

What is Sectarianism.

President Quincy has furnished a singular and probably the most modern answer to this question. In his defense last week, before the board of overseers of Harvard College, he repelled the insinuation of Mr. Bancroft and others, that said college was sectarian. That it was in the hands of Unitarians he did not deny, but insisted that Unitarianism is not sectarianism, and then gave his definition of what sectarianism is, "in the abstract."—It consisted in this—"No salvation out of our communion." This was a sectarian dogma, and only those who held it were properly called sectarian. Who then we asked at once, are liable to the charge? Not Unitarians, nor Universalists, nor Quakers, Nor Methodists, nor Baptists, nor Episcopalians, nor the Orthodox. None of these denominations confine God in his works of grace to their own circles. We could think of none but the Roman Catholics and the Mohammedans who do so. Of the latter there are none in this country, and therefore the Romanists have all the sectarianism to themselves. No where else in all the land is there any such thing to be found. Is it likely that President Quincy ever discovered this glorious truth till Mr. Bancroft made his report? The ingenuity of man sometimes performs great feats in a moment of danger, and such a moment it was when all eyes seemed to be turned upon the religious character and influence of the college. What should be done? But just one thing,—put the sectarianism of the college out of sight,—and the easiest way to do this was by a definition. Happy thought! How much better this, than to meet in detail, all the vexing arguments and questions that might be thrust forward by ignorant men!

Is it true then that the definition cures the evil complained of? Will it blind the public to the evil? Will it check investigation?—Not at all. The fact still remains, that Harvard college is under the almost exclusive influence and control of Unitarians, and this the Venerable President admitted, when he put the question direct to the Board, "Is there any sect to whom you would sooner trust the interests of the college than to Unitarians?" He had just said—"If you separate Unitarians from the college, what then? Will you have no divinity taught there?—And if any, what kind shall it be? The result of the effort now making, if carried out, would be to make the college a Girard scheme excluding all religion and all clergymen.—But the object he thought was, not so much to get Unitarianism out, as to get some other sect in. Sectarianism he added, must exist, and then he put the above question, and immediately following this came the definition.

If Harvard college was not a state institution, its sectarianism would not be complained of. But being the property of the commonwealth, its appropriation and subserviency to the interests of a single denomination, be that denomination what it may, becomes a fit subject of investigation and complaint.

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