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THE UNITARIAN MOVEMENT IN NEW ENGLAND.

THE Unitarian movement in New England has a deeper signification for the philosopher and historian, than is brought out in the controversial works of those engaged in it. It is quite likely, too, that there is a deeper one than those in the midst of the dust, and smoke, and tumult of the contest, whether friends or foes, can discover for themselves, or even see when it is pointed out by others. It will be well for us, therefore, to retire, if we can, for a while from the scene of contention and turmoil, to some eminence from which we may view the field, unbiassed by personal feelings and interests, not only to see how goes the day, but also to see more clearly what the nature and object of the contest really are. This we now propose to do. We call the movement in the church, the Unitarian movement, because it is now known by that name, and because a better does not readily occur to us, rather than because we like it.

As it is probable that the results, to which we shall arrive, will not be satisfactory to the Unitarians in every particular, we wish to bespeak their good will, by showing that we fully appreciate their labors and motives, and the necessity there was that something should have been done. We are not, however, satisfied with the solution of the Unitarian movement that is now common; namely, that certain noble and manly souls, feeling the oppression and tyranny of the prevalent form of church-government and discipline, and gifted with a keener insight and a more sensitive con-

science than their contemporaries, seeing absurdity in their doctrines, deadness in their faith, and hollowness in their worship, and whatever other ill effects there might be of the prevalent theology and church-discipline, did, like brave men and true Christians, take their stand for liberty of conscience and freedom of inquiry; that, therefore, their preaching was necessarily controversial, occupied with tearing down Calvinism, rather than with building up any new system; that now, when this kind of preaching has done its work, and ceases to be interesting, there must, of course, be a temporary *still-stand*, in appearance at least, while this sect, having done its work as a reforming, is becoming a conservative one; and that in a fitting time, even now at hand, they will put forth and systematize the positive part of their faith, and be recognised in Christendom as a communion, whose position and views are well defined and generally known and respected. This solution of the phenomenon is plausible, and as true and philosophical perhaps, as any popular one that can be given. But there are some among us who desire something more than a popular solution. For such it is that we write, and with what degree of success, we humbly submit it to their judgment to decide.

We, however, agree with this popular solution in the main, so far as it goes. It describes only the surface. We would look into the nature of the deadness, corruption, and abuses of the church from which the Unitarians dissented. We would also look into the nature of the change they would bring us. The freedom for inquiring minds, and the liberty for the conscience, for which they so manfully and successfully contended, — are jewels beyond all price, — are the condition of all progress, — are the very atmosphere in which souls do grow; and while they labored for an end, which was felt by every living soul to be indispensable to its life, they had a strong hold on the heart of the community, and might calculate upon almost any degree of success. But these, indispensable as they are, are but the means to an ulterior end. They are the air we breathe, and therefore necessary; but they are not the food that we can live upon, nor the work to occupy our hearts and hands. When the Unitarians have secured these preparatory conditions, they must furnish the bread of life, or the souls that

have stood by them in their contest will famish off. While, then, we acknowledge what they have done, and look to them for a revival of Christianity, and a more full development of the Christian idea than can be effected by any other existing sect, which does not come upon the Unitarian platform of freedom for every inquiring mind, and liberty to conscience to decide for itself, in all cases, upon truth and duty, principles and measures; let us also be faithful to them, and point out their imperfections, the obstacles that oppose their progress, and the rocks and shoals that endanger their course.

Every system of theology grows out of and is shaped by the philosophical system of those by whom it is first digested and scientifically taught. For our present purpose, we shall divide all systems of philosophy into two classes, those that recognise innate ideas, and those that do not; and shall endeavor to show, in the course of our article, that there are but three distinct systems of theology founded upon the idea of one God, namely, Pantheism, Trinitarianism, and Unitarianism; the first two growing out of the philosophy that recognises innate ideas, and the last out of that which does not. Leaving Pantheism for the present out of view, the great question upon which the other two systems split, the point upon which individuals and sects turn in deciding upon the views they will adopt, is native depravity; and, therefore, we will in this article, for convenience' sake, call all those systems that hold to depravity, by the general name Trinitarian, and those that do not hold to depravity, and the dogmas generally and logically connected with it, Unitarian. On the side of the Trinitarians, there is greater logical consistency and completeness of system than there is on the other. The only thing that essentially modifies the Trinitarian systems, and furnishes a good ground for a subdivision, is the view they take of the freedom of the will, — or the answer they would give the question, whether man, in his unregenerate state, is able of himself to will or desire to be born of the Spirit and become holy. Edwards and Hopkins, for instance, answer the question in the negative. The Methodists and Lutherans, we believe, answer it in the affirmative. The doctrine of infant damnation, and a few others that might be named, we do not consider as either included in or excluded by the Trinitarian theory.

We would remark here, that by Trinitarianism in this article we mean exclusively the *Trinitarian theology*, without any reference to the form of church-government with which it may happen to be connected, or the degree of liberty which the different churches may allow their members, or the charity they may have for those who do not belong to them. Hence we include Episcopalians, Presbyterians, Orthodox Congregationalists, and Roman Catholics. So too, by Unitarianism we mean the *Unitarian theology* exclusively; for we can see no necessary or logical connexion between this theology, and that liberty of conscience, that freedom of inquiry, and that liberality of the construction put upon Christianity, which have characterized the Unitarians in our age, and which have done more, in our estimation, than the peculiarities of their theology, to give them that degree of success with which their efforts have been attended. We must request the reader to bear especially in mind that we speak of the different systems in the *abstract*, rather than as they have appeared in any of their particular manifestations. We by no means intend that the Orthodox of our New England in this nineteenth century, shall pocket all the good things that we shall say of Trinitarianism; much less would we have the Unitarians suppose that we think that all the hard things we are compelled in truth to say of their system, are applicable to them. They are better than their system, and, therefore, we have a hope of them; while the Orthodox are worse than theirs, and this, if anything, would lead us to despair of them.

Unitarianism has made its appearance frequently in the Church — in Paul of Samosata, Arius, Pelagius, the Waldenses, Socinus, and the Polish Unitarians: and in England some of her brightest ornaments and best scholars are now acknowledged to have been Unitarians. Under Constantine it well nigh gained the ascendancy, and in the succeeding reigns it was for several years the predominant faith. But the general, and perhaps we may say the uniform voice of the Church has been against it. Of course we would not so far beg the question as to include the Apostolic Age in our assertion. So far, then, as the Church of Christ is our authority in interpreting the religion of Christ, that authority is against Unitarianism.

This fact, and we are anxious not to overstate it, is so important, that we will pause a moment to give it a little more consideration. Should we regard Christ merely as a teacher, — the lowest view that can be taken of him, — and suppose that his spirit has no influence upon his followers, except through his doctrines, as that of Plato and Zeno also had; still the uniform testimony of the body of his followers, who had professedly made his doctrines their study, and who had disciplined their lives upon his principles, that such or such a doctrine was the Christian, and the true one, would be a very great authority to prove that it is so. This principle we recognise, and make use of in our inquiries into the system of any other founder of a religious sect, or school in philosophy, and then we regard it as sound and legitimate. Why is it not as sound and safe in our inquiries into Christianity, as in our inquiries into Platonism? But if we take a more spiritual view of Christ, as of a being that came to communicate himself to his followers; and consider how many promises he made to his disciples that he would be with them always, even unto the end of the world; that when two or three were gathered together in his name, he would be there in the midst of them; how he promised the Comforter, which is the Spirit of Truth, which should lead them into all truth; how the Church is spoken of by Paul as the body of which Christ is the life, the soul, — we shall see that there is a reason for regarding the authority of the Church, when opposed to an individual, or a comparatively small body of dissenters, which there is not in the case of Plato and other teachers. This, we are aware, is going very near to the basis of Episcopacy; but we ought not to be scared from the truth, by its proximity to what we in many respects very much dislike. Carry this view to the extreme point to which it tends, and it will make no difference to the disciple, whether a doctrine were uttered by the lips of Jesus Christ in person, or by Christ living in Paul or John; or finally, by Christ as the life and soul of the Church. To one who holds this view, the testimony of the Church would be decisive against Unitarianism. But we design to make no use of this argument any farther than merely to state it.

During the whole of this controversy, it has been maintained that the dogmas of the Trinitarian theology were

corruptions of Christianity, introduced into the popular faith by the Platonic fathers, in the early ages of the Church. This position was maintained by an array of arguments, sufficient to convince any one that could be convinced by such arguments. It contained the shell of the truth, but not its substance. It is true that the Trinitarian view of Christianity was first reduced to dogmatic formulas by these fathers. It was many years, and required the labors of many and great geniuses, before the Trinitarian scheme received its full development, and an adequate scientific statement. Theophilus of Antioch, we believe, first introduced the word Trinity, as applied to the Godhead. Clement of Alexandria uses it once, and then in reference to Paul's triad, Faith, Hope, and Charity. But at the time of the Council of Nice the doctrine of the Trinity had received a pretty definite statement. This scheme is of such a nature that one needs but to receive one of its points, to be in the way to embrace the rest; for it is a unity, and each of its parts implies all the rest. It is a little remarkable that every writer upon dogmatics, whose name has come down to us, associated with recollections of any permanent influence exerted upon or important service done to the Church, helped, in one way or other, to develop the Trinitarian scheme, until it may be said to have received its completion by the hand of Augustine.

The arguments adduced by the Unitarians prove nothing more, and from the nature of the case they could prove no more, than that the Trinitarian scheme received its development, systematic arrangement, and scientific statement, from these Platonic Fathers. This, we suppose, every intelligent Trinitarian will admit. The Unitarians further maintain that these Fathers received the substance of their system from the Platonic Philosophy, while the Trinitarians maintain that they derived it from Christianity. There can be but little if any doubt in the minds of those acquainted with the writings of Plato, that the Trinitarian scheme can be made out from them, or at least from principles contained in them. Thus far the presumption is in favor of the Unitarians. But the question then arises, whether it cannot equally well be made out from the Christian Scriptures. This the Trinitarians affirm, but the Unitarians deny it. We waive the question for the present.

But all agree that the Trinitarian scheme received its development, and was introduced into the Church, by the friends of the Platonic Philosophy; and this is all that we had in view in alluding to its origin as a system. Now Platonism is a spiritual philosophy. It is transcendental, — it is dynamical. Unitarianism, on the other hand, has very rarely, so far as we know, been taught or held by any man of eminence in the church who was a Platonist. Many adherents, indeed, of the sensuous philosophy have received the Trinitarian scheme. Indeed this was generally the case at the commencement of the Unitarian movement, and this it was, we think, which gave rise to that movement. Men with a sensuous philosophy, and material conceptions of spirit and spiritual things, made but sorry work in teaching dogmas that were developed, and could be understood, only by means of a spiritual philosophy. These dogmas, thus taught, became absurdities, and all persons who had boldness to think for themselves, and the sagacity to discern these absurdities, were dissatisfied with what was called Christianity. Out of this dissatisfaction grew the Unitarian movement. We think we do not err when we say that the Unitarian theology owes its reception, more to the fact of its having brought relief from a theology that was felt to be absurd and enslaving to the soul, than to any convictions, which it produced in the minds of men, of its own intrinsic worth. When the Trinitarian scheme, from a living spirit warm from the heart, became congealed into dogmas, its incongruity with the quickening truths of the gospel, and with the best instincts of humanity, were strongly felt. This made it unwelcome to the hearts of men. The Church, bent on self-preservation, and confident, even beyond a doubt, that she was right, resorted to every means she could, to enforce the reception of her doctrines. She threatened all the unconverted with eternal torments in the world to come. She represented every calamity that befel men in this world, as an indication of the displeasure of God at the stiff-necked generation who would not receive his statutes. And in proportion to the absurdity and shallowness and self-contradictions of her theology, *as her ministers taught it*, was the necessity for her to watch over the action of the minds and consciences of her members, lest

error and heresy should creep in. Hence too all free inquiry must be checked that heresy might be forestalled. Hence spiritual despotism.

The authors of the Unitarian movement, dissatisfied with this state of things, took their stand boldly for freedom and truth. They probably were too much permeated with the philosophy of their age, to have much sympathy with the Platonic Philosophy, through which alone they could come to such an understanding of Trinitarianism, as to make it seem intelligible and rational. They therefore associated with the liberty of conscience and freedom of inquiry, for which they so manfully contended, the Unitarian theology. This association, it seems to us, was wholly accidental; since there is nothing in Unitarianism itself that is more congenial to free inquiry and liberty of conscience, than there is in Trinitarianism. While its reformers opposed the popular theology, which so many disliked, and held out such promises of freedom and encouragement in all inquiries after the truth, and of toleration for the opinions of honest minds, they met with great success. But they were thus living upon the crumbs that fell from another's table. They did not live and grow from a principle of life within themselves. The talk about freedom soon got to be an old story. The Unitarians had, however, from the first, insisted upon morality and good works, much more than was common in any other of the denominations of their day. This gave them some life of their own, underived from and independent of any other denomination. But they need, in order to their success, a quickening and life-giving theology. Have they got it? This is the question we propose to discuss.

We have before alluded to the fact, that Unitarianism had frequently made its appearance in one form or another, and had as frequently been repudiated by the general and constant voice of the Church. This would seem to indicate that it is inconsistent with the spirit of Christianity.

We have before said that all systems of philosophy may be divided into two classes, — those which recognise innate ideas, and those which do not. There can be no other class. For those who do not believe in innate ideas, there is but one system of theology logically possible, and that is Unitarianism. For those who adopt the spiritual philos-

ophy, and hold to innate ideas, there are two systems logically possible. If one take ideas as his starting point, he comes to Pantheism. If he start from the fact of sin, he comes to Trinitarianism. Hence there are and can be but three systems of theology radically and specifically different from each other, based upon the idea of one God, — Unitarianism, Pantheism, and Trinitarianism.

If one deny innate ideas, he adopts a system of philosophy that is sensuous, for it traces the origin of all ideas to the senses; — it is empirical, for it teaches that we can know nothing except by experience; — and it is mechanical, for it ascribes to nature a causality different from that of God. If he have logical consistency in all his opinions and feelings, he is a Unitarian in his theology, a Whig in his politics, (if he be a citizen of our own country,) and a conservative in everything.

When we speak of one's adopting one or another system of philosophy, we do not mean to have it understood that we suppose that one in a hundred of those of whom we thus speak, has ever studied the different systems of philosophy, and deliberately chosen between them. Systems of philosophy are not made as we get up a constitution for a state or society; but they are foreordained in the constitutions of the men who receive them, and in the state of things in which they appear. One will belong to the school of philosophy that is most congenial to his temperament. Hence he may be said to belong to that school, even if he have never read a book or heard a lecture upon philosophy in his life. But suppose he begins to study philosophy. He examines the various systems, and it is certain that he will deliberately adopt that which he had before unconsciously acquiesced in. He will find it more true to the facts and experience of his own mind than any other. He will find that it harmonizes better with all his thoughts, feelings, and opinions, than any other, and therefore he will finally adopt it. Although it is very rare to find one logically consistent in all his opinions, still there is always a tendency that way, and one advances with a rapidity proportioned to the free, unbiassed, and unconstrained activity of his mind. The soul is such a unity in itself, that it tends with strength and speed proportioned to its vigor and spontaneity, to a unity in all

its opinions. This tendency to unity is an invariable law of our minds, and of all mind. Its influence is great,—far greater than the unreflecting suppose. It acts upon our thoughts and feelings both before they come into consciousness, and when they first come under the influence of the will, and does much to mould them during the process of their formation into opinions.

From this consideration of the law of unity, we are often led to speak of men as holding opinions, which in point of fact they do not hold, and to classify them with those from whom they thus apparently disagree. We classify them, not by the opinions they have adopted from interest, policy, or authority; but by those they have adopted from the free, unbiassed activity of their own minds, and which are therefore congenial to them. It requires but little sagacity to discriminate between the two.

The sensuous philosophy recognizes no source of ideas but the senses. These connect the mind with the outward material world, and consequently, since they have no originating power of their own, they can furnish us with the ideas of nothing except what is out of them. Now since there is nothing but material things out there, we can have no conception of spirit; and since all matter is limited, we can have no idea of the Infinite, the Eternal; and finally since there is no source of ideas but the senses, all our knowledge is empirical, and experience can give us no idea of the Absolute and the Necessary. Hence it follows that the Author and Cause of Nature cannot be called Infinite and Eternal, but only Indefinitely Powerful, Wise, Good. As we can know no absolute truth, all truths that we can know are conditional; and the condition upon which they all depend in the last analysis, is the will of the First Cause. Hence we can know nothing of our duty and destiny except by a revelation of His will, made through some chosen messenger; and this messenger can authenticate his claim to be received in his official capacity, only by doing what the First Cause alone can do, namely, work miracles. We can then know nothing more of the message, than that it is the will and the opinion of the Creator. Hence duty is nothing but the will of God, and truth is nothing but the opinion of God. Some of the conclusions, that we have now drawn from this sensuous premiss,

will be acknowledged by the disciples of this school, and some will not; yet all of them will be assumed and implied in their discourse and writings.

We have thus a God that is not Infinite, but only Indefinite; whose will is duty and whose opinion is truth,—and for no other assignable reason than because they are His will and opinion. We get at Him through the material outlying world, with which our senses acquaint us, and at abstract truth and duty only through Him. Now as the senses can bring in ideas of only what is in the material world, they can bring in nothing but ideas and conceptions of material things; and as, according to this theory, the mind in its action upon these ideas and conceptions can add no new element, our idea of spirit must be material, or, strictly speaking, we can have no idea of spirit. We only christen matter in some exceedingly subtle and attenuated form with that name. Hence spirit, or what this school call so, is treated in all their thoughts and speculations, as subject to material formulas and categories. It is treated as having impenetrability. Hence its relation to number, as one or more, its relation to time, past, present, and future; to space, as here or elsewhere, and as being in but one place at a time. Hence God, who is the living spirit, is only man purified from sin, and indefinitely enlarged. He yet sustains, like man, relation to quantity, number, time, and place. He is therefore called a person,—in a sense involving these relations. Now to say that three persons, one of whom is like what is above described, are one person in the same sense of the word that they are three persons, is an absurdity,—a contradiction in terms. Thus the sensuous philosophy denies the possibility of a Trinity; and, as men will never find in Revelation what their philosophy, or their reason, as they usually call it, tells them to be impossible, one who adopts this philosophy will feel obliged, especially if he be opposed to mysteries, to interpret every passage of Scripture which others regard as proving the Trinity, as proving no such doctrine.

This philosophy, by making the soul a mere *tabula rasa*, a mere capacity, denies the possibility of innate depravity or original sin. It denies all spontaneity of soul. It denies that there is a tendency of any kind, and maintains that we sin through the influence of bad education, exam-

ple, and so forth. Giving, as it does, all the properties of matter to spirit, such as extension, impenetrability, it denies the possibility of a common soul. I am one man, one individual unit. Adam is another, and we can be one in no other sense than I and my pen are one. The corruption of his nature can no more affect mine, than it can that of my pen. My soul is inclosed within this body of mine. It never saw Adam, had no opportunity to assent to or dissent from his transgression, and it must therefore be the height of injustice to punish or disable me in any way for it. I cannot be answerable for his act, and no more can I have been created with a tendency or proclivity to sin, in consequence of his sin. Thus we see that this philosophy denies innate depravity, and consequently we need no Saviour. Born free and pure, we can, if we will, keep a righteous law, and all that we need is a teacher of that law; it will indeed be of great service to us, if he will set us an example of obedience to it. It is unjust to require of any individual what he cannot do; so that even if one cannot keep a perfect law, he cannot justly be punished for it. He is justified if he do all that he can.

So too there can be no regeneration. Such a change can mean nothing more than improvement, — the becoming more pure, more prudent, more industrious, more benevolent, more honest. It is not a new birth, into a world of new thoughts, new hopes and feelings, new lights and new life. It is an improvement in the life, effected by breaking off bad habits and practices, and cultivating those that are good and reputable; it is not a thorough purging of the fountain of life. As there is nothing in the soul except what has been brought in from some outward, foreign source, there can be no need of a change more radical than that effected in what flows from, and is reflected back into, the outward world by the soul. Now as the moral character was formed by the influence of education, example, — what is outward to the soul, and to the free will of the individual, — so it can be changed, — regeneration can be effected, — by the proper change in the external influences that environ the individual, and by his resolutions to that purpose. As there is no power or tendency to evil intrinsic to the soul, behind and controlling the will, there is no need of any foreign influence. Man can effect his own regeneration.

Such is the sensuous philosophy, and the theology which it gives, when applied to the interpretation of divine things. We do not describe these views as being those held by the Unitarians in our neighborhood, nor, indeed, as those that have ever been held by any considerable number of Christians. Yet such we believe to be the logical deductions from their premises, and, consequently, the goal towards which they tend. Such would be the views held by any who should adopt this system of philosophy in all its logical consequences and scientific proportions. But this system is counteracted more or less, probably, in every mind by the influence of its better nature.

Another simultaneous movement in Christianity is the Rationalistic, which is Pantheistic, according to our classification. This movement grew out of the Unitarian movement. It did not, however, grow out of the Unitarian theology; it is not a carrying out of Unitarianism, for the two systems have different starting points, and tend in different directions. Unitarianism and Rationalism are, however, associated in the present case; but the association is, philosophically speaking, purely accidental. We have before remarked, that the liberty allowed to the individual conscience, and the encouragement given to free inquiry, have no necessary connexion with Unitarian theology any more than with the Trinitarian. Perhaps they have generally been associated wherever Unitarianism has appeared, under some of its various names, in the Church. But this is not attributable to their theology, but rather to the fact, that the Unitarians have always been, as a sect, inferior both in point of numbers and general influence, to the other sects with whom they are compared in these respects. Small, persecuted sects are always more tolerant than large and predominant ones are, except in cases where the small sect is under the influence of fanaticism. There is, perhaps, another reason why Unitarians have generally been more tolerant and liberal than other sects, and that is to be found in the fact that, as a general thing, they attach much less importance to theological opinions than to a moral and religious life. The connexion between the Unitarian and the Pantheist in the present case, however, is to be found in the encouragement which the former gave to freedom of inquiry. Had the popular theology, at the commencement

of the nineteenth century, been Unitarian, instead of being, as it was, an ossification of Trinitarianism, then the movement which was really made in favor of liberty of conscience and freedom of inquiry, would have been connected with the Trinitarian theology, and Trinitarianism would have sustained the same relation to Pantheism that Unitarianism now does.

The introduction of Pantheism and Rationalism into our country was thus. The sensuous philosophy, which had just before received its best statement, by one of England's best men and brightest ornaments, John Locke, and which then almost exclusively prevailed in the schools and in the reading of the common people, as well as in that of the learned classes, had laid its iron hand upon nearly or quite all men. It took from the books that stimulating and nourishing influence which they should have exerted upon the minds of their readers. It did not quicken men to sufficient mental activity and keenness of insight to make them perceive its imperfections. Hence the multitude received it with never a question of its truth. But the more enthusiastic and expansive minds felt the pressure severely. Perhaps they were not able to say what caused their misery. They were ignorant of the definite object they were to seek, and the Church forbade any general research, except on condition that the adventurer should return at last to rest in her own bosom. Moved by an instinct which she probably did not understand herself, she greatly preferred to have none wander in quest of truth and rest, to the strongest pledges they could give of their return. The Unitarian movement disenthralled the minds of men, and bade them wander wheresoever they might list in search of truth, and to rest in whatsoever views their own consciences might approve.

The attention of our students was then called to the literature of foreign countries. They wished to see how went the battle against sin and error there. They soon found a different philosophy in vogue, and one which seemed to explain the facts of their own experience and observation more to their satisfaction, than the one they had been accustomed to meet with in their books. In most cases the pleasure of the discovery was greatly heightened by the fact, that these men, in their previous inquiries, had come to

the same or similar conclusions. In some cases they had been too diffident to express them, while in others the expression of them had called forth manifest indications of disapprobation, if not open persecution.

The first fact that fixed the attention of these inquirers was the recognition of innate ideas, — a source of truth and spiritual influence hidden in the depths of soul. A fact so expansive in its nature, and so important in its consequences, filled the whole of their field of vision. They thus found that the whole of one side of the soul of man lay open to the Spiritual and the Ideal. This was the source of those ideas that are not of earth, earthy, — not of matter, material, but which transcend the outward world, and are beyond its power to give, — the ideas of the Infinite, the Eternal, the Absolute, the Necessary. They thus became acquainted with entities that have no relation to time, and place, and condition. They saw that God must be of this nature, or else they had found a greater than He. They saw too that there were essences that sustain no relation to quantity and number. Quantity, number, time, place, all belong to matter, but have no application to the eternal verities of God. Taking these for their point of departure, they come to a One, — the Essence of all things, — eternal, immutable, indivisible, excluding all idea of duality and plurality, of infinite attributes, and perfect in each, existing in its wholeness and entirety in each and every point of space, at any and every moment of time.

Pantheism in philosophy and religion in general is Rationalism in Christianity. This system is the result arrived at by all who take eternal and necessary ideas for their point of departure. By holding to a unity of essence, underlying as the basis all the diversities of things existent in nature, it rejects the doctrine of the Trinity, not like Unitarianism, by denying it, but by making an omni-unity, — not a three-in-one, but an all-in-one. Christ differs from other men only in degree, and the miracles he wrought differ from other men's acts, only as he differs from them. He is to other religious teachers, to Moses, Zoroaster, Socrates, Confucius, — what Shakspeare is to other poets, Phidias to sculptors, or Cuvier to naturalists; his relative superiority indeed being far greater than theirs.

Holding as they do to but one essence of all things,

which essence is God, Pantheists must deny the existence of essential evil. All evil is negative, — it is imperfection, non-growth. It is not essential, but modal. Of course there can be no such thing as hereditary sin, — a tendency positively sinful in the soul. Sin is not a wilful transgression of a righteous law, but the difficulty and obstruction which the Infinite meets with in entering into the finite. Regeneration is nothing but an ingress of God into the soul, before which sin disappears as darkness before the rising sun. Pantheists hold also to the atonement, or at-one-ment between the soul and God. This is strictly a unity or oneness of essence, to be brought about by the incarnation of the spirit of God, which is going on in us as we grow in holiness. As we grow wise, just, and pure, — in a word, holy, — we grow to be one with Him in mode, as we always were in essence. This atonement is effected by Christ, only in as far as he taught the manner in which it was to be accomplished more fully than any other, and gave us a better illustration of the method and result in his own person than any one else that has ever lived.

Such is the theology which those who believe in innate ideas arrive at, if they take those ideas as their point of departure. This system, as well as the Unitarian, and, indeed, almost all systems, appears naked and lifeless in a scientific statement. As systems, they have but little, if any, power.

The introduction of a spiritual philosophy into our community was, however, an incalculable good. The movement of Unitarians in favor of freedom and toleration had prepared a field for it. Their theology was a comparatively unimportant affair, and we think is destined to give place to another gradually, and perhaps imperceptibly to all except the closest observers. This will take place so soon as the object upon which their attention was at first mainly fixed, namely, freedom and toleration, shall have been made so secure as to allow their best minds to direct the full activity of their energies to this matter. We predict that the Unitarians of New England will be known in church history, not so much as reformers in theology, as in the character of champions for the rights of the soul, and advocates of investigation and progress. They prepared the way for the introduction of a better philosophy; which in

its turn will, if we mistake not, introduce a better theology. So soon as familiarity with the spiritual philosophy will allow all of its parts to assume their just proportions in their minds, the theologians will take sin, which seems to be one of the most prominent and obvious facts in the universe, as their point of departure; and then, relying upon the law of unity, which rules all minds to some extent, we predict Trinitarianism as the result.

The one object and aim, in which all theological systems and all religious culture centre, is the extermination of evil, — the great fact that everywhere stares us in the face, when we look abroad upon the world. It is natural, therefore, to ask in the outset, what is evil? To this question each of the three theological systems gives an answer, so different from those of the other two, as to modify every other part of its system, and the measures and efforts to which it tends. We have already said that the peculiarity of the Trinitarian system is, that it takes the spiritual philosophy as its guide and interpreter, and the fact of evil or sin as its point of departure. To get rid of evil is the problem; it is therefore necessary to a right solution, that one should have a definite notion of what evil is, — and one that is correct; at least it must be correct so far as the purposes of this problem are concerned. The development of the Trinitarian theory should therefore be preceded by a disquisition upon the nature of evil. This theory assumes it to be something positive. A question might be raised between the Trinitarian and the Pantheist, in which the Unitarian can have no part or interest, whether evil be essential or modal. But the answer has no bearing upon our present purpose. The Pantheist, by acknowledging but one essence of all things, must necessarily make that one essence homogeneous and good; and by ascribing, as he necessarily does, all causality to that one essence, which is God, he must deny not only that evil is essential, and this the Trinitarian may concede, but he must also deny that it is positive, which it must be to be causal. This the Trinitarian must maintain, and here join issue with the Pantheist. We do not propose to argue this question here. With the Pantheist evil is negative, like cold and dark; being negative, — nothing, — it can do nothing, it can make no resistance to good, and it

cannot influence the will and lead man to sin. Good can act upon the will. Love, Justice, Truth influence the will, and move us to do good. There is the day and the warm summer of life. When they cease to act there is sin, the winter of life, in which nothing can grow, the night without aurora or stars, in which no beauty can be seen. The Trinitarian says that evil is as causal as good. When good is absent the mind is not left vacant; the will is not left uninfluenced, but evil is present with us. Hate, for instance, is as influential upon the will to lead us to sin, as love is to lead us to good. You may say, if you please, that hate and love are essentially one and the same, different only in form. This is quite possible and even probable. The position has much, which if not decisive, is very weighty, in its favor. Thus it is impossible for one to hate that which under other circumstances he could not love; and the bitterness of one's hate is measured by the ardor with which he would love that same object or person under other circumstances. These considerations go far to show that hate and love are only different forms of the same essential feeling. Hate is only inverted love. Still, if it be so, the Trinitarian will maintain, this inversion takes place in the feeling before it comes into the consciousness, and consequently before it comes under the influence of the will; so that in relation to our actions, — our outward moral character, it is the same as though hate were in its essence different from love. Self-love, hate, lust, arise from those unexplored depths where the light of consciousness never shone, and where the influence of the will never extended. They come up behind the will, like an enemy from the dark, and force it into their service. You may explain the nature of these enemies as you please, their extensive control over the will is as certain as any fact of psychology.

These three views of evil can now be seen at a glance. The Unitarian denies that there is any such region from which influences, good or bad, may come up behind consciousness and the will. All actions, good and bad, issue from the will, and originate in the consciousness. One wills to love, and thereupon he loves. One wishes to weep, or repent and love God; he sets himself about it, and grief, repentance, and love to God ensue. Hence men are born free from sin, and the will is unbiassed and uncon-

strained in its choice of good or evil. The other two systems maintain that freewill is not the only source of influence, nor the only agent in forming the character. Its warp is spun and laid by God himself, and the woof only is the work of freewill. They agree in acknowledging a backdoor to the soul, through which messengers may come and go unperceived. The Pantheist says that through this door God sends his angels on messages of holy influence. Thereby enter love, hope, faith, truth. But the Trinitarian says that the Devil has discovered this private entrance, and comes in also with his foul and pestilential breath, bringing with him the servants of hell, — death, fear, envy, hate, lust, self-love, and all the train of ills that desolate the earth. In short, the Unitarian says that every act originates in freedom and from the will. The other two systems acknowledge the agency and influence of the will, but hold also to an influence exerted upon it, which originates behind consciousness, and biasses, and in some cases entirely controls the will. The Pantheist holds that these influences are good, and good only, while the Trinitarian holds that they are both good and evil. With the Unitarian, holiness consists in choosing the good; with the Pantheist it consists in submitting the will wholly and entirely to these divine influences. But the Trinitarian holds with the Unitarian, that holiness consists in choosing the good; and with the Pantheist, that it requires submission of the will wholly to the good influences, both of which man can do of himself; — and still further he holds, that it implies not only a resistance to the evil influences, but it also implies a freedom from them. This freedom man cannot of himself effect. This is the work of Christ. The Holy Spirit may enter to lead us unto Christ, for no one can so much as call Jesus Lord, but by the Holy Spirit; and none can come to the Father but through the Son. "If," says the Trinitarian, "we can always choose the good, — which is all that the Unitarian scheme requires, — and if we can always submit ourselves to the Holy Spirit, — which is all that Pantheism requires, — still the work is not done. We may have obeyed the law, and we may not have resisted the Holy Spirit; but we are not beyond temptation; we are not beyond the possibility of sinning. Though we may so choose, and so control our words and actions, that we never

do or say anything that is not kind and benevolent, still we find it quite beyond our power to keep ourselves wholly from feelings, which, unresisted, would lead us to be unkind and selfish. There will still be a fountain of evil within us; and, although we may possibly dam the current that flows from it, so that nothing wrong shall appear in our conduct, we can never remove the fountain itself. But this must be done; else our wills must run counter to the will of God, and we cannot be at one with Him."

Such is the Trinitarian view of evil. It is not our object here to prove it either true or false. We only seek to know what it is, that so we may have the point from which they take their departure,—the stand-point from which their system may be fairly seen and rightly understood. The fact, that there is this current setting towards evil in the human heart,—that every one is born into the world with a fountain of sin and corruption welling up in his soul, and to all appearance forming a part of it, is all that is necessary to the Trinitarian scheme. Other questions arise, and will be differently answered by different persons. But the discussion of these questions belongs to another place. The spiritual philosophy, by removing the enclosures that sunder soul from soul, and make a common humanity impossible, removes the difficulty lying in the way of the doctrine, that this common humanity, which is the basis and substratum of all individual souls, might have been not only represented by, but actually and substantially, embodied in Adam; and that as our bodies were formed from his, and partook of the diseases that were in it, so also our souls are formed of the essence of his. On this supposition, the corruption he introduced into his soul by transgression was introduced into all humanity, and in so far as each of us partakes of humanity we partake of this corruption. Divisions and enclosures which make many of one belong to matter. Spirit knows them not. Hence there is no presumption against the Adamic theory of the origin of sin. But the universal prevalence of sinful practices among the children of men seems to indicate a cause coextensive with the effect. A cause that resides in all men must reside in that which is common to them all. This is what we call humanity or human nature. It cannot reside in the freewill, for in that case its manifes-

tation would be contingent. For if all men are unbiassed and free to do or not to do a thing, we cannot suppose that all, without a single exception, would do it. If then all men commit sin, the inference is, that there is a tendency spontaneously active in every soul,—a tendency behind the will and prior to its activity. If it be not in the soul at the soul's birth, then it is born in the soul afterwards, and in either case we are entitled to call it innate depravity. It is not necessarily total, nor is it equal in all individuals. Its extent is to be ascertained by an examination of each individual case.

Now as this sinful nature is situated in the soul, behind the will, and must pass through, be augmented, restrained, or modified by the will on its way into activity, it is beyond the power of man to remove it. There must be some supernatural aid. This aid is found in Christ. Christ therefore cannot be a mere man. What then is he? He that made human nature can change it, and he only. This change is as much an act of supernatural agency as creation. Christ appeared in the world exercising the same power over material nature that was exercised over it at its creation. To call a dead man back into life is an act akin in its nature to the calling of the soul into a new body. So Christ's influence upon the soul is like to that of its creation. Was Christ then divine, one with God? We will not ask if he be *equal* with God, for that would imply a diversity of essence. But was he one with God, the same in essence and in power?

We have seen that the spiritual philosophy, by denying a human personality to God, removes all antecedent objection to this doctrine. To deny the personality of God, is to deny that He, being a spirit, sustains any relation to quantity, number, time, or space. It is not to deny that God is a free, self-determining, intelligent, self-conscious agent. God is one and not many. He is a unity, which is in its very nature indivisible. He is spirit. Now spirit, even in the chemical sense of the word, from which it is not unlikely that the other sense is derived, is not spoken of as subject to the relations of number. We speak of two bodies of water, two quantities of oxygen; but never of two waters or two oxygens. The names of fluids admit of no plural in grammar. There may be

many quantities or bodies, but not two fluids of the same kind. Now take away from a fluid, water, for instance, its extension, which is purely a property of matter, and you will destroy its relation to quantity, more and less. It then escapes our power of conception, but does not therefore become nothing. We have an idea of it still. By the same process it loses its relation to place. We can predicate things of it which we could not before. Thus I say of my blood, which sustains no relation to number, that it is in my hand, in my foot, and in my head, at one and the same time. Take away its extension, out of which grow its relations to quantity and place, and I should mean by it, as I cannot now, *all* of it, because in that case it would be indivisible, and I should never have an idea of a part in contradistinction from the whole. I should say that it, in its perfect unbroken wholeness and entirety, was in my hand, in my foot, and in my head, at one and the same time. Now it is said of Christ, that the fullness of the Godhead dwelt in him bodily, and if he had nothing in his nature heterogeneous to the divine nature, — nothing but sin is so, — then we may say of him that he is God. But unity is indivisible. While God is in his fulness and perfectness in Christ, he is not therefore absent from any other part or point of the universe. But, as in Christ there was no sin nor imperfection, but pure, free, unobstructed divinity, and as the divine unity is incapable of division or plurality, so he was very God. As it is one thing to create us, and another to guide us and lead us to Christ, through whom we have salvation and “justification from all that from which we could not be justified by the law of Moses,” or any other law, so a third agent is found necessary to guide us and lead us to Christ. This is called the Holy Spirit. Hence a Trinity. The influence of the Holy Spirit is general, anterior to, and in a sense independent of, the will. It leads us to Christ. The influence of Christ is special, and contingent upon the election of the individual will subject to the influence.

The necessity for regeneration grows out of the fact of a sinful nature, as the common ground and cause of sinful actions. The sin that men commit indicates a sinful nature, as clearly as the poetry they write indicates a poetic nature. The only way to make men secure against com-

mitting more sin, is to purge them from this sinful nature. Hence regeneration, to be complete and adequate to the necessity of the case, must be a change of nature, a radical change, though not necessarily a total one. Man must come to love God and his neighbor instead of the world and himself. His love which proceeds not from the will, but from a nature behind the will, must be changed. This must be done by a supernatural agent.

Being thus led by the Spirit of God to Christ, that we may have righteousness and holiness through him, we cease (gradually) to be influenced by those passions and appetites which had before led us to commit sin. We cease to live, and Christ liveth in us; so that we are saved not by our own righteousness, but by the righteousness of Christ living in us. We are justified by his faith. He by taking our nature upon him, and living in us, has fulfilled for us all righteousness, and wrought our salvation and acceptance with God, not out of us, but within us. Being purged from sin by him, we are brought to be one with the Father, even as he was one with him, and the atonement is made.

This, we believe, is a development of all the essential points of Trinitarianism, from sin as a point of departure, and the spiritual philosophy as the interpreter. We have entered thus into an examination of the three systems, to find data for a calculation of what is to be. Unitarianism, having often come up in the church, and been repudiated by it, is found to be contained in Trinitarianism. We regard it as the result of an attempt to explain Christianity by the sensual philosophy, instigated by a desire to get rid of mystery, and make everything clear and simple. If this philosophy is not true to psychology, then its interpretations of Christianity are wrong, and the soul is against them, and will finally triumph. We cannot enter into a general discussion of Unitarianism in a psychological view. Paul speaks of a “spiritual discernment” of things, which cannot well be a function of any one of the five senses. What is communion with the Holy Spirit? talking *to* him? or intercourse *with* him? Whence come the joy and peace in believing? through the five senses, or any one of them? By what avenue is that “manifestation of the Spirit given to every man to profit with,” made, the

eye, or the ear? We might put many other like questions, and should perhaps put them, if it would not seem to imply that we supposed Unitarians among us do actually adopt the system in all of its details. But let it be understood that we speak of Unitarianism as a theory, and not of the views that one and another man or any body of men actually hold. This is also true of what we have said of other systems. Probably no person holds either of them in all of its logical connexions, and unmingled with the others. Still the theory to which a man's leading views belong exerts a great influence over the success of his efforts, through the domineering influence of the love of unity. He, who says anything that does not grow out of his theory, finds his efforts comparatively powerless. The fates seem to be against him. His inconsistency is felt by, and influences many, who cannot tell what has affected them.

The fact, that Pantheism has so seldom appeared and made so little figure in the church, leaves us but slight room to expect that it will or can prevail to any extent. It is congenial as a system only to minds that are of a rare and peculiar cast. It has but little to recommend it, and promote its introduction to popular favor and reception, except its own intrinsic merits. Creative geniuses, who are always inclined to this view of things, are very rare, and seldom or never have any taste for systems as such. Common minds will materialize it, and then it becomes Atheism. The Pantheistic views of prayer and religious duty are too refined for the uneducated laboring classes, and too subtle and evanescent for the matter-of-fact business men, — the merchants, physicians, and lawyers. We speak, of course, generally; being well aware of the many exceptions to what we say. We know, too, that there is much in the system, which, when stated in glowing poetic language is very inspiring to the reader or hearer. Still we cannot think it possible that it should ever be the popular faith. It does not declare itself to be essential to the salvation of men's souls; and a system that does not do this with some show of plausibility, will receive but little attention from this busy self-seeking age. It says sin is an imperfection or non-growth; and if it is no more than this, men will not feel that it is a very bad thing after all. It

can never make them more unhappy than it does now; and if all other causes of unhappiness were removed, they think they should be about as happy as they desire. This reasoning, we admit, is purely selfish; but if we mistake not, it is such as men will adopt. There will always be a few to whom Pantheism will be congenial, and who, while the popular theology may be what it now is, will advocate it. But it seems to us that it can never prevail.

The question then is between Unitarianism and Trinitarianism. We incline to give a verdict for the latter. But let it be borne in mind, that by Trinitarianism we do not understand the doctrines and practices of the Orthodox Church, as that Church now is. The Orthodox Church, in order to succeed, or even sustain itself, must allow greater liberty to individual conscience, and encourage greater freedom of inquiry than heretofore; and finally, which is more than all the rest, it must apply the spiritual philosophy, as some of its members are beginning to do, to the interpretation and explanation of its dogmas. Else these are a mass of absurdity and contradiction; and the prop upon which they have hitherto rested, — textual authority, — is fast falling away. A few years ago it was enough to quote a few texts from any part of the Bible indiscriminately, which had been so explained as to tell in favor of a position, and however inconsistent or absurd that position might be, the objector was silenced by the declaration that it was a sin to question the word of God, — to put carnal reason above revelation. No intelligent Orthodox man would do so now. In a controversy, instead of wholesale quotations from Scripture, as in the case of Stuart's reply to Channing, he would attempt to show the reasonableness and consistency of his doctrine. The appeal would not be to the letter of Scripture, but to reason and common sense. The Orthodox must prepare themselves for this trial, both in respect to their doctrines and church-discipline. Their discipline must be reasonable and Christian. Their doctrines they must explain and interpret by a higher philosophy than they have generally done. Will they do this? We cannot answer for them. We hope they will. If not, the vineyard will be taken from them and given to other servants, who will render its fruits in due season.

It is not an easy matter to speak of the prospects of the

Unitarian body as it exists now amongst us. They have in several respects, incalculable advantages over Trinitarians. They have taken the position of reformers; and they have effected a glorious reform in church-government, and in the management of ecclesiastical affairs. They have made a great movement too in favor of freedom of inquiry, and thoroughness and fearlessness of investigation; and now, like the witch of Endor, they seemed terrified at the spirit they have called up. This would seem to indicate that the movement in favor of freedom and liberality was not the offspring of pure, disinterested love of truth and principle. They were oppressed by the existent state of things, and sought a better. There was nothing radical intended in the movement. It was made from convenience, rather than from a clear insight into, and a disinterested love of, first principles. What was their watchword? What spell would most move the souls of their hearers and readers? The Divine Unity? The Humanity of Christ? or any one of their theological doctrines? No; but liberty to the individual conscience, freedom of inquiry, and the encouragement of sound morality and good works. Now the encouragement of sound morality and good works is not the exclusive property of Unitarianism. It belongs equally to the various Trinitarian systems. Nay, it comes with more force and effect from them than from the Unitarians. But of what value are liberty of conscience and freedom for inquiring minds, *as ends*? Of none whatever. They are privileges and conditions by which we may do something; and as such they are invaluable. But unless we have something to do, and intend to do it too, they are worth nothing. We should therefore have much more hope of the ultimate success of those engaged in this movement, if they had made a distinct statement of the thing they intended to do, and in all their efforts for freedom and liberality, regarded them as only the means to some ulterior end, upon which they were intent. This would have given them greater earnestness and zeal. It would have called a more effective class of minds to their service. It would have awakened a greater enthusiasm in the congregations they address. The mass of the people felt none of those evils of which they complained, and by which they were moved to attempt a reformation. These

evils were felt by only a comparatively small and peculiarly situated class; and they only responded to the call. Hence the fact, that may be seen in almost any country village, where there is a Unitarian society, that the most wealthy, the most refined, the most highly educated, according to the standards of this world, belong, as a general thing, to that communion.

This fact, so far from being a source of encouragement, as it is generally considered, appears to us to be a source of discouragement. These same persons, of whom the boast is made, are not the class most given to religious enthusiasm. They are good, exemplary, well-meaning men; they are very benevolent and liberal in their contributions for the support of public worship, or of any other public good. But they are not the stuff that reformers are made of. We certainly would not accuse them of a want of feeling; but we would say that they are cool, deliberate, sound, practical men; nowise inclined to fanaticism. Now any religious movement, whether in the Church or out of it, from Moses until to-day, has owed its success mainly to something, which, if it be not fanaticism itself, has been so very like to it, that it has been called by that name by all contemporaries who did not sympathize with it. Now we say that these men, who form the body and substance of the Unitarian denomination, honest, respectable, useful, and worthy men as they are, are precisely the class that have always been found least inclined to devote themselves and all they have, so entirely and so unreservedly to the promotion of any social or religious reform, as is necessary to secure its success and triumph. These men then will not do the work. Will they countenance and support others in doing it? We hardly think they will. They have no taste for that particular kind of zeal and earnestness, that the cause requires. They will find fault, as in some cases it has already happened, that the preacher is a little too orthodox, when he approaches the orthodox only in point of zeal and earnestness.

The Unitarians, dissatisfied with the absurdities and contradictions in the popular faith, which were dignified and protected by the sacred name of mysteries, endeavored to make their system simple and intelligible to all. We cannot but think that in this they have gone a little too far.

If religion be nothing more than a statement of a man's duties to God, himself, and his neighbor, then clearly there can be no mysteries in it; and we may say with Foster, "that where mystery begins, religion ends." Many minds may be satisfied with such a religion, but we hardly believe that they were intended for guides and teachers to the people. If so, many in every congregation will know more than their teachers. They will see things that are mysteries, and of which such a preacher can give no satisfactory solution. Perhaps he cannot even see the difficulty at all. If he deny that it is any part of religion to enlighten men upon such points, then the inquirers will feel that there must be a something above religion. A religion that is perfectly plain, and clear, and intelligible, will not satisfy such souls; and they have but little sympathy for or interest in a sect that does not, as they are obliged to do, bow itself in humble reverence before the inexplicable. They have no confidence in the solutions given by those who see no mysteries nor difficulties, until they are pointed out to them by somebody else. They see that Unitarians make Christianity too plain,—plainer than from the very nature of the case it can possibly be; and they feel that this must be done by overlooking or denying the great facts which are either to be explained or believed as mysterious. Now it happens that this is precisely the class of minds that have most of the Promethean fire, and that are the most efficient as writers and speakers. Such men, if they are now engaged in the Unitarian movement at all, as doubtless many of them are, are so not from a love of their theology, but because they consider it the cause of freedom and humanity.

There is, moreover, a degree of religious experience that Unitarianism fails to satisfy. We will not say how genuine it may be; we only refer to the fact that it exists, and that too to a great extent. How common is the remark made by Trinitarians, that they hear from the Unitarians good moral essays, splendid literary performances, but no Christianity, no religion. In other words, the preaching of Unitarians does not satisfy their religious feelings and experience. These feelings may all be morbid and extravagant; but they exist, and oppose the progress of Unitarianism. The most ardent and enthusiastic, so long as they

feel no particular interest in religion, except as a promoter of good morals, and as a means of keeping the state in order, go to the Unitarian churches, and are satisfied for a while. They have no wants that are not satisfied, no feelings that are not met. While they are in this state there is much to attach them to this denomination. But no sooner are their religious feelings excited, than they go to their church hungering and thirsting for the bread of life, and receive the cold injunction, "go and be fed." They go; and some one else feeds them, and gathers them into his fold. There is usually a reaction in favor of the Unitarians, after the excitement is over. But the Trinitarians prosper when religious feeling is the highest; and the Unitarians after the excitement is passed. In such case, action and reaction are never equal in their final results. Such things are, and always have been, in the church. It does not answer the purpose to call them extravagant and mad, or to apply to them any other opprobrious epithet. The church should be the nursing mother to such spirits, and, even if it does not approve of such tumultuous out-breakings of the religious feelings, it must treat those subject to them with tenderness and respect, and show them that within her ample folds there is room enough for every variety and manifestation of the spirit.

To these discouragements we must add another, and we hardly know by what name to designate it. Perhaps it might be said that Unitarianism is too intellectual, too argumentative and explanatory; that it addresses itself too much to the intellect. It preaches good morals, it labors hard upon the evidences. We believe that a very great portion of the printed sermons of that denomination consists of attempts to prove what other denominations wisely take for granted, or to explain what others believe without an attempt to explain. Thus, while Unitarians are laboring to build up the faith, they are unconsciously pandering to the spirit of infidelity. They are explaining away what the infidels object to; or at least trying to see if they cannot interpret Christianity, so that the objectors will consent to receive it. They are attempting to convince doubters by arguments that must fall powerless upon the doubting mind. They are trying to make Christianity intelligible to the unregenerate, while they seem to have forgotten that

"the natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, *because they are spiritually discerned.*" We cannot but think that it is a wiser and more successful course, even when the object is to prove a doctrine to be true, to assume it in the outset to be true, and by treating it as true beyond a doubt, produce the feeling that it is so in the hearts of those who listen. One will convince an audience of doubters of the existence of God much quicker, and produce a much more permanent conviction, by awakening their feelings, so that they shall feel him stirring and moving in their inmost hearts, than he can by the most logical and best constructed argument coldly addressed to the understanding. A preacher will much sooner bring his hearers to an understanding of Christianity, by assuming it to be true, and then proceeding to urge upon them the repentance and religious discipline it requires, than he will by making use of the most ingenious explanations and the most happy and striking illustrations.

The last discouraging circumstance that we will mention, and by far the greatest, is one of those we brought against Pantheism; namely, that it does not declare itself to be necessary to the salvation of man. Systems, like men, must convince the world of their own importance, or they will be neglected. If the Unitarian preacher tells his congregation that regeneration and a religious life are necessary to salvation, the system that he adopts contradicts him while he is saying so. Sin, it says, is a mistake, tremendous in its consequences, but it can be avoided by more light and a firmer resolution. This is quite a different thing from telling one's hearers that they have the poison in the very essence of their souls; and that, unless it be washed out by some supernatural aid they are forever lost.

The Unitarian would convince us that our deeds are wrong. But we do not believe that any one ever became truly religious, without having felt, not only that his deeds were wrong, but that he, in his self-most self, was wrong; that he needed not only to *do* better, but to *be made* better. If so, then the doctrine of depravity is one that is found in the course of religious experience to be a most solemn and humiliating truth. We need not call it *total* depravity. Neither need it be so preached, as to discour-

age effort, or make one despair of salvation. But we do think that it must be felt to be true, before one can be truly a Christian. We have not the least doubt that it has been felt to be true, by the great mass of those who are now members of Unitarian churches. Yet if one were to ask them if they believed in the doctrine of depravity, they would say no; and truly; for they would have in their minds not the true doctrine, but the exaggerated view of it held forth by the popular Orthodox theology. If then this doctrine has been felt to be true by the most religious of the denomination, why should they not receive it into their theology, and profess to the world that they believe it? We think they will; but at present they are, as they have hitherto been, prevented, in a great measure, no doubt, by certain speculative difficulties connected with it.

You may tell people, if you please, how beautiful or pleasant a thing it is to attend public worship, and lead a pure and religious life. But if the present pleasure of the thing is all that you can advance in its favor, we fear you will find people too intent upon other pleasures to give you much attention. You must make them feel that it is necessary; and we do not see how this can be done, without convincing them that there is a depravity of soul, of which all partake, and from which they cannot free themselves, — but from which they must be washed, or there is no salvation for them. This depravity needs not to be represented as a failure or thwarting of the divine purposes. Who can tell but what God designed it and introduced it into human nature, as a means of bringing it to greater glory and happiness than it could otherwise be brought to; and provided in Christ a remedy from all eternity for this evil? In this case, the goodness of God is left untarnished; the heart is none the less humbled, and the dignity of human nature remains the same inspiring theme that it has ever been. But without a belief in depravity, you may convince people that religion is a good thing, and a pleasant thing, but you cannot convince them that it is necessary. Throw away this doctrine, and you throw away what gives the weight to your blow, — the momentum to your motion.

Unitarianism is sound, sober, good sense. But the moment a preacher rises to eloquence he rises out of his sys-

tem. What topics are there that belong to this system peculiarly, which are inspiring? Is there any one doctrine that is peculiar to Unitarian theology, and which serves to distinguish it from that of other denominations, which makes a man eloquent? Or rather does not each depend upon him for eloquence, to make it interesting and acceptable? Now a sect or party that would succeed, must have a leading and distinguishing idea that is inspiring, that gives eloquence, — a mouth and wisdom which no adversaries can either gainsay or resist. We say now that whatever inspiring topics the Unitarians have in their theology, they have in common with the Trinitarian denominations. The Universalists have the love of God, as shown in the final salvation of all men; the Orthodox have the depravity of man, and his salvation through Christ; but we look in vain for anything that the Unitarians have that can give eloquence, which other denominations have not also. Does one refer to the unity of God? Do not Trinitarians hold to it too? Besides, it is a truth that has but little to do with practical life, or the welfare of men.

We have spoken freely of the prospects of Unitarianism in the church. We are aware that we have represented these difficulties to be greater than they really are, *as they exist among us*. We repeat again, for we are anxious not to be misunderstood, that we have aimed to speak of Unitarianism and Unitarians in general, rather than of the particular Unitarians that live here in our midst, in New England. For them we have the highest respect; and we think we appreciate their labors and efforts as highly as any one can well do. Still we think their theology imperfect and inefficient. We think that in its principles and logical tendency, it is *allied* to the most barren of all systems. But we do not well see how, under all the circumstances of the case, it could have been much different. If we were situated as the pioneers in this movement were, and left to choose the course that we would pursue, we are not sure that we should have chosen a different one. We should have spoken loudly for freedom, and against the abuses and absurdities of the church, and of the popular theology. This we esteem a fair beginning; and now, having secured those ends, and cleared a way for our own theology, we would propose it and introduce it. The

theological views and the style of preaching of the Unitarian body among us, have changed very perceptibly within a few years. We think they will change more in as many years to come. No denomination stands on so good ground as it does. Free from creeds, free from church censure for heresy, professing a toleration for any opinion honestly held by any upright and conscientious man, and encouraging freedom of thought and inquiry, there is no measure of success too great to be hoped for its members, if they will adopt theological views that are lifegiving and spiritual, — if they will make their theology as good as, or rather the expression and statement of, their religious experience. It is much easier for them to do this, than for the Orthodox to breathe life into their dead formulas, and adopt that liberality and freedom without which no denomination can flourish in our age and country.

Perhaps what we expect is nothing more than would be *popularly* represented by saying, that the Unitarians must become more zealous and more deeply religious in their public teaching; that they must insist more upon the religious life; that they must preach from a deeper religious experience. This indeed would be a representation of the outer phase of the change we look for. But we are now seeking for the inner phase, — the change that takes place inwardly and not its outward appearance. We say then that they must have a deeper religious experience; or if they now have it, as we believe they have, they must allow it to have its legitimate influence upon their preaching and theology. This will effect the change we expect. And this surely will produce an approach towards the Trinitarianism we have described. Depravity, the Divinity of Christ, the Influence of the Holy Spirit, Election, Justification by Faith, will be facts of the religious life; not dogmas to be enforced upon the belief of the hearer, but the spontaneous and natural expressions of one's own experience.

While then we confidently expect this change in the theology of the Unitarians, we do not expect a return to scholastic or doctrinal preaching. The religious life, not the moral one, and the sanctification of the soul, will be the great topics dwelt upon. But these cannot be preach-

ed with much force without a recognition of the fact of depravity. Exhortation, without this, will be powerless. It is a fact of conscious experience. There may be, here and there, one so pure by nature as not to feel himself very depraved; but most people, we think, will recognise the truthfulness of the doctrine of depravity, when it is fairly stated. When this is admitted, all the rest follows, not as doctrine and science, but as life; not as something that the preacher is to insist upon, but as something that he may permit the members of his flock to say.

This system can, and probably will, embrace all that is good in the other two. It will embrace enough of Pantheism to recognise the presence and agency of God everywhere,—to take a lifeless nature from between God and the soul, and lay it open to his influences. It will also include all that is valuable in Unitarianism, properly so called,—the divine unity unbroken, the dignity of human nature, the example and sympathy of Jesus Christ, and a scrupulous attention to the outward life. Minds of all classes will then find themselves at home in the church. They will then find their duties explained and enforced, their hopes encouraged, their feelings interpreted and sympathized with, and their feeble aspirations directed to their proper object. Then will the divine idea of Christ be realized, and there will be founded upon him a church that shall be indeed a mother to the souls of men. No radical shall be so latitudinarian, as not to find the church broader than his most far-reaching thought;—no genius so aspiring, but it shall find the church lofty enough for all the creations of his fancy, and even towering with height on height far beyond them;—and no saint shall be so pious but that the church shall be more pious still.

But it will need great souls to be pillars in such an edifice; greater, we fear, than will find themselves at home or welcome in this unpropitious age. We would not complain of the age; but we must concede to those that do so, that it is not the mother of giants. The philosophy, the theology, the literature of an age, are the exponents of the greatness of the soul in that age, and of its general culture. Men may get together, calling themselves the heads of the church, and say such and such was the theology of the church in some palmy period, and therefore it shall be

now. But it is all in vain. Nothing real is ever thus effected by main force. Changes in the church and society come not of the flesh, neither by the will of man, but by the will of God. Let some General Assembly, or Convocation of the Clergy, resolve to remodel the church upon the theology of some more flourishing period; they may do it in form and in name, but not in reality. They are like David clothed in Saul's armor. They cannot carry it to the field, much less do battle when there. They would do better to go with their simple sling, and the five smooth stones,—truth, honesty, faith, hope, and charity. Any system, however liberal and generous it may be in itself, is contracted by its entrance into a narrow mind. It then loses its form and comeliness; and straightway all lofty and poetic souls become dissatisfied with it, and seek something nobler and more beautiful.

We had intended to say a word on the prospects of theological discussions and controversies, but our article has already reached such a length that we forbear.
