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MR. TUCKERMAN'S NINTH SEMI-ANNUAL REPORT OF HIS SERVICE
AS A MINISTER AT LARGE IN BOSTON.

[Continued from page 203.]

AGAIN it is asked, 'Should we build churches or chapels for the poor?' I answer, that while I think this mode of operation to be secondary in its claims, and to promise little in comparison with a daily and hourly ministration from house to house, yet as considerable numbers, even of the very poor, may be brought together on the evenings of Sunday, for social worship and instruction, and a few may be collected for a service in the day, it is therefore well to have small and unexpensive chapels for these services. But if a commodious hall may be obtained, near the centre of the neighbourhood of a large number of the poor, I should not advise the erection of a chapel. A very large proportion of the poor, it is to be remembered, frequently change their place of habitation; and the parts of the city to which they remove are often far apart from one another. It will often, therefore, be inconvenient, or impracticable, to continue their connexion with a particular chapel or hall of worship. Many, too, who will go, and be glad to go to an evening service, cannot leave their homes during the day, either because they have young children who demand their care, or because they have not the attire in which they are willing to go abroad. I venture indeed to say, that far less

than half of those for whom this ministry is most important, can be gathered for anything like a constant attendance upon the services of a mission-house or chapel. They are, therefore, to be ministered to at home. And as far as any can be induced and enabled regularly to give their attendance upon the religious services of a church on Sunday, it seems to me very desirable that they should be persuaded, as far as may be, to connect themselves with the existing congregations, or religious societies, in the city; while, if it shall be thought best, they may still be in the charge of the minister of the poor who has brought them into this connexion. I would say also, that not more than one public service in the day time should be required of a minister at large on Sunday; because half of the day may be far more profitably appropriated to visiting those who cannot be brought together for public worship, and who are then to be found at home under circumstances the most favourable for religious and moral influence. He may, however, preach on other days, in any room of those whom he visits; and he may have a regular Sunday evening service in his hall or chapel. But, I repeat, let the poor, as far as it can be done, be brought into the congregations of the rich; and there, as our Lord and

master intended that they should, let them worship together. There let them send up the mingled incense of united adoration and thanksgivings, of penitential acknowledgments and fervent supplications; and there let them open their hearts to a sense at once of their relation to each other, through their common relation to God, and of their great common interests; of their reciprocal duties, and of the common and infinitely glorious inheritance to which God is calling them. Many may thus be united with our churches, who otherwise would have lived and died unconnected with any of them. Still, however, after all that can be done to bring them into this connexion, there will be many, to whom, if the gospel is to be preached, it must and can be only in the family circle; many, therefore, who will be without the pale of the Christian ministry, unless there shall be a ministry exclusively for them.

My reply to the third query, 'Should this ministry be made an instrument for the formation of new religious societies?' is plainly to be inferred from what I have said in my reply to the second. If, indeed, a chapel, or a mission-house for the poor, shall become a centre in which those who can build and support a new house of worship shall be disposed to form themselves into a new religious society, and to unite themselves with the poor who are collected there, it is well. Let a new religious society then be formed there. But most earnestly should I deprecate any measures, which should have for their end the establishment of congregations, or of religious societies, exclusively of the poor. It is a very important purpose of the ministry for which I plead, to bring the classes of society into a new and Christian union with each other; and it is greatly to be regretted, that our religious societies are constituted as they now are, in respect to the accommodation of any but proprietors

in their places of public worship. The poor, who would gladly unite with them, but who cannot pay for the privilege, in the largest number of our places of worship have at best a very narrow space appropriated for them; and there they must sit apart, as 'the class of the poor.' This is a practice not less inconsistent with our political principles, than it is with the spirit of Christianity. Under other governments, where distinctions of rank and of rights are universally recognized, the poor feel themselves to be, and revolt not at being treated, both politically and religiously, as *a caste*. But far otherwise is it under our institutions, for the preservation of which, religious as well as political, no means is more important, than the excitement and maintenance of an interest in them, and an attachment to them, in the mass of the poorer departments of society. Let nothing, then, be done by this ministry, by which the poor shall be made to feel that the very religion, which is intended to be a bond of union between them and their fellow-men, is itself an instrument of their separation from the more favoured classes of their fellow-beings. The attempt, by any means, to build up and to increase the number of religious societies, composed of those, who, without bringing themselves into great pecuniary embarrassments, and taxing others to uphold them, cannot support a ministry, I deem alike impolitic and wrong; and if the ministry for the poor shall be employed for this object, I feel assured that by this single circumstance, it will be not less exposed to fall into discredit, and to become an utter failure, than it will if it shall be engaged in only as a temporary service, and in preparation for the ministry of our churches.

Having given my judgment upon these questions, I would state a few great principles of operation in the ministry, which I have tested, and have found to be of increasing value

in proportion as I have learned how to apply them. This, I think, will be a better service than I could render by any statements of my own modes of action in particular cases.

I observe then, in the first place, that, either for personal happiness in this ministry, or for success in it, we must regard poverty, and the poor, as Jesus Christ regarded them. We must have a love of man, *as man*, like that which glowed in the heart of Jesus. We must recognize in every human being a child of our Father in heaven, and go to our work under the full influence of the sentiment of Christian brotherhood with those, whom it may be our privilege to serve as ministers of Christ.

This Christian interest in the poor, this affectionate care for them, and this solicitude for their highest improvement and well-being,—for their happiness through their piety and virtue,—is the first of all requisites, not only for making the proffered services of the minister acceptable, but even in any considerable degree useful. This is, in truth, no other than the principle of a true sympathy with Jesus Christ in the distinctive object of his religion, that, through its influence, the poor are to be blessed; that, through his teaching, and the spirit of his gospel, even the poorest may be made rich by the acquisition of a treasure, which is infinitely more precious than all outward good. This simple and divine principle in the soul of a minister of the poor will inspire the consciousness, that he has himself obtained a better possession, when he has been an instrument of bringing a family, or an individual, under the influences of the gospel of Christ, than if, by any other operation, he had even obtained for himself great riches. It will also be to him for light, where otherwise he would have found himself in the thickest darkness; and for encouragement, where, without it, he would have shrunk from the obstacles which will sometimes

beset his path. It will even reveal to him the strength and the weaknesses, the virtues and the vices of those to whom he shall minister. It will suggest to him new modes of action when old ones have failed him, and make him patient with the dull, tender and kind to the feeble and susceptible, as affectionate as he is persevering towards the apparently obdurate, and ever forbearing even towards the most violent opposer. It will gradually soften hearts, which at first appeared to be impenetrable, and call forth in them sentiments of regard, and confidence, and attachment; and it will make him feel, that, in being permitted to minister to the moral recovery and the spiritual advancement of any, even the meanest of his brethren, who would otherwise have been overlooked and neglected, and left in ignorance and recklessness and sin, for whom yet Christ lived and died, he is one of the most privileged, and ought to be one of the most grateful and devoted, of the children of God in this world. I do not say that no one should make a trial of his capacities for this service till he shall feel the full extent of this religious interest in the poor, and the most exposed of his fellow-beings. But I think that if, after a fair trial of the work, he shall not find this sentiment to be daily growing in his heart, he may reasonably conclude, that this is not the department of the ministry to which the providence of God has called him.

Again, I adduce it as an elementary principle of this ministry, that we should go to it with a true and strong spirit of sympathy with every one, whom we may be called to address, or with whom we may have to expostulate, *as a sinner*. The first principle to which I have adverted will keep us constantly mindful of the sentiment of our Lord, 'I am among you as one that serveth.' And the second, implying a constant recognition of the fact, 'I, too, am a

sinner,' will dispose and prepare us, as we could not otherwise be prepared; gently, kindly, and affectionately to approach our offending brother. This second principle, therefore, in my estimation, is not of less importance than the first. Here we are brought into connexion with those, whose lives have passed under far different influences from our own. We have neither been exposed, as they have been, and were never perhaps inclined to the vices and crimes into which they have fallen. But may not our own sins, in the sight of God, and under the circumstances in which we committed them, be as great as theirs? I plead for no false sensibility on this subject; for no artificial and assumed feelings; for no self-accusations of sins of which we are innocent. But it is the truth, and a matter of simple truth, that we are ourselves the fellow-sinners even of the greatest transgressors. Let a conviction of this truth, then, be ever present to our minds, when we are speaking to others of their sins. It is, indeed, hardly conceivable by those who have not made the experiment, how close is the intimacy which may be formed in this service of mind with mind; and what a free and willing access may be obtained in it even to minds which spurn the authority of law, and in mockery laugh at, or indignantly resent, every other indication of an attempt to control them. But, for this end, we must identify ourselves with the transgressor, through that sympathy with which nothing short of a strong sense of our own sins can inspire us. Few are so dull that they cannot perceive, though they may not be able to explain, the actings of this principle in the soul of one who addresses them; and few consciences are so dead as to be wholly insensible to the motives and persuasions which it will suggest and urge, to impress and win the heart of the sinner. Under its influence, the minister of the poor can never be authoritative, harsh, severe,

or reproachful in manners, or in language; for even without speaking of himself, yet feeling this principle, he will but press upon the sinner his own deep-felt convictions, his own most dearly cherished interests, his own firm purposes, and his own ardent hopes. Every feeling, therefore, of his own sins, and every effort he shall make for the self-improvement to which the gospel calls him, is an increase of his qualifications for the ministry, in which he would be an instrument of bringing his brother-sinner to repentance and to salvation.

Again.—As it is a peculiarity of this ministry, that its objects are to be sought rather through direct personal intercourse, than by preaching, and therefore, that it principally addresses itself immediately to the individual mind, the principle should never be lost sight of, that a constant regard is here to be had to the distinctive circumstances, both personal and relative, of every individual to whom it is extended. Allow me then to say, that, in this service, the inquiries should constantly be present to our minds, 'What are here the prevailing principles, dispositions, and tendencies?' 'What are the effects upon the individual of the employment in which he is engaged, and the company with which he associates?' 'What are the influences at home which are conducing to good in him, and what to evil?' 'What is there in his mind, or heart, which is to be cherished and strengthened, and by the culture and advancement of which the whole character may be improved; and, what is the prejudice there, the passion, or the habit, which it is most desirable, and most important, should immediately be corrected?' Some, even of those who are living most viciously, it will be found were religiously educated, and will not have forgotten the care with which they were reared, and the hopes which were indulged of them. This is a circumstance which may be

of great importance to the objects of a religious teacher; for of those who have been recovered from gross vice, I believe that nineteen out of twenty will be found to have received early religious instruction; and that their reformation, under God, is principally to be ascribed to the revived influence of this instruction. Some, also, have been reared from infancy in an atmosphere of sin, and have never received a strong impression of a religious principle, or had a strong sense of a religious obligation. Still they may not be, and in truth they are not wholly, without natural conscience; and the skill of the teacher is to be exerted upon this conscience, in awakening its almost deadened capacities. Some were early accustomed to a condition of at least comparative prosperity, and others have never known any other than a life of poverty. Having then obtained as perfect a knowledge as he can of all within and without which is conducing to the virtue or vice of the individual, the teacher will understand something of the nature of the work which he will have to do; of the objects to which he is particularly to direct his attention and cares; and, of the means he is to employ to attain these objects. And though, after all that he may thus have learned, his success may be far short of his hopes, he will, yet, to the extent to which his influence shall be felt, and to which the individual shall be brought to cooperate with him, have the satisfaction to know that he is working for a radical and a permanent reformation.

I would state another principle which is constantly to be cherished and maintained in this ministry. I mean that we should be careful to carry into it a deep feeling of respect for the actual rights and capacities of the individual mind. I do not indeed suppose that this principle is of greater importance here than in any other department of the Christian

ministry. But here, more easily perhaps than in the ministry of our churches, we may lose sight of it. What, indeed, it may be asked by some, are the rights which belong to a condition of ignorance, and dependence, and degradation, and sin? And what is the respect which is due to him who has no respect for himself? I reply that the capacities and rights of an immortal nature, of a being who must account for himself to God, and in whom the objects of the gospel of Christ can be accomplished only by his own free choice of truth and virtue and duty, have the highest claims to the respect of a religious teacher, even in the most wayward and debased of our fellow-men. For how is it but through his capacities and rights of thought and understanding, of judgment and affection, of choice and of will, that any one is, or can be, a subject of the moral government of God, and accountable to him? It is a new world of interests, and as distinct a course of action, into which we are brought in our intercourse with our fellow-beings, by Christian sentiments on this single subject respecting them. Our own use of these rights, and our improvement of these capacities may, perhaps, have raised us, in our moral condition, above some poor, degraded fellow-beings, even more than we are raised above them by the circumstances of our outward condition. But enfeebled as these powers may be in them, and perverted and corrupted, they are not wholly lost; for if they were, the individuals would not be proper subjects of the Christian ministry. A man may be regardless of his capacities and rights, and unconscious of their importance and worth, and of the responsibility which they bring upon him; and it may even be the high office of the minister into whose charge he may fall, to reveal this individual to himself. And what an exalted ministry is that in which we are called to bring home to any soul a conception

which it never had of the capacities with which God has endowed it; of the certainty, which has been unfelt, of an immortal existence; and of the necessary connexion of human happiness, and misery, with its freely formed habits, and its chosen moral condition! And does God himself, —I ask with reverence,—act upon the human mind, or heart, for its conversion, or restoration, independently of the free exercise of those capacities by which he has constituted us moral and accountable agents? How then shall man be made an instrument of the salvation of his fallen brother, if he respect not in him those powers and rights which are the essential constituents of the soul that is to be redeemed? Is it still asked, how may we aid the poor manacled and fettered spirit to regain its freedom? How may we awaken in him a sense, and fasten upon him a conviction, of the greatness and excellence of the capacities which he has given over to sin? How shall we teach him and help him to feel that he has power, and that he must use it to return to God; and that if he will seek, because he truly wants it, God will not withhold the assistance he needs to break his chains and to recover his liberty? I can only answer, that, as far as human agency may be effectual in this work, he, I believe, will possess the best light, and will labour with the best success, who, under the guiding influence of the instructions and example of our Lord, shall always, and in everything, most carefully maintain the respect which is due to these capacities and essential principles of human nature, which our heavenly Father himself respects in all his dealings with man as a moral being. And he, I think, will most faithfully regard these capacities and principles of our common nature in others, who is most strongly impressed with their importance and worth in himself, and with his own accountableness for the use which he

shall make of them. If any one have not a consciousness in what consists the essential worth of the rights and powers of his own moral, accountable, and immortal nature, I know of no rules which aid him in awakening this consciousness in the soul of another.

It is another principle, which should never be forgotten in this ministry, that human nature,—or, to speak more definitely, a fellow-sinner,—is never to be given up, as if he were either beyond the pale of God's mercy, or of human hope and charity and labour. I give a prominence also to this principle, because in this ministry, far more than we should be in that of our churches, we are called to a frequent and intimate communication with obdurate, and reckless offenders; and because here, therefore, unless we are strongly impressed with it, we shall not only find our own energies daily enfeebled by new discouragements, but we shall be disregarding one of the highest and most glorious of the objects of Christianity, and of the ministry it has instituted, the salvation of *the lost*. Here it may be, that from day to day we shall be brought into the society of the confirmedly intemperate, into whose very bones and marrow, and every thought and affection, the chains of the appetite which has enslaved them seem not only to have grown, but to have become identical, with the very principle of their existence. But are they, therefore, to be overlooked, as no longer subjects of the moral government of God? Even if all expedients which have yet been tried shall have failed, are there no new expedients which Christian benevolence can devise for their recovery? Would he, who came to seek and to save that which was lost, pass them uncared for, while God continues to them any use of their reasoning powers, or while any principles of their moral nature are still living in their hearts? Here, too, we shall

meet the equally perverted, who have reasoned themselves, as far as they could, out of all principle, and into a justification of every sin, to which passion may prompt, or desperation may drive them. And here must be met those, who have fallen into that deepest of the abysses of human iniquity, that foulest and most corrupting of sins, that sin which extends the deepest and deadliest of moral poisons into the soul, and of all sins seems most completely to deprave and deaden every faculty of the moral nature; I mean the sin of licentiousness—of profligacy. But is even the profligate to be given up? I have seen the human soul, and have been called to minister to it, in some, at least, of the most painful varieties of debasement into which it is brought by violations of conscience and of God's will. And I have seen that, even where the moral nature seemed to be dead, utterly dead, it is very possible, by feeling long and patiently about the heart, that some pulsation may be found there to indicate, or even to prove, that the principle of moral life, and the capacity of moral feeling are not, in truth, wholly extinct. While God, then, shall continue life, shall we not continue our efforts and our prayers as the ministers of his mercy? Besides, even if, in regard to many, we must, to carry out the rule that human nature is never to be given up, hope against hope, and labour, without making even the smallest apparent progress, still, if we shall persevere, some occasion may be given in the providence of God, in which a way will be opened for us that we thought not of; and in which a success, to call forth our eternal gratitude and praise, will follow our cares, our prayers, and our exertions. Would, indeed, that I had a warning voice, by which I could carry home to every soul, especially of the young, a conviction of the extent and fearfulness of the desolations to which the human soul may

be, and is, brought by abandonment to intemperance, to falsehood, and dishonesty, or to a life of profligacy! I can hardly conceive of the degradation and the misery, which I have not witnessed, as the consequences and the wages of these sins. And I have seen many, very many, who, having resisted all reasonings and all persuasions, have gone into eternity moral suicides, to stand before their Judge in the fulness of their unrepented sins. But I would still repeat, let human nature, let a fellow-sinner never be given up. Let a minister of Christ never be weary, and never be discouraged with a transgressor, even though all the world beside should forsake and give him up as hopeless. I have seen that there may be at least an apparently real restoration, even in a case apparently as desperate as any one to which the moral nature may be brought; and I have seen those recovered to temperance, and faithfully maintaining it, who were once broken down, were the scourge and misery of their families, and were threatened with premature death by their habitual and lawless excesses. To God, then, let us look in every step of our way, seeking his guidance and aid; remembering our own dependence on mercy, and exercising the mercy which, could we imagine ourselves to be in the condition of our fallen brother, we could wish should then be extended to ourselves. This is plainly the rule of the gospel, and it should never be forgotten by a minister of the poor.

I might state other principles, which have, I think, a peculiar bearing upon this ministry; but I forbear. I must, however, observe, that I do not forget that here, at least, as much as in any other department of the administration of our religion, we need the light and power which God only can communicate; the influences of his spirit; and that here, too, if any one is an instrument of good to a fellow-being, to God, we are to

ascribe the success, and to him we are to render the glory. I know not, indeed, the sphere of human action, in which human need of divine aid is more impressively taught, than in the services of this ministry. Strangely constituted must be that mind, which, amidst the spectacles that are here daily witnessed, at once of human weakness, and exposure, and want, and suffering, and of the power of human propensities and habits, and amidst the embarrassments and trials which are here daily to be met, shall not often and strongly feel its personal insufficiency for the objects, for the attainment of which the gospel yet calls for human interest and sympathy and co-operation. But, blessed be God, this very gospel assures us that he will not withhold his holy spirit from those who ask him for it. This is the first and the last, the beginning and the end, of the encouragements to this ministry; nor can I conceive that any one who should attempt this service, independently of this divine aid, would long obtain the remunerations of his work, which would induce him to continue in it.

But while I plead for a special ministry for the poor, I am fully aware that our religion knows of no substitute, and that its believers should not think of proposing any for that extended and personal connexion between the wise and the ignorant, the rich and the poor, the virtuous and the vicious, at which our Lord aims in the sentiment addressed to them without discrimination, *All ye are brethren*. No one, indeed, I think, who has watched the operations of this ministry, can doubt whether it have done much in our city to quicken and extend a sense of the relations into which Christianity would bring the classes of society with each other. And let me here observe, that something will also, I hope, be done in this cause by the publication of Degerando's 'Visitor of the Poor.' I commend this

work to the readers of my Reports, in the belief that it is suited to do much to make the service to which it calls its readers profitable at once to those who may engage in it, and to those to whom this service may be extended.

The past winter, it will be remembered, was one of unusual severity: it was also a season of unusual sickness. But although there was a proportionably unusual demand for fuel, and although its price was one-third higher than in several preceding winters, there yet was not, I think, any unusual suffering among the poor from a want of the means of warmth and comfort. The cold weather of the winter began very early, and public sympathy with the suffering was strongly excited among us. The rich were liberal in their contributions for the necessitous, and the distributors of their bounty were faithful in the appropriation of it. Much moral evil, I believe, was thus prevented, and much moral, as well as physical good, was promoted. There are, without doubt, cases of an unwise and injurious distribution of alms among us. But I believe there is as little ground for complaint, or for apprehension on this subject, in our city, as in any city of equal numbers in our country, or in the world.

Of my own services, during the last six months, I can only say, that I have endeavoured to do what I could. At the close of the last December I was taken from my work by a dangerous illness, which confined me to my house for five weeks; and I have recently been absent from the city for eight days. My visits, therefore, for the last half year have been but thirteen hundred and twenty-one, and these have been divided between four hundred and fifteen families. I have been obliged also, from inability to preach, wholly to relinquish the services of the chapel. A recurrence to this last circumstance, and to the fact, that

twice during the last year I have been admonished, by sudden and severe illness, of the tenure by which I hold my life in this world, constrains me to urge again my strong desire, that some one should take my place in this ministry, to whom I may act as an assistant from house to house, and on whom may devolve the whole duties of the chapel. Not only would my life be rendered far happier could I pass the remnant of it in this relation with one who could bear the full heat and burden of the day, but with far greater happiness should I then look to its close. 'But all is in His hands whose praise we seek.' Six, besides myself, are now employed wholly as ministers of the poor in this city; and not less active than either of us in this field of duty is Mr. Taylor, the seamen's preacher and friend. We have good reason, therefore, to believe that this ministry will be one of our permanent institutions. It has conducted to very great good; and if fit instruments shall be obtained for it, and it shall be wisely conducted, it will never want either public approbation or patronage. May the Lord of the harvest raise up for us and send forth new and more efficient labourers into this department of his harvest!

Respectfully,

JOSEPH TUCKERMAN.

Boston, May 5, 1832.

MEETING OF UNITARIANS AT DANVERS, U. S.

A meeting of the friends of Liberal Christianity in the county of Essex, was held at the church of Rev. Mr. Sewall, in Danvers, on Monday 28th May, at 7 P.M.; and attended by a great number of persons from different towns in the vicinity.

The Rev. Mr. Thayer, of Beverly, commenced the meeting with religious services: and after a hymn had been sung by the choir, the Rev. Mr. Sewall, of Danvers, offered some

very impressive remarks on the object of the meeting and the duty of Unitarians to make exertions for the spread of a pure and scriptural faith.

Hon. Robert Rantoul, of Beverly, was then called to the chair, and John Walsh, Esq., of Danvers, chosen secretary.

The following resolutions were passed unanimously:—

Resolved,—That the recent indications of an increased interest in the promotion of Unitarian Christianity in the county of Essex, deserve our sympathy, and require our efforts, in aid of the infant societies, which have been or are about being formed.

Resolved,—That Unitarian Christianity demands of those who profess it, a ready and untiring devotion to the diffusion of its principles and the promotion of its interests.

Voted,—That the Chairman, Hon. Mr. Phillips and Rev. Mr. Thompson, of Salem, Rev. Mr. Sewall and Dr. Nichols, of Danvers, be a committee to correspond with the several Unitarian Societies in the county, to secure their co-operation in the objects of this meeting, and to provide for holding another at some convenient time and place, as they shall propose.

The proceedings throughout were such as to excite the highest and best Christian sympathy and zeal in the cause of evangelical truth and practical piety.

The doxology, beginning with the words

'From all that dwell below the skies,'

was sung in conclusion, and the meeting was dissolved.

DR. NICHOLS'S REMARKS.

The meeting being organized by the appointment of a chairman and secretary—

Dr. Nichols, of Danvers, addressed the meeting on the objects for which they had assembled, and stated, in a

plain, sensible, practical manner, the peculiarities of Unitarian Christianity.

We believe, said he, Unitarian Christianity far better calculated to promote the happiness of the community than any other system of religion—that it is indeed Christianity as taught by Jesus Christ and his apostles.

The essence of this religion is charity—benevolent action. It requires us to love God supremely, and our neighbour as ourselves.

What then does God, what do our country and the times, require of us? These are, in many respects, unlike anything which the world has before seen. Here every body of men, every sect in religion, every party in politics, is left free to propagate its own views, and to strengthen itself by the acquisition of talents and numbers.

The recent simultaneous and unprecedented exertions of those who style themselves Orthodox Christians, have opened to us new opportunities for doing good. The plain, practical preaching of the Calvinistic clergymen of the old school—their prudent policy, which in a good degree kept out of view the contradictions in which their system abounds—and their reliance on appeals to the reason and understanding to make men good, have been abandoned, and very different doctrines have been advocated and measures pursued. With this change many, very many, independent, pious, virtuous minds are dissatisfied and disgusted. By such Unitarianism will be embraced wherever it is understood. In it they will find all the practical religion, which their old instructors taught—in it they will find a religion, in harmony with the works of God in the visible creation.

There are others, driven almost to distraction by the terrific representations of the wrath of God, against all who do not become the subjects of

his special grace and favour; and who, finding it impossible to feel, as they are told all must feel, who have hope of being saved, are left by their religious teachers to a fearful looking for of judgment, wretchedness, and despair. To such Unitarianism becomes the power of God, and the wisdom of God unto salvation. It makes them acquainted with the parental character of the Deity, and declares, in the simple language of Scripture, that all that is required to secure the favour of heaven, is to do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with God. And that if they have failed thus to do and walk,—they have only to repent, cease to do evil, learn to do well, and return unto God who will abundantly pardon and bless them.

There are also the bold, daring irreligious, whom the most terrific harangues of the orthodox cannot move, who deem all religion a cheat, fit to terrify women and children, but unworthy the regard of the independent mind. To these the advocates of Unitarianism come, not with harsh denunciations, but with the soothing voice of persuasion and truth;—declaring the ways of religion pleasantness, and all her paths peace;—showing the adaptation of the laws of God to the condition of man, and appealing to their consciences for a confirmation of the doctrine everywhere taught in Scripture—‘there is no peace to the wicked,—that the way of the transgressor is hard.’

This view of the times in which we live, and the different classes of society, shows us that there is ample room for the exercise of benevolent and Christian feelings, without interfering at all with the success or rights of others. Even if we but glean the field, over which they have trampled, and save the scattered corn;—our reward, though humble, will be lasting. In our Saviour’s view, the widow’s mite was not disregarded.

Whoever has attentively observed the writhings of the diseased mind, —either labouring under distressing doubts, or overwhelmed with terror, must know that the most acute physical sufferings are trifling compared with these. How many are the minds thus affected, under the influence of the terrors of religion! We condemn not the authors of such wretchedness. God has not appointed us their judge. They doubtless console themselves with the belief that the same threat, the same denunciation that drove one to despair, snatched others from everlasting burnings. Who that has ever felt that filial trust and confidence in God, which liberal Christianity inculcates, can hesitate to believe that it is better calculated to prevent or heal these maladies of the mind, than any other application that can be found?

Contemplate, for a moment, the operations of the numerous sects into which Christians are divided. The main object, we rejoice to believe, by which all are actuated, is to promote the best good of mankind. Leading partizans may have other motives, but the motives of the several parties, as a whole, we doubt not are sincere, though oftentimes misguided. And is not the wisdom of God manifest in permitting this state of things: different parties excite to emulation, and provoke each other to good works. All parties teach nearly the same code of Christian morals, and wherever these are received as the rule of life, the kingdom of God comes with power. We should, therefore, proceed with caution. Care should be had that while we labour to correct the errors of other sects, and repair the injuries which we apprehend they may have done; that we do not also counteract the good influences which spring from their exertions. We are happy to believe that our orthodox friends do much good, that they are casting out many devils;—and we would obey the commands of our Saviour and *forbid them not*.

We should not be deterred from performing our duty because in so doing we may expose ourselves to misrepresentation and revilings. While we govern ourselves by the golden rule of the gospel, we cannot be justly censured;—and if others censure us unjustly, the sin is *theirs*, not *ours*. The poisoned shafts of calumny rebound from the object at which they are aimed, and return to rankle in the heart of him who throws them.

It is of the first importance that the gospel should be disencumbered of all additions which it has received from the hands of men, and freed from all sectarian incumbrances. The great mistake of Christians of all ages has been their endeavour to control *by force* the opinions of others. Reasoning, argument, persuasion, are the only weapons which the gospel presents to be used in religious warfare. Whatever is more than these comes of evil and tends to propagate evil.

We profess to be members of the Church of Christ—and we cordially invite all others who honestly make the same profession, to come with us to the table of the Lord. What man or body of men has a right to judge another as to his qualifications for this ordinance? To his Master, which is God, is he alone answerable, —and He alone seeth the heart and judgeth justly.

The different orders in religion, and offices of its servants, have tended in no small degree, in times past, to its corruption. By too much regard to *form*, the *substance* has been neglected. If others in this have fallen into error—let us be watchful against the same error.

Where lies our path of duty? How shall we perform it, without interfering with the rights and privileges of others? Shall we send our preachers and our tracts, into houses and villages where they are not wanted, and where they will not be heard or read with candour? By no

means. But go with your preachers and your tracts into every city and parish in the land, proclaiming *peace unto it*. Wherever you are received kindly and affectionately, abide. Where you are not so received, go your way, silently praying that they may duly improve and live worthily of the privileges which they already enjoy.

In the call that comes to us from every part of our country, from many parts of Europe, and India, for instruction in liberal Christianity, we hear a repetition of the declaration of the Saviour—'The harvest is truly great, but the labourers are few.' May labourers in abundance be found for the harvest, and may all those who have little or much of the good things of this world to spare, cast it into the treasury of the Lord; to be applied to the promotion and diffusion of that knowledge which purifies, elevates, and fits men for the enjoyment of heaven.

MR. SALTONSTALL'S REMARKS.

Hon. Mr. Saltonstall, of Salem, remarked, that he had been requested to present to the consideration of the meeting a resolution expressing the interest we should feel in the successful diffusion of Unitarian sentiments in this community. But previously to offering it, he could not forbear expressing the unfeigned satisfaction he felt in witnessing this large assembly; come together with one accord, without previous concert, and now deliberating on the successful progress of Unitarianism, in this our ancient and well beloved county of Essex. Such meetings were well. He had often thought it would be well to have them. He had often thought it a great defect, that public meetings on the subject were not more frequent. By thus associating we receive a new impulse—we feel encouraged to action; we interchange opinions, and urge each other on in doing good. Who ever attended one of the Annual Meetings

of the General Association in Boston, without feeling an increased confidence in the cause; without being aroused to action; without feeling himself benefited thereby? And why may not a portion of the same spirit be infused into the community, by occasional meetings like the present, in each and every district of the Commonwealth?

There is, said he, a great body of Unitarians in this county. There are more or less in every town in the county. In Salem, in this place, and in several adjoining towns, they constitute the majority of the male population. In the north part of the county also there are Unitarians; and many highly respectable. They are beginning to feel it to be their duty to avow themselves such; they are taking courage to declare their opinions. It is right that they do this. Perhaps, I should say, it were wrong in them so long to have omitted to do it. Advert for a moment, Sir, to the history of the county, some forty or fifty years since. Who then were its religious teachers? Were they not liberal Christians? There was Tucker at Newbury, Webster at Haverhill, and Balch at Bradford, and many others;—who then taught in *substance*, if not in *name*, the same doctrines now held by Unitarians. At that time there was but one *exclusive* society on the Merrimack. But how is the scene now changed? Who now are the leaders on the Merrimack, and other towns adjacent? Even there we are not left without hope. Already are there indications of brighter times. In Ipswich, the venerable centre of our county, there has been lately formed a society with highly encouraging prospects. In Haverhill and in Amesbury, are societies well established; and in Newburyport, the strong hold of Orthodoxy, is a most flourishing and efficient society of Unitarians. Let people but feel the importance of the cause; let them but feel the obli-

gation that rests upon them to act according to the dictates of their conscience, and to pursue the conclusions of their own judgment, and Unitarian societies will grow up, wherever intelligence and reason are to be found. It is impossible it should be otherwise; for Unitarianism is but the result of the application of sound reason in the interpretation of the Scriptures.

If then we value our sentiments—if then we believe our sentiments to be well founded in the Scriptures—it is our bounden duty to make them known. If we consider them the true path to salvation, does not Christian charity require of us, to indicate this path to others?

At the present time, Sir, all denominations are awake. It is an age of excitement. And shall we alone be lukewarm, while others are burning with zeal around us?

Hereafter, whoever professes will have to be able to give some *reason* for the faith that is in him. It is a time of inquiry, and people will not be satisfied without *reasons*.

We are in danger, Sir, of being misrepresented. Our silence exposes us to misrepresentation. Are we not already misrepresented? What say the numerous tracts that abound in our land? that are crowded into every crack and crevice of our dwellings? Do they not abound with representations many of which are most scandalous? Is not the finger of scorn pointed at us because we are Unitarians? How then must these things be met? We must meet *exertion* by *exertion*, and calmly but firmly vindicating our characters, and endeavouring to correct the errors falsely circulated respecting us.

I would not wound the feelings of any one who hears me. I impeach no man's motives; but justice requires the truth to be stated; and I may say, that through the influence of the means to which I have alluded, in this county, and in our own times

too, clergymen who have *preached* the gospel of Christ, who have *lived* the gospel of Christ, who have spent the greater and better part of their years in diffusing the gospel of Christ, have been accused of wanting religion, of being destitute of piety, and therefore been dismissed from their societies.—I could name individuals, but I forbear. Shall we not then, when it has come to this, maintain our rights, and defend our characters? How, then, is this to be done? If Unitarians are silent, they are charged with *concealing* their sentiments, if they act, they are charged with being influenced by a *sectarian spirit*. What, then, must we do? Let us go forward manfully, with no ill will to others, and explain and defend our cause. If others are sincere, we are equally so. The field is broad, there is room for all. If the cause be of God, it surely will prosper.

REV. MR. THOMPSON, OF SALEM.

Rev. Mr. Thompson, of Salem, said, he rose more for the purpose of expressing his hearty concurrence in the objects of this meeting, than in the hope of adding to its interest by anything which he might say. There was a single thought suggested by the gentleman who preceded him, on which he thought he might venture, for a moment, to enlarge. It was this—that *the cause of Unitarianism was none other than the cause of Christianity*. This he believed in the sincerity of his heart; and he felt most solemnly the conviction, that any effort made to sustain or advance the cause of Unitarianism, was an effort made for the diffusion and triumph of pure Christianity; and that, so far as we co-operate as Unitarians, in the spirit of Unitarianism, to accelerate its progress, so far we co-operate as Christians in the spirit of Christ to speed the establishment of the kingdom of God in the earth. Sir, it is not the cause of a party that we are solicitous to promote.

It is not for such a cause that these doors have been thrown open to us, and we have come together this evening in solemn assembly. It is no sectarian field whose borders we are eager to enlarge: it is no sectarian interest which we are exciting one another to aid; but it is the great cause of Christianity, as Jesus gave that divine religion to the world; the cause of truth, the cause of righteousness, the cause of love, of celestial and godlike benevolence, that we would here arouse, unite, and pledge our energies to subserve. It is sympathy in this cause, cordial and sincere, glowing and lasting, that we would awaken and extend.

Let it not be thought for a moment, Sir, that we are acting here as sectarians. It is a higher and a holier purpose which has called us together. Besides, we are entirely wanting in the essential features and characteristics of sectarianism—*separation*, for we do not withdraw from any communion, unless denied our Christian rights; *creeds*, for we have no creed but the Bible, God's own word, as it commends itself to every man's conscience. We have no set of doctrines long and complicated to which we require assent, before we can receive to our fellowship a fellow-believer. We belong to the holy church universal, and therefore are ready to give the right hand of Christian affection to the devout Calvinist, to the humble Methodist, to the sincere Universalist, and to the pious Catholic. We are glad to witness in their lives the fruits of pure religion; and whenever and wherever we see these fruits, we feel under a religious obligation to admit that the tree which bears them was planted of the Lord. We desire,—as I trust every Unitarian in this assembly will bear me witness,—we desire to throw around all Christendom the golden chain of Christian love; and we ask no man to bend *his* reason to *our* faith. How then, Sir, can we be

called sectarian in the popular acceptation of that word? We do not require, as a condition of fellowship, a conformity either of faith or form or discipline to our own, and we freely accord the Christian name and character to our brethren of every branch of the great Church, of which Jesus is the only head. But, Sir, if to be zealous for Christian love in its length and breadth and whole extent—if to be inflexibly opposed to everything like exclusiveness and uncharitableness—if to be resolutely bent on the overthrow of an assumed infallibility, on the part of some of our fellow-Christians—if this be sectarianism, then, Sir, I confess that we are sectarians, bone, muscle, and sinew, to the very blood and spirit; and I pray God that we may continue to be so for ever.

Sir, (said he,) if I do not greatly mistake, it is the breaking down of all barriers to love between Christians and the production of a deep and unfeigned fraternal regard, which it is our aim, the end of our efforts, to effect. And it is this which I call the *great cause of Christianity*; for it was the new, the peculiar commandment of the Saviour to his disciples, 'That ye love one another;' and it is a free, prompt, general, universal obedience to this command which, as Unitarian Christians, we are now labouring, and would always labour to secure. Sir, it is certain that this great end for which Jesus lived and died, will never be attained, so long as Christians of one form of speculative faith shall feel at liberty to disown and denounce those of a different form. This will never be effected, so long as one class of believers shall assume the right of determining the essential doctrines of Christianity. This will never be effected so long as the right of free examination and private judgment is in any way, and to any degree, infringed—so long as any believer, or body of believers, shall presume to establish any condition of fellowship,

other than that broad and liberal condition authorized by Christianity, a belief that *Jesus Christ is the Son of God*, and the natural and necessary consequences of such belief. Who, Sir, let me ask, has a right to make any other condition, and who gave him this right? On what one of the sons of men did the Saviour confer the power of deciding on the right and the wrong in another's faith? Where is the evidence of this gift of power? Where are the credentials? These are what we want—these are what we demand. *We do not find them in the word of God; and the simple reason is, we believe, because they are not there.* Him, therefore, who presumes to exercise that power, we cannot but regard as an usurper, who does himself a wrong and his fellow-men a wrong, and Christianity a wrong. Sir, it is no small evil; nay, it is an evil of tremendous magnitude—that there are men amongst us, good men otherwise, Christian men, who dare to take to themselves this power, and fear not to judge their fellow-believers concerning things whereof no man knoweth, 'save the spirit of man which is in him,' and of which no other being knoweth, save him who searcheth the heart. These men must surrender this power, unjustly held, before all Christians will love one another as disciples of one master, heirs of one hope, children of one father. Samaritan must meet Jew, and Jew, Gentile. The walls of partition must be beaten down; 'not one stone be left upon another;' and a spirit of kindness, of charity, of union, and of peace must animate and pervade all bosoms. Sir, is it not this which we are endeavouring to accomplish? Is it not this for which we have here offered our united and fervent supplication to heaven? And is not this the great cause of Christianity? And is it not of sufficient importance to quicken us to the highest effort—to awaken in us the deepest

and holiest and most ardent emotions?

Who, Sir, love us as brethren? Who treat us as fellow-disciples of Jesus? They who daily and hourly, in their public convocations, in their private gatherings, and even in their prayers to God 'say all manner of evil against us,' calling us 'deniers of the Lord that bought us!' They who warn others to avoid us, to flee from us, as they would avoid a leper, and flee from a pestilence! They who call us the enemies of truth, the enemies of religion, the enemies of Christ and of God! And is this the love by which we and all men are to know that they are the true disciples?

We are stigmatized as heretics! Sir, I know of no heresy under the sun so monstrously unwarrantable and absurd, as that of the assumption of infallibility by poor, weak, erring, sinning man.

And whoever meets one of us, and simply because we do not agree with him in our religious opinions, passes, in his mind, sentence of condemnation on our Christian character—whoever does this, virtually assumes the attribute of infallibility, and if it were ever proper and just to punish any man as a heretic, it would be that man. But, Sir, the cause which we would promote would not sanction, nay, it would frown indignantly on any attempt to punish or injure him. It holds the principle of 'blessing him that curses us and praying for him that persecutes us.' I repeat, Sir—and in doing it will relieve your patience—that it is not the cause of a sect that we are anxious to advance; but it is the cause of Christianity, uncorrupted, the light of the world, tolerant, liberal, divine Christianity. And we wish this to prevail and gain for itself triumphs and trophies, until it shall embrace all men in its arms, and present them, united in eternal fellowship; as an acceptable offering unto God.

HON. S. C. PHILLIPS.

Mr. Chairman:—That such a meeting as this should have been held—that it should have been announced through the medium of the public press—and that so many should have been found ready to come forward upon such a notice to signify their approbation of the object of the meeting, are circumstances which afford an encouraging proof of the progress and present influence of Unitarian Christianity.

The time was, Mr. Chairman, within your recollection, and within the recollection even of those who have recently attained the age of manhood, when publicly to profess Unitarian Christianity was but to incur the unmitigated charge of heresy, infidelity, and impiety! The time was when the pulpit and the press uttered nothing but denunciation of the motives and purposes of the few,—the very few,—who, at the risk of martyrdom at the bar of public opinion, could venture to ‘confess Christ before men’ in the simple character in which they believed him to have been born into the world, and to be revealed in Scripture. The time was, and that but recently, when many believed it to be their solemn duty to sound the alarm of danger, and to raise the cry of watchfulness, wherever the fury of intolerance had been so far remitted as to permit Unitarians to speak for themselves! The time was, and that but recently, when Sunday, and the church, and the Bible were thought to be profaned by the use of Unitarians; when, under the impression that Unitarians in profession were Deists in disguise, the old regarded with distrust, and the young were taught to view with suspicion, our professions of reverence for the divine revelations of the Old and New Testaments, and our unqualified disclaimer of any doctrine or principle which might not be shown to be contained therein. The time

was, Sir, and that but very recently, when even by those who reluctantly conceded that our opinions might be made to appear plausible as matters of speculation, their practical tendency was, to say the least, seriously questioned; and when our fellow-Christians did not refrain from warning us, in the anxiety of their hearts, that our faith could yield no support in the vicissitudes of life, and that it must wholly fail us at death!

Far be it from us, Sir, to complain of the means by which it has pleased God to cause all things to work together for good. The scrutiny to which our faith has been subjected has tested its purity, and tried its strength. Everywhere spoken against, it has been, through the zeal of its opponents, everywhere proclaimed; and nowhere has it failed, in a greater or less degree, to conquer prejudice, to silence calumny, to excite inquiry, and to produce conviction. Nowhere has it failed to gain friends and advocates, who have lived and died in reliance upon its principles. Nowhere has it failed to exert a benign influence upon human interests and relations. Abroad, in countries where the government was not sufficiently despotic to suppress it, but where it could be held only under the penalty of civil disabilities, it has exhibited bright examples of conscientious rectitude, humble piety, and enduring fortitude; and here, in this land of free minds and honest hearts, it has advanced with the slow but sure march of truth, wherever error had preceded it. With no panoply but the Bible, with no other weapon than reason, contending only in self-defence, yielding every right which it claimed, and honouring motives while it protested against dogmas, it has so far triumphed over or conciliated its opponents, as to enjoy, at the present day, its full share of confidence and respect. Yes, Sir, our claim to an equality of Christian rights is at last virtually conceded; and he must be

weak or wicked, a bigot or a calumniator, who would now venture before God and man, to deny us the Christian name. It is rather for our fellow-Christians, if they would do us justice, to yield their testimony, that we have never been wanting, as a body, in the liberal support of religious institutions—that our societies and ministers are numerous and respectable—that the cause of good morals has never been deserted nor betrayed by us—that we have formed no alliance, political or personal, with the opponents, or to the prejudice, of religion—that we have neither discarded nor failed to rely upon the Bible as our rule of faith and practice—and that we are and ever have been ready to make exertions and sacrifices for the common cause of religious knowledge, liberty and charity. It is more than we can as yet expect of our fellow-Christians, to concede the soundness of our opinions; but for a favourable interpretation of our motives and objects we do not fear to rely upon their sense of justice.

There are, perhaps, even yet, those in the community who are slow to believe that the odious accusations heretofore preferred against our faith and its professors, are wholly unsustainable. And if from a sense of justice, charity, or shame, other charges are no longer persisted in, there is one which still meets us in every shape of censure and reproof, and demands, from its importance, serious consideration. It is the charge of indifference, lukewarmness, and coldness in religious concerns. It is the charge that Unitarians, individually, and as a body, are more negligent than their fellow-Christians of religious duties—that they are “more lax” and “less scrupulous” in religious observances—and that in their deportment they exhibit less evidence than others, of a decidedly religious character.

Now, however much there may be of exaggeration and injustice, if there

be any truth in this charge, let it incline us, first of all, to serious expostulation. Are these things so? Not to compare ourselves with our fellow-Christians, but to compare our own practice with our own faith, we may admit, and we ought to confess with sorrow and remorse, that there is much truth in the charge. That we have failed to reflect seriously upon our destiny and duties—that concerns of the day and hour have engrossed our thoughts and affections—that in the employment of our time and talents we have sadly mistaken our true interests—that in much of our conduct our principles and motives have not been those of Christian morality—that for ourselves, our friends and children, we have not eschewed temptations, into which it was our duty not to suffer ourselves or them to be led—that, in short, we have done far less than we ought to have done, by our private and public influence and exertions, for the cause of strict virtue and personal religion, who amongst us shall not acknowledge?

But let the censure fall not upon our faith, but upon ourselves. We put it to our fellow-Christians, we put it to the world—what is there in our faith, which does not absolutely require the strictest conformity of our characters to the principles, the precepts, the example of Jesus? What is there in our views of Christianity that robs a single duty of its obligation, or a single virtue of its attractiveness? What is there in Unitarianism to encourage or permit the slightest misdemeanour, or the most venial foible? What is there that falls short of requiring the entire devotion of heart and life to the service of man and the known will of God? What is there in Unitarianism that does not frown upon thoughtlessness, heartlessness and inaction? They charge us justly who allege that we place no reliance upon ‘imputed righteousness’ (technically so called), and that we attach

merit to good works. We believe, as we believe we live, that life is designed for virtue; that religion is designed to promote virtue; and that virtue on earth is the pre-requisite to happiness in heaven. We believe that it is not so much by calling Jesus Lord, or magnifying his name or nature, as by keeping his commandments, and doing the will of God his Father, we are to vindicate our claim to be called his disciples. We believe that the misery as well as happiness of our future condition will be spiritual and not physical, and that the remorse and internal anguish which we here feel for wrong conduct at the moment we are conscious of it, is the fittest emblem of what they must suffer to whom the consciousness of all their bad acts and perhaps worse motives shall suddenly be imparted in the hour of retribution. Holding such views of religion, of life, and of duty, how shall it be said that we, above all others, can find any excuse, still less any inducement, in our faith for aught that savours of indifference, lukewarmness, and coldness in our moral and spiritual concerns? Let them who venture to say so, point to a principle or precept inculcated by Unitarians, which justifies the charge. We do not know, and, until we are otherwise advised, must deny that there is any such; and when it is pointed out, we will show that it has been misrepresented, or we will renounce it.

The present meeting, Mr. Chairman, will not allow us to admit, unqualifiedly, the charge of religious indifference. There is a spirit *here* which encourages the hope that in many hearts Unitarianism has proved itself to be Christianity in all its influences and effects. It is not in *this church* that we are to believe that it is wanting in power to convince the reason, to rouse conscience, and to warm the affections. It is not in *this county*, as has been well shown, that, either in its past history or present

condition, any other than what we esteem liberal and rational views of Christianity have been most distinguished for producing a salutary and permanent influence. It is not in *this state*, distinguished for the prevalence of Unitarianism—it is not in Massachusetts, surely, that so far as we are concerned, the principles and interests, the instructions and ordinances, the schools and churches of religion, have been suffered to languish and decline. Rather has it been here, and amongst ourselves, that learning and talent and private munificence, and the public bounty, have been frequently appropriated to religious uses. Rather has it been here, and amongst ourselves, that religion has been held to be the bulwark of all our institutions, and that the support of religion, in perfect consistency with liberty of conscience, has been felt to be the duty of every citizen and of the whole people. We may, then, as we should upon every such occasion, confess our deficiencies, and exhort each other to reformation and improvement; but it would be unjust for us to admit that the charge of our opponents is to be received without limitation—that it is more true of us than it is of themselves, and of all not divested of the imperfections of humanity—or, least of all, that it has any pretensions to truth, as directed against the pure and holy faith in which we trust.

The present occasion, suggesting so many causes of gratitude to God, and of mutual congratulation, deserves especially to be improved as the commencement of a new series of efforts to excite and extend a religious sympathy, and to aid the cause of practical piety amongst ourselves. We ought not to be insensible to the new and peculiar circumstances in which we are placed. By the blessing of God we are no longer a few scanty, scattered groups, incapable of co-operation, and hardly daring so much as to make ourselves

known to each other. Our churches and congregations are now so numerous that in this quarter nothing would seem more easy than for us to hold frequent and profitable intercourse; and there seems, also, to be no mode of bringing us together, combining more attractions and advantages, than that which has been adopted by our friends at whose instance we are now assembled. There are surely none amongst us, laity or clergy, who do not need the countenance, the excitement, the encouragement, which such meetings are suited to impart. They will call for no sacrifice of time which we should not readily have appropriated to comparatively unimportant secular interests. Their design is, by the aid of circumstances, to call us to deliberate more seriously and frequently upon our Christian privileges and obligations—to direct our attention and our efforts to practicable measures for the common benefit—to make us better acquainted with our situation, our wants and our duties as a body of fellow-believers—and to enable us, by combined as well as separate exertions, to do more, constantly more, for the cause of truth and virtue, of Christ and God. By holding such meetings, let it be understood and realized, that we deem religion a matter of such moment that we choose to bestow upon it an increased attention, and that we are anxious to strengthen in the mind of every individual, the conviction that he can and ought to do more, much more, for his own religious improvement, and for the diffusion of a religious spirit, wherever his example may be witnessed, and his influence extends.

This, then, is what we want—to do more for ourselves, and amongst ourselves. We ought not to shun controversy when it is forced upon us—our opinions should be tested by constant investigation and discussion—but let us remember, above all things, that Unitarianism is a prac-

tical religion; that it requires all the duty which man can perform; and that it is nothing short of its original design, to render the whole of life one act of blended piety and beneficence. What excuse shall a Unitarian invent for neglecting or delaying to be a religious man? The simple faith which he professes has commended itself to his understanding. He perceives in it no perplexity, no mystery, no gloom, no absurdity. In every principle and precept he traces the impression of truth and virtue. In its requisitions he complains of no austerity, and although he perceives that they are as comprehensive as his faculties, and as lasting as his existence, he perceives also that they have no other purpose than his own improvement; and what can a rational being desire so ardently and so exclusively as his own improvement? What doubt can he entertain that the whole design, and the whole effect of this religion, is to impart a moral dignity to his character, to instil the noblest sentiments, to inspire the best feelings, and to make him, by its various and constant influences, a blessing to himself and all around him? What doubt can he entertain that such a religion, if sincerely embraced, will guide him safely through the changes of life, and will conduct him to its close in peace? How can he doubt that such a religion will lend its sweetest charm to youth, its most enduring honour to manhood, and its only comfort to old age? How can he doubt that the principles and spirit of such a religion are suited to accompany him in all his pursuits, to regulate every transaction, to save him from temptation, to make prosperity harmless, and adversity useful? How can he doubt, then, that it is safe and wise, nay, that it is necessary and indispensable for him to strive earnestly, steadfastly, and habitually to acquire and manifest the spirit of this religion in all his thoughts, in all his feelings, in all his conduct!

Shall he fear to encounter a want of sympathy in those who seem to prefer to be irreligious rather than to appear religious? What can their sympathy avail him? If the alternative is to despise himself, or to despise them, to violate his principles, or to contemn their sophistry, will he hesitate in his decision?

Shall he fear that the claims of religion may conflict with his worldly interests? Is there any worldly interest of so much value that it will compensate for the want of religious principle? Can our worldly interests, under any circumstances, rest upon so solid a foundation as religious principle? Let the idea be again and again repeated, that, so far from interfering with worldly avocations, religion, as we understand it, actually designs to carry us into the world and through the world under the influence of such motives and habits that every faculty shall be well employed, that every hour shall be well spent, that every reasonable desire shall be gratified, and every laudable purpose promoted. It withdraws us from no pursuits but such as we cannot approve, and debars no enjoyments but those which must be eventually disgusting.

Shall a Unitarian, moreover, believe, or act as if he believed, that an attention to religion may be deferred until a late, or the latest period of life? Let him remember that there is no period of life which may not be late enough to be the latest; and especially let him remember that by the principles of Unitarianism there can be no compensation in the agonies of a death-bed for the waste of hours, and days, and years, which might have been devoted to duty, to virtue, and to God.

What, is it asked, shall a Unitarian seek to become when he becomes religious? The character of Christ is the model proposed for his imitation. This is the standard of moral and religious perfection. We can conceive of no virtue which it does

not comprise, and of no duty which it does not illustrate. Our love of Christ is the love of his character—of the principles, motives, purposes, which governed his intercourse with man and God—which were breathed in every prayer, uttered in every discourse, and manifested in every action—which, in our view, gave all its glory to his life, and all its value to his death. Looking, then, to Jesus, the author and finisher of his faith, the Unitarian will strive to become pious, humble, and resigned to the will of God, *like him*—doing good always and every where, *like him*—seeking the honour which cometh from God only, *like him*—enduring temptation and trials, *like him*—honouring goodness under every name and in every form, *like him*—in short, devotional in every sentiment, righteous in every motive, and useful in every act, *like him*.

Could every individual here present resolve to be from this moment what he will now admit an Unitarian should become—could he be induced to shut out from his mind all other considerations of duty and interest but such as his religion approves—could he carry hence to the bosom of his family the blessed influences of the temper of his Master—could he nobly go forth into the world bearing upon his front the badge of his profession, steadfastly maintaining his own integrity, and emboldening others to walk in his steps—could he feel and make others feel that whatever is opposed to Christian morality is as weak as it is wicked, and that it is an act of self-degradation to refuse to be a Christian—could he feel and make others feel that there is no limit to the influence of a good motive, and to the effect of a good example—could he feel and make others feel that to a truly good man the love of usefulness supplies the place of all meaner ambition, and that in the circumstances of every individual there is ample scope for the beneficent exertion of the most varied

faculties;—could every Unitarian, here and elsewhere, thus think and feel, and act, we might safely leave our principles to be judged by their results. In the view of an admiring world, and of a grateful posterity, *the truth of God* would be the inscription every where displayed upon the broad banner of our faith, while *the spirit of Christ* would impart its brightest lustre to the public and private character of every disciple.

EIGHTY FEEBLE CHURCHES.

It is generally known that many small Calvinistic churches have been established in different parts of Massachusetts, within a few years past, that are unable to support regular worship, except by large assistance from missionary funds. These new churches have been mostly formed within Unitarian parishes, where there was too small a population to support two ministers, and where the people were, for the most part, happy with their minister. There is good evidence, that their establishment has been frequently caused, not so much by the original wants or wishes of the people, as by excitements and disaffection produced by the intermeddling of the orthodox clergymen and other zealots of neighbouring towns. Nor have these men been over-scrupulous as to the character of the means used to effect their purposes. Hard speeches against Unitarian ministers—Calvinistic tracts thrust upon the people against their wishes—and finally an organized religious police—visiting committees of orthodox clergymen creeping into houses and imposing upon and alienating from their ministers the ignorant, the unstable, and the weak,—these are common instruments and methods of operation. And what is the result?—eighty feeble churches. Eighty feeble churches! that are to have a new house of worship, if they can get some zealous clergyman to undertake a tour of begging for it,—

and then to have a minister, if they can get the Home Missionary Society to support him.

In an address, published by the Hampden county auxiliary to the Massachusetts Missionary Society we find the following statement:—

‘The number of feeble churches and congregations in this Commonwealth, which cannot sustain the ministry of the word without aid, is more than sixty.’ [A note in the Recorder says “eighty.”]

The Society urges its appeal to the community for funds in such language as this:—‘Can you behold the desolations which error, and heresy, and wickedness are bringing over many societies, once famous for their adherence to the pure doctrines of Christ, and for the influence of these in turning sinners to God, with indifference? Can you see many, for conscience sake, driven from the home where their fathers worshipped, compelled (by us, the only true ministers of Christ), to unite in feeble bands, and to appeal to their Christian brethren for aid, that they may be fed with the sincere milk of the word, and permit the desolation to increase, and the weak to sink down under their burdens? Shall fathers and mothers, whose hope is in Christ, and in the precious doctrines of his grace, see their families scattering away, to receive the influence of those who trample upon the truths, which they deem alone able to make men wise unto salvation?’

Thus, it will be perceived, all goes upon the assumption that every Unitarian minister is leading his people straight down to perdition, and that there is no Christianity out of the pale of Calvinistic orthodoxy. A modest conclusion surely; and in beautiful accordance with the many Christian requirements of humility, self-distrust, and charity to others.

‘Driven from the home, where their fathers worshipped.’ This is the language used in reference to the ‘feeble churches.’ Let us un-

derstand now the true import of this, and see if it be in reality what is intimated. Are men really forbidden to worship and to enjoy the ordinances of religion where their fathers worshipped? No. The only forbidding is, that a feeble minority of the people shall not, as they have claimed to do in repeated instances, impose a minister on the majority, contrary to their choice and wishes, and oblige them not only to hear, but to pay a man for denouncing them as heretics and infidels. For this simple assertion of their Christian rights, the majority are branded as persecutors.—*Christian Register.*

CANADA—MONTREAL.

THE melancholy intelligence has arrived of the death of the Rev. David Hughes, late of Yeovil, who was carried off by cholera almost immediately after his arrival at this place. Mr. Hughes and his family left England about the end of May last, and reached Montreal after a voyage of nine weeks. Such was the state of the town, from the devastation and alarm produced by the ravages of the cholera, that accommodation could only be obtained for the travellers by the active interposition of an Unitarian to whom Mr. Hughes made himself known, and whose kindness to him and his now destitute family was most unwearied and invaluable. Mr. Teulon, the friend to whom we refer, immediately made known the arrival of an Unitarian minister to other Unitarians in the place, who manifested the strongest interest in the circumstance; and before he had been twenty-four hours in the city, several of the first merchants and their ladies there established waited on him to congratulate him—to express their pleasure at his arrival, and offer him every assistance in furthering his views. This was on Thursday. On Friday a deputation waited on him to solicit a Sabbath service on the following Lord's Day,

—he assented—for some particular reason they then requested him to preach on a given text—'Christ and him crucified,'—to which he also assented; on which they applied at the whole round of chapels for the use of a pulpit for two hours—to be only uniformly repulsed. They then got permission to use a school-room, where he addressed an auditory of about eighty Unitarians—with such acceptance that they determined, if possible, to fix him with them,—and immediately subscribed 60*l.* for fitting up a store-room capable of accommodating one hundred or more persons, and entered into negotiation for a dwelling-house in which to install his family. Having preached twice on the Sunday, and once in the week, on the 9th of August he embarked in the steam-boat to accompany his daughter to the house of a lady with whom she had been previously engaged to reside. He left his family about five o'clock in the morning, and before nine o'clock in the evening was dead and buried. His daughter was attacked also, but medical aid was promptly sent from Montreal, and she recovered, and was taken back to that place by a friend who had set out instantly on hearing of what had occurred. The kindness of the Unitarians of Montreal to the afflicted family has been truly explained. Both in that, and in the zeal which they demonstrated for the establishment of Unitarian worship, we trust it will appear that there are many here who sympathise.

IRELAND.

From the BIBLE CHRISTIAN.

Bigotry at its work again.—We hardly expect to be believed when we inform our readers, that Mr. Cromie, of Portstewart, the landlord of a great many of the members of the newly-erected Remonstrant Congregation, in Ballymoney, has refused to allow his tenantry to obtain stones from his quarry, for the

purpose of building a house for the worship of God. Such, however, is the fact.

The Remonstrant Congregation has been obliged since it was first formed into a worshipping society, to assemble on the Lord's Day in the loft of a grain store, which has been fitted up as a temporary meeting-house. The members, feeling themselves sufficiently numerous and united to commence the building of a more permanent and commodious place of worship, sent forward a deputation, consisting of the Rev. Mr. Osborne and another gentleman, requesting Mr. Cromie to allow them to procure stone for the erection—but to their no small surprise, and to his great disgrace—they met with an absolute refusal. The only reason assigned by Mr. Cromie was, that “he could not conscientiously allow stone to *Arians*.” He intimated that as he had already made up his mind on the subject, there was no use in further urging their request. With this reply the deputation of course were obliged to be satisfied.

Here, then, is a member of the Protestant Church, which professes to be founded on the right of private judgment, refusing, not his support, for that was not asked—not his countenance, for that was not expected—but simply a common and customary accommodation to persons who sought that accommodation, merely that they might be enabled to assemble in a decent and suitable building, to worship the God who is a spirit, and who must be worshipped in spirit and in truth—in the only mode of which their consciences approve. The stone in the quarry is of no use to Mr. Cromie: the removal of it does not leave him by one doit a poorer man: permission to take it for purposes connected with the improvement of the estate, or the convenience of the tenantry, has hitherto been freely bestowed by Mr. Cromie, as we are sure it would be by every other landlord in the island; but the creed of

the present applicants does not square precisely with Mr. Cromie's; and therefore he refuses.

Here again is a member of the Protestant Church established by law, which derives so much of its support from *tithes*, the produce of the industry of Roman Catholics, Presbyterians, and Dissenters of various denominations; here is he withholding not a pecuniary contribution, but *an act of ordinary courtesy*, which would have cost him nothing, when that act would have proved a convenience and accommodation to Christians of another communion. Truly the members of the Church of England will feel little obliged to Mr. Cromie for the plea of *conscience*, which he has, in this instance, set up in his defence. If the conscience of a member of the Church of England will not allow him to permit a body of Dissenters to remove a few valueless stones, in order to build a meeting-house, perhaps Dissenters may begin to ask themselves whether *their conscience* (for they have consciences too) ought to allow them to contribute of their skill, capital, and industry, in the form of tithes, to the support of the Church of England; a church from which they are Dissenters only because they believe her doctrine, discipline and worship, to be at variance with the word of God. Now if the Presbyterians of the North were to ask themselves this question, and *by mistake or otherwise* happen to answer it in the negative, the results might be particularly inconvenient to the Church of England, especially at the present moment. The son of Peleus inquires in the *Iliad* whether the Atridæ alone are privileged to love their wives. Perhaps Dissenters might, by such examples, be prompted to inquire whether Episcopalians alone are to be allowed to keep a conscience!

And what is the reason assigned by this conscientious gentleman for his denial of a petty civility to the

Remonstrant Congregation of Ballymoney? The persons composing it are not to be allowed to take stones from his quarry, because they, forsooth, are *Arians!* while he himself, as we presume, is a *Trinitarian*. That is to say, they worship the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, whom Mr. Cromie also adores; but abstain from the worship of two other persons whom Mr. Cromie *believes* to be entitled to the homage of religious adoration. This is, at the worst, only an error of omission, on their part, even according to the estimate of their conscientious landlord. Were he to enter the place where this Arian congregation assemble to worship God, he would hear no prayer in which he could not join with perfect propriety; although there might be something wanting which he would wish had been added. This is the head and front of their offence; but it appears so great to the mind of Mr. Cromie, that he has felt himself obliged to withhold an act of customary politeness from those who are guilty of it; and to declare that further applications are useless, as he has made up his mind on the subject. This is his treatment of the unfortunate *Arians*.

There is, however, a congregation of Roman Catholics in the same neighbourhood who are, at the present moment, engaged in erecting a chapel for their worship; and to them Mr. Cromie has acted a more liberal part; for he has granted to the Catholics that permission which he has denied to the Remonstrants. Now, as the Roman Catholics are in the habit of presenting religious adoration to the Virgin Mary and a number of saints and apostles; and as all such worship must, in Mr. Cromie's opinion, be *idolatrous*, if he be a consistent member of the Church of England; it follows, that in his judgment, it is better to commit idolatry than to engage in a worship which, so far as it goes, he allows to be pure, though he believes it to be

imperfect—that is to say, it is better, according to him, *to do a positive wrong*, and to do it repeatedly and habitually, than to omit the performance of *one particular thing*, which he judges to be right. This is the way in which his conscience compels him to act. He feels no scruple in extending his favour to the persons whose religion he has sworn in his oath of office as a magistrate to be nothing less than idolatry; while he refuses the common courtesies of a landlord to the Remonstrants, whose form of worship is such that he might join in every part of it with perfect propriety and consistency. Truly some men's consciences lead them into awkward situations! The awkwardness of Mr. Cromie's situation is increased by his having some time since granted the use of his quarry to the Covenanters for the erection of their meeting-house; it being a matter of notoriety that in the solemn league and covenant, and other symbolic writings of that Church, Papacy and Episcopacy are both denounced, and condemned to be uprooted by all the means which can be employed for the purpose. Without subscribing this document, no person can be a minister among the Covenanters, nor, we believe, received into communion with any of their congregations; and these are the persons whom, together with the Roman Catholics, the zealous and conscientious Episcopalian, Mr. Cromie, selects for the objects of his especial favour!

Let not the tenour of these latter observations be mistaken. We are far from disapproving of Mr. Cromie's conduct in granting the required accommodation to the Roman Catholics and Covenanters of Ballymoney. On the contrary, we highly approve of his behaviour in so doing. But we do most decidedly condemn his inconsistency in refusing to *others* what he has felt no scruple in according to them.

It may be thought that in these

strictures we have been more severe than the occasion required. Perhaps there might be some reason for saying so, were there no more in this business than meets the eye. But we feel perfectly convinced that the object for which the slight was put upon the Remonstrants of Ballymoney, was much more important than to retard, for a few months, the building of their meeting-house. It was designed, not simply to delay the erection of their place of worship, *but to destroy their congregation.* Mr. Cromie is the person on whose estate a great many of the members of the newly-formed society reside; and this demonstration of his feeling was intended, as we have reason to think, to serve as a hint to those of his tenants who might be inclined to join the Remonstrants, that they cannot do so without incurring his displeasure; and to those who have done so already, that they can only regain his forfeited favour by relinquishing their recently-adopted connexion. But we know the Remonstrants of Ballymoney; and we can take it upon ourselves to assure Mr. Cromie that his threats and his annoyances will be equally fruitless when addressed to men of their firm and determined character. Their religious views are too deeply considered and too seriously embraced to be abandoned at the bidding of a fellow-mortal!—He may, no doubt—so far as the use of his quarry is concerned,—do with it what he pleases; for it is his own: but they will teach him that the consciences of his tenantry are not under his control, *for they are not his own!*

After all, the power of Mr. Cromie to injure the congregation happily does not extend as far as his inclination. It is fortunate that although stone cannot be had for the erection of a meeting-house in Ballymoney, (for there is no quarry in that neighbourhood but his,) yet *brick* can be manufactured and purchased in every part of the country. It is true that

the cost of the material will be greatly increased by his illiberality; but we are sure, if the congregation think it necessary to apply for assistance to meet this additional demand, they will receive aid from many quarters; were it only to show that the time is come when the formation and profession of religious opinion must be left free and unshackled; when man must not attempt to dictate a creed to his brother, and landlords, content with their just influence over the property of their tenantry, must desist for ever, from their tyrannical efforts to establish *a dominion over their souls!* R.

SCOTLAND.

THE Rev. W. Smith has resigned the charge of the congregation at Dundee. In the afternoon of Sunday, August 26th, Mr. Smith delivered a farewell sermon, from the words—“Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering.” The chapel was quite full. At the close of the service, and after the strangers who were present had retired, Mr. Smith addressed the members of the congregation, thanking them for the kind and respectful manner in which he had been uniformly treated by them, and expressing the hope that some good had been effected by their united exertions in the removal of prejudice and error. Mr. George Speid, on the part of the congregation, came forward and expressed in the most feeling and impressive manner, the regret of the Society at the loss they were about to sustain by Mr. Smith’s removal—their unfeigned respect for his talents and character—and their admiration of his strenuous labours in the advancement of Christian righteousness and truth. Mr. Speid then presented to Mr. Smith a handsome volume, which had been purchased by their united subscriptions, and on which was inscribed these words:—
“Presented to the Rev. William

Smith, by the undersigned members of the Dundee Unitarian Congregation, in testimony of their respect for him as a man—their approval of the manner in which, for two years, he has discharged the duties of a Unitarian minister among them—their regret that circumstances render it necessary that their mutual connexion should be dissolved, and their earnest wishes for his prosperity and happiness.” Mr. Smith replied; the audience were deeply affected; and with mutual good wishes and fervent prayers, Mr. Smith and his friends separated.—*Pioneer*.

UNITARIAN STATISTICS.

* * * In these lists of Unitarian chapels the letters P, GB, and M designate Presbyterian, General Baptist, and Methodist: the figures following the minister's name denote the *average* attendance; F, that the chapel has a fellowship fund; L, a library; S, a Sunday school; and DS, a day school, the number of scholars being added when known.

Wales.

The following has been sent as a list of Unitarian congregations in Wales:—

CARDIGANSHIRE. 1. Capel-y-Groes and Ystrad. R. Davies. 2. Pant-y-defaid, Owen Evans *pro tem*.

CARMARTHENSHIRE, 1. Carmarthen, David Evans, *pro tem*. 2. St. Clears, J. Thomas. 3. Rhyd-y-Parc. (No settled minister). 4. Pant-teg, B. Evans. 5. Llandybie, J. Griffiths. 6. Gelly (a small congregation assembling in a room).

GLAMORGANSHIRE. 1. Gellionnen, J. James. 2. Swansea, R. Awbrey. 3. Ditto, Philip Richards. 4. Neath, J. Davies. 5. Bridgend, J. Jones. 6. Blaengurach, Wm. Williams. 7. Aberdare, Thos. Evans. 8. Merthyr-Tydvil, John Evans. 9. Coed-y-Cymmar, Thos. Davies.

Only two of these have made returns:—1. Capel-y-Groes; Rees

Davies; 200 to 300; S. 2. Swansea, R. Awbrey; 120; F; L.

Island of Guernsey.

GUERNSEY. S. Weston; 30.

Scotland.

EDINBURGH (Young-sreet). B. T. Stannus; 100; S, 20.

GLASGOW. George Harris; 500; F; L; S.

DUNDEE. Vacant.

GREENOCK. A. Macdonald.

PORT-GLASGOW. No minister.

PAISLEY, CARLUKE, TILlicouLTRY, KILMARNOCK. Supplied by H. Clarke, missionary, who has also preached at Lanark, Johnstone, and other places.

In various parts of Scotland there are resident Unitarians, and, we believe, occasional meetings for divine worship. The following have been mentioned:—Dumblane, Blackford, Renfrew, Annan, Saltcoats, Aberdeen.

ADDITIONS AND CORRECTIONS.

Dorsetshire.

BRIDPORT. R. Cree; 200; F; L; S.

DORCHESTER. L. Lewis; morning 100, afternoon 150, evening 130; F; L; S, 25 girls.

POOLE. J. Michelson; 70; L; S.

WAREHAM. J. C. Wallace; 100; L; S;

Correction—Lancashire.

PRESTON. J. Ashton; 60; F; L.

BOLTON. F. Baker; 400; L (Chapel and SS); S, 200; DS, 30 girls; trust school, 50 boys, 40 girls,

Kent.

MAIDSTONE. There was an error respecting the number of the Maidstone congregation, it is 250 and not 150; and this does not include the schools.

Nottinghamshire.

NOTTINGHAM. (High Pavement Chapel); Benjamin Carpenter; 500; F; L; and S, 200; and DS, 40 boys and 25 girls.

At New Radford, a village about a mile from Nottingham, there is a

small society of Methodist Unitarians, who assemble in a neat chapel erected about seven years ago, where there is a morning and evening service; it is supplied occasionally in the evening by Rev. B. Carpenter, but principally by Mr. Jonathan Holmes, a lay-minister, and latterly by Edward Hawksley, a young man, who assists him during one part of the day. The average number of attendants is from 20 to 30. A Sunday school for boys and girls containing 100 to 120.

At Mansfield there is an old-established chapel and congregation, under the pastoral care of the Rev. John Williams.

There is no other congregation or society of Unitarian Christians in Nottinghamshire, but those above-mentioned. There was formerly a Presbyterian congregation at Sutton, in Ashfield, under the care of Dr. Davies, now one of the medical professors of the London University; but I believe it is entirely extinct, and has been for some years.

Devonshire.

HONITON. James Taplin; 100; F; L; S, 30 boys and girls.

Sussex.

HORSHAM. GB; Thomas Sadler and R. Ashdowne; 150; (no F, but a Missionary and Tract Society).

ROYSTON.

ON Sunday, September 23d, a small but neat chapel was opened for religious services at Royston, Hertfordshire, when two sermons were delivered by the Rev. W. Clack, of Soham,—that in the morning, on the love of God and men, from Matt. xxii. 37-40. The preacher endeavoured to show, that the views entertained by Christian Unitarians of the Divine perfections and character are highly important, as they tend to promote obedience to the

two great commandments, therefore that they are worthy of the most cordial acceptation, a steady profession, and of zeal for their diffusion, and concluded with an address suitable to the occasion.

In the afternoon the discourse was on the importance of not being ashamed of the Gospel, from the words of the Apostle Paul, in his Epistle to the Romans, i. 16. The nature, design, and efficacy of the Gospel were taken into consideration, after which it was shown that the doctrines held and espoused by Unitarians are in accordance with it; in particular, that they comport with the primary meaning of the word gospel, *i. e.* 'good news,' but that some which are considered by many the peculiar doctrines of the Gospel are contrary thereto; the folly and injurious tendency of being ashamed of it, were pointed out; and an exhortation given to an imitation of Paul, to be like him, ready to say—"I am not ashamed of the Gospel," and to prove the sincerity of such a declaration by the temper and conduct.

On the following Sunday morning service was again conducted by the Rev. W. Clack, the discourse founded on Matt. xxii., 41-46. At the close of the service the Lord's Supper was administered, when ten united in partaking of it. In the afternoon, Rev. G. H. Wells, M.A. officiated, and delivered an excellent discourse on the value of Christian zeal, from Gall. iv. 18.

Thus the wish of several friends of Unitarianism at Royston, and its vicinity, for a chapel in which they might assemble for the worship of the Father, and attend upon services congenial to their views and feelings, has been accomplished. They were cheered by the congregations exceeding their expectations, and the pleasing prospect afforded of their efforts to establish a Christian Unitarian church proving successful.

BOLTON DISTRICT ASSOCIATION.

THE thirteenth half-yearly meeting of the Bolton District Unitarian Association was held at Chowbent, on Thursday, October 4, 1832. The religious services were conducted by the Rev. Franklin Howorth, of Bury, and the Rev. John Ragland, of Hindley, the latter of whom preached from Matt. xix. 17. The preacher's object was to show the folly of trusting to the performance of external rites, and the profession of certain doctrines of faith, as passports to a heavenly kingdom. Holy living, he contended, was the purest Christianity, the best fruit of holy doctrine, and the only foundation for 'The hope that maketh not ashamed.'

At the conclusion of the services in the chapel, a numerous party assembled to dinner, and to spend a few hours afterwards in the interchange of friendly sentiments, and in the promotion of that social intercourse which it is one of the objects of the Association to encourage. In the absence of T. B. W. Sanderson, Esq., the Rev. Franklin Baker, of Bolton, was requested to take the chair. The business of the meeting being transacted, the Chairman proposed 'The King, and may he never forget those principles which fixed his family on the throne of these realms.'

The Chairman, in proposing the next toast, could not help congratulating the meeting on what had been already achieved for civil and religious liberty in this country, and in the prospect of its triumphs being extended to other parts of the world, where it was now only known as one of the bulwarks of Britain's glory. It was only to be obtained and preserved under a free constitution and an unfettered press, operating upon the minds of an enlightened nation. He would give 'Civil and religious liberty all the world over.'

'The Bolton District Unitarian Association.' In giving which as a

toast the Chairman would add but a few words. It had now been established six years, and had gone on its way rejoicing, increasing the harmony and friendship of its members, and emulating them to good works. Almost every meeting offered some additional proof of its usefulness, either in the development of some new plan of benevolence and utility, or in the introduction of such plans into different societies. It was impossible to allude to these advantages without connecting with the Association the names of its founder and its treasurer—the Rev. B. R. Davis and Mr. Robert Heywood.

The Rev. B. R. Davis thought the Chairman had given him more than his due meed of praise. It was true that the first suggestion of the Association proceeded from him, but the idea was instantly adopted by many of his friends, who then made it their own, and gave it a shape and form, which had made it useful and agreeable to all the congregations connected with it. He had no doubt, that as long as it was productive of so much good it would continue to flourish.

Mr. Robert Heywood was gratified to see so large a meeting. He found, by referring to his book, that the attendance had never been so numerous as on the present day. Something always depended upon the weather, and something upon the locality of the place where the meeting was held, both of which were favourable on this occasion, but he had reason to believe the meetings of the Association were becoming more spirited and interesting.

The Chairman, after passing a merited encomium on the religious services of the day, proposed the health of the two officiating gentlemen—'The conductors of the public services in the chapel, and thanks to them for the manner in which they were performed.' The Rev. Messrs. Ragland and Howorth briefly ac-

known the notice which was taken of their services.

The Chairman next gave—'All seminaries of education established on catholic principles, and may they never fail in producing exemplary and efficient labourers in the vineyard of Christ.'

The Rev. T. May, of Stand, had been requested to make a few remarks upon the last toast, and it was gratifying to him to do so, for he entirely concurred in the sentiment therein expressed. He had been educated in the Dissenting Academy at Belfast, where the most catholic principles prevailed. He had had for his fellow-students Churchmen and Calvinists, Trinitarians and Unitarians; but these varieties of opinions had never interfered with their intercourse or friendship, and he felt convinced that their proximity to each other had fostered none but kindly feelings. He wondered how long the two great monopolies of learning in this country would be allowed to continue, without any effort being made to remodel their charters and constitution. If it be expected that such a movement will proceed from the learned dignitaries themselves, who preside over these institutions, we may wait till doomsday. The spirit of the age may reach them, and must reach them; but it must be expressed, before it can be heard, by the loud and commanding voice of public opinion.

After some prefatory observations the Chairman then gave—'The cause of education—may speedy and effectual measures be taken to render it universal.'

Mr. C. J. Darbishire rose to express his admiration of the last sentiment which proceeded from the chair. Education appeared to him to be the instrument by which everything enlightened and generous in the character of a nation must be achieved. He did not altogether concur in the objections urged by the Chairman against a national

education. Only let us have education as much diffused as the light of day, and he cared not whether it was national or not. Once let us feel the effects of it—let the great evil of ignorance be removed, and every other evil of a minor nature would be diminished and corrected. He was anxious to see the higher seminaries of education constructed upon catholic principles, in order that such principles might govern the lives of those who are intended to teach in our churches; but he was not less anxious that schools should be established in every town and village in the kingdom, on the same principle, for the sons and daughters of the people. If it was desirable to protect the mind of the accomplished minister of religion from the undue biases of prejudice and sectarianism, how much more desirable was it to preserve the minds of the children of the poor from such pernicious influences! He wished to see schools established everywhere, and the youth of the nation instructed in such principles as would lead them to see that their happiness consists in the cultivation of their understandings and their hearts.

The next toast proposed by the Chairman was 'Health and prosperity to the advocates of Unitarianism in Ireland and in Scotland.'

The Rev. Mr. Smith, late of Dundee, and now supplying at the meeting-house, Moor-lane, Bolton, deeply sympathized in the situation of the Unitarians, both in Ireland and in Scotland. He had been resident for some time past in the 'land of the mountain and the flood.' He had seen in that country the strong power of early impressions. From infancy the people of Scotland imbibed the doctrines of Calvinism. Was it any wonder that the progress of other opinions was slow? There was also something in the national character unfavourable to the spread of Unitarianism. He hardly knew how to characterize it. It secluded the real state of in-

dividual as well as national opinion from the gaze of the stranger. Though an observer of character, he was not sure that he understood the real opinions of any one individual in Scotland with whom he had been acquainted. Unitarianism, in the northern part of the island, required all the aid which could be afforded its advocates from this country. Not less did the sister-island stand in need of our warmest sympathies. He hoped, with the Chairman, that the Irish Unitarians would very soon determine to make a voluntary surrender of the *regium donum*. Ireland was borne down by an ecclesiastical oligarchy, which infested the land on which stood their forsaken and ruined churches, worse than the vipers and toads which croaked in its fens and marshes. Never was a poor country so paralyzed by a system of misrule and oppression; but he hoped a brighter day had begun to dawn upon her destinies, and that the doctrines of religious truth would acquire power and permanence by the diffusion of education, and the blessings of a milder and more generous government. He begged permission, before he sat down, to propose 'The health of the Chairman,' who had made his speeches on this, as on other occasions when he had the happiness to hear them, the vehicles for disseminating the noblest sentiments.

The Rev. F. Baker, in acknowledging the honour which had just been done him, not only by the complimentary manner in which his health had been proposed, but by the way in which it had been received, was at a loss to express himself in words exactly suited to the occasion. Were he given to bandy compliments, he should say, that such eloquence as was contained in the speech of the last gentleman, he had not very often heard. He was happy that such frequent opportunities occurred for the interchange of their sentiments. What he had been able

to do for the advancement of liberal opinions had fallen short of his own wishes, however indulgently they might be appreciated by others. He should always consider it as a part of his public duty to advocate the principles of truth and justice in politics, in morals, and in religion, believing, as he did, that they were all intimately and indissolubly connected. Before he sat down he desired to give them an opportunity of paying a tribute to those into whose labours we have entered, and who are gone to their reward, after sowing the seed, without being able to reap the fruits of their labours. He would propose that they should drink in silence, 'To the memory of those departed worthies who so ably and honestly defended the cause of Unitarian Christianity in times past—times of peril and persecution—times which we hope are now passed away for ever.'

The Chairman then gave as a toast, 'Success to the cause of truth in all parts of the world.' The Rev. J. Whitehead, of Cockey Moor, had been requested to speak to this sentiment. It contained a wish which every Christian, and especially every Christian, minister must entertain, whatever be his party or his opinions. He would be doing violence to his nature if he were not to confess, that it was one of his most ardent prayers that truth should prevail, for he was convinced that it was only in the spread of just principles and views of moral and religious truth, that any improvements could take place in the condition of man, and in the prospects of society.

The Chairman hoped he might be allowed to take particular notice of those who had honoured the meeting by their attendance, not being resident in the district, nor consequently members of the Association. He begged to propose 'The healths of the Rev. Mr. Dymock and the strangers, who have favoured us with their company on this occasion.'

The Rev. Mr. Dymock, of Warrington, acknowledged the compliment paid to himself and friends. He had on former occasions received much pleasure from a visit to one of the meetings of the Association, but he had never been so highly gratified as he had been with the proceedings of that day. Where there existed such a friendly spirit—such a pleasing emulation to do good as prevailed amongst all who had taken a part on that occasion, it was obvious that nothing but advantage could arise from such social intercourse. He hoped the Association would long continue in a career of usefulness.

The Chairman had one more toast to propose before they parted. It was one which he was sure they would receive with an expression of approbation, because it included the name of an individual whom some present had long known, and known only to honour, and whom none had known, even for a short period, without entertaining for him mingled feelings of affection and respect. His worth was not confined to his own flock, although among them it was most frequently exercised, but it was felt and appreciated throughout the district. If feelings akin to melancholy forced themselves upon the mind, in connexion with one whose life was so valuable and so endeared to us, it was only because a lingering complaint had for some time impaired that health which we so ardently wished to see re-established. The appearances of convalescence would, he hoped, be confirmed, and again enable him, whom they all looked upon as a counsellor and friend, to enjoy many happy years in the bosom of his family, and in that pastoral connexion which had been productive of so much mutual happiness. The Chairman concluded by proposing 'the improved health of the Rev. B. R. Davies, and the health of his congregation, with thanks to them for the use of their

chapel, and for their kind attentions throughout the day.'

The Rev. B. R. Davies could not be insensible to the kind tone of the Chairman's observations respecting himself. He had some time ago felt as if his days were numbered, and he had made up his mind to leave these scenes for ever. But since then, it had pleased God to restore him, in some degree, to health; and should his restoration be complete, one part of the happiness of the residue of his life would be to see those friends who now surrounded him renewing their visit to Chow-bent, and assembling, with himself and friends, to promote the cause of Christian truth and holiness.

The Spring Meeting of the Association was announced to take place at Chorley on the last Thursday in April of the ensuing year, on which occasion the Rev. F. Howorth, and the Rev. F. Knowles are expected to conduct the services.

CANTERBURY.

At the request of two or three influential individuals, a meeting was called at the General Baptist chapel here, on Sunday, October 7, to take into consideration the propriety of re-establishing our Sunday School, which had been discontinued some months on account of the scarcity of funds to support it. It was agreed to raise a boys' school immediately, and a girls' school in the ensuing spring; and Messrs. Cade, Ellerbeck, Hooker, Booth, and Parsons were appointed teachers. On Sunday last another meeting was held, to raise a subscription for supporting it, when subscriptions and donations to the amount of 4*l.* 4*s.* were received by the secretary. We intend opening on Sunday, the 28th inst., and expect about twenty boys to begin with. As we are at a loss for a catechism in unison with our tenets, perhaps you or one of your correspondents will inform us whether

there is one published by any one in our connexion suitable for our Sunday School.

Our Book Society continues to flourish, and much interest is excited in the perusal of our works. To the list of periodicals which we circulate, we have added the "Penny" and the "Saturday" Magazines, which contain much interesting information.

J. T. ELLERBECK.

LANCASTERIAN SCHOOL EXAMINATION.

I was present the other day at an annual examination of a Lancastrian school of boys, not a hundred miles from the metropolis; and am inclined to think that a brief report of it may not be unacceptable or useless to your readers. The book selected for the purpose was a compilation from the Bible, consisting of extracts from it, arranged under a series of titles, which served as theses for the supposed subsequent testimonies to their truth. A person attended from the Parent Institution to conduct the ceremony. The title pitched upon by the President was, 'Salvation by Christ.' Of course everything probable and improbable was pressed into the service, from the bruising of the serpent's head, to the Lamb in the Revelations. The catechist, proceeding in his work, alighted upon some questions, which the boys as unanimously as heretically answered by the word God, for which they were very properly corrected, and told to substitute, the Spirit. The synonyme, as it was termed, was then called for, and the reply duly followed, the Holy Ghost. Exposition was now the order of the day. What is meant by atonement?—Answer,—Satisfaction. What by reconciliation?—Answer,—Making friends. *Ex pede Herculem*,—I may be excused any further details.

And is this, then, our far-famed system of Bible, and Bible-only, education? The conceit is little less than broad farce, if the Sacred Records

are to be thus travestied, garbled, and put higgledy-piggledy together.

Let me enliven, and close these few remarks by a quotation, perhaps somewhat in point, from C. J. Fox's History—"How vain, then, how idle, how presumptuous, is the opinion, that laws can do everything; and how weak and pernicious the maxim founded on it, that *measures not men* are to be attended to!"

TE TACE.

The Rev. R. B. Aspland, of Chester, has accepted an invitation from the Lewin's Mead congregation, Bristol, to become co-pastor with the Rev. L. Carpenter, LL.D.

Died, on Thursday, 18th October, at her house in Clapton, in her forty-ninth year, Harriet Hester Spencer, eldest daughter of the late Dr. Spencer, formerly of Bristol. It was the earnest desire of this most estimable and useful woman not to be the subject of funereal eulogy. Her wishes are sacred to us, as is her memory.

Notice.

FINSBURY UNITARIAN CHAPEL will be re-opened for public worship on Sunday, 18th November, by W. J. Fox, minister of the chapel. Collections will be made towards defraying the expense of the repairs. Service to commence at eleven o'clock in the morning and half-past six in the evening.

Unitarian Publications.

'The Ways of Providence,' a sermon, by J. Taplin. 'Original Sin irrational and unscriptural,' by Dr. Drummond. 'Life of Capt. Heywood,' by Rev. E. Tagart. 'Daily Monitor,' by Charles Brooks, Hingham, U. S.

CONTENTS:—*America*.—Tuckerman's Report, 209. Danvers Meeting, 217. Feeble Churches, 229. *Canada*, 230. *Ireland*.—Instance of Bigotry, 230. *Scotland*.—Removal of Rev. W. Smith from Dundee, 233. Unitarian Statistics, 234. Royston, new Chapel, 235. Bolton District Association, 236. Canterbury Sunday School, 239. Lancastrian School, 240. Miscellaneous, 240.