

THE CHRISTIAN VISITOR.

SAINT JOHN N. B., APRIL 20, 1859.

AVOID EXTREMES.

Some writer has said that "the extreme of truth, lies just beside the dangerous ditch of error." A statement, alas! which has quite too often found an illustration in the lives of many. And yet how incautious and how reckless are some persons upon this very point; seeking to cherish and to defend with the strongest tenacity the most extreme points in philosophy, politics, or religion.

Radicalism is not confined to one subject, but exhibits itself in great variety and in direct opposites upon scores of subjects. But perhaps there is no one subject agitated among men, where more of real and constant caution is absolutely needed, than upon the subject of our holy religion. There are so many different views advocated, and so many appeals to men's prejudices and passions, that the greatest caution is necessary lest on the one hand we incur the danger of self-deception, and on the other we are aware of it, find that we have been casting stumbling blocks in the way of the weak and doubting. The safest and most useful course as a general rule, is to seek the proper medium between extreme and opposite views, and thus be able to secure a true conservative element of character that preserves from bigotry, and at the same time compromises no principle of truth and duty.

The tendency to extreme views is strongest, when, whether real or imaginary, we are anxious to resist what we regard as error. Who has not read of the horse who was blind in one eye? He was crossing a bridge upon which there was no railing. But being able to see only on one side, and being even too careful to avoid going off upon this, he unfortunately went off on the blind side. So it is sometimes with men in religious doctrine. They seem to have only one eye in a religious point of view, and hence they look only upon one side of the subject presented for their consideration. They see, or think they see, some great error, to avoid which they are almost sure to go into the opposite extreme.

We were reminded of this too frequent tendency, on hearing a certain minister of late, a man of talent and standing in his own denomination and in the community, who was labouring with all his might to show that the doctrine of "ELECTION BY GRACE," is not the doctrine of the Bible. But the dear man went so far in his zeal to annihilate this doctrine, that he unintentionally, we charitably presume, tipped off on the other extreme.

In the first place, he was fighting a merely ideal man or doctrine. A doctrine such as we have never heard any person preach. A mere "man of straw." And to show his utter detestation of this creation of his own fancy and imagination, he out-*arminianized* Arminius himself. No matter about the text, for that had nothing to do with the preacher's sermon or subject. So far as any connection existed between his text and his sermon, he might as well have taken "the full of the moon" for his text, as the one he selected. He commenced the presentation of the subject by stating,

1st. That God had made ample provision for the salvation of the entire human family. 2nd. Infinite wisdom would not establish means of grace without intending their application in the most general sense. 3rd. God has the power to apply the means of his own appointment, and 4th. It is his will that all men should be saved.

Now from such unqualified premises, what must be the necessary inference and conclusion? Why most surely, that all mankind must be saved. Indeed, the preacher himself seemed at last to discover this, and hence, to prove that such was not the case, he made the denial that such conclusions should follow, and very graciously quoted the text, "The wicked shall be turned into hell, with all the nations that forget God." By his admission this as a matter of course was considered all-sufficient; but to us, we must confess, it only amounted in the first place, to an affirmation, and in the second place, to a flat denial. Yes, where is the sound logic in all this? and by the way, the preacher boasted of his logic, and was as pompous and as windy in his declamation as though all the wisdom of the age, found its soul and centre in himself. We question however, whether that preacher approached the "mercy seat" as nearly and as intimately, when he entered his closet to pray for that discourse, as though he had kept both eyes open, and had not suffered himself to run into such an extreme.

So on the other hand, there is danger in opposing such heresies as the above, lest we tip off on the other side, and preach in such a manner as to leave men to forget their solemn responsibilities to their Maker, and to one another. To avoid the extremes to which we have referred, let each turn his and her attention to the Holy Bible. What are its teachings? should be the question, seriously, deliberately and prayerfully. Do not fear to believe, to receive, to advocate, what it teaches. It would lead "into all truth," and "the truth will make you free." As we begin, so we conclude with the remark, "AVOID EXTREMES."

CLOSING OF THE SESSION. The Legislature was prorogued on Wednesday last after an existence of sixty two days. The main feature of the Session was the King's College despatches which were debated over thirteen days and ended in a Bill regarding that institution into

question,—but unfortunately for himself he has, just like those in the House who took the same side of the question, forgotten the principles which he himself laid down in his opening and bases his whole argument upon "false premises"

We hold the Government responsible, not so much for what the Governor did as for what they, themselves, neglected to do. We intend in future numbers to give a few more of the most pointed speeches, on all sides of the subject, so that our readers may be able to form their own opinions on the merits of the question as well as on the consistency of a majority of their Representatives.

Another feature of the Session was the RAILWAY COMMITTEE. Their Report, at the last hour, we are happy to say exonerates the Commissioners, past and present, from all charges of extravagance or misappropriation—pronounces the Road as superior, and the accounts as satisfactory and well kept. The evidence taken by the Committee is to be published, and will afford us an occasion for returning to this subject.

An AGRICULTURAL BILL has become law, but we have not seen it and do not know what its import may be. Some time will have to transpire before we can lay accurate information before our readers as to all the doings of our Representatives. They have been so economical this year as to have been able to afford us a copy of the Journals; and as to printing Bills that would quit out of the question. We wish they would learn to "avoid extremes."

(From our Fredericton Correspondent) MESSRS EDITORS:—The Legislature has closed, and ten months will probably pass away, before the Assembly will meet again to deliberate upon those matters in which the social interests of the people are concerned; and, no doubt, some who have taken a part in these things, either through the press or in the legislature, will have been removed from the stage of action during that time, it is very important then, that all who are exerting an influence should endeavour to do so unbiased by party preferences or prejudices. You cannot fail to see that the larger portion of the press, while dealing with the political affairs of the Province, strive rather to operate upon the prejudices than upon the judgment and the intellect of the people. You are no doubt aware that a very good argument may be made, which is entirely based upon false premises. This is often the case in religious discussions, when dealt with by a clever mind, one is carried along, and almost convinced that the argument is correct, and only learns that it is all a fallacy by reverting to the premises upon which the whole is based. The same is equally true in reference to politics; it is therefore very important that those who are honest in their efforts to establish and promote correct principles, should examine closely the foundation upon which they attempt to build.

The discussion upon Mr. Steadman's resolution, has been the most important that has taken place during the Session. Many of the arguments, favourable to Steadman's resolutions, were drawn from the "Political Primer," made up of the speeches delivered in 1854 on a vote of want of confidence in the Executive Government at that time in power. The quotations given from speeches, made on that occasion, can only be understood when read in connection with the whole speech, and therefore gross injustice may be done a person by quoting a detached expression, and although the questions, discussed at that time were, in some respects, similar to those invested in Steadman's resolution, yet in others they were very dissimilar. At any rate the "Political Primer" forms no part of our Colonial Constitution,—no more than a file of newspapers.—It may, and no doubt does show individual inconsistencies, but it is not the source from which to derive our information, respecting constitutional questions.

In the few thoughts which I shall write upon this question I shall make no reference to the part taken by any person during that debate, the representatives as well as the press entertain a great diversity of opinion. When responsible government began first to be discussed here, which was nearly twenty years ago. Many thought it meant exactly the same mode of Government, as existed in the parent state,—where some one of the ministers of the Crown, or all of them, are responsible for every act done in the name of the sovereign. The principle of the Constitution—"The Queen can do no wrong"—is easily understood, but where a Governor is under a double responsibility, on the one hand to the sovereign who sends him here and whom he represents, and on the other to the people whom he governs, it must be apparent that his advisers can only be held responsible for his acts in the latter capacity.

This may be illustrated by supposing the sovereign to appoint two officers, the one to discharge the duties of Colonial Governor, the other to watch over Imperial interests. The duties of the former would be simply to administer the local affairs of the Colony, and, therefore, his council might justly be held responsible for every act of his administration, and the maxim, "The Governor can do no wrong," as long as he had acted under the advice of his Council, would very properly and correctly apply to him, but upon the other officer then would devolve duties of an entirely different nature,—which would consist in watching over and keeping the Imperial Government advised of everything done in the Colony which might affect the general interests of the empire.

Now if there are two distinct classes of duties required to be performed in a Colony (and there are; the Royal instructions and the Governor Commission plainly show) and if performed by two individuals, while in one class, such as devolve on the person whom I call the Colonial Governor, may properly be carried out by and with the advice of Executive Councillors, who are responsible to the people for his acts the duties to be performed by the other, or Imperial officer, are such as must be done in the exercise of his own judgment, and for the way in which he discharges them no one can be held responsible but himself. I have supposed this case, in order that my thoughts might be the more clearly understood, and, if my reasoning be correct, it must follow that the circumstances are not charges when both classes of duties are

performed by the same officer. In either case they must be viewed as entirely distinct, and, if so, an Executive Council can be held responsible only for the advice they give in the local affairs of the Province. While for those acts of the Governor concerning which they have no claim to be consulted, it would be unjust to hold them responsible. Now such was the case to which Mr. Steadman's resolution referred. The assembly passed an act suspending the grant to King's College and directing that the funds should be paid into the Treasury to be appropriated by the legislature. The endowment to be disposed of consisted in part of £1100 originally granted from the casual revenue, and subsequently charged on the Civil list fund.—This is a fund over which the Imperial Government never would admit the right of the legislature to have any control. The Casual revenue derived from the sale of land, timber, &c. had from the earlier history of the Province been considered crown revenue and such the crown exercised entire control over it. The House of Assembly complained that it was badly administered, and after much negotiation and two delegations to England Her Majesty's Government agreed to hand it all over to the Legislature on condition of a permanent grant of £14,500, being a sum sufficient to pay the salaries of the Governor, Judges and heads of department together with the King's College endowment. Over this £14,500, secured by a permanent act, the crown claimed the same unrestricted control which it had formerly exercised over the casual revenue, and it was laid down as a rule and strictly adhered to, that no alteration would be made in the salary enjoyed by any officer at the time of the passing of the civil list act, so long as such officer enjoyed his office; it being held that the faith of the crown was pledged to all such officers.

The Colonial Secretary in his despatch to the Governor informs him that he viewed the grant to King's College in the same light as a salary. The Governor appears to have taken the same view of it, and to have written the despatch complained of in consequence. Whether that despatch was couched in proper language has nothing to do with the argument, (you are acquainted with your Correspondent's views upon that point). It is sufficient for my purpose to shew that it was written under the impression that Imperial interests, or the pledged faith of the Crown, was involved; that it was one of those acts upon which he was not obliged to consult his Council and consequently one for which they ought not to be held responsible.

Were the Legislature to enact a law which would conflict with an act of the Imperial Parliament, or with a treaty between Her Majesty's Government and any foreign nation,—or lead to a violation of any pledge of the Crown, it would be the duty of the Governor at once to acquit the Colonial Secretary of the same, with the objections to the Bill. Or were an act to pass imposing charges on foreign vessels not borne by British ships, as it would bear variance with the Imperial law, the Governor would be required to pursue the same course. But would any one affirm that the Executive advisers of the Colonial or local Governor should be held responsible for the correspondence of the Imperial officer? His despatch might not be such as the people of the Province, or their representatives, would approve; and, if not, they might express dissent, or dissatisfaction, but he only who wrote the despatch could be held responsible for it, and his responsibility in matters touching Imperial interests, would be to the Government whose officer he was. I have troubled you with a longer letter than I had intended when I commenced.—If it were not that I should trespass too much upon you, I would make some quotations from certain papers and speeches, in justification of the position I have taken in this letter,—but I must content myself with one from a speech of Lord John Russell, he says: "I am not of opinion, as I have often declared, that the official servants of the Governor should be subject to exactly the same responsibility as the Ministers of this country, because the Governor's orders issue directly from the Crown, and it is unjust that the Representatives in the Assembly should visit with responsibility those who are not the authors of the act which they condemn." Lord John was speaking in reference to Canadian affairs.

If I have given a correct outline of the nature of the endowment to King's College, your readers will be able to judge whether it does not differ from an ordinary case of legislation which is purely local. In conclusion, the supporters of Steadman's Resolutions repeatedly stated that the Legislature were the judges as to how far the interest or honor of the Crown was involved in matters upon which we were legislating. I have only to say, that the great Nation, of which we form so small a part, has never delegated to others the right to determine how far its interest or honour was involved in any matters.

UNITED STATES CORRESPONDENCE. NEW YORK, April 9th, 1859. DEAR VISITOR:—Since I last addressed you, March has passed from us, and April with its tears and smiles is now in our midst. In the ceaseless din and commotion of city life one knows little of the beautiful changes now going on in the face of nature. Snow wreaths have vanished before April suns, soft winds whisper of sunny, southern climes, and the whole earth rejoices in the coming of bright, beautiful spring. The city too has its vernal manifestations. In the market are already displayed green peas and radishes, and for those who can afford the luxury—strawberries—at the modest price of one shilling per doz. But it is on Broadway that we find the most significant signs of spring. The shops are gorgeous with their display of "season goods" exhibited in the most bewildering and tempting profusion for the special benefit of the fair sex. With such an array of every thing that is exquisite in the dress line, it is not to be wondered at that many a lady finds herself in the melancholy condition of having "Nothing to Wear," and immediately seeks relief from this distressing state by a shopping excursion from which she returns with a complete wardrobe of the latest and most ample style. Upon which a small fortune may probably have been expended. But to more serious matters. Vigorous preparations are going forward for the approaching anniversary. Attempts are being made to liquidate the mission debt which has for so many years been an incubus upon the energies of that society. Thirty-six thousand dollars is the amount required, and instead of calling upon the wealthy

members for extra contributions an appeal is made to the masses within Zion's borders to contribute each one dollar. The sum is to be raised within six weeks, that is, prior to the annual meeting of the Society. It seems a feasible plan, and one which while it burdens no one will be most gratifying in its results.

I shall not fail to inform you of the proceedings at the coming meetings, which are expected to be of more than ordinary interest. I hear you have been raising a sum of money in some of your St. John churches to purchase the freedom of a slave. Surely this effort will not fail of its reward. A similar occurrence has lately transpired here, and has created some interest. A white woman has been appealing to the liberality of the people to aid her in purchasing the freedom of herself and five children. They had been set free by the will of their master lately deceased, but the heirs disputed the will, and determined to sell them "down South." To prevent this, a benevolent gentleman purchased them for \$1000 and then allowed the mother to come north. She collected \$500 in two cities and the remainder was raised here, chiefly in Plymouth church, whose pastor H. W. Beecher is an earnest advocate in behalf of the oppressed.

On Wednesday evening Mr. Beecher introduced the subject to his church, and on Sunday evening he thus alluded to it. "It is not improper for me to refer at this time to the interesting fact of the appearance before us, last Wednesday evening of a woman of Anglo-African blood, pleading for the freedom of herself and her five children; yet so Anglican, that I will defy any man to detect the African tint in her countenance. The time had expired already to which she was limited, but the money was immediately subscribed, and we telegraphed that a draft might be made upon us at eight for the amount. Last night I received a despatch stating that 'Ellen' and her five children are free. 'If she is present,' continued the speaker—a fine glow of sympathy and gratification upon his face, as I believe she is, this is the first instance which she has received that she is as free by man's law as she always was by God's gospel. And so—'through much toil and tribulation, in his Christian land, are Ellen and her five children set at last, in the very state where by the ordinance of God they were, when they were born, and where every human creature is when he is born—the state of freedom.'"

This is only one out of many similar instances in which the talents and enthusiasm of Mr. Beecher have been expended in the cause of the down-trodden sons of Africa. O what a withering, blighting curse is this Southern Slavery. The North too has its advocates for the horrid traffic in human beings. Surely the day must come when Africa so long oppressed will take her place among the nations of the earth and her people again exult in that freedom which is the glorious heritage of every human being.

YOUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.

DOMESTIC. NEWS OF THE WEEK.

We are informed by a communication from Mr. Abram McDonald, (New Canan) that a Mr. Keirstead and his son were attacked by a bear while in the act of executing vengeance upon him for stealing one of their sheep. After a severe struggle they succeeded in conquering old Bruin, but however until the son had been severely wounded, the father escaped without serious injury.

A new paper entitled the *Albion* was issued from the office of Mr. Geo. W. Day on Saturday last. The first sheet presented a very creditable appearance, both as regards its typography, and the arrangement and character of its articles. It is intended to fill the place of a literary paper, which has been long felt to be a necessity in this community; but which has heretofore been supplied by United States Journals.

We trust that the enterprise will meet with that success for which, the object of the Journal, and the necessities of the case might lead its proprietor confidently to hope. The Anti-Slavery meeting repeated on Monday evening in the Institute for the purpose of completing the purchase of Mrs. Lewis's Son, was well attended.

After a very appropriate and interesting introductory address by Dr. Botsford, the Rev. Mr. Washington was called upon. He related some incidents connected with his life while a slave, and gave a very graphic and telling account of his escape from bondage. The people were much interested in his remarks. Messrs. Wettsell and Watson next addressed the meeting in a very satisfactory manner. At the close of the meeting a subscription list was opened and a fair sum was realized.

We observe by the *New Brunswicker* that on Sunday last two young men named Peter Tracey and Michael Tillridge, robbed a named James A. Porter, about 18 years of age, on the Loch Lomond road, of his cap and 20 shillings in cash. By the promptitude of Capt. Scoullar, the scoundrels were arrested, and are now in jail awaiting their trial.

The following Bill, making several important amendments in the Police Act, is now law:—Be it Enacted by the Lieutenant Governor, Legislative Council, and Assembly, as follows: 1. Any person who shall by insulting or abusive language or behaviour, taunting epithets or threatening gestures, attempt to provoke another person to commit a breach of the peace, in any part of the City of St. John, or in any building therein; or whereby a breach of the peace may be committed, shall be liable for each offence to a penalty of not more than Forty Shillings.

2. That it shall be lawful for the Police Force of the said City, or any of them, to enter into any house, place or premises where liquor is sold; and no licensed Tavern-keeper shall sell any liquor in the said City after eleven o'clock at night, under a penalty upon the proprietor of Forty Shillings, to be recovered before the Police Magistrate in the same manner and to the same effect; as any other pecuniary penalty may be recovered at the Police Office of the City of Saint John.

3. Whenever any person shall be charged with the offence of larceny, or of receiving stolen goods, whose value the value of the articles stolen does not exceed the sum of Five Pounds, it shall be lawful for the Police Magistrate of the City of Saint John forthwith to hear and determine such offence, and on conviction by confession or otherwise, to commit the offender to the Common Gaol, or the Provincial Penitentiary at the discretion of the Magistrate, for any period not exceeding Twelve Months.—*Freeman.*

The following is the confession of Potter, the murderer:— "I am guilty! I came home about 10 o'clock on Wednesday night; my mother was up; she told me it was a fine time of night to come home. One of my brothers told me I had been over to Mr. Hanson's and carried a bottle of liquor to me; I told him I had not been there; he told me that I had; I told him I did not want any more stuff from him, or something to that amount. He told me then that if I did not keep still I should go out doors; I told him I should stay in. I went into the other part of the house and got a shingle maul, (an instrument made of hard wood, twelve inches long and six in width and breadth, with a handle about a foot long in the end,) with which I took the lives of them all. I went in and struck Alexander with the shingle maul; I hit him in the face and on the head, and struck him a number of times, and then struck Oliver several times on the head and face; they neither of them struggled after I struck them. My mother came into the room and got hold of me. I swung round and struck her with the maul, and she fell. She did not struggle. The house was on fire at that time. The candle was sitting on the wood-box, by the side of the stove. I tipped it off the box into the box of shavings. The shavings took fire, and I did not try to put the fire out. Then I made a clean sweep of all the rest in the house.—I then left the house." He subsequently admits killing the boy, and then to securing the house and securing the money, \$38 in all, with which he bought a bottle of liquor and started for New Brunswick. An examination of the bodies of the deceased showed that their souls were crushed or beaten in, and both arms of both the brothers were broken. The body of his mother was so badly burned that no signs of injuries could be recognized. Potter was committed to jail to await trial.

NOVA SCOTIA. The Nova Scotia Legislature is prorogued, and writs have been issued for a new election, which is to come off on the 12th of May.

A second edition of Dr. Cramp's pamphlet is now in press and is to be issued shortly. An appendix is to be subjoined which will contain articles on the following subjects: 1st. Was Peter Bishop of Rome. 2nd. The early history of Christianity in Britain. 3rd. The inspiration of the Scriptures. 4th. Apostolic succession.

A NOVA SCOTIA POEM.—A poem entitled "The Lone Horse," partly founded on fact, by Cassie Fairbanks, extending over fifteen pages, has just been issued from the press of James Bowers & Sons. It is a production of great merit. The murder of Rebecca Langley, on the Guysboro' road, in August 1854, is the theme of the gifted writer. Truth is stranger than fiction. And the melancholy fate of Becky Langley stands out in bold relief as an illustration.—*Journal.*

A correspondent writing from Handy Mountain, Nova Scotia, informs us that a glorious revival of religion is in progress in that place. Those who had fearfully backslidden have been humbled at the foot of the cross, and numbers have professed faith and followed Christ in Baptism. We rejoice with our esteemed Bro. Parker, the Pastor, and with those veteran disciples who have long borne the burden and heat of the day in this triumphant manifestation of Sovereign love.

We extract the following from the *Messenger*. The regular quarterly meeting of the Colchester County Temperance Convention was held at Polly Village, on Wednesday, 8th April. Among other matters the new Formative Bill came under consideration; when, after considerable discussion, the following resolutions were severally moved, seconded, and unanimously agreed to: 1st. This Convention regarding the Formative Prohibitory Bill, which has recently passed the House of Assembly, especially after the mis-named amendments, which have been engrained on it—as a "delusion and a snare," disclaims all responsibility in connection therewith, and protests against the result of the votes (when said bill is submitted to the people) being regarded as a test of public opinion on the subject of prohibition. 2nd. This Convention respectfully recommends to the friends of Temperance in each polling district of the County of Colchester, and throughout the Province generally, to disapprove of the recent action of the Legislature by refraining from voting on this question on the day of General Election.

3rd. That the Secretary be directed to transmit a copy of these resolutions to the Editors of the *Abolitionist*, *Wesleyan*, *Witness*, and *Messenger*, whom they hereby respectfully solicit to insert said resolutions in their respective papers. The *Messenger* in an editorial upon the subject republishes the opinions expressed in these resolutions, and considers the Bill a wise measure. THE NEWS BY THE CITY OF BALTIMORE. THE PEACE CONGRESS. The meeting of the new European Congress has been fixed for the 1st of May, probably at Baden. It will be attended by five Cabinet Ministers, namely—Almonstbury for England; Walewski for France; Gortchakoff for Russia; Buol for Austria; and Schrenk for Prussia. The Italian States will be indirectly represented. The English Government is said to have given its consent for the admission of Sardinia. Also that Lord Cowley will assist Malmebury, and M. Drouyn de L'Hays act second to Walewski. THE SPANISH CORRESPONDENT of the London *Times* says, that although Austria consents to attend the Congress, she has no belief that peace will be maintained, and therefore continues armaments. The latest advice are that while Piedmont will have a seat in Congress she will not have a vote, and that the Italian States will be admitted on the same conditions.