastor by your regular and constant attendance upon his ministry.

This is a duty of much greater moment to the usefulness and happiness of a pastor, than Christians generally imagine. When a church and congregation regularly attend on the ministry of a pastor, it cheers and elevates him. He considers it as an assurance that he shares their affection, esteem and confidence. He goes to his pulpit, feeling that he shall not preach in vain, nor spend his strength for nought. He pursues his studies with greater diligence, and goes to the house of God with greater pleasure. And when he stands in the presence of a serious and soberly listening throng, whose eyes are fastened upon him, he is animated and encouraged. A new impulse is given to his feelings—his thoughts are quickened—his imagination soars with a truer and bolder wing—his appeals are more earnest—his sympathies well up and pervade his whole nature; he feels strong in argument, and there is a concentration both of mind and heart, followed by an earnest and ready utterance, that he can never have who is doomed to preach to listless hearers or to empty pews. When the people with one consent come together to hear God's minister, his words come from his lips with facility, strength and attractiveness; chaining the attention of his hearers to the close. To the minister so situated, the pulpit is more than a throne. It is the pleasantest, as it is the most honorable place in which he ever stands. And the ministry is preferred by him to any other service on earth.

But when a pastor perceives that his ministry is neglected—when the absence of some is occasioned by their love of the world, or by their dislike of the plain and faithful preaching of God's word—when one service is deemed better than two, and none better than one, even by some church members, the pious pastor returns from his scene of labor disquieted and cast down. In the bitterness of his soul he is ready to relinquish his work; to remove to some other station—and to doubt whether the ministry can be his province. He is discouraged in his studies. The energies of his mind are palsied. He knows not what subject to select, nor how to illustrate it, for he fears there will be but few to hear him. He goes bound in spirit, and is both thought-tied and tongue-tied.

See this discouraged pastor. In his visits among his people, he has found some of his brethren in affliction—some in temptation—

some in despondency—some it may be, self-confident. They need consolation, counsel, warning. He goes prepared to be a minister of consolation; a preacher of righteousness; a guide to wanderers. He hopes to do some good, because he draws his bow not at a venture. But when he has announced his text, and his lips are ready to pour forth words of consolation, the afflicted are not there to hear the words of comfort; the weak are not there to be strengthened; the bowed down are not there, that their minister may lift them up; the wanderer is not there that he may reclaim him. What discouraging sensations must a minister feel, to be thus disappointed in his benevolent aims. Encourage your minister then, by your habitual attendance on his ministry. Let neither the weather, nor worldliness, nor indolence cause you to leave your own seat vacant in the house of God.—*Dr. Sharp.*

POWER OF CHRIST'S CHARACTER.

There is a power, then, in the character of Christ—a power which is not merely as the power of a precept, that forces the assent of the reason, and through that slowly filtrates a moral influence upon the will; nor as the power of a miracle, which takes captive the senses, and overawes our opposition. But it is a power which silently works upon us, and absorbs us. It impresses us, it sinks into us, it purifies and elevates us, we know not how, perhaps—but we feel that a virtue goes out in it and heals us all; penetrates with conviction at once the brain and the heart, and wins our intellect through our affections. There is no power so akin to it, though it is far below it, as that of some great work of *Art*, upon which we gaze and gaze, and feel that it draws and lifts us the longer we gaze. Or, perhaps it is better to say, some grand form of *Nature*, whose majesty thrills us with an overmastering influence, wakes up all that is good and sublime in us, and makes us feel that we stand very near God. Or, better still, we will say a *good man*—a man whose power is what we call "the power of character"—who, from the silent virtue of his single life, sends a holy influence through a community, levens a whole era it may be, and influences the progress of the race.—Such a man has, in a degree, the kind of power to which I refer in Christ, and the more he is like Christ, the more such power he has. It is the mightiest force in the universe. It is the great reforming power that operates upon mind and wins souls. Men are converted and elevated from their low estate, not by denunciation, or by fear; but by a contact with a higher ideal; and the highest agency of this kind is the agency of character. This combines thought and deed, and is moral power in its largest manifestation. Let a good man appear in a base and sensual community; let him live a life of righteousness and of heavenly-mindedness; and he shall rebuke and purify that corrupt generation more than any teaching can. The dew of a blessed influence shall distil from his life, and make all green and fresh around him. A living virtue shall go forth from his presence. Have not some of us felt rebuked and afraid to sin, nay, restrained and won from our sin, in the presence of some good and holy man? Have we not felt that no power is like that power, to purify us and make us better? Like this is the power of Christ's character. In this way he saves the world.—*Rev. E. H. Chapin.*

ENTHUSIASM.—It is very possible that I am too sanguine. I remember what Charles James Fox said in the House of Commons, when the friends of the Slave-merchants within those walls, charged the Abolitionists with enthusiasm; turning to the speaker, he exclaimed, "Enthusiasm! why there never was any good done in the world without enthusiasm." We must feel warm upon our projects, otherwise, from the discouragements we are sure to meet with here, they will drop through.—*William Allen.*

BE GENTLE.—"I walked," said Henry Martyn, "into the village where the boats stopped for the night, and found the worshippers of Gali by the sound of their drums and cymbals. I did not speak to them, on account of their being Bengalese. But being invited to walk in by the Brahmins, I walked within the railing, and asked a few questions about the idol. The Brahmin, who spoke bad Hindostan, disputed with great heat, and his tongue ran faster than I could follow, and the people, who were about one hundred, shouted applause. But I continued to ask my questions without making any remark upon the answers. I asked, among other things, whether what I had heard of

Vishnu and Brahma were true, which they confessed. I forebore to press him with the consequences, which he seemed to feel, and so I told him what was my belief. The man grew quite mild, and said it was *chulabat*, (good words,) and asked me seriously at last what I thought—was idol worship true or false; I feel it a matter of thankfulness that I could make known the truth of God, though but a stammerer, and that I had declared it in the presence of a devil. And this I also learned, that the power of gentleness is irresistible."

The Bible Christian.

MONTREAL, DECEMBER, 1848.

"THE BIBLE CHRISTIAN."

The issue of the present sheet brings the fifth year of the existence of the *Bible Christian* to a close. Originally established in January, 1844, it had for its aim the explanation of Unitarian Christianity. At that time, it was found that the Unitarian Congregation of this City, then commencing to assume a permanent form, laboured under great disadvantages, owing to the mistaken opinions which so generally prevailed in the community concerning Unitarian principles. The unfounded prejudices of multitudes shut them out from any reasonable hope of ever hearing our views properly expounded from the pulpit, and if such persons were to be reached at all, it became evident that it must be done by some other method than oral teaching. The only other method was to be found in the use of the press, and hence the establishment of the *Bible Christian*.

Our commencement was very unpretending, and our course has been the same. Our purpose was both local and temporary. We had to act within a certain sphere, and upon minds furnished, and educated, and prejudiced after a certain fashion, and we have always endeavoured, in the selection of our materials, to keep our particular purpose as steadily as possible in view. We had to remove prejudices which existed against our distinguishing views of truth, and to impart further information for the benefit of persons who were disposed to receive those views. We have great faith in that principle of tactics which steadily directs power to one point, rather than diffusing it over an extensive surface. The well instructed engineer selects some particular stone in the strong wall, against which he directs his force knowing that if this stone can be shaken and dislodged, the downfall of the superstructure will speedily follow. Now if any of our readers have at any time considered that our range of topics was too limited—that we have dwelt too much on the mere peculiarities of Unitarianism—that we should have given more prominence to the great general questions of social and moral reform, or shown a greater interest in some of the more modern forms of speculation—we can only say that such an extension would not have comported with our original design, and that it would, moreover, have made a larger demand on our time and attention than we could conveniently afford. We have been fully sensible of the imperfections of this sheet since its commencement, and nothing should have induced us to continue its existence, but the hope that it was doing some good in the quarters where we intended it should act.

And it has done some good. We know that it has dissipated prejudice, and imparted instruction, and that many rejoice that it has fallen into their hands. But a variety of circumstances, which it would be tedious and useless to explain here, demand that some change be now made in its management and issue. It is right to state that this demand springs not in any way from a decrease of subscribers. Our subscription list is now as large as ever it was, although our finance committee have to regret that subscribers residing out of Montreal are so remiss in forwarding the trifling amount of their subscriptions. As a consequence of this neglect, the burthen of the expense of printing and publishing has been thrown, for the most part, on a few persons in this city.

The change which we propose to make, then, for the ensuing year is, that instead of appearing monthly as hitherto, the *Bible Christian* will be issued as a Quarterly Tract in the months of February, May, August and

November. The design of the sheet will continue mainly the same:—to illustrate the doctrines of liberal Christianity. The gospel of Christ generously and correctly interpreted, read in the spirit of meekness and candor, and obeyed with sincerity and fidelity, we regard as the divine instrument by which man is to be redeemed from the ignorance, error, and sin, in which he is now involved, and raised to a state of salvation and celestial bliss. For such redemption and salvation should we not all labor and pray? And it is without any affectation of piety that we would now record our own desire and hope, that God will direct and bless the continuation of our humble efforts.

In connection with the change announced in the foregoing article, we would request our Subscribers to forward the amount of their Subscriptions as soon as possible, addressed—"BIBLE CHRISTIAN, MONTREAL."

We would also take this opportunity to express our thanks to the Publishers of various valuable weekly newspapers that have hitherto been exchanged with us.

A FABLE,
SOMEWHAT AFTER THE MANNER
OF AESOP.

A company of men desired to raise a place for common shelter in the wilderness. Hitherto many of them had gone without any shelter at all, while others had sought it under rocks, trees, and the like, where they were not easy, nor comfortable. A few, more strong, willing, and hopeful than the rest, put their hands to the work, and induced others to join them. After some effort, a goodly tabernacle was constructed, very pleasant to rest in, and very comely to look upon. But the winds of the desert blew high, and the floods were frequent and strong, and the house, if not cared for, would be cast down and carried away. So some men were appointed to care for it—some to watch the foundations, others the timbers, others the roof, and so forth. But these were so engaged with their felling of wood, and their hunting, and their fishing, that they frequently forgot their task. So their tabernacle grew weak, and they perceived it not. A few strove to keep it strong, but they were not able. The wind at length came and shook it, and it fell to pieces.

And now all the men were very sorry, and many of them much ashamed. And they came together, and many voices were heard, and they said one to another, "if we had known that the timbers were weak, and the roof loose, we should have willingly put forth our hands." But while the men spake confusedly one to another, the clear voice of Wisdom was heard in their midst, saying, "Why did ye not know? Behold, each should have done his part diligently, and in season."

We trust that some of our readers, at least, will apprehend the moral.

The Annual Meeting of the Members of the "Montreal Unitarian Worshipping Society," is convened for Tuesday Evening the 26th instant, at 7 o'clock, in the basement of the Church.

THE PEACE SOCIETY.

The adherents of the Peace Society held a meeting in Exeter Hall, London, on the 31st October. Mr. Hindley, M. P., in the chair. Several excellent speeches were delivered by Messrs. Ewart M. P., Bowring M. P., Elihu Burritt, J. W. Alexander, Joseph Sturge, and H. Clapp; Revers. Dr. Burnett, Thomas Spencer, &c. In the course of the speeches it was stated that it was intended to hold the next Congress in Paris, in the month of August, and it was expected that the numbers would be swelled by a good delegation from the United States. It was proposed to expend 2000 francs in prizes for the best essays in defence of the peace principle. It was proposed, too, that early in the next session of Parliament, the question should be brought forward in the shape probably of an address to the Queen, praying that she would direct her Ministers to insert in all treaties an arbitration clause.

On the 30th ultimo the deputation appointed at the recent Peace Congress held at Brussels in the course of last month, waited upon Lord John Russell, at the official residence, of the Premier,

in Downing-street, for the purpose of presenting to the noble lord an address which had been prepared and adopted at the congress. The deputation consisted of M. Visschers, Councillor of Mines to the Belgian Government, and who filled the office of president during the sittings and deliberations of the Peace Congress; Mr. William Ewart, M. P., vice-president for England; Mr. Elihu Burritt, vice-president for the United States; the Rev. Henry Richards, secretary of the Peace Society of Great Britain, and representing on this occasion M. Frisque Bouvet, member of the National Assembly of France, and vice-president of the Peace Society established in that Republic; and of Mr. John Scoble, representing M. Baron Suringar, vice-president for Holland. On being admitted to an audience with the noble premier, the members of the deputation were severally introduced to the noble lord by Mr. Ewart, who also communicated to his lordship the general character of the congress which the gentlemen present represented, and the scope and object of the address, with the presentation of which they were charged. The address, which was prepared in the French language, was then read at length by M. Visschers. It advocates the principle of universal peace among nations, and urges objections to recourse, under any circumstances, to war. The various arguments advanced in the address were pressed upon the noble lord by Mr. Elihu Burritt, who stated the efforts which had been made, and were still making, by the friends of peace in the United States, to indoctrinate the public mind with peace sentiments, and the policy of kindness and friendship which prevailed in the United States to this country. The Rev. Mr. Richards and Mr. Scoble also spoke, and tendered apologies for the unavoidable absence of their principals, MM. Bouvet and Suringar. Lord John Russell, who had received the deputation with the greatest courtesy, and had paid profound attention to the reading of the address, and to the speakers by whom he had been addressed, adverted to the several propositions embodied in the address, which, he said, should have his attention. His lordship also expressed the deep interest which he, in common with the other members of her Majesty's Government, had felt in the preservation of peace, and his belief that such assemblages as that lately held in Brussels were well calculated to produce a temper of moderation and kindness among the various nations of Europe. The deputation then took their departure highly gratified, not only with their reception, but also with the tone and character of the interview.

PROTESTANT SYNOD OF FRANCE.

This body, at its late sitting for the purpose of re-organizing the French Protestant Church, decided against the use of any authoritative written Creed. This we regard as a very important decision. The Protestant Church of France has taken its stand before the world as a community of Christian believers, free and untrammelled by any humanly devised authority. It is to all intents and purposes, a body of liberal Christians. In consequence of this decision, three Members—Mr. F. Monod, a pastor, and two laymen—withdrew from the Synod, for the purpose of forming a new "orthodox, evangelical body."

The following is a translation, according to the *London Patriot*, of the "Declaration" prepared by the Committee of Eight, appointed by Protestant Synod sitting in Paris. They were unanimous. The draft was adopted by the Synod on the 27th ult.; 73 voices being in its favour, 7 declining to vote, and not one voting against it:—
The General Assembly of Deputies of the Reformed Churches of France to the Members of those Churches:

"PARIS, September 27, 1848.
"Dear and well-beloved brethren in Jesus Christ, our Lord.—From the beginning of their labours, your Deputies have satisfied the most sacred of all duties, and the prime wants of their own hearts, by prostrating themselves before the Author of all grace, to give Him thanks for having repaired the chain of our traditions, and called our Church, after an interruption of more than eighty years, to deliberate, through her representatives, upon her dearest interests. At the same time, we have besought Him to bless the work to which we have set our hands, that it may be productive of an abundant and lasting fruits; and, if it is true, as the Divine Word declares, that 'the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace,' we have confidence towards God that our prayer hath already been heard, for we have been kept in peace. You yourselves laid down the course of our proceedings; and we have but obeyed your wishes in taking our stand more especially upon the ground of the Christian life and ecclesiastical organization.

"But, thanks be to God, we have not contented ourselves with the attainment of a negative peace; we have, happily, met each other upon 'the only foundation that can be laid; that is, 'Jesus Christ and him crucified,' our adorable Redeemer. In him we have found, for every faithful member, as well as for the Church collectively, the true

source of life, and, at the same time, the most perfect of bonds. Without denying the glorious past of our Churches, their eminent doctors, their pious martyrs, and the venerable monuments of their faith, we have had no desire to diminish the no less glorious liberty of the children of God asserted by our fathers, or to proclaim any other authority than that of the Eternal Word. To us, Jesus Christ is, at once, the bulwark of true liberty, since he it is who makes free and delivers; and the bulwark of the faith, since he is its author and finisher. We, therefore, unite with true Christians of all ages who have confessed his name; we acknowledge him, with joy and love, as our only Master, our only Saviour, our only hope in heaven and on earth, where, 'to him every knee must bow, and every tongue confess that he is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.' We desire no other Mediator than he, no other rule than his Word, no other guide than his Spirit, no other life than that which he gives us, no other salvation than that of which he is the author; and we bless God, with overflowing hearts, for having 'so loved the world as to give his only son, that whosoever believeth in him might not perish, but have everlasting life.'

"With these sentiments it is, dear and well-beloved brethren, that we have put our hands to the work of ecclesiastical re-organization which you have confided to us; and with like sentiments it is for you to receive it, in order that it may be effectual and fruitful. The times in which we live are difficult: society totters on all sides upon its shaken foundations; all is passing, all changing, all being renovated around us: but the Word of God abideth firm, and Jesus Christ is still 'the same, yesterday, to-day, and for ever: in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily, and he is ever able to save them that come unto God by him.' Let us cleave to this Divine Deliverer; and, embracing him by faith and love, be changed by him into his own Divine image. Already, under his blessed influence, we have, in the course of our labours, experienced the dispersion of many clouds, the disappearance of many difficulties: may He finish among us and among you the work so happily begun, 'till we all come in the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the fullness of the measure of the stature of Christ.'

"The visible Church, which it is our object to re-construct and improve, is, after all, but the external covering of the Kingdom of God upon earth,—that Kingdom of which the Saviour hath said, that 'it is within us.' In our religious society, there will ever be the spots and imperfections inseparable from our sinful humanity: let it be recognized, at least, in the spirit which animates it, and in the fruits of righteousness, peace, and joy, which its Divine Head causeth it to bring forth.

"Let us unite in imploring that our humble labours, made fruitful by the blessing of Him who in all things giveth the increase, may contribute to this happy result, and be rendered subservient to the progress of truth and charity, to the advancement of the Gospel's reign, to the union of the churches and their members, to the sanctification and salvation of every soul.

"In this hope, dear and well-beloved brethren, we offer you, in conclusion, the cordial salutation of the Apostle: 'The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit, be with you all. Amen.'"

RONGE.—The Vienna Correspondent of the *London Daily News*, says: "Ronge is preaching his new doctrines here with unabated zeal, and with no slight success, his auditors in the Odéon being, every time he lectures, eight or nine thousand strong. He denounces the doctrines of the Trinity, Confessions, the Pope, the Calendar of Saints, Convents, and Monasteries, celibacy of the Clergy, and praying in an unknown tongue."

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WARE ON THE FORMATION OF THE CHRISTIAN CHARACTER.

Poetry.

PLEASANT CHILDREN.

BY THE LATE R. EDMONSTONE.

EVERYWHERE, everywhere—
Like the butterfly's silver wings
That are seen by all in the summer air
We meet with these beautiful things;
And the low sweet lisps of the baby child
By a thousand hills is heard,
And the voice of the young heart's laughter wild,
As the voice of a singing bird!

The cradle rocks in the peasant's cot
As it rocks in the noble's hall,
And the brightest gift in the noblest lot,
Is the gift that comes to all;
For the sunny light of childhood's eyes,
Is a boon like the common air;
And like the sunshine of the skies,
It falls everywhere!

They tell us this old earth no more
By angel-foot is trod;
They bring not now, as they brought of yore,
The oracles of God.
Oh! each of these young human flowers
God's own high message bears
And we are walking all our hours
With angels, unawares.

By stifling street and busy hill,
We meet their spirit-mirth:
That such bright shapes should linger still—
They take the stains of earth!
O! is not theirs a blessed part,
To whom the boon is given
To leave their errand with the heart,
And straight return to heaven?

H Y M N

Written for the morning of Communion Sabbath,
November 12th, 1848.

Father, we have come to praise thee,
Good and glorious as thou art,
Praise thee with our songs of gladness,
Rising from each grateful heart.

Gathered on this joyful morning,
Sacred to redeeming love,
Send us, while we kneel before thee,
Blessings from thy throne above.

Father, we would ask forgiveness
For our many, many sins,
Oh! be ours that true repentance,
Which the soul to goodness wins.

Grant us strength against temptation,
Fidelity in thought and deed,
High endeavour, firm endurance,
Comfort in our utmost need.

In our daily, hourly, journey,
Through this tempting, weary world,
O'er our pathway let the banner
Of thy mercy be unfurled.

For we need its sweet protection
In our onward toilsome way;
Pilgrims wandering in darkness,
Longing for eternal day.

On our weakness, we implore thee,
Look with kind indulgent eye,
Kneeling here in humble worship,
May our prayers ascend on high.

Gazing on the sacred emblems
Of our Master's dying love,
May our souls hold sweet communion
With our risen Lord above.

E. H. H.

LECTURE BY MR. G. DAWSON.

From the London Inquirer.

On Thursday evening, Mr. George Dawson delivered the first of two Lectures, at the Whitington Club, in the Strand, "On the Relation of Literature and Art to Religion." The room, which is one of the largest in London, was filled to excess, many being compelled to stand throughout the evening. There were nearly one thousand persons present. We have never heard a lecture better calculated to arouse and sustain the attention of a numerous and mixed audience. It is, we think, the happiest effort Mr. Dawson has yet made in public lecturing. Without the powers of an accomplished orator, his naivete of manner and originality of illustration produce the effects of finished oratory. However his views may contrast with those of the hearer, he is always listened to with pleasure. We give a few of the thoughts which were contained in his address.

Mr. Dawson commenced with explaining his view of Religion, and its connection with his subject. The most dangerous thing religious men could do, was to wage war with anything based upon the principles of human nature. It was like an army marching on to the conquest of a city, while it left districts

on its road unconquered; the necessary consequence of which was, that those districts, after the city had been taken, rose up to attack and hem in the citadel, and keep up a constant warfare. Those religious men who so taught religion, that it did not give full scope for the development of primary principles in humanity, passing them over unsubdued and unconquered, would find that those principles would be in continual enmity to Religion itself, till many were thereby led to reject the truth. Religion, in the sense in which he should use it, was not a matter of the intellect or a process of logic. It was common to all men, and were its expression was most faulty, its existence was no less certain. Every man was religious by nature. He did not mean that every man was a believer in Calvinism, Arminianism, or any other *ism*; but that every man of whom he had ever heard, or read, until, by careful discipline he had rooted it out of him, possessed that longing for the unknown, that bowing down before the Omnipotent and unseen, that certain seeking, that happily he may find a God or Gods, which constituted Religion in its true and primitive sense. Let them make a difference between religiousness and religion. They could find a distinction between bread and hunger. The appetite was not affected by the diversity of its gratification. If religion had not a hold on man, it could not have established itself.

Mr. Dawson proceeded to consider the historical relations which Art had sustained to Religion. He dwelt at some length on the manner in which Art was held by the early Hebrews. It was with them a mode of worship. Every thing came direct from God. Their very embroidery patterns were taught them by the Deity. Nature was the veil which covered Infinity. And truly Nature, if they watched it rightly, was like the eyelid to the eye, it keeps us from the excess of light. It was said, man may not look on God and live; infinity is seen through Nature, as far as it can be seen, but she keeps back that which cannot be seen, with pleasure and profit. Moses and Solomon made an inroad into idolatry by making that which was the object of worship the mode of expressing worship. The artist was a part of Nature. With an eye keener than others, his mission is to read for us God's word in the universe; to gather up its beauty into his own soul, and produce it in active forms, for the world's gaze. He looks on the world, and reads its secrets to us. And some of us needed a picture reader; we could go forth in the midst of beauty and see it not. We are astonished to find Pythagoras in nature; we had never seen him. He reads to us in an earthly tongue, the message of Heaven. There was a comprehensive faith, and the artist was one of its priests. The Puritans, it was remarked, waged war against Art. He granted that. Another point he would also grant, the New Testament said little about Art, nor did it about courtship and other matters we are not content to part with just yet. As he viewed the New Testament, its errand was this: to humanity it says, "Thou art sick and must be healed, like the man left wounded by the way-side, thou must be lifted up, oil must be poured into thy wounds, and shelter be given thee. Thou art weeping—thy tears must be dried; thou art sorrowing—thou must be comforted." To the sick it would be worse than wickedness for the physician to discourse on astronomical systems or geographical boundaries. The mission of Christianity was to heal and to bind up, to gladden and to bless. That done, other matters will follow. The New Testament was not a law-book at all. It was a great book of principles, which were far greater than laws. Give us a great principle, and a thousand laws spring from it. Laws were temporary; any faith that dealt much with laws could not live long. The laws were but the temporary expression. The principle branches out into laws to guide little people. He thought that the New Testament contained little law, but a great well of principles. Hence was the reason that there was nothing in it concerning the Fine Arts. Get its principles deep down in the soul, and it will take care of the rest. In the middle ages, for a time, the artist was a servant to the church. The Catholic Church opened its wide gates, that human genius and skill, in their various developments, might contribute to the glory of God. He found the Catholic Church expressing many mighty truths. It took the primitive principle, that the physical powers came from God, and that their best offerings belonged unto him.

Mr. Dawson then gave utterance to some very noble sentiments, lying at the root of Christian charity and human reason. He pitied the Puritan who could not find room in his heart for Fenelon; and he pitied the Catholic who could not view as a Christian brother glorious John Bunyan. He then entered into a comparison of modern works of art with those of the middle ages. Both

the paintings and the architecture of modern times met with his unsparing ridicule. The latter, he said, was "an abomination to the righteous." The former was great in horse-flesh; it could paint you your poodle or lap-dog, so that you might almost touch it; but of the Divine it could tell you nothing. He honoured the old paintings. He would rather have the rudest Madonna than the most accurate representation of horse-flesh, ever painted. Modern Art could but show you the outer things of the world. It had been said, that religion writes itself in its buildings. If this be true, what sort of religion was that written on our Bethshas and Zions? Why had painting degenerated? because the artist's source of inspiration was changed. In the old school, the artist lifted up his brush for God; and let a man do anything for God, and his work becomes divine. Moses looks on God, and his face shines. A lofty ideal brought a lofty work. But, happily, God has not left us without a witness in these things. He has given us glorious music. He loves this generation, in that he has reserved to it a Handel, a Haydn, a Mozart, a Mendelssohn, God vindicates his own; and he has made the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries glorious by giving to them the chief masters of song. And their source of inspiration made their work what it was. Who would dare to compare the best opera that had ever been produced, with their glorious productions? Man, in working for God, derives a double inspiration, one from the Primitive source, and one from the end for which he is labouring. Work with the loftiest aims of humanity, and thy work will be lofty. Compose music for the Casino and it will be worthy of its end. Work for the Church, and thy work will be divine. Every true writer, poet or musician, know that their best works are the strangest to them. They cannot tell whence they came. They look them in the face and say "thou art not mine, thou wert given to me." The Puritans were then defended by Mr. Dawson on their destruction of the works of Art, inasmuch as Art was taking the ground of Religion. They looked upon Art as impertinent, and when is it so? When it offers to become greater than the soul. Whenever Art says, "Without me thou canst not see God," it is time to dismiss Art and Artists. The Puritans asked themselves, is it possible to serve God without lofty cathedrals, gorgeous paintings, or any outward manifestations of human skill? was it possible for Robinson Crusoe to serve God in his island alone? they answered "Yes." They thought Religion had become too luxurious and cushioned, they sent her out from velvet couches into the bleak air, and she had looked healthier ever since. Then came the question, are we Puritans! Some of us try to be. Enter our meeting houses and see what a sublime defiance they set to Art. As to music, they will not be beholden to it. Wearisome to the man whom God has afflicted with the sense of beauty are these places. There are some which almost make us regret that we are not deaf, and others that we are not blind, and in which we almost wish to depart in peace, not however, that we have seen salvation. But it is far easier to get a Puritan dress and Puritan forms, than to get a Puritan soul. These forms were simply reminiscences, not justifiable, for the spirit which originated them was gone. Not that this age was less Religious: though he knew many differed from him in this respect, he nevertheless regarded this age as more spiritual than any preceding one. These were, he believed, the best days this old world has ever seen. This year, this terrible year, is the bravest and noblest that has ever been. If he did not believe this, his faith collapsed, and his past opinions had all been mistaken. Man is never worse than he was. If there ever be a Sabbath-day for this world, it cannot have been Friday the other day, and now gone back to Monday. He believed that we get nearer and nearer to this Sabbath. There were those who said that infidelity was spreading itself and the Christian faith was waning away, but it was the cry of those who cannot bear the dazzling light of the sun which is rising from the east. It was for these reasons that he saw no necessity for keeping up the old Puritan forms or language. He honoured those most who could make eloquent all that was good in the spirit of the past in the fashion of to-day. To dress for your part you take from its spirit. It is a poor Puritanism that must dress to play its part. It is as though to have Cato's honesty you must have Cato's beard. A form never goes out of this world till it is worn out. But we are improving in some of these matters. Dissenters are venturing on a little Gothic, there is even a distant hint about bells and spiral towers. There wants in this country some clear theory which shall make our religion and our aesthetics one. The Jew, in his sacrifice, offered up the best of his flock, the finest of his flour and the

first of his fruits. How do we carry this out? Where are our first fruits and choice offerings? What glee singing on the Friday and psalm singing on the Sunday? How are our pianos worked on the week day and a psalm only given on the Sunday? How do good people put their aesthetics under their arm when the minister comes? Is that the best of the flock? Like David, we dwell in a ceiled house while the temple of God is almost a hut. Could this be right? He liked not to see God put off with such shabbiness of things. He still demanded the best of our gifts.

Mr. Dawson concluded his remarks by a few sarcastic allusions to the numerous inconsistencies of the modern Puritans, and by stating the principal points he should consider in his next lecture.

A loud and unanimous burst of applause greeted the lecturer as he resumed his seat.

IMMORTALITY.

It has been imagined that religious faith does not like to draw attention to the decline which precedes, often by years, the approach of death; that the spectacle of a human being in ruins terrifies the expectation of futurity, and humbles the mind with mean suspicions of its destiny. Skepticism, which delights in the ill-bodings which can be drawn from evil and decay, takes us to the corner where the old man sits; shows us the bent frame, and fallen cheeks, and closing avenues of sense; points to the palsied head, and compels us to listen to the drivelling speech, or perhaps the childish and pitiable cry; and then asks, whether this is the being so divinely gifted and so solemnly placed, sharer of the immortality of God, and waiting to embark into infinitude? I answer—assuredly not; neither in the wrecked frame, nor in the negation of mind, is there any thing immortal; it is not this frail and shattered bark, visible to the eye, that is to be launched upon the shoreless sea. The mind within, which you do not show me, whose indications are for a time suppressed,—as they are in every fever that brings stupor and delirium, in every night even that brings sleep,—the mind, of whose high achievements, whose capacious thought, whose toils and triumphs of conscience and affection, living friends will reverently tell you,—the mind, which every moment of God's time for seventy years has been sedulous to build, and from which the deforming scaffold is about to fall away,—this alone is the principle for which we claim immortality. Say not that, because we cannot trace its operations, it is extinct; perhaps, while you speak, it may burst into a flame, and contradict you. For sometimes age is known to wake, and the soul to kindle, ere it departs; to perforate the shut gates of sense with sudden light, and gush with lustre to the eye, and love and reason to the speech; as if to make it evident, that death may be nativity; as if the traveller, who had fallen asleep with the fatigues of the way, conscious that he drew near his journey's end, and warned by the happy note of arrival, looked out refreshed and eager through the morning air for the fields and streams of his new abode. And if any transient excitement near the close of life can, even occasionally, thus resuscitate the spirit; if some vehement stroke upon a chord of ancient sympathy can sometimes restore it in its strength, it is there still; and only waits that permanent rejuvenescence which its escape into the infinite may effect at once.—Rev. J. Martineau.

TOLERATION.—"Who art thou, vain mortal, that darrest intrude thyself between my God and me? If I have an account to settle with heaven, am I not competent to effect it myself? Can you be more interested than I am? or, if you are, why insult me; why denounce me—why publish me to the world as the vilest animal in existence? May I not possibly be right as well as you? If so, by what grant, either of Heaven or earth, can you be justified in assailing the purity of my motives? The great God of Heaven suffers me to enjoy liberty—suffers me to investigate freely, and without any fear, all subjects my mind may chance to pursue, and informs me by the eternal laws of my nature, that I can only believe as my understanding directs me. Yet you—you, dust and ashes of the earth—arrogating to yourself Heaven's power, would do what Heaven refuses to do—you would stay the progress of my mind—you would end all inquiry which did not exactly suit you—you would prostrate me in the eyes of society, and send me headlong to eternal punishment? Away, from this bad, persecuting spirit! Intolerance! Intolerance! Intolerance!—Benjamin Franklin.

Published monthly by the Committee of
THE MONTREAL UNITARIAN SOCIETY.
Joseph W. Harrison, Printer.