

works. Theology engaged his attention when quite young, for he was only twenty-two years old when he published a book on "Errors concerning the Trinity," propounding what would now be called Unitarian views. Other works were issued from time to time, the most important of which was entitled "Christianismi Restitutio," or "The Restoration of Christianity." He held that the Reformers had not proceeded far enough in their inquiries, and he endeavored to point out how far they should go. But neither Roman Catholics nor Protestants were prepared to receive the book. At Vienna, in France, he was denounced to the Inquisition, seized, and condemned to die. But he managed to escape, wandered about various parts of Italy, and at length found his way to Switzerland. Calvin heard of his arrival at Geneva, and procured his arrest. He was examined, tried, condemned, and burnt alive (Oct. 17, 1553), to the everlasting disgrace of the Protestantism of the sixteenth century. It is one of the saddest chapters in ecclesiastical history.

But was he a Baptist? That he denied Infant Baptism is a certainty. Many persons have done the same, whom we would not have acknowledged as Baptists, their sentiments on other points being erroneous, or their practice faulty.

If ecclesiastical historians are to be believed, Servetus advocated notions which no Baptist of the nineteenth century would endorse.

Calvin says—"It would take too long to relate, with how many errors—yea, prodigious blasphemies—against God—the book abounds." (Letters of John Calvin, ii. 422.) But his testimony must not be adduced, because he was the enemy of Servetus, and persecuted him to death.

Mosheim says that he "most violently assailed the opinion held by the great body of Christians respecting the divine nature and the three persons in it." (Ecclesiastical History, Cont. xxi., Sec. 37.)

Dr. Thomas McAfee is "induced to think that the anti-trinitarian opinions were introduced into Italy by means of the writings of Servetus" (Reformation in Italy, p. 150).

The Rev. John Scott observes (Continuation of Milner's Church History, iii. 621) that Servetus was "led away by a daring, self-confident, speculating spirit into the extravagances of pantheism, virulent anti-trinitarianism, materialism, and anabaptism, all combined together."

Dr. W. L. Alexander speaks of the "heretical notions concerning the Trinity," held by Servetus, and of his "gross and insulting blasphemies" (Encyclopaedia Britannica, Art. "John Calvin").

"Pantheism, in our day," Felix Bungeer remarks (Calvin: his life, his labors, and his writings, p. 244). "is often taught, or combated, on the ground of social questions; between Calvin and Servetus, it was on the ground of dogma. Therefore, even if we were disposed to grant, dogmatically, less importance than Calvin conceded to the question of the Trinity, we must yet admit that Calvin was right in perceiving, in the system and method of Servetus, the subversion of Christianity. No Christian, not even the most latitudinarian, would judge otherwise if a new Servetus were to arise; he would only need such a conversation as Calvin relates having had, one day, before the Council, with the Spanish heretic. 'What!' said Calvin 'if one were to strike this pavement with his foot, and to say that he is trampling upon thy God, wouldst thou not be horrified at having subjected the majesty of God to such opprobrium?' Then Servetus said, 'I have no doubt that this bench, this cupboard, and all that can be shown me, are the substance of God.' And again when it was objected to him that, according to him, therefore, even the devil would be substantially God, he replied laughing, 'Do you doubt it? All things are part and parcel of God.'"

Dr. Henry (Life of Calvin, ii. 200), says that "Pantheistic and Platonic notions lay at the root of his system."

Now, whatever might be the correctness of his doctrinal sentiments on other subjects, it is manifest enough that the opinions of Servetus, as described by the writers quoted above, were destitute of foundation, either in reason or in Scripture. He might be sound on the baptismal and other questions, but in reference to the Divine nature he was far, far astray—made a spoil of "through philosophy and vain deceit."

We cannot claim Servetus as "a Baptist, in his views"—looking at our "Declaration of Faith and Practice."

For the Christian Messenger.

THE FIRST OF THE SERIES.

Mr. Editor.—I wish you a happy year. You deserve it. Without asking more money than heretofore you provide eight more columns. This is generous and ought to secure you happiness. Your paper was already large and richly freighted, doing good everywhere. But eight new columns will not make it too large. May you live to add another eight and be rewarded. This is all candid but it is also preliminary to a request. I want some portion of the new space. Say a column or so monthly. That, surely, is a moderate request. I know you will grant it. In fact, I consider it granted and proceed.

What to write and what not to write? Few questions more important. How much is written that ought not to be written. How much is written for merchandise. Books will soon be written and sold by the cord, on the other hand, how much is suffering to be written that somehow never gets written. How many things start up, flourish and establish themselves to whose roots the Editorial axe should be laid most vigorously and is not. The wicked things go on rooting themselves more firmly, branching more widely, blossoming more abundantly and never an axe uplifted against them. On the other hand how many a tender root that would grow and spread and load itself with fruit, good and wholesome, that dies for want of a little fostering care. How much good seed lies in good ground ready to spring up were but the Editorial dew to distil upon it, which distils not.

Then, what to read and what not to read? What Benefactor will stand forth and make a right selection? We have only seventy years or so, any of us. What a mistake to have left unread all our lives better books than we have read, when some guide might have led us to the richer ferd. Arise, Benefactor, and give us this boon. Select and prescribe a seventy years course of the very best reading. Is not this practicable? If one man is not equal to the task could not the nation select and appoint a Committee to do it? I wish the nation would consider this.

There is one comfort, however.—We know what book should head the list. There can be no doubt here.—THE BOOK demands to be read.—Whatever books are left unread let not the Bible be left unread. Read what else you may, if you do not read the Bible you are ignorant. It gives you the earliest history of things. For many centuries it is the only book that tells what was doing. It tells you what you are, whence you came, whither you go. It reveals the only way of escape from the punishment your sins deserve. It sets forth Jesus Christ the Saviour from sin. No other book does this. It tells what you are to do to fulfil the end for which you live. No other book does this. Search the Scriptures. The danger of an age of books is that the Bible may be put low on the list of books to be read—too low to be reached. Hence infidelity and all manner of errors flourish. Let these eight new columns do something to secure the reading of the Bible.

Enough for now.

HALLIBURTON.

The Christian Messenger.

Halifax, N. S., January 4th, 1871.

1871.

ASPECTS OF THE NEW YEAR.

The new year opens ominously. On all sides there are symptoms of disturbance and alarm. The nations of Europe are regarding each other with distrust, and some of them are trembling for their own safety.

Prussia, victorious beyond all former precedent, is bleeding at every pore, for the losses which her army has sustained have carried distress to households in all parts of her territory.

France, vexed, mortified, enraged at her defeats, but not yet humbled, invites greater suffering, and would rather starve than submit. Both the combatants in this "great duel," as it has been called, seem determined to fight on till compelled by sheer exhaustion to cease.

Italy is restless and ill at ease.

There are warring elements in her population, and a volcanic air prevails.

Spain's legislature has voted a king. But it is not certain that his reception will be hearty, or his term of office long. There is a numerous and defiant minority, sufficiently powerful, perhaps, to cause serious embroilment.

Holland and Belgium are looking on with uneasy feelings. They are afraid of being swallowed up. It is the fashion in these days to construct great powers by the absorption of the smaller.

Russia has assumed a threatening aspect, and evidently means mischief.

Turkey is not well prepared for the rough grasp of her northern neighbour, and claims the sympathy of old allies. Great Britain is appealed to—with what success remains yet to be seen, for the people are divided in opinion, some of them being desirous of holding on to the traditional policy, others preferring peace at any price.

Abroad, the atmosphere looks hazy in some directions.

China watches for an opportunity to get rid of the "outside barbarians," and commences operations by burning chapels and massacring missionaries and converts. The Chinese have forgotten that by the tea-craft they "have their wealth," and they fail to foresee the enormous amount of misery which would follow the suspension of commerce. Nothing could be so disastrous to them as to be left to themselves.

There are mischief-makers, too, on this continent. They would rather see Ulysses S. Grant employed as a General than as President. They would "let slip the dogs of war," utterly regardless of consequences, were they would secure power and wealth for themselves. It is much to be desired that the President may not allow himself to be duped and betrayed by them.

And thus, as we said, the new year opens ominously. But let us listen to the song of the Hebrew bard—"THE LORD REIGNETH." Too many, who call themselves Christians, would fain have us regard that song as little better than an old ballad or a nursery rhyme. Their aim is to glorify man. They would thrust God out of his own court. The world would soon go to ruin if they had the rule. There is another Hebrew song, relating to those who say, "Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us." It tells us that "He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh; the Lord shall have them in derision." So it has been, through successive ages, and so it will be, till "the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ."

Meanwhile, amid the jealousies of nations and their strivings for pre-eminence, which country, after all, is the greatest? Not that which has the broadest territory and the most numerous population; whose soldiers are expert in war; and the habits of whose people are gay and self-indulgent;—but the land where sound freedom is combined with firm government, and laws righteously and impartially administered; where the rights of honest industry are protected; where the fountains of knowledge are open to all; where science is religious, and religion intelligent; where fit provision is made for the destitute and afflicted; where the poor are assisted to help themselves, and the rich acknowledge their responsibilities to the Great Giver;—in a word, that country is the greatest which is the most enlightened, the most moral, the most obedient to the commands of "the King Eternal, Immortal, Invisible, the Only Wise God."

FIFTY YEARS AGO.

Our entry on a new year gives rise to various reflections. We look back on the past with gratitude—and with humiliation. We took forward to the future with seriousness—or with distrust—or with hope.

The contrast of the present with the past may furnish an interesting topic for contemplation.

Fifty years ago, we respected the king (George IV.) for his office sake; now, we esteem the sovereign for her virtues.

Fifty years ago, there were no railroads, no ocean steamships, no electric telegraphs.

Fifty years ago, Great Britain and the United States held five millions of their fellow-creatures in slavery. There are no slaves in those countries now.

Fifty years ago, Napoleon I. was pining away on the rock of St Helena. Now, Napoleon III. is a prisoner in Prussia.

Fifty years ago there were no steel pens, no postage stamps, no photographs, not to speak of many other inventions and improvements, which contribute materially to our convenience and comfort.

But we may turn to religious considerations.

Fifty years ago, none but members of the Church of England could bear office under the Crown, or in corporate towns and cities. That restriction has ceased to exist.

Fifty years ago, the Church-rate was an oppressive tax in England. It is now abolished.

Fifty years ago, a dissenting minister could not officiate at a marriage in England. Persons may now be married by their own ministers, of any religious denomination, or at a Registrar's office, without the intervention of a minister.

Fifty years ago, violent interruptions of non-episcopal worship, and cases of individual persecution for nonconformity were matters of frequent occurrence. Now, they are scarcely ever heard of. In the Evangelical Alliance, all denominations are represented, and Episcopalians unite with Baptists in the Revision of the Authorised Version of the Bible.

The state of our own denomination deserves notice. Its increase has been remarkable.

Fifty years ago, there were about six hundred Baptist Churches in Great Britain and Ireland, with thirty thousand members. The present returns are—Churches, 2600—members, 300,000.

Fifty years ago, there were thirty-eight Baptist Churches in London and its vicinity:—there are now two hundred and nineteen.

Fifty years ago, there were about five thousand Baptist Churches in the U. States, containing 350,000 members:—the Baptist Year Book for 1870 gives the following statistics—Churches, 15,143—Ordained Ministers, 8787—Members, 1,221,349.

Coming now to this Province, we may observe, that fifty years ago Edward Manning was labouring in Cornwallis—Joseph Dimock at Chester—George Dimock at Newport—John Burton at Halifax—James Munro in Onslow—Samuel McCully at Amherst—Thomas Handy Chipman at Nictaux—Thomas Ansley at Bridgetown—Peter Crandal at Digby Neck—Knock Turner at Weymouth—David Harris at Horton, temporarily supplying the Church during the absence of its Pastor, Theodore S. Harding, in New Brunswick—Robert Davis at Lunenburg—William Elder at Annapolis—David Nutter at Windsor—Charles Tupper at River Philip. David Nutter is still living, we believe; in the state of Maine, but retired from active labour. Dr. Tupper continues at work for the great Master. All the others have departed this life. But their paces have been supplied: the succession is kept up.

Fifty years ago, there were fifteen Churches in Nova Scotia:—there are now 158.

Fifty years ago, there were seven-teen ordained Baptist ministers in this Province:—there are now seventy-eight.

Fifty years ago, the members of our Churches were 1827 in number:—they are now 17,085.

Fifty years ago, we had no Academy—no College—no Christian Messenger—no Foreign Missionary Society—no Infirm Minister's Fund—no organized Home Missionary operations—and but few Sunday Schools.

While we are bound to record our thanksgivings to God for his great mercies, received and enjoyed during the last fifty years, we must not conceal facts of a discouraging kind. Among them is the great number of vacant Churches. It is stated above that we have seventy-eight ordained ministers. But of these, only about sixty are pastors. Some of them have more than one Church under their care;—yet it is believed that fifty Churches are at present destitute of regular pastoral supervision. The Lord's direction is still applicable—"Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest."

But this is not all. The old saying is, "God helps them that help themselves"; and the fable of Hercules and the waggoner applies to Christian as well as to heathen times. Obedience to the apostolic injunction—"As

every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another," would produce a healthy state of feeling, and preserve the Churches from decay.

EDUCATIONAL PROCEEDINGS IN ENGLAND.

Great interest was felt in the recent election of proper persons to form the new School Boards throughout the kingdom. There were ten Divisions, and about 300 polling places in the Metropolis, and the contest was somewhat exciting in some of the divisions. The following description of the polling places may give some idea of the proceedings of the day:—

At the entrance of the various polling places men and boys were distributing bills and thrusting cards into the hands of the voters, but within the polling rooms all the noise and excitement of a contested election had vanished. The voter first encountered the rate collector of his district and received a paper containing a list of the candidates, which he filled up by writing each name. He then folded up the voting paper and deposited it in the ballot box. In the majority of cases enclosed boxes like those in telegraph offices were provided, in which the voters filled up their lists without being overlooked, but in one polling room in the Lambeth division no provision of this sort had been made, and the voters filled up their lists at a small table near that at which the presiding officer and inspectors were sitting, and within their purview. One gentleman was, indeed, allowed to sit at this table, and saw how everyone voted. It is only fair to state, however, that few electors either appeared to court secrecy or to be apprehensive of intimidation.

As the poll did not close until eight o'clock on Tuesday night, the presiding officers in almost all the polling districts arranged to postpone the examination of the polling papers until the morning. A novel feature of the election was the appearance of women-ratepayers, who voted in considerable numbers, especially in the three districts containing lady-candidates. In the Tower Hamlets and elsewhere several married women who had heard that women could exercise the franchise presented themselves and claimed to vote in the absence of their husbands, who were at sea, &c.

In the City of London the successful candidates were: Rev. W. B. Rogers, Prebendary of St. Paul's, Rector of St. Botolph, Bishopsgate, and Chaplain to the Queen; Mr. Alderman Cotton; Mr. Samuel Morley, M. P.; Mr. W. S. Gover.

In Chelsea there is reason to believe that the election resulted in the return of the Rev. Canon Cromwell, Lord Lawrence, Mrs. Grey, and Mr. Kiell.

In Finsbury the successful candidates were: Mr. E. J. Tabrum, Mr. W. T. M'Cullagh-Torrens, M. P.; Rev. J. Rodgers; Mr. T. C. Clark; Sir F. Lyett; Mr. B. Luerat.

At Greenwich the successful candidates were: Miss Emily Davies, Spinster and Authoress; Rev. John Melville Glenie, M. A., Roman Catholic Priest; Rev. J. C. Miller, D. D., Vicar of Greenwich; the fourth is either Mr. John Maegregor, M. A. and Barrister-at-Law, or the Rev. Benjamin Waugh, Congregational minister.

In Hackney the successful candidates were: Mr. C. Reed, M. P.; Mr. William Green; Mr. T. B. Smithies; Mr. J. H. Crossman; Rev. J. A. Pictou.

In Lambeth the official return is Messrs Stiff (Nonconformist); Tresider; Tilson (Churchman); M'Arthur (Wesleyan); and Few (Churchman).

In Marylebone one of the most populous districts, the successful candidates were Miss Garrett, M. D., who headed the poll; Professor Huxley, the Rev. Prebendary Thorold, Rev. Dr. Angus, Mr. E. J. Hutchins (Roman Catholic), Mr. Hepworth Dixon, and Mr. James Watson. The following statement shows the total number of votes given for each of the seven elected candidates:—Garret, 47,858; Huxley, 13,494; Thorold, 12,186; Angus, 11,472; Hutchins, 9,253; Dixon, 9,031; Watson, 8,355.

In the Tower Hamlets, the successful candidates, were Mr. E. H. Currie; Mr. T. Scrutton; Mr. E. N. Baxton; Mr. W. Pearce; and Mr. A. Langdale.

Mr. Spurgeon gave a strong expression of opinion against clergymen being candidates. For doing this he was charged with inconsistency, seeing that he does so much in various ways beyond strictly ministerial work. In the December number of his magazine—the Sword and Trowel—he explains what he meant by his regret that clergymen and Dissenting ministers should be candidates for a seat on the School Board:—

Not with any view of defending ourselves, but solely that we may not with any reason be further misunderstood, we beg to say that all we meant was that in this case we do not think ministers are called to leave their spiritual work to become the directors of a movement which can just as well be managed by others. We do not undervalue national education, we prize it highly, and hope for the best results from it; neither should we object to ministers sitting upon the Board, if there were any occasion for their being there arising out of the scarcity of proper candidates; but to the preacher of the gospel, it is most important not to be needlessly entangled with the things of this life, but to make