# The VIRGINIA RELIGIOUS MAGAZINE.

#### Vol. I.]

## MARCH 31, 1805.

### [No. 2.

Acquaint thy felf with God if thou would'st taste, His works. Admitted once to his embrace, Thou shalt perceive that thou wast blind before : Thine eye shall be instructed ; and thine heart, Made pure, shall reliss, with divine delight, Task. Task.

# Prospects of the state of Religion abroad.

### (Concluded.)

N Germany, the afpect of religion is undoubtedly mor favourable than it was before the convultions of the Before that frightful, but inflructive French revolution. period, the character of the princes, the labours of the faphilts, the effusions of the poets, the temper of the universities, the prejudices of the people, were hollike, not-only to found principles and pure morals, but even to genuine philolophy, folid learning, and good talle. These fatal fources of corruption, though in part checked, are by no means radically removed. One great caufe of error in opinion, and laxity in practice, among even the Protestant clergy of Germany, fprung from the fame origin which engendered most of the herefies of the first ages of Christianity. It was the pride of reason, the affectation, or the prejudice of a falle philosophy. Right reason, genuine wildom, happily accord with pure religion ; and in the Scriptures themfelves, are employed as fynonymous terms. The minds of a Socrates, or a Newton, would readily have been impelled to revere the doctrines of the gospel; and in favourable circumfances, might have been led to difplay their power. The minds of modern fophifis exhibit very different tempers, as well as talents. The fyllem of what is called fpeculative, or metaphilical philosophy, form at beft, but a feries of romances. When these involve no pernicious principles, and lead to no dangerous practice, they may be regarded as innocuous in themfelves, or anusing exercises to the human under-

### Prospells of the state

flanding. But unhappily, like other romances, they are prone to ergrofs too much the mind. diffurb the imagination, When their principles are falfe, and agitate the paffions. and their tendency permicious, their effects mult prove fill more fatally deftructive. Such have been the character and effects of many modern fpeculations of pretended philosophy. In Germany, lyftems and theories, called philosophical, often of extreme abfurdity, inconfiftencies, or contrarity, have fucceeded each other with amazing rapidity. The fpirit of fophiftry, the arrogance of dognatifm, or the propenfities to fcepticifm have thus been wickedly foffered. It was the falhion for princes and fubjects to affect to be philosophers. The clergy, forgetting the dignity of their offices, the immu. table fanctity of religion, and firm features of divine truth, yield to the fame infatuation. To pleafe fpeculating princes, to accommodate themfelves to fophillicated univerfities, cr to indulge the natural pride of the human mind, many of them affected to be philosophical preachers. As the philo. fophy of the day was fo perverted or pernicious, it may eafily be conceived how foul was the taint of its imprefien on the features of their fermons, and the fpirit of their character. In the ministrations of religion, nothing can be fo abfurd as this affectation of philolophy, even where the fyllem adopted is otherwife inoffenfive. Abstract metaphifics, or refearches in their proper place, may amufe inquifitive and fludious minds : but metaphyfical fermons, affected speculative difcuffions are the fcorn of the wife, an infult to the hearers, and a mockery of religion. When thilefophy attempts to graft its theories upon religion, herefy, abfurdity and delufion will appear as the fruits. In Germany, the defire to accommodate religion to the philosophy of the day, at one time feemed to have defaced from the difcourfes of the clergy, in many places, every veflige and feature of the gofpel of Chrift. The fophifts themfelves laugh at fuch philofophiling divines, the people defert them in hopelefs indifference; they are left to brood in their fwelling imaginations over the folace of their cold dreams; and religion, like a blafted tree, feems to wither at their touch. In Germany, the tendency of fuch infatuation is now, in part, perceived even in courts and univerfities : in the country, and among the people, it never was fo widely fpread. Even the more formidable alarms which have been excited from the pernicious projects of mafonic confpirators, illuminati, and confederated tophills. have only been confined to a narrow circle, though intended to diffuse ruin and convulsions to the wideft

### of Religion nbroad.

range. Happily, the projects are unknown, and the poifon untailed, through the great mails of the people. Happily through the good providence of God, we can now hail more favourable prospects of the frate and reception of religion.

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The condition and circu riftances of the United Provinces, widely differ from those of Garmany. Infulated by their limits, their language, their interests, their habits, from the reft of Europe, they admit innovations more tardily, and retain their cultoms and other principles with more pertinacity or firmaels. The Protestant religion in a very limple and falutary form, has long been established in this country .----Perhaps, it has as little degenerated from its original confritution, as in any other region of Europe. There are, indeed, many Roman Catholics in Holland. There is a multitude of Jews in Amiter lam. The Mennonites still are found in confiderable numbers, especially at Haerlem. All fects are tolerater 1: and, from the freedom of the prefs, books of infidelity, and scepticism have, in former times, often been printed in Flolland, which could not find publishers in any other country : but these books were foon scattered to other quarters, and received but little encouragement in the Provinces themfelves. It is not the delafion of fophillry, the vices of courts, nor the feductions of poetry, that can be supposed to pervert the Dutch. The temptations which un. avoidably attend extensive commerce, and an unceasing purfuit of gain, are afferted to have rather marked the unfavorable features of their character. But, however prevalent these may be among the richer classes, they affect little the great body of the people. Among these are still found many happy effects of a pure religion ; much reverence for its doctrines and inflitutions, and great attention to the right education of their children, and difcipline of their families .---The clergy difplay firiking examples of Prefbyterian fimplicity and firicinels of manners : they in general, are learned in the fciences that pertain to their profession, exemplary in their conduct, regular, and even first in their attention to their duties, and often zealous in their performance. From the recent innovations of the French in Holland, the clergy have fuffered confiderably. In Amfterdam, eight Paftors were driven from their churches, becaufe they refused their oaths to the new conflictution, and, to the deep regret of the people, who still fork their ministrations, were supplanted by others, who are regarded with indifference or contempt.

The Constitution of the church is Prefbyterian; the doctrines are Calvanistic, and are generally taught not nominal-

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Iv. merely, but explicitely; the difcipline is first and regularly exercised. Their mode of worship is like that of the Scots church, simple and primitive, and generally fervent, interesting, and well attended. They, however, admit organs into their churches, of which, that at Haerlem, is reckoned the finess in the world. At Rotterdam, they are at prefeat erecting an organ, valued at  $f_{20,000}$  Sterling. Freedoms and levities appear in fome towns upon the Sabbath, which once were regarded with abhorrence in Scotland : but which, if suffered to increase, will do more harm there than in Holland; because regarded as a departure from all religion, which is not the featiment of the Dutch.

The Univerfities of the United Provinces have been long deemed very pure feminaries of education, highly refpecta. ble for learning, piety and difcipline, and particularly attentive to those fciences which are connected with theology .-They have produced many eminent divines and profound fcholars. Classical literature, the oriental languages, biblical criticifin, fyllematic theology, have been cultivated in them with peculiar ardor and fuccefs. Theology is the only fcience which can, with just claims, be taught fynthetically. A revelation from God, if rightly understood, must be fixed and immutable in its doctrines. The Dutch feem to act upon this principle; and are remarkably fleady in their attachment to the creed they profefs. Happily for them, that creed is fcriptural, fimple, and found. Their ftedfaltnefs to the religion of their forefathers is wife and fafe. In other fciences, which boall no fuch authority, and are to be fludied in a different manner, this unbending disposition might not merit fo much praise : as when, in their medical inflitutions, they will permit no man to be wifer than their countryman Boerhnave, or to contradict his aphorifms.

It is remarkable, that in fo fmall a flate, there are no lefs than five univertities, befides inferior colleges, academics, and excellent fchools, in every town of note. Of the reformed Calviniftic church, there are fifteen hundred and feventy preachers—literature, and the knowledge of religion are thus very generally diffused. Their elements, principles, and forms, are rigidly exacted of the young, and respected with feeming reverence by all ages. Some intelligent and devout chriftians who refide in the country, affirm that, as the Dutch are fingularly cleanly in their mode of life, yet often very indelicate in their actions : fo while they are rigidly attentive to the form, they are often fadly eftranged from the power of godlinefs. This, however, is a cenfure, that unhappily may 11.

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be applied to every country where the inflications of religion have been introduced, and long familiar. But contemptible as mere forms are in themfelves, they are yet highly use ful in human fociety, and even in the church of Chrift. And where the forms are are in themfelves good, many fubftantial advantages may flow from their obfervance; though, from the infitmities of human nature, they are ever liable to be abafed. But God even connects his bleflings with the external ordinances and means of grace, which he preferibes. It may be trufted, that they are not for frequently feperated in Holland.

The religious inflitutions of the Proteftant cantons of Switzerland, are fimilar to those of Holland. Their admired fimplicity of manner and purity of principles, were reprefented, as having fuffered melancholy abatements, even before the late convultions which have diffracted that unhappy country. Still the impressions of the good feed fown, and advantages formerly possefield, are not effaced, and amidst their mountains are yet found examples of primitive piety, discipline and zeal.

From the most recent accounts, the aspect of religion in Benmark and Sweden, as in Germany, is more favorable, than at fome former periods. Though French manners and philosophy had tainted the higher ranks in Sweden and Denmark, the luxury and temptations, incident to fimilar flations, had foftered their concomitant vices ; these had never infected to any extent, the great body of the people. The eftablished religion in both kingdoms is Lutheran, with some shades of diffinction, chiefly in the power, titles, and diffribution of the clergy. Manners, fchools, difcipline, the poor are under falutary regulations, and the happy effects, and principles of the Reformation, are fill zealoully retained.-In Lapland and Finland there still prevails a melancholy gloom of almost inaccessable heathenism : but in the other provinces, the Protestant faith, and truth of the golpel, are attended with confpicuous and invaluable advantages.

Minds that are narrow, bigoted to the forms of their own church, or actuated by zeal, not according to knowledge, are prone to deny all merit or utility to inflitutions that differ from their own, or to limit by their own prejudices, the councils of God, and the features of holinefs. Enlightened and benevolent Christians will derive fatisfaction from viewing the diffusion and effects of pure religion, whatever be its form, and, like Paul, every way, whether in pretence or in truth, Christ is preached, therein they do rejoice, and will rejoine.

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# To the Editors of the VIRGINIA RELIGIOUS MAGAZINE.

The follo sing thort account of the French Prophets, has been extract. ed from HANNAH ADAMS's View of Religions, in order that it might be published in your Magazine, if you should think it worthy of the attention of your readers.

QUADRATUS.

HEY first appeared in Dauphiny and Vivarais. In the year 1688, five or fix hundred Protestants of both lex. es, gave themfelves out to be prophets, and infpired of the Holy Ghofl. They foon became fo numerous, that there were many thousands of them inspired. \* They had ftrange fits, which came upon them with tremblings and faintings, as in a fwoon, which made them firetch out their arms and legs, and flagger feveral times before they dropped down. They flruck themfelves with their hands ; fell on their backs ; fhut their eyes; and heaved with their breafts. They remained a while in trances; and coming out of them with twitchings, uttered all which came in their mouths They faid they faw heavens open, the angels paradise, and hell. Thofe, who were just on the point of receiving the spirit, dropped down, not only in the affemblies, crying out mercy, but in the fields, and in their own houses. The least of the affemblies amounted to four or five hundred, and fome of them even to three or four thougand perfons. The burden of their prophefe was amend your lives ; repent ye, the end of all things is at hand. The hills refonded with their loud cries for mercy; and with imprecations against the priests, the church the pope &c. And all they faid at thefe times, was heard and received with reverance and awe.

In the year 1706, three or four of these prophets came over to England, and brought their prophetic spirit along with them; which discovered itself in the fane ways and manners, by extactes, agitations, &c. as it had done in France. And they propagated the like spirit to others, so that before the year was out, there were two or three hundred of these prophets in, and about London, of both sexes, of all ages, men, women, and children and they delivered four or five hundred prophetic warnings.

I be great thing they pretended by their fpirit was, to give warning of the near approach of the kingdom of God, the happy times of the church, the millenium state. They declared,

\* They were of all fexes, but most of them were boys and freak girls, from fix or feven, to twenty five years of age. that all the great things they predicted would be manifest over the whole earth, within the term of three years.

These prophets also pretended to the gift of languages; of differing the fecrets of the heart; the gift of the ministration of the fame spirit to others by the laying on of hands, and the gift of healing.

I o prove they were really infpired by the Holy Ghoft, they alledged the complete joy and fatisfaction they experienced; the fpirit of prayer which was poured forth upon them; and the anfwer of their prayers by God.

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MESSRS EDITORS,

By inferting "a fhort account of the People known by the Name of Shakers, or Shaking Quakers," from the Theological Magazine, in the fecond number of the Virginia Religious Magazine, you will oblige one of your readers.

WHILST the hiftorian is in general fupplied with records of those whose hiftories he would collect, and is favored with many other written authorities, his way lies plain before him, and his work is partly prepared to his hand. But he who attempts the hiftory of a people, or fect of people entirely new, labours under this difadvantage, of having no written author to confult, or authority to support him. Like the first traveller through an unexplored region, his way lies through an almost impervious wilderness, without a fingle way-mark to guide his steps; more especially, whils he delineates the character of a fect, whose religion it is to defpife letters, and as much as in them lies, suppress every written account of their profession or practice.

Knowing the weaknefs and wickednefs of this world ; the credulity, the malice, envy, and caprice of mankind, we may not attempt to deliniate the character of any people or profeffion, merely from the tongue of common fame

The facts which have fallen under the particular notice of the writer, those things which the Shakers publicly profess, and own to be facts, and those occurrences, the truth of which refts on credible evidence, shall now be arranged with as much conciseness and perspicuity as possible, leaving many doubtful occurrences to be hereafter developed by time, or buried in oblivion.

This fingular religious fect of people called Shakers, or Shaking Quakers, derived their name, partly from a diffant likenefs in them, to the people called Quakers, or Friends, and partly from an uncommon effect their extraordinar, has on their bodies, caufing them at times to fhake, or flug. der, in a most furprising manner.

This peculiar fect, if they belong to any known religious denomination, are a fpecies of Roman Catholics. Like the Papal church, they have their popes, their extraordinary laints, their auricular confessions, their absolutions, exorcifms, and their purgatory; like them the decrees of their church are binding on the confciences of men; their elder has power to forgive fin; and like the Papal Church, they forbid to marry, pretend to miraculous gifts, and hold to the invocation of departed faints

Their likenefs to the Romifh church the Shakers are fensble of, and fay, the Papal is the only church on earth eftablifhed on the true gofpel plan; but having loft the fpirit, are become a lifelefs body; which fpirit hath revived in the Shakers, and hence now they are the only true church on earth; and that falvation can be obtained in no other way.

The first founder of this wild lect was one Jane Lees: fhe lived in the town of Manchester, in England; was of low parentage and procured her living at the expence of her chaftity. She fustained the character of a woman of ill fame in England, which character the fupported in America until her eleath.

She affumed the name of the Eleft Lady, but was more generally kown by the name of the Mother. She divulged her extraordinary pretentions first to a few of her intimates, about the year 1770. She collected disciples in the town of Manchester, to the number of thirty perfons, and fet up her religious exercises much in the same form in which the afterwards established them in America.

But her religious performances were to very clamarous, her rites fo gymnaftic and fubverfive of the peace of families, and her fpirit fo intolerably cenforious and impudent, the fect was deemed a public nuifance by the people, and was fupprefied by the civil authority. This the Shakers branded with the odious name of perfecution ; accordingly fhook off the duft of their feet against them, and fought an afylum in a land of more perfect liberty. In the year 1773 or 4, this Eleft Lady, with five of her principle difciples, viz. William Lees, her brother, James Whitaker, John Ocknel, James Porterton, and one Shepherd took fhipping and came to New York, from whence they foon removed to an obfcure village in the flate of New-York, about twelve miles north-weft from Albany, known by the name of Nefgueuna. The remainder of the feet, who were left in Manchefter, foon loft their fpirit, after this elopement of their mother accordingly difbanded, and the feet difappeared. \* In this place of obfcurity, thefe fix emigrants lived, unnoticed by the public, until the fummer of 1779, when their fpirit again revived ; multitudes reforted to them, and they became an object of curious fpeculation to the world.

It hath apeared to many perfons a riddle altogether inferutable, how it was polfible for an indigent firanger to effect what this woman effected, when labouring under all the difadvantages with which fhe was burdened. As a woman, fhe was in the eyes of the world difqualified for the office of a bifhop. Her perfon was fo far from charming, that fhe was deemed ugly; fhe was wholly deflitute of letters; fhe could neither write nor read; her character was lewd; her converfation vulgar, and her language very prophane. She lived a moft intemperate life, and her behaviour was moft outrageous and provoking in her fcenes of intoxication.

Yet, with all this group of evils, this woman became the mighty power of God to this deluded people.

In fearching the latent caufes which have been productive of this uncommon event, we are not to confine ourfelves to the power and addrefs of this Elect Lady; more is due to the moral flate of the people who became her difciples.

Previous to this extraordinary event, Providence had thrown together in New-Lebanon, and the adjacent towns, a large number of enthuliallic fpirits, among whom, in 1779, there was an uncommon religious commotion.— This awakened all their religious wildfire to a very high degree ; and as is common with all fanatics, they were full in the belief, that God was about to perform fome unheardof wonder for his church upon earth.

They confidered themfelves now, according to their own phrafeology, in Babylon; but the time of their deliverance was at hand. Many of them were in frequent and fore travail for the deliverance of the church, and for individuals; others were fainting, crying out falling down, and wallowing on the ground; whilft fome were falling into trances, out of which they would emerge full of the fpirit of prophefy. They predicted, either that God was about to deliver his

This information was received from the mouth of Col. Smith, an English gentleman, who lives in the town of Manchester, and was intimately acquainted with this feel until their departure for America. people, or that the day of judgment was at hand, or that after fo many days the door of mercy would be forever that again the unbelieving world. Many of them dreamed extraordinary dreams, which were interpreted by others in as extrao-dinary a manner. Indeed, nothing was heard among them but things which belonged to the marvellous or the miraculous.

Whilit this was the religious flate of this people, and all, men were looking out for those approaching wonders, an incident happened which brought them to the zenith of their withes, and inflantly completed the whole drama.

One Talmage Bithop, of New-Lebanon, a great fanatic, being at Nefqueuna, in this crifis of religious phrenzy, and becoming acquainted with the Elect Lady, just as her fpirit began to revive, and difciples had begun to refort unto her, inftantly caught the fpirit, and like a fleaf fully dry, immediately kindled into a flame,

Replete with joy, he haltily bore the happy tidings to New Lebanon. The effects were furprising, and the road from thence to Nefqueuna was inftantly crouded with these deluded people in quelt of more fatal delutions.

This fcheme of Shakerifm was admirably adapted in its nature, to millead a people thus prepared for deception : hence but few of them efcaped the fatal fnare. It was composed of those extraordinaries they were in expectation of, and replete with the spirit and power they ardently longed for.

The pretentions of this bold imposter were, that the was Chrift in his fecond appearing; that the was as really the faviour of the world as Jefus of Nazareth was; that the divine nature as really dwelt in her as it did in hum; and as the fecond coming of Chrift was to be far more glorious than his first appearing; fo the was feven times more glorious than Jefus.

She claimed power to minister the spirit to whom she pleafed-declared that she had power to judge the world, and that she was now daily judging the dead of all nations, who were coming in vast crouds to her for that all-important purpose. She pretended to know the hearts of all men; accordingly, when these deluded people first came to her, she would call them by name, tell them the knew of their coming the day before, where they lodged on the road, and who they met by the way. These extraordinaries wrought wonders in those inflamed imaginations, and confirmed them in the delufion.

Those who visited this Elect Lady were treated with the greatest hospitality; they were admitted into the company of ter

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their new converts, who were rejoicing and finging most melociously. Some words they could undernand, and fome were in an unknown language to them.

The mother would wilk around them, fmile upon them, lay her hand upon their h art, then take their hand and prefs is upon her own bofom. She would for ke their arms, lay her hand on their heads, and many other things the would do of the like kind; all the while the would be finging and chanting forth a firange bewitching kind of incantation, until the perfon was wrought into a perfect maze. Many perfons who have been the fubjects of thefe bewitching charms, have related for prifing effects of them on their minds.

They affirm, that all their former views of things were ftrangely obliterated; they could recollect nothing of their former notions of religion; every thing appeared dark and confuled, and the new fystem now before them wholly fwallowed up all their attention, and their whole fouls were irrefittably borne away by its bewitching energy.

In this paroxifm of infatuation, they were warned against the awful danger of refifting the Holy Ghoft; and were now called to a contession of their fins as the only way in which they could expect forgivenets. This confession mult be in public, and every fin of heart and life, though ever to fecret, mult be difclosed. This, no doubt, was performed with focupulous punctuality, as it was in the immediate prefence of their judge, and they were taught to believe their future falvation was fospended, on a faithful difcharge of this all-important duty.

Here was an exhibition really humiliating to every feeling and fober mind, to behold multitudes of deluded mortals at once difgorging every abomination they had ever practifed, or even thought in their lives. This being effected, the mother then warned them of the danger of pride, the great fin of following the foolifh and vain fathions of the world; and after having fleeced them of their jewels, earrings, necklaces, buckles, and every other thing which might feed their pride, or rather enrich her felf, and having cut off their hair hard by their ears, would then admit teem into her fraternity.

Being thus metamorphifed, they might as well be Shakers as not; for they were fit for no other fociety, and indeed they were albamed to appear in any other.

After this general defcription of the rife of this fect, a more particular deliniation of their faith, the power of their spirit, and manner of their behavior, demand our attention. It may be observed, this zealous sect of people profess no article of faith at all. This is too low a term for them; all is absolute knowledge and open vision. Howbeit, we shall treat of it under this name.

The great and fundamental article of the faith of this people is, that the Mother is Chrift in his fecond appearing, and that fhe is the judge of quick and dead.

2. That Shakerifm is the first refurrection, and is the commencement of the final judgment; that they themselves are the children of the refurrection, shall become perfect in the present state as the angels of God; and that death shall have no more dominion over them.

3. That they, being children of the refurrction, must neither marry nor be given in marriage.

4. That this first refurrection is an entire new difpensation, and that the written word of God is of no use to the people of God in this new and spiritual state; but they are to be guided wholly by the immediate influences of the Holy Ghost.

5. That many things forbidden to men in their carnal flate, are allowable and innocent to the fpiritually minded; for to the pure all things are pure.

6. That the interdicted tree in the garden of Eden was Eve the mother of mankind; and the first transgreffion of Adam was his receiving and treating her as his wife.

7. That all congugal and filial connections, ties and obligations, are of the flefh, are works of the devil, and are to be diffolved.

8. That all common fenfe, natural reafon and confcience, belong to carnal reafon, are not to be attended to as our guide but we are to be directed wholly by the dictates of the fpirit.

9. They believe there is a probationary flate, or flate of purgatory; out of which finners may be releafed, by the interceffion and power of the Mother.

10. They believe men must be regenerated in order to falvation, by the fpirit which is in the Mother: and that becoming Shakers is regeneration.

11. They believe, that being born again, is arriving to a flate of perfection, and is a progreflive work, effected by their own painful endeavours, in labour or dancing, and other penance and acts of mortification.

In addition to these articles of belief, they profess a thoufand inconfistent and felf-contradictory things, which they are alternately adopting and again differenting as occasion may ferve ; for there is no feet of people more unstable 10

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and fulfiliating than the Shaking Quakers are. Although they profets to be under the immediate influence and guidance of the unerring fpirit of God, and confidently affirm, of every fcheme they adopt, that it is the eternal and unskerable truth of heaven, yet they will very foon be found in a quite different and contradictory belief and practice.

Reason would dictate, that fuch inconfistencies could not fail to confound them before others, if not create doubts in their own minds, that they might be mifled by a falle and Yet these inconfistencies give them no undelufive fpirit. They have one fovereign falvo for all thefe ealinels at all. reveries, which is, we are now in the infancy of this new and glorious difpendation : we are led by the fpirit of God as little children, which deals to us as we are able to bear ; we expest to alter much more hereafter than ever we have done heretofore ; those things we once adopted were fit and proper for us then, but we have advanced beyond them now, and by and by thefe things God directs us to now, will be laid afide. Armed with luch a fword of the Spirit as this, they cannot fail of victory.

Indeed, of those abfardities, at which common fende must re volt, they will fay, it is only carnal reason fays they are abfurd, but the Spirit testifies to their confishency; therefore, they know that it is truth, as certainly as they know there is a God in heaven.

And here the difpute must end; for the mighty bulwark of Shakerifm is the powerful influence, or mighty impressions of their spirit.

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The following is a charge delivered by Jacow Refh, prefident of the third diffrict of the court of common pleas and queries refilms for the flate of Pennfylvania, before the grand jury of Luzerne courty, August 1800.

I this a ldrefs, the reader will find evidences of a penetrating and manly genius joined with the most rational piety; le will fee at once, that religion and the most enlightened talents, mutually adorn each other; and he will also fee, that to appear the man of latters, is not to show a diffelpect to the institutions of the Christian religion.

#### Gentlemen of the Grand Jury,

R ELIGION and government are the two great and important topics, that have employed the thoughts, and divided the opinions of the wife, in every age and country.

# Judge Rush's Charge

Strongly connected, and blended as they are with each other. involving at the fame time, our most invaluable interests, both here and hereafter, it cannot be deemed furprising, that the , utmost efforts of the human understanding should be called forth, in the invelligation of fubjects of fuch momentous con. cero. Religion is effential to the happinels of man : and go. vernment was defigned by the great Author of our exiftence, to be the means of enabling us to obtain a higher degree of happinels. Every law, or focial regulation, fo far as it has a tendency to defeat the purposes of religion and morality, is therefore to far fubverfive of the end for which government was inflituted. How far the establishment of religion, in general, or any particular fyllem and forms of religion, may be compatible with policy, or the rights of private judgement. is a quellion not now to be difcuffed. Happily, the utmost liberality of fentiment has always prevailed in Pennfylvania, I he laws tolerate every religious feel, in the greateft latitude, without granting exclusive privileges to any. One polition may however be fately afformed; namely, that every legilla. ture is under indiffentible obligations, to extend the influence of virtue, to discountenance all those vices that are forbidden. by the precepts of religion, and which, at the fame time, are permutious to society. Strictly speaking, there is no fuch thing as an offence against religion, known to the laws of our country. It is only becaufe certain acts distu: b, or have a tendency to disturb the peace and moral order of the community, that they are punifiable by human tribunals. Although our law punishes murder, theft, blasphemy, swearing, and other crimes, yet it does not punish them as violations of the divine law. The act of April 1794, for the prevention of vice and immorality, gambling, and diforderly iports, which alfo reftraius unnecessary labour on the first day of the week, is entirely filent with refpect to religion : and the word religion is not to be found in the act from beginning to end. The legillature have viewed the fubject in connection with its political confequences, and have proceeded on grounds and confiderations purely fecular. The All-powerful Deity is infinitely able to punish the transgreffions of his own laws, and to maintain the rights and dignity of his moral government. Our laws look no farther than to overt acts, and confider their tendency to subvert the peace and happiness of fociety, as the fole rule of effimating the demerit of actions, and the only standard of legal punilhment.

With good reafon the abell legiflators have endeavored to frame their laws and conflications on the bafis of religion; her,

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well knowing the predominance religious fentiments have alwavs had over the human mind. Man has been not improperly defined animal religiosum; becaufe religion of fome kind is effential to his make, and infeparable from his nature. Even the most abfurd fuperstitions, and extravagant ideas of the government of the world, by invisible beings, are infinitly more favorable to human happinefs, than downright Atheis if a falfe religion is universally acknowledged to be better than none.

Actuated by fimilar views, and purfuing the fame laud able policy that has influenced other rulers, the legiflature of our flate, by forbidding all unneceffary labour on the first day of the week, have wifely called to the *aid* of government, one of the molt important inflitutions of the Christian religion. The law containing this claufe, is is my opinion, one of the molt falutary in the book of our flatutes. Its object, as the title imports, is to prevent that inundation of vice and immorality, that proved the bane and ruin of thoufands of individuals ; the fcourge of nations, and bottomlefs gulph in which all the valt empires that ever exifted, have been finally finallowed up.

To prevent this difmal cataftrophe to our country, the law just mentioned, befides interdicting labour on the first day of the week, and so far adopting the precept of Christianity, has, from the fame motive of public good, pointed its prohibitions and its penalties against duelling, blasphemy, drunkennefs, gambling, and many of those defiructive habits, in which it is well known the more irregular and vicious part of the people, generally indulge. A law thus beneficial in its effects-the palladium of public virtue-the fhield of government-deferves the most attentive confideration of every man. It is a public law of the land, of the greatest importance and univerfal concernment. It is therefore apprehended, an explanation of the various parts of it, as arranged in the law, will not be deemed improper in a court, whole incumbant duty it is to watch over the morals of the people; and to enforce, by every argument in their power, entire and unreferved obedience to the best laws of our country.

The first fection in the law, and upon which I mean now to addrefs you, is that which prohibits all worldly employment or bufiness on Sunday, except works of necessity and charity: and forbids, without any exception, all gaming, hunting, shooting, and other sports and diversions whatsoever. A provise in the law, authorises the preparation of necessary food in private families, and in public houses, for strangers

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and travellers; the conveying passengers, and perfons removaing with their tamilies, over ferries; and also, the fale of the necessaries of life, before nine in the morning, and after five in the afternoon, in our public markets.

But it may be afked, why are the hands of industry thus bound up : why are the people restrained from labour, upon every feventh day ?

Very good realous, Gentlemen, may be affigned for its otherwife the wifdom of the Most High would not have enjoined it, at the creation of man; afterwards made it a part of the decalouge to the Jews, and finally continued under the Christian difpensation.

The gradual exercise of Almighty Power, by which this world was created, in the space of fix days, was no doubt in. tended as an infructive leffon to those intelligent beings, that sere deltined to inhabit it. Upon the seventh day, we are told, the Deity ceafed from his labours ; and directed his creature man, ever after, to confecrate it as a HOLY DAY in honor of creation; thereby to commemorate the glorious e-Nor is it poffible to concerve, that any means could be vent. devifed more likely to imprefs the idea, that the world was the work of an Almighty Hand, than influting a certain day; to be kept in memory of it. It is therefore, realonable to besieve, this was one end, proposed by the inflitution of the Sabbath : at the fame time, it had a direct tendency to banift the extravagant notion of the eternity of the world, and to guard against the idolatry of the fun, moon, and stars : to which, we know, mankind have been extremely prone in ever ay age and nation. The diffiute concerning the origin of the earth, which fo much perplexed and bewildered the heathen philosophers, is folved in a moment, by the fublime declaration of the Jewish legislator-" God faid, let there be light, and there was light."

With refpect to the feptenary division of time, it is worthyof temark, that it prevailed in the earlieft ages, and was obterved, not only by the Jews, but by the more ancient Egyptians, and by the Aflyrians, Persians, and Arabians; among whom it was the conftant usage to divide the week into seven days. It is, I think, totally impossible to account for this division of time, and its prevalence in the most remote and dark ages of antiquity, on any other supposition, than its being inflituted in honor of creation, and handed down by tradition, through successive generations of men.

It is the attribute of wildom, to proportion the means to the end; and it is the character of Infinite Wildom, both in

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ne moral and natural world, to render all his operations abservient to the production of the greatest possible good -Ian is a compound being, confifting of both foul and b dv, and has the interests of both to provide for : the inflitution of the Sabbath has therefore a two-fold afpect-it has referuce to his present as well as to his future late of exiltence. ris defigned and calculated to promote his hap inefs here, nd to fecure it hereafter. Abstraction from worldly em. doyment, is enjoined, that religious worthip may be obferv. The reafon explicitely given, why man fhould reft from ed. his labours every feventh day, is that he may have leifure from the noife and builde of the world, for devout contemplaions ; and for acquiring those habits of piety, without which, all hopes of future felicity, are entirely fallacions. It is in he higheft degree irrational to imagine, that religion confilts in a few acls, or in the cold performance of an occasional dur. To the understanding and good fenfe of every man, it is evident, that religion is a fettled difpolition-a habit-a temper-an entire devotion of the heart, to please that Being, whom it is our interest to please and to obey. But I would alk, can this difposition, this habit be acquired, without the ife of flated means, and the most vigorous exertions? The lawyer, the physician, and the mechanic, are trained for years, before they attain the knewledge, or are qualified for the excreife of their different professions. And every body knows, or ought to know, that attainments in virtue are not made without conflant discipline, and unremitted efforts. Confiderirg the depravity of the human heart, there can be littledoubt, that if certain periods had not been appointed by the Deity, for religious folemnities, every appearance of public and focial worthip would have been banifhed from the world. Abforbed in the bufy purfuits of life, man would foon forget his duty to his Creator, unlefs a recurrence of fixed and stated periods had been inflituted, to keep in mind his immortality, and to prepare for that untried existence, for which he is ultimately intended. Between the two worlds, God has established an indiffoluble connection; and it is an immutable truth, that virtuous habits, acquired in this, are indifpenfibly neceffary to lay a foundation of happines in the near. In thort, fuch is the conflitution of human nature, and its propentity to keep out of fight the future world, that nothing leis than the expedient of appropriating a certain portion of time for the duties of piety and devotion, would be fufficient to prevent religion, and every veflige of it, from being totalby obliterated from the face of the earth.

Nor is it lefs undeniably true, that the inflitution of the Sabbath, is calculated to advance the temporal, as well as the moral and spiritual interests of mankind. This will appear evident from the reflection, that in all probability, focial and public worthip was the principal defign of inflituting the Sab. lath, and the sin the fanctuaries of religion, it is natural to fup. pole, those useful impressions would be made, that have a tendency to advance the interefts of virtue, and the general happinefs of mankind. Here it is, men are taught their duty to God and to their fellow-creatures; enforced by the powerful con. fileration of future rewards and punifiments.-Here they are taught the awful confequences of vice, and that nothing but a life of piety, and obedience to the laws of Heaven, will procure final happinels beyond the grave. - Here they are taught, that the defign of the great Author of Christmanity, was to infpire men with mild and peaceable difpolitions, and with an utter abhorrence of every species of fraud, falfebood, ciuelty and injuffice .- Here they are taught, that without holinefs, the finicleft morality, and univerfal benevolence, future telicity is abfolutely a attainable .- Here they are traight, in their intercourf with the world, to exhibit gentle. nefs and coultely of manners towards all men; not from the ignoble view of acquiring populae applaufe, but as the means of cultivating that effectionate and brotherly frame. of fpirit, which is reprefented in Scripture, as the most decifive evidence and criterion of love and obedience to the great Parent of the Univerfe-In fine, here is inculcated the provide of those eminently Christian virtues, mechnels, cha-1ity, and forgiveness, as the indifpentible condition of obtaining our own forgiveness. And can there be any doubt, that the public delivery, and frequent inculcation of precepts fo abline and benevelent, mult have the happieft effect in correcling the manners and mending the heart, and thus powerfully contribute to maintain the caufe of virtue and order, and the general interells of fociety? Deeply immerfed as the bulk of mankind are, in the laborious employment of life, it cannot be expected they flould have it in their power to devote much of their time to the acquisition of religious knowledge. How admirably adapted then is the inflution of the Sabbath, to the condition of the poor, and indufficious claffes in fociety ! the main defign of which is to difpenie, at flated periods, influction to those, who feem to have no other means and opportunity of attaining it.

Even in the pertion of time allotted for religious exercises, there is the evidence of confummate wildem, and an un-

# Upon the institution of the Sabbath.

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bounded knowledge of the human frame. If less then a seventh part had been allotted, there is reason to believe, it would not have produced the flightest effect, either upon the heart or life. The interval would have been too dittantand every advantageous impression would have been efficied from the mind. From experience allows are taught, that after fix days of unremitted toil and drudgery, the bary flands in need of reft, and acquires from it renewed vigor and elaflicity.

On the other hand, if a third or fourth part had been allotted, befides rendering men extremely fpeculative, and detaching them too much from the affairs of the world, it would have left too little time, for the laborious occupations of a creature, who is compelled to live by the fweat of his brow, and to make provision for the continual wants of a helplefs and needy offspring.

Thefe loofe and general obfervations, on the use and defign of the Sabbath, and the advantages refulting from the inflitution, both to temporal and moral interests of fociety, are made with a view of enabling you to underfland the reafonablenels and propriety of our law, in directing a ceffation from labour on the first day of the week. The legillature have confidered the fubject rather in the light of a civil inflitution; but have taken the idea from the Christian religion, and have thus far adopted one of its p fitive laws, as a rele of municipal conduct to the citizens of Pennfylvania. The divine law, it is true, goes farther than ours; it not only enjoins fell, and refiraint from labour on the first day of the week, but it requires that the day be alfo conferrated to the purpofes of religion. Our law prohibits fecular employment and bufinefs-here it Rops, and meddles not with the heart; for the belt reafon in the world, that it is impracticable in human government, to compel the performance of religious duties. 1 martin

In one point, and that a very important one, our law concurs with the divine law. They both admit that the works of necessity and charity may be done, on the fift day of the week; for as the Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath, the obfervance of it neceffarly gives way, when it comes in competition with moral obligation. or the indifpentible duty of felf-prefetvation. It would be difficult. if not impracticable, to flate with precifion, what are works of neceffity and charity; becaufe queflions of this kind depend on a great variety of circumflances. And pethaps it would be proper to have recourfe to the divine law, from which ours is certainly derived, for a folution of fome diff. culties that may arife on this fubjed. The expressions are very indefinite, and admit a pretty wide latitude of construction, which in all probability will be feen to vary, according to the character and principles of the judge or magistrate.

In fundry inflances, the laws of our flate have recognifed the first day of the week, as a day of reft; particularly by declaring, that all procefs executed thereon, fhall be void; unlefs it be in the cafe of treafon, folony, or breach of the peace. And fo far does the common law venerate the Chriftian Sabbath, that it not only invalidates all law-proceedings on that day, but likewife all fales in market overt, and all other contracts whatever. \*

#### Gentlemen of the Grand Jury,

Notwithstanding all that has been faid in favor of the infitution of the Sabbath, as a means of procuring individual happinefs, and national profperity, melancholy experience fliews, there is no law of heaven or of arth, that is more generally violated. I his is the more to be regretted, as it fems to be the contrivance of infinite wildom, to keep up a fenfe of religion in our world, without which government and morality cannot long fubfilt. In the prefent age, we have not, our choice of two religions; for it might be some confelation, while we are extinguishing every appearance of Christianity in our country, if we had the wretched profpect of relapfing into the errors of Paganism. But the cafe is otherwise; for if we deflow the Christian religion, we fhall have none. It has been often faid, the Sabbath is the palladium of our religion, and that as this day is observed or neglected, Christianity will fland or fall. If this be really the cafe, there is reafon to fear, it will not be of long continuance among us. One thing, in my judgment, is certain. If it does fall, it will fall like a flrong man-it will pull down the pillars of government, and bury our country in the ruins. Every wicked man is an enemy to his country; becaufe he breaks her laws, and fpreads the contagion of vice around him; and becaufe his, conduct has a direct tendency to bring down the vengeance. of heaven on his devoted country. Though we may be fecure in this part of the world, from earthquakes and famine, yet there are other methods of punifling vicious and ungrate.

\* 2 Inft. 264, 265. W cod's Inft. 214. 2 Inft. 713. Shepp. Abridg. 3d part. 181. See 1 Swift's Connecticut Laws, a note executed at noon on Sunday, held void.—Secular tufnels unlawful film morning light till evening.—page 367.

## Upon the institution of the Sabbath.

ful nations. A people who difobey the laws of God and man, have no right or reafon to expect a continuance of their profperity; because obedience to the law is the appointed means of attaining it; otherwife the laws had never beer made. There is no other way of discharging our duty to our country, but by yielding obedience to all her laws; not this or that law, but every law. Men are influenced by different paffions and appetites. Some perfons diffike this, others that law, and there are some to bad, that they hate all law. One man is averfe to the law that forbids tavern-haunting on Sundays, a vice, which, by the bye, is common among us; and therefore he breaks it. Another laughs at the law, that forbids fwearing and blatphemy, and therefore he breaks it. A third complains of the law, that reffrains fports and diversions on Sunday, and therefore he breaks it .- In the name of goodnefs, Gentlemen, what is to become of a country, where the laws are thus openly infulted and violated by every man at his pleafure? We might as well expect order among drunkards, or virtusus couduct from a parcel of profitutes, as gov-roment among a people who have no fense of the obligations of law, religion, or morality. As the divine Author of Chritti nity faid to his followers-" Ye are my disciples, if ye do whatfoever I command you,"-fo I fav to you, Gentlemen, You'are good citizens, if you do whatfoever the law enjoins; not if you obey this, that, or the other law, but every law. Remember, there is no fuch thing as patriotifm by the halves; and that to emitle you to the character of good. citizens; your obedience fould be uniform and univerfal; for a partial obedience, implies resistance and opposition to govern nent in all other points.

Upon the whole, it is high time for the friends of virtue and order among us, difregarding the theors of the ignorant, or unprincipled profligate, of whatever rank or character, to fland up in defence of our country, against the torrent of licentioufnels, that threatens to fweep away religion, law and government. To the judiciary, her defence is, in a peculiar manner, entrulted by the law now under confideration; which, in pointed language, never used on any other occasion, calls distinctly and feverally, on the Judges of the Supreme Court; the Presidents of the Districts; on every Associate Judge, and Justice of the Peace; on the Mayor and Aldermen of Philadelphia, and on every Burgess of a corporate town, to aid her in bringing to justice, all perfons who may offend in any inflance, specified in the act. So general, however, is the uilobedience to this law, and so great the contempt of public

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authority, that a flranger paffing through our country, would rather fuppole we had a law enjoining fports and divertions on Sunday, under a heavy penalty, than one forbidding them. To the difgrace of our police, and to the irreparable injury of our youth, most of our country towns exhibit on that day, one continued licene of violence, tumult and uproar; which the magifirates feem to be no more concerned to fapprefs, than if they had nothing to do with the fupport of law and government. This illegal and fcandalous behavi. our may, and ought to be checked, by directions to the Constables to apprehend all offenders, without any respect to perfons; and directions of this kind may be cafily giv. en to the Constables, who are the immediate officers of the Juffices, and always at hand to receive and execute their lawful commands. To the reafons already given of a public and general nature, for executing the law on this fubject, it may not be amil's to add in conclution, that as it gives one half the fine to the poor, an ample fund for their relief might be procured by carrying it into effect, without the aid of taxes from the township. Thus the vices of one part of the community, would be the means of maintaining those of our fellow-creatures, who are no longer able to maintain themfelves.

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A plain and ferious address to the Matter of a Family, on the important subject of Family-Religia, by P. Doddridge, D. D.

#### SIR,

70U may eafily apprehend, that the many interruptions to which perfonal vifits are liable, make it difficult for Minifters to find a convenient time, in which they may apply themfelves furtably and largely to those committed to their care; or at leaft, if they refolve to do it, will neceffarily make their progrefs through large congregrations very flow. I therefore, take this mothod of visiting you while alone, and of addreffing you on the very important fubject of Family. Religion. For your own fake, and the fake of those dearest to you, I entreat you to give me a calm attentive hearing .-And I would particularly defire, that if it be by any means practicable, (as with a little contrivance and refolution I hope it may) you would fecure one hour on the morning of the Lord's-Day after you receive it, not merely to run over this letter in a curfory manner, but deliberately to weigh and confider it, and to come to fome determination, as in the fight of ould

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nof God, that you will, or that you will not, comply with the petition which it brings; if I may not rather fay, with the demand which in his name it makes upon you.

As I purpose to deliver it to every Master of a family under my stated care, or to every Mistress where there is no Master, (that no offence of any kind may be taken, which it is in my power to prevent.) I know it will come to many, who have long been exemplary for their diligence and zeal in the duties I am recommending; to many, whom their own experience hath instructed in the pleasures and advantages which flow from them; an experience, which will enforce them more effectually than any thing which it is possible for me to lay. Such will, I hope, by what they read, be confirmed in purfuing the good refolutions they have taken and the good cultoms they have formed; and will allo be excited more earnefuly to endeavor to contribute towards introducing the like, into other families, over which they have any inducace, and efpecially into those which may branch cut from their own, by the fettlement of children or fervants. In this view, as well as to awaken their thankfulness to divine grace, which hath inclined them to the dilcharge of their duty in fo great, yet to frequently neglected, an article of it, I hope the heads of praying families will not perufe this letter in vain. But it is intended as an address to those, who have hitherto lived in the omifion of it : and if there were but one fuch Matter of a family under my care, I would gladly fubmit to the labour in which I am now engaging for his suke a-To fuch, therefore, I now turn my felf, ; and O that lone. divine grace might engage every one of fuch a character to hear me with attention, and might enforce upon his confcience the weight of reasons, the evidence of which the lowest may receive, and to which it is impollible that the highest thould find any thing folid to object!

O my dear friend, whoever you are, (for I know no one under my care to whom I may not addrefs that appellation) give me leave to tell you plainly, that while I write this I have that awakening Scripture in view : Pour out thy fury upon the Heathen that know thee not, and upon THE EAMI-LIES THAT CALL NOT ON THY NAME. \* I appeal to you as a man of ordinary fenfe and understanding. (as it needs no more) to judge whether this do not frongly imply, that it may be taken for granted, every family which is not a heathen family, which is not quite ignorant of the li-

Jer. x. 25.

ving and true GoD, will call upon his name. Well may it then pain my heart, to think that there fhould be a professed Christian family, whom this dreadful tharacter fuits. Well may it pain my heart, to think of the divine fury, which may be poured out on the heads and on the members of it: and well may it make me defines, to do my utmost to fecure you and yours, from every appearance, from every possibility, of fuch danger. Excuse the earnedfuels with which I may address yoe. I really fear left while you delay the fire of the divine difpleasure should fall upon you. \* And as I adore the patience of God in having thus long fuspended the florm, I am anxious about every hour's delay, left it should fall the heavier.

I will therefore as plainly and as ferioufly as I can, endea wor to convince you of your duty, if peradventure you are not already fecretiv convinced of it; as truly I believe most who neglect it, under the regular administration of gos pel ordinances, are. I will then touch on a few of the objections, which have been pleaded to excuse, in fome degree to finameful an omiffion. And this will naturally lead me to conclude with a few hints, which may ferve by way of direction, for the proper introduction and difchaige of the fervices to which I am endeavoring to engage you.

I mean not to handle the fubjed at large, which would afford abundant matter for a confiderable volume ; as indetd feveral volumes have been written upon it, by divines of different denominations, who, however various in other opinions, agree here ; as what intelligent Chrif. tian can difagree i But I mean to fuggeft a few plain things, which it is evident you have not fufficiently confidered, and which if duly weighed, may, by the bleffing of God, a fwer my prefent purpose. Now the arguments 1 fhall propose will be fuch, that if you will not regard them, little is to be hoped from any other. For furely the mind of man can difcover none of greater and more universal importance; though I readily acknowledge, that many others might enforce them with greater energy and addrefs. Yet if the defire, the molt earnest defire of fucceeding, can add any of the proper arts of perfuation, they will not be wanting here. And I would fain fpeak, as one who confiders, how much of the glory of God, how much of your own happinels, and that of your dear children, for time and eternity, depends on the fuccels of what I am now to lay before you.

Gen. xix. 16, 17.

# Family Religions

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What I defire and entreat of you is, that you would honor and acknowledge GoD in your families, by calling them together every day to hear fome part of his word read to them, and to offer for a few minutes at leaft, your united confessions, prayers, and praises to him. And is this a cause, that should need to be pleaded at large by a great variety of united motives? Truly the petition feems fo reasonable, and a compliance with it from one who has not quite renounced religion might feem fo natural, that one would think the bare proposing it must fuffice. Yet experience tells us, it is much otherwife. This letter will come into the hands of fome, who, though they maintain a public profession of religion, have been again and again exhorted to it in vain, and that perhaps for fucceeding years. I might fay a great deal to upbraid fuch efpecially, on account of this neglect ; but I rather chuse to entreat to the future performance of the duty; humbly hoping, that criminal as former negligence has been, a gracious God will mercifully forgive it, to those who repent and defire to reform.

And O that I could engage you to this, by reprefenting in the plaineft, kindeft, and moll affectionate manner, the reasonableness and advantage of this duty! For if it be reafonable, if it be evidently advantageous, there are numberlefs general precepts of Scripture which mult comprehend and enforce it, if it were lefs immediately fupported than it is by particular passages; which yet, as I shall prefently shew, do many of them strongly recommend it to us.

Confider, Sir, for laddrefs myfelf to every particular perfon, feriously confider the apparent reasonableness of Family Religion. Mult not your confciences prelently tell you, it is fit that perfons who receive to many mercies together, thould acknowledge them together? Can you; in your mind, be latisfied, that you and your nearest relatives, should pay no joint homage to that God, who hath fet you in your family, and who hath given to you, and to the leveral members of it, fo many domeflic enjoyments? Your creator and theirs; your preferver and theirs, your daily benefactor and theirs? Can it be right, if you have any fenfe of these things each of you in your hearts, that the fenfe of them should be conrealed and imothered there, and that you should never join in your grateful acknowledgements to him? Can you imagine it reasonable, that when you have a conflant dependance upon him for fo many metcies, without the concurrence of

which your family would be a fcene of milery, you fhould never prefent yourfelves together in his prefence, to afk them at his hand? Upon what principles is public worfhip to be recommended and urged, if not by fuch as have their proportionable weight here?

Indeed the force of these confiderations hath not only been known and acknowledged by the people of Gop in all ages; we have not only Noah and Abraham, Jofhua and David, Job and Daniel, each under a much darker difpen. fation than ours, as examples of it; but we may venture to fay, that wherever there has been a profession of any kind of religion, it has been brought into private houfes as well as public temples. The poor heathens, as we certainly know from the remaining monuments of them, had their lares and their Penates, which were houshold images, fome of them in private chapels, and others about the common hearth, where the family used to worthip them by frequent prayers and facrifices. And the brafs, and wood, and stone, of which they confilted, fhall (as it were) ery out against you, fhall rife up against you and condemn you, if while you call your. felves the worthippers of the one living and eternal Gon, and boaft in the revelation you have received by his prophets and by his Son, you prefume to omit an homage, which the flupid worthippers of fuch vanities as thefe failed not to prefent to them, while they called them their Gods. Be perfuaded then, I befeech you, to be confistent in your conduct. Either give up all pretences to religion, or maintain a fleady and uniform regard to it, at home as well as abroad, in the family, as well as in the closet, or at church. But the reasonableness of this duty, and the obligations which bind you in confcience to the practice of it, will farther appear if you confider,

The many advantages, which will by the divine bleffing, attend a proper difcharge of it. And here I would more particularly reprefent the good influence, which family devotions are likely to have,—upon the young perfons committ d to your care,—upon your own hearts,—and upon the advancement of a general reformation, and the propagation of religion to those that are yet unborn.

Confider in the full place, what is most obvious, the happy influence which the duty I am recommending might have upon the young members of your family, the children and fervants committed to your care. For I now confider you as a parent, and a maller. The father of a family is a phrase uld

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that comprehends both these relations; and with great propriety, as humanity obliges us to endeavour to take a parental care of all under our roof. And indeed,

You ought to confider your servants, in this view, with a tender regard. They are probably in the flower of life, for that is the age which is commonly fpent in fervice; and you flould recolled how poffible it is, that this may be, if rightly improved, the belt opportunity their whole life may afford, for learning religion, and being brought under the power of it. If your fervants are already instructed in it, by being brought up in families where these duties have been maintained; let them not, if they fhould finally milcarry, have caufe to impute it to you, and to tellify before GoD in the day of their condemnation, "that it was under your root "that they learnt the neglect and forgetfulnefs of GoD and "of all that their pious parents, perhaps, in a much inferior "flation of life to you, had in earlier days been attempting to "to teach them; to teach them, in moments taken from labor, "or from repose almost necessary for their sublistence." On the other hand, if they come to you quite ignorant of religion (as, if they come from prayerlefs families, it is very probable that they do) have compation upon them, I intreat you. and endeavor to give them those advantages which they never yet had; and which it is too probable as things are generally managed, they never will have, if you will not afford them.

But I would effectially, if I might be allowed to borrow the pathetic words of Job\*, intreat you by the children of your own body. I would now as it were prefent them all before you, and befeech you by all the bowels of parental affection (which I have myfelf fo ftrongly felt) that to all the other tokens of tendernels and love, you would not refuse to add this, without which many of the reft may be worfe than in vain.

Give me leave to plead with you, as the inftruments of introducing them into being. O remember, it is indeed a debafed and corrupted nature you have conveyed to them. Confider, that the world, into which you have been the means of bringing them, is a place in which they are furtounded with many temptations, and in which, as they advance in life, they mult expect many more; fo that in plain terms, it is on the whole much to be feared, that they will perifh in the ignorance and forgetfulnefs of GoD, if they do to the terms is a place him. For how can it be

Job. xix. 17.

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expected they flould learn this at all, if you give them no advantages for receiving and practifing the leffon at home?

And let me further urge and intreat you to remember, that these dear children, whose tender age, and perhaps amiable forms and dispositions, might attract the affection and folici. tude of firangers, are committed to your especial and immediate care by Gon their Creator. And he has made them thus dependent upon you, and others that have in their infancy and childhood the care of them, that there might be hereafter a better opportunity of forming their minds, and of influencing them to a right temper and conduct. And can this by any means be effectually done, if you do not at proper times call them together, to attend to the instructions of the word of Gon, and to join in folemn prayers and fupplications to him? At least is it possible, it should be done in any other way with equal advantage, if this be not added to the reft?

Family worfhip is a most proper way of teaching children religion, as you teach them language, by infentible degrees; a little one day, and a little another; for to them line must They may learn to be upon line, and precept upon precept. conceive aright of the divine perfections, when they hear you daily acknowledging and adoring them : their hearts may be early touched with pious remorfe for fin, when they hear your confeffions poured out before GoD : they will know what mercies they are to ask for themfelves, by observing what turn your petions take : your interceffions may diffuse into their minds, a fpirit of love to mankind, a concern for the interest of the church, and of their country; and what is not, I think, by any means to be neglected, fentiments of loyalty towards our fovereign and his family, when they hear you daily invoking the divine bleffing upon them : and your folemn thankigivings for the bounties of Providence, and for benefits of a spiritual nature, may affect their hearts with those gracious imprefions towards the gracious Author of all, which may excite in their little breafts love to him, the most noble and genuine principle of all true and acceptable religi-Thus they may become Christians by infenfible deon. grees, and grow in the knowledge and love of the truth, as they do in flature.

By observing your reverent and solemn deportment, (as reverent and solemn I hope it will always at such seafons be) they may get some notion of an Invisible Being, before they are of age to understand the definition of the term GOD;

## Family Religion.

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and may feel their minds fecretly impreffed with an humble awe and veneration, before they can explain to you their fenfe of it. And whatever inftructions you give them concerning his nature and his will, and the way of obtaining his favour by Jelus Chrift, all your admonitions relating to the importance of that invisible world we are going to, and the neceflary preparation for it, will be greatly illustrated by the tenor of your daily devotions, as well as by those excellent leffons which the word of God, when folemnly read to them morning and evening, will afford. Nor is it by any means to be forgotten, that while they hear themfelves, and their own concerns, mentioned before Gob in prayer; while they hear you earnefly pleading for the divine bleffing upon them (elpecially if it be in expressions wifely varied, as some particufar occurrences in their lives and in yours may require) it may very probably be a means of moving their imprefible hearts; as it may powerfully convince them of your deep and tender concern for their good, and may add great weight to the inflructions you may address to them : so that it may appear, even while you are praying for them, that Goi hears.\* And indeed I have known fome inftances of excellent perfons, who have dated their conversion to GoD, even after they had begun visibly to degenerate, from the prayers, from the ferious and pathetic prayers, which they have heard their pious fathers, perhaps I might add their pious mothers, prelenting before GoD on their account.

Indeed were this duty properly attended to, it might be expected that all christian families would, according to their respective fizes and circumstances, become nurferies of piety; and you would fee, in the most convincing view, the wisdom of providence, in making human infants fo much more dependent on their parents, and fo much more incapable to shift for themselves, than the offspring of inferior creatures are.

Let me then entreat you, my dear friend, to look on your children the very next time you fee them, and alk your own heart, how you can answer it to GoD, and to them. that you deprive them of such advantages as these? Advantages, without which it is to be feared, your care of them in other respects will turn to but little account, should they be ever so prosperous in life. For what is prosperity in life without the knowledge, and fear, and love of GoD? What, but the poi-

Ifa. 1xv. 24.

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# P. Doddridge's address on

fon of the foul, which fwells and kills it? What, but the means of making it more certainly, more deeply, more into. lerably miferable; when its transfent and empty amufements are palled away, line a dream, when one awaketh. + In thor, not to mention the happy influence it may have on their tem. poral affairs, by drawing down the divine bleffing, and by forming their minds to those virtues, which pave the way to wealth and reputation, health and contentment, which make no enemies, and attract many friends ; it is, with refpect to the eternal world, the greatest cruelty to your children thus to neglect giving them these advantages, which no other cares in education itself exclusive of these cap afford : And it is impoffible, you fhould ever be able to give them any other equi-If you do your duty in this respect, they will have valent. reason to blefs you living and dying; and if you neglect it, take care that you and they come not, in confequence of that neglect, into a world, where (horrid as the thought may now feem) you will be forever curfing each other. And thus I am fallen infenfibly, becaufe fo naturally, from what I was faying of the concern and intereft of those under your care, to your own, fo far as it may be diffinguished from theirs.

Let me therefore prefs you to confider, how much your own interest is concerned in the matter; the whole of your interest, both fpiritual and temporal.

Your spiritual interest is infinitely the greateft, and therefore I will begin with that. And here let me ferioufly afk you, do you not need those advantages for religion, which the performance of family duty will give you, added to those of a more fecret and a more public nature, if peradventure they are regarded by you? Thefe inftructions, thefe a dorations, these confessions, these supplications, these intercessions, thefe thankfgivings, which may be fo useful to your children and fervants, may they not be useful to yourfelves? May not your own hearts have fome peculiar advantage for being impreffed, when you are the mouth of others in these domestic devotions, beyond what in a private station of life it is otherwife poffible you fhould have? Or thefe leffons of relegion to your own fouls, every morning and evening, might be (if I may be allowed the expression) either the feed, or foretaste, of falvation to you. Nay, the remoter infinence they may have on your conduct, in other refpects, and at other times, when confidered merely in the general as religious exercises

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performed by you iu your family, is to be recollected as an argument of valt importance.

A fense of common decency would engage you, if you pray with your family, to avoid a great many evils, which would appear doubly evil in a father or a matter, who kept up fuch religious exercifes in his houfe. I will not now, Sir, fpeak of yourfelf, for I would not offend by fuppoling any thing grofsly bad of you. But do you imagine, that if reading the fcripture and family prayer were introduced into the houfes of fome of your neighbours, drunkennefs and lewdnefs, and curfing and fwearing, and profaning the Lord's Day, would not, like to many evil Damons, be quickly driven out? The mafter of the family would not for fhame indulge them, if he had nothing more than the form of duty kept up; and his reformation, though only external, and at first on a kind of confirmint; would carry with it the reformation of many more, who have fuch a dependence on his favour as they would not facrifice, though by a madnels very prevalent among the children of men, they can venture to facrifice their fouls to every trifle.

And may it not perhaps be your more immediate concern, to recollect, that if you prayed with your family, you would yourself be more careful to abstain from all appearance of evil ?\* You will find out a way to suppress that turbulency of paffion, which may now be ready to break out before you are aware, and other imprudences, in which your own heart would check you by faying, " Does this become one, that is "by and by to kneel down with his domettics, his children "and fervants, and adore Gop with them, and pray against "every thing which difpleafes Gop, and makes us unfit for "the heavenly world?" I will not fay, this will cure even ry thing that is wrong; but I believe you are already perfuaded, it would often have a very good influence. And I tear, it is the fecret defire of indulging fome irregularities without fuch a reftraint, that infamous as fuch a victory is, hath driven out family-praver from feveral houfes where it was once maintained, and hath excluded it from others. But if you have any fecret difinclination of heart rifing against it in this view, it becomes you ferioufly to take the alarm; for, to speak plainly. I hardly know a blacker symptom of damnation, than a fear of being reflrained in the commission of fin.

• 1 Thess. v. 23.

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After this it may feem a matter of fmaller importance, in mrge the good influence which a proper difcharge of family duty may have upon your own temporal affairs; both by a firaining you from many evils, and engaging you to a prope conduct yourfelf, and alfo by impreffing your children as fervants with a fenfe of religion. And it is certain, the more careful they are of their duty to Gob, the more likely the will be to perform their duty to you. Nor can any this ftrengthen your natural authority among them more, that your prefiding in fuch folemnities, if fupported by a fuitable conduct. But I would hope nobler motives would have fuperior weight. And therefore waving this topic, I entrea you as the laft argument to confider.

The influence it may have on a general reformation, and on the propagation of religion to those who are yet unbon You ought to confider every child and fervant in your family ly, as one who may be a fource, not only of life, but (in fom degree) of character and happines, to those who are here after to arife into being ; yea, whofe conduct may in part al fect those that are to descend from them in the following generation. If they grow up, while under your eye, ignor ant of religion, they will certainly be much lefs capabled teaching it to others ; for thefe are the years of difcipline, and if they be neglected now, there is little probability of their receiving after-inflruction. Nor is this all the evil confequence ; for it is highly probable, that they will think themfelves authorifed by your example to a like negligence, and fo you may entail heathenism under difregarded Christi an forms, on your defcendants and theirs in ages to come Whereas your diligence and zeal might be remembered, and imitated by them, perhaps when you are in your grave; and the flock which they first received from you, might with rich improvements be communicated to g eat numbers, fo that one generation after another might learn to fear and ferve the Lord, On the whole, Gop only knows what a church may arife from one godly family, what a harveft may fpring up from a fingle feed ; and on the other hand, it is impossible to lay, how many fouls may at length perifh by the treacher. ous neglect of a fingle perfon, end to fpeak plainly, by your own,

These, Sir, are the arguments I had to plead with you, and which I have selected out of many more : and now give me leave seriously to ask you, as in the presence of God, whether there be not on the whole, an unanswerable force in them?

# Family-Religion.

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And if there be, what follows, but that you immediately yield to that force, and fet up family-worthip this very day. For methinks, I would hardly thank you for a refolution to do it to-morrow, fo little do I expect from that refolution. How can you excuse yourfelf in the continued omifion I Bring the matter before GoD: he will be the final judge of it; and if you cannot debate the question as in his prefence, it is a fign of a bad cause, and of a bad heart too; which is confcious of the badness of the cause, and yet will not give it up, nor comply with a duty, of your obligations to which you are fecretly convinced, and yet in effect fay, "I will go on in this fin, and venture the confequence." O it is a dreadful venture, and will be found in effect provoking the LORD to jealousy, as if you were stronger than he. \*

But perhaps there may arife in your mind, fome objections, which may in fome degree break the force of this conviction, and which in that view it may be expedient for me to difcufs a little, before I difmifs the fubject and clofe my addrefs to you. You may perhaps be ready to object,

1. " That family-prayer is not in fo many words command-" in Scripture; and therefore however expedient in fome " cafes, it cannot be fo univerfal and fo important a duty, " as we reprefent it."

I answer plainly, that it is strongly recommended in Scripture, and confequently commanded ; as there are precepts, which plainly include, though they do not particularly exprefs it. And I appeal to yourfelf in this matter. When God is represented as giving this reason to his Angels for a particularly favor to be beltowed on Abraham, because he knew, that he would command his children and houshold to keep the way of the LORD, that he might obtain the blessing promised ; † did he not intend to declare his approbation of the care he took to support religion in his family ? And can it be supported in a total neglect of prayer? Again, do ye not in your confcience think, that the Spirit of God meant, that we fhould take Joshua for an example, when he tells us, that he refolved and publicly declared the refolution, that he and his house would serve the LORD ; which mult express areligious care of his family too?-Do you not believe, that this bleffed Spirit meant it as a commendation of Job that he offered sacrifices for all his children; facrifices, undoubt-

# 1 Cor. z. 22, † Gen. xviii. 19. ‡ Jofh. xxiv. 15. § Job, i. 5.

## P. Doddridge's address on

edly attended with pravers; when he feared left the gaiety of their hearts in their fuccessive feastings, might have betray. ed them into fome moral evil ? And was it not to do an honour to David, that the Scripture informs us, that he went home to bless his houshold, \* that is, to perform fome folema act of domeftic worthip, when he had been fpending the whole day in public devotions? What think you of the ex. ample of Diniel, who prayed in his house, with his windows open towards 'jerusalem, t and would rather run the rifque of being caft into the den of lions, and being torn in pieces by the fe cruel beafts, than he would either omit or conceal it? And do you think, that when our blessed Lord, whole whole life was employed in religious fervices, fo frequently took his disciples apart to pray with them. that he did not intend this as an example to us, of praving with those under our special care, or in other words with the members of our own fami. ly, who are most immediately fo ?-Or can you by any imaginable artifice delude yourfelf fo far as to think, that when we are folemaly, charged and commanded to pray with all prayer and supplication, . this kind of prayer is not included in that apollolical injunction?

On the whole, the quellion lies in a very little room. Have I proved by what I have faid before, that Family-Prayer is a reafonable thing? that it has a tendency to promote the Honour of Gob & the intereft of religion, & your own falvation, with that of those who are committed to your care? If you are really convinced of this, then all the general precepts which require the love of Gob and your neighbour, all that recommend a regard to the interest of Chriss, and a concern for our own everlasting happines, bind it in this connection as certainly upon us, as if it had been commanded in words as express as those, in which we are required to enter into our closets, and there to pray to our Father which is in secret.

And I will farther add, that if the care of Family Religion be (as I suppose every man's conficience will fecretly tettify that it is) a proper part of *religious education*, then all those many passages of foripture which recommend this, must in all

• 2 Sam. vi. 20. + Dan. vi. 10. ‡ Ephe. vi 18. § Matt. vi. 6. ¶ This part of the argument is enforced with peculiar firength by that great and excellent writer Mr. Howe in his Potte umous S r nons on the subject; which I earnessly recommend to every realer that can get an opportunity of perufing them. reason be understood as including that. But perhaps you may be ready to plead,

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Yet fcarce can you have made or thought of this objection, but you will fee at the first glance, that this must turn upon yourfelf, rather than on the whole appear favorable to your caufe. It is the reproach of our age, if it be indeed generally neglected. And if it be generally excluded from the families of the rich, and the great, who too frequently fet the falhion, where they are molt apt to fet it wrong, let it rather awaken a generous indignation in our breaft, to think that it is fo excluded. At least, let it awaken a holy zeal to exert ourfelves to much the more, as it is certain that no affocia. tion in vice can secure those that join in it: For it is expressly faid, though hand join in hand, the wicked shall not be unpunished.\* So will your obedence be more acceptable, in proportion to the degree in which it is fingular. Were there not one praving family in the whole nation, in the whole world, methinks it thould inftigate you to the practice, rather than tempt you to the neglect, and you fhould prefs on as ambitious of the glory of leading the way: For what could be a nobler object of ambition, than to be pointed out by the bleffed Gop himf if, as Job was; of whom he faid, with a kind of triumph hast thou considered my servant lob, that there is none like him in the land, or even on the earth? But bleffed be Gop, this fuppofed universal neglect is far from being the cafe. Let it however rejoice us, if God may fay, "there are fuch and fuch families, diffinguishable from "those in their neighbourhood on this account; as prevalent "as the neglect of family prayer is, they have the refolution "to practice it, and like my fervant Daniel, fear not the re-"proach and contempt, which profane and ungodly men may " caft upon them, if they may but honour me and engage my " favour; I know them; I hearken and hear, and a book of " remembrance is written before me, for them that fear me, "and think on my name." § Nor thould you urge,

3. " That you have so much business of another kind, as " not to be able to attend to this."

I might cut this objection flort at once, by applying to your conficience, whether you have not time for many other things, which you know to be of much lefs importance. How many hours in a week do you find for amufement,

Prov. xi. 21. + Job, i. 8. § Malachi, ili. 16.

while you have none for devotion in your family ? And de you indeed hold the bleffing of GoD fo very cheap, and think it a matter of fo little importance, that you conclude your bufinefs, must fucceed the worfe, if a few minutes were dai. ly taken folemaly to feek it together ? Let me rather admo. nifh you, that the greater your bufinefs is, the more need you have to pray earnelly, that your hearts may not be engroffed And I would beg leave further to remind you, that by it. if your hurry of bulinefs were indeed fo great as the objection fuppofes, (which I believe is feldom the cafe,) prudence a. lone might fuggest, that you should endeavour to contractit. For there are certain boundaries, beyond wuich a wife and faithful care cannot extend; and as an attempt to go beyond these boundaries has generally its foundation in avarice, it often has its end in poverty and ruin. But if you were ever to fecure of fucceeding for this world, how dear might you pay for that fucces, if all the bleffed confequence of Family. Religion, for time, and for eternity. were to be given up as the price of that very fmall part of your gains, which is ow. ing to the minutes you take from these exercises, that you may give them to the world ? for you plainly perceive the queftion is only about them, and by no means about a firen. uous application to the proper duties of your fecular calling through the day. And if you will be rich upon fuch profane terms as are here supposed, "for truly I can call them no better than profane," you will probably plunge yourself inte final perdicion. and may in the mean time pierce yourself through with many sorrows\*; while religious families learn by bleffed experience, that the blessing of the LORD, which they are fo often imploring together maketh rich, and addeth no sorrow with it; t or that a little with the fear of the Lord is better than great treasure, with that intermingled trouble, which in the neglect of God must necessarily be expected, But I conclude that yet more will be objecting,

4. "That they want ability for a work of this kind." To this I mult in the first place reply, that where the heart is rightly difposed, it does not require any uncommon abilities to difcharge family worship in a decent and edifying manner. The heart of a wise and good man, in this respect, teacheth his mouth, and addeth knowledge to his lips. w and out of the fullness of it, when it is indeed full of pious affections,

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the mouth will naturally speak. And if it fpeak naturally, and in the main properly, it is enough. There is no need at all of fpeaking elegantly. The plaineft and fimpleit language in addreffes to the Majefty of Heaven, appears to me far preferable to laboured, pompous, and artificial expressions. Plain fhort fentences, utterly just as they rife in the mind, will be best understood by them that join with you. And it should on fuch occasions be our endeavour, to *let ourselves down*, as much as possible, to the understanding of the least and meaneft of them: And this will in itself be more pleasing to GoD, than any thing which should proceed from oftentation and parade.

I must also defire you to confider, how many helps you may eafily procure. The Scripture is a large and noble magazine of the molt proper sentiments, and molt expressive language; which, if thou wilt attend to with a becoming regard, will foon furnish you for every good word and work, and molt apparently for this. And belides this, we have in our language, a great variety of excellent forms of Prayer, for families as well as for private perfons ; + which you may ufe, at least at first, with great profit. And if it be too laborious to you to learn them by heart, or if, having learnt them, you dare not truft your memory, what fhould forbid your reading them reverently and devoutly? I hope I thall give no offence to any good chriftian by faying, but on this occasion I should offend my conficence by not faying that I have long thought an irreconcileable averfion to forms of prayer, even of human composition, as vain a superflition, as a passionate attachment to them. And if any had rather, that a family flould be prayerlefs, than that a well chosen form should be gravely and folemnly read in it, I think he judges as abfurdly, as if he would rather fee them flarving to death, than fed out of a difh. whofe materials or shape are difagreeable to him. The main thing is, that God be reverently and incerely adored-that fuitable bleffings, temporal and fpiritual, be lought from him for ourfelves and others, and cordial thankf-

### • Luke vi 45.

† I ma<sup>ch</sup> beg leave on this escafion to mention and recommend two excellent collections of this kind : JERR's DEVOTIONS, and THE FAMILY PRAYER BOOK. Readers of almost every talle may find them leves fuiled by one or other of these; and there are many admirably devout and judicious forms in both, which I should think every wife and good man might hear with pleasure and improvement, and to every claule of which he might put his most hearty AMEN. givings returned to him for the various gifts of his continual bounty: And if this be done, the circumstances of doing it. though I cannot think them quite indifferent, are comparatively of fmall importance. I know by fure experience, in a great variety of inftances, that it is very poffible for Chriffi. ans of no extraordinary genius, and with a very low educati. on, to acquit themfelves honourably in prayer without the af. filtance of forms: And they who at first need them may, and probably, if they ferioufly fet about it, would foon outgrow that need. But if they did not, GoD might be glorified, and families edified by the continual use of fuch helps. And on the whole, if it be indeed come to this, that you will rather facrifice all the benefits of family prayer, than fubmit to the trouble of reading, or appointing another to read, a well compofed addrefs, which perhaps, with a fmall portion of fcrip. ture before it, might not take up one quarter of an hour's time, indeed, indeed, you mult be condemned by GoD, and your own confcience. In fuch a view, both must tettify, that it is neither want of leifure, nor want of ability, that prevents your discharging your duty, but a stupid indifference about it, or rather a wretched averfion to it; the natural confequence of which might, if a little reflected upon, be fufficient to throw the more carelefs and arrogant finner into an awful alarm, if not a trembling confiernation.

I apprehend, that the most plausible objections have now been canvassed; for I suppose,-few will be so weak and cowardly, as to plead,

5. "That their domeftics will not submit to the introducli-"on of fuch orders as thefe."

But as this may be fecretly thought of, where it would not be pleaded, effectially where thefe duties have unhappily been omitted when families were first formed, and in their most flexible and pliant state, I will bestow a few words on this head.

And here I must defire that you would not rashly conclude this to be the cafe, with respect to your own. Do not think to unkindly of your domestics, if they be not extremely wicked indeed, as to imagine they would be fecretly discontented with spending a little time daily in hearing the word of GoB, and being prefent at your domestic devotion; much less should you allow yourfelf to think, till it appears in fact, that he will have the arrogance openly to dispute fo reasonable a determination as this. Perhaps, on the contrary, they are two now fecretly withing, that GoD would put it into your nual

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heart to make the attempt; and thinking with a kind of tender regret, "Why are we denied fuch a bleffing when the "members of this and that family in the neighbourhood are "favoured with it?"

But if it be indeed as you suppose, that they would think of it with a fecret aversion, and come into it with apparent reluctance, if they can be induced to come into it at all; you would do well to reflect, whether this profanenels and perverseness may not, in a great measure at least, be owing to that very neglect which I am now preffing you to reform? which if it be, it ought certainly to convince you in the molt powerful and effectual manner, of the necessity of endeavour. ing to repair as, foon as possible the mischief already done. And if there be really an opposition, you ought to let any in whom you difcover it know, that your measures are fixed, and that you cannot and will not refign that just authority, which the laws of Gop and man give you in your own houle, to the petulancy of their humour, or the impiety of their unhappy temper. Make the trial, whether they will dare to break with you, rather than fubmit to fo eafy a condition, as that of being prefent at your hours of family-worthip. If it be a screant that difputes it, you will no doubt think it a great bleffing to your family to rid it of fo detestable a member, in that relation. And if it be a child, grown up to years, that thould be years of differention, that fets himfelf against this reformation (and it is not possible that any others should oppose you) though it is certain, that, wherever fuch a son of Belial be, he must be a great grief to your heart, you will be delivered from a great deal of diffrefs which the fight of his wickedness must daily give you, by returing him a placein your own family, which he would only difgrace and corrupt, and leaving him to practife those irregularities and feandals which always go along with fuch a prefumptuous contempt of religion, any where elfe rather than under your own root.

I can think of but one objection more, and that is,

6. "That you may not know how to introduce a practice "which you have fo long neglected."

But this is an objection fo very foon removed, that I hope, if nothing elfe lie in the way, your family will not continue another week in the unhappy circumflances in which your negligenec has hitherto kept it. I were unworthy the name of a Minister of the Gospel, if, whatever my other engagements are, I were not willing to give you my utmost affiliance,

as foon as peffible, in fo good a work as the reformation of this great and lamentable evil. Far from thinking it a trouble to vifit you, and fpend an hour with you upon fuch an oc. cefion; who would not efteem it a refreshment, and a bleff. ing to come and inform your domeflics, when gathered toge. ther for this purpofe, how wife and happy a refolution you had taken. to reprefent the reason they have to rejoice in it, and to blefs Gop who had infpired you with it? And how fweet a work would it be to perform it, as for the first time, implor. ing the bleffings of Providence & grace on you and yours, and intreating those affiltances of his Holy Spirit, which may quality you more abundantly for difcharging your peculiar part in it, and may render it the fuccefsful means of planting, or of fupperting and animating, a principle of true religion in every foul under your care? Nor would the joy and delight be confined to the minutes spent with you at fuch a feafon: It would be carried home to the fludy, and to the house of Gon: And the verv remembrance of it would, for years to come, encourage to other attempts of ufefulnels, and firengthen our hands in the work of the LORD.

And O my dear friend, whoever you are, be not ashamed, that a Minifler flould on this occasion tell your children and fervants, that you are fenfible of your former neglect, and are determined in the flrength of GoD, to practife a duty, which it has, indeed, been criminal hitherto to omit. This is a mean and unworthy flame, and would prevent our reforming evils which are indeed thameful. It will be a glory to you, to be willing and folicitous to revive languishing religion; a glory, to give to other families an example, which, it they have the wildom and courage to follow it, will undoubtedly bring down a rich variety of bleffings on them. felves, and, if followed by confiderable numbers, on the pub-HC. At least, it will be an honour to you in the fight of men, and, what is infinitely more, in the fight of Gon, to have, made the generous effort; and not to make the guilty negled of former years, an excuse for continuing to neglect, what it should rather be a powerful argument immediately to praclife.

But I would by no means infift upon it, that divine worfhip fhould be introduced into your family in the particular manper I have recommended. Ufe your own judgment, and purfue your own inclination; fo that it be but effectually and immediately done. You may, perhaps, think it convenient to call them together, and read over this letter to them, telling

## Family Religion

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them at the conclusion, that you are in your confeience con. vinced there is reason in it which cannot be answered, and that therefore you are refolved to act agreeably to it. You may then proceed to read a portion of foripture, and to pray with them in fuch a manner as you may think expedient. But in whatever manner it be done, you will remember, that it must be with reverence and folemnity, and with unfeigued fervour of devotion, as in the light of the heart fearching Gop. And you will farther remember, that, when once introduced, it must be refolutely and constantly carried on; for to caft out this heavenly gueft, will, in fome degree, be more mameful, than not to admit it. But I hope, fweet experience of the pleafure of these duties will be infleted of a thousand arguments, to engage your adherence to them. May Goo give you refolution immediately to make the attempt! and may he affift and accept you, and featter down every defirable bleffing of Providence and of grace, on you and yours! So that this day (for I hope it will be introduced this very day) may become memorable in your lives, as a feafon from whence you may date a profperity and a joy hitherto unknown, how happy foever you may have been in former years: For very imperfect, I am fure, mult that domeflic happinels be, in which domeflic religion has no part.

How shall I congratulate myself, if in confequence of the representation and address I have now been making to you. I may be the bleffed inftrument in the divine hand of infpiring you with fuch a resolution! What an additional bond will then be added to our friendship, while Gop continues us together in life! Yea, what an everlassing bond of a nobler friendship, in a future state; where it will be, before the Throne of Gop, my joy to have given such admonitions as these, and yours faithfully and obediently to have received them !

But if, after all, you will not be perfuaded, but will hearken to the voice of cowardice, and floth, and irreligion, in defiance of fo many awakening and affecting reafons, you must answer it at large. If your children and fervants grow up in the neglect of GoD, and pierce your heart with those forrows. which fuch fervants, and especially fuch children, are like to occasion; if they raife profane and profigate families; if they prove the curfe of their country, as well as the torment and ruin of those most intimately related to them; the guilt is in part yours, and (I repeat it again) you must answer it to GoD, at the great day, that you have omitted the proper and appointed method of preventing fuch latal evils.

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In the mean time, you must answer the omission to your own confeience; which probably has not been eafy in former days. and in future days may be yet unquiet. Yes, Sir, the me. mory of this address may continue to torment you, if it can, not reform you: And if you do not forfake the house of Gen. as well as exclude GoD, and his worthip, from your own houfe, you will meet with new wounds; for new exhortati. ons and admonitions will arm reflection with new reproaches. And in this uncomfortable manner you will probably go on, till what has been the grief and thame of your life, become the affliction of your dying bed; nor dare I prefume to af. fore you, that God will answer your last cries for pardon. The best you can expect under the confcioufness of this guilt, is to pafs trembling to your final doom :- But whatever that doom be, you mult acquit your minister who has given you this faithful warning;\* and this letter, transcribed as it were in the records of the divine on nifcience, shall tellify, that a matter of fo great importance hath not been wholly negled. ed, hath not been coldly and flightly urged, by,

Dear Sir,

Lour affectionate Friend, and faithful Servant, in our common 1 cRD,

Northampton, Dec. 23, 1749.

#### POSTSCRIPT.

To prevent, as far as roffible, any objection which might arife from not having any proper form just at hand, I shall here fubjoin two, which I will recommend to those who may happen not to be better provided. The first is indeed, (fo far as I know) pretty peculiar, being intended for a family into which prayer is just going to be introduced, after having been long neglected : the other is for morning or evening, with fuch proper variation to fuit either, as common fense

• If this letter fhould be prefented by any of my brethten in the ministry to any of their hearers, they may eafily see, that this expreffion is applicable to them, as well as to those who may receive it from my hands.

P. DODRIDGE.

## An introduction to Ramily Prayer.

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will direct. And I defire it may be observed, that it may well is used as a directory to those, who do not chuse to use it as a form. And I apprehend it may be most ferviceable in this view; as my defire to reduce it within narrow limits, and yet to suggest as many thoughts as possible, hath obliged me to such concidencies of expressions, that the ideas are varied fatter than many capacities may conveniently admit. Bat I pray GOD to enlarge your heart, that you may expatiate upon these hints to your own edification, and that of all those that join with you.

### PRATER,

Which may be eled as an introduction to a flated course of familyprayer, where it hath been formerly neglected.

O Most great and glorious God ! When we confider thee, as the gracious author of all those mercies which we enjoy, in our perfons and in our family, we have great reason to humble ourselves before thee, that we have not more folemnly acknowledged that goodness, on which we have fo long and so comfortably subsisted. Justly mightess thou, O thou Almighty JEMOVAH, have poured out thy fury upon those, that herein have acted, as if they knew thee not, even upon this family which hath not called on thy name. But confessing and lamenting this our finful and inexcusable neglect, we earnostly entreat thee through JESUS CHRIST to pardos it, and to accept and Arengthen the refolution, which in dependence on thy grace we would now ferm to be for the future diligent in it, and to do all we can, in our respective stations, to encourage and support it.

And we entreat thee to blefs those religious opportunities, which, as a family, we may enjoy. Enable us to hear thy word with due attention. Open our minds to all the inftructions we receive from it, and bow our hearts to humble obedience.

Be favourably prefent with us, when we are offering our addresses to thy throne 1 While we are adoring thine infinite

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perfections, may we feel a reverent and joyful fenfe of them upon our hearts! While we confers our fins before thee, may we inwardly abbor them, and mourn over them, and be infpired with firm tefolutions, that we will never return to them any more, but will guard against every appearance of evil! Excite in our fouls earnest defires after those spirit, ual bleffings, which we ask at thine hands! May we is tencede for others with fervent charity! May we acknow. ledge thy mercies with the most lively gratitude, and devote ourfelves to thee with full purpose of heart!

And, on the whole, may every one of us find the divine life growing and advancing in our Touls by every opportunity of this nature; that we may rejoice in each other, and in thee; and that true religion being family eftablished in our own hearts, may, by our means, be communicated to others, fo far as our influence over them may extend; till at length, having worthipped these together in fuch inflitutions as thefe in a hely and acceptable manner, we may join that large and bleffed family above, which is forever rejoicing in thy prefence; through JESUS CHAIST our LORD; to whom, with thee, O Father, and thine Holy Spirit, be everlatting praifes.—Anen.

#### 

# PRATER,

## A FAMILY.

#### To be used either Moraing or Evening, with such variations as may eafily be understood by any who are able to read it.

Most great, eternal, and ever-bleffed Gon! We thine unworthy creatures, defire at this this time with all humility, to bow ourfelves down in thine awful and majestic preience, acknowledging thine infinite perfections and glories. [We adore thee, as the first & the last the greatest and best of beings; who art originally and necessarily posses and best of ledge and power, witdom and righteousness, holiness and truth, mercy and goodness, in degrees which no other being can conceive.] We pay thee our homage as the author and support of universal nature, the lord and life of the Creation-We acknowledge ourselves thy creatures, whose bodies and souls have been formed by thine hand, and continually maintained and defended by thy care and favor.

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Most justly mightest thou therefore, O our heavenly father, have expected from us the most constant gratitude, duty and obedience. But we humbly confess before thee, (and we defire to do it with the deepen humiliation and fhame, remorfe and forrow) that we have been very much wanting in those returns ; yea, that we have all most grievoully offended thee. [We confers, O thou holy, holy, holy, LORD Gon, that we are polluted and guilty creatures, and fo most unworthy and unfit to appear in thy prefence.]-We acknowledge, O LORD, that we were fhapen in iniquity, and in fin did our mothers conceive us ; and that we have, from our very childhood, been renewing our provocations and transgreffions in our thoughts, our words, and our actions; and all these attended with circumstances of high aggravation. We own and lament, O thou most gracious Sovereign, that we have in numberless inflances, negligently, yea and prefumptuoufly broken those wife and holy laws, which they gaveft us for our good ; and that by the breach of them, we have deferved thy righteous difpleafure :1 So that we might have been made examples of juffiee, and spectacles of mifery, to all thy rational creation. [We might long fince have been cut off from this pleafant abode which thy goodness has affigned us, and from all the comforts thou haft given us in it, and been tent down to everlasting darknefs, where the worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.]

But we humbly implore thy pardon and mercy in CHRIST, JESUS our LCRD, thine only begotten and well-beloved Son ; who hath by thine appointment, O compafionate Father, vifited this world of ours, not only to give it the most excellent instructions, confirmed by the most associate fragminacles and recommended by the most amiable example; but also to redeem us to Gou by his blood, and to offer up his own life a facrifice for us. [He was delivered for our offences, and raifed again for our justification. And as he is now ascended into heaven, there to make a prevailing intercession for all that come unto Gou through him]—we prefume to approach thy facred prefence with all becoming regards to him, humbly pleading that atoning blood which he shed on the crofs, and that all-perfect, merit and righteousness of his, by which alone finners may

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drawnear unto thee with acceptance. And we entreat thee for his fake, and in regard to our relation to him, fully and freely to forgive us all our numberlefs tranfgreffions, and to be gracioufly reconciled to us; yea, to take us unworthy as we are, into the number of thy dear children. For his fake we alfor humbly entreat thee, to free us from the power of fin, as well as from its guilt. — Send down, O thou Gop of all grace, thine Holy Spirit upon our hearts in a rich abundance, to infpire us with a hatred of every thing that is difpleafing to thee, and to form us to a love of univerfal goodnefs, and a defire of making continual improvements in it!

[Fill us, O LORD, we humbly befeech thee, with a fervent love to thy bleffed felf! In all things may we be obedient to thine holy precepts, and fubmiffive to thy wife and gracious difpofal! May we be united to CHRIST by a funcere faith, which thall work by love, and fhew itfelf in keeping his commandments, as well as trutting his attonement, intereeffion, and grace ! May we be always led by the Holy Spirit of GoD, and cherifh his influence on our hearts as the fpirit of holinefs and of love ! To our brethren of mankind may we be ftrictly juft, and affectionately kind, doing to others as we could reafonably defire they fhould do to us, and rejoicing in every opportunity of advancing their temporal or fpiritual happinefs.]

While we continue here in this uncertain world, give us, if it be thy bleffed will, food to eat, and raiment to put on, health of body, and cheerfulnefs of mind, and whatever other enjoyments thou feelt neceffary to make our journey through life comfortable ! But let us not have our portion on earth ! May our hearts be more and more indifferent to it, and our views continually raifed above it !- [May we learn to govern with firict authority our appetites and paffions, and to deny ourfelves, wherever the precepts of the gofpel require it! On the whole, may every part of our conduct, in every relation and circumflauce of life, adorn religion; and may the luftre of our good works engage many around us to glorify our father in heaven !]-May we continually remember the fhortness of time, and the importance of eternity; and behave in fuch a manner, that fhould we be fummoned away ever so suddenly, death may not be a terrible, but a joyful furprife ! Support us, O LORD, in our last extremities, and help us to honour thee by our dying behavior. Receive our departing fpirits to the embraces of thy mercy, and give us a triumphant part in the refurrection of the juil.

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We pray for the advancement of thy gospel in the world, and for the conversion of yews and Gentiles to the faith as it is in JESUS. We pray O LORD, for the progress and improvement of the reformation, abroad and at home. We entreat thee by thy grace to animate all, who are diffinguished by power, riches, or other advantages, that they may improve all their talents for the public good. And we carness by pray, that the ministers of thy gospel of every denomination, may with united affection, ardent zeal, and eminent fuccess, be carrying on the work of the LORD!

May it pleafe thee O thou God of mercy, to fpread among Christians of every profession, a spirit of forbearance, candor, and love; and to visit all that are in any kind of affliction, whether perforal or relative, of mint, body, or estate ! Graciously support them under their forrows, and in thine own time fend them deliverance.

We befeech thee to blefs us as a family; whether we prefide over it, or belong to it, as children, fojourners, or fervants, may we all be found in a faithful difcharge of our duty to thee, and to each other! May our united and retired devotions be fo performed, as to have the happieft influence on our temper and our conduct!

And now, O most gracious and merciful father, we defire with all our hearts to blefs and adore thing holy name, for all thy great and unmerited goodness to us, and to the whole We praife thee for our creation and prefervahuman race. tion, for health and eafe, for food and raiment, for liberty and fafety, for friends and fuccefs; and above all, for our redemption, for the ineftimable privilege of approaching to thee through a mediator, and for the rich and full provision thou halt made in him for the forgiveness of our daily fins, for our receiving all the fupplies of grace we ftand in need of here, and our enjoying everlatting happines hereafter. And under a fenfe of thy mercies, we defire to devote ourfelves to thee as to the LORD our Gon, and renew our covenant with thee through our LORD JESUS CHRIST ; humbly refolv. ing by the affiltance of thy forit and grace, to ferve thee with all good filelity unto the end of our lives.

We particularly blefs thee for the mercies of the day [or night pail, and would humbly commit our ourfelves to thy gracious protection and favor this night, [or day] entreating thee to guard us from all evil, and to grant that at our next affembling together, we may have reafon to unite our praifes for the continuance of thy goodnefs. And may we be per-

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petually advancing in our preparation for that heavenly world where we hope to worlhip thee without any of those imperfections which now attend us; which we ask and hope, thro the merits of thy Son CHRIST JESUS, in whom we have righteousness and strength, and in whose name and words we conclude our address, calling on thee as our father which art in heaven. Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespresses, as we forgive them that trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

N. B. As this prayer may be deliberately read over in about ten minutes, or leaving out what is included in crotchets, in half a quarter of an hour, I think I may take it for granted, that the affair is brought to a crifis. For if just after reading this letter, being thus difarmed of every excele as to the want of necessary helps, you will not call your family together to attend to it for fo fmall a space of time, or to put up fome other petitions with them, I fear it is a fad fign. you will live and die in the neglect of this important duty, and I must leave you to answer it in the prefence of GoD.

# CHRISTIAN ZEAL.

HRIST gave himfelf for his people, not only to redeem A them, from all iniquity; but that they might be diffinguilled from others, by their zeal for good works. And the following fentiment of the Apoffie Paul is certainly correct: "It is good to be zealoufly affected always in a good caufe." Every laudable purfuit calls for zeal proportioned to its importance. But whill the Apolle approved of a paffionate ardor, and a warmth of holy affection, in the fervice of God; he lamented that the zeal of fome, with whom he was converfant, was not according to knowledge. The object in view was not of fufficient importance, to juffify their ardent zeal, in its purfuit. He feems to have had in view, a fet of fpurious Preachers, by whom the Churches were infefted at that early period ; who, to avoid perfecution, and gain popularity with a numerous clafs of their hearers, taught the people that they could not be laved, except they were circumrld

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cifed, and kept the law of Mofes. These men were zealous, but the exciting caule of their zeal, was the supposed interest of their own party; and if the value of zeal is to be estimate i, not to much by its heat, as by the importance of the cause by which it is excited; these party zealots were guilty, in proportion to the height of their zeal, in the profecution of their anti-christian cause.

The great Apolie of the Gentiles had obtained a happy deliverance, from the party fchemes and contracted felfith defigns of zealous bigots. The glory of God-the fpread and l'uccess of the Gospel of Chrift, and the confequent happinels of all the nations of the earth, were the grand objects which ftimulated him, to unexampled zeal in the difcharge of his duties, as an Apofle, and as a Chriftian. Confrained by the love of Chrift, he was willing to facrifice every inferior interest for the prosperity of his Church. His fufferings and felf denial teffified, that he had no interest to profecute, dilting from the Redeemer's caufe; that he only defired to live, to bear teftimony to the riches of his grace ; and that he was willing to die, for the name of the Lord Jefus. The most Superficial reader of the Epilles of Paul, mult certainly difcover fomething dignified, and noble, in his character; and whatever he may think of the caufe which he fo zealously elpoufed, and vindicated; he will be confirained to acknowledge, that his zeal proved him to be fincere ; and that it was, in all points, just what we would expect to proceed, from a frm belief of the doctrines which he taught.

Now, though all Chriftians are not called to manifest their zeal in the fame manner, or to move in the fame fphere; though all are not Apolites or Preachers; the great object purfued by all is the fame. They are the feveral members of that body, of which Chrift is the head ; and though all the members have not the fame office, vet one fpirit pervaries and influences all; and thus is every member firmulated to vigorous efforts, for the promotion of a common caufe. The method whereby a finner is brought to participate of the bleffings of the Gofpel, and the nature of the truths which by the Spirit of Christ, he is led to contemplate, are fuch, as cannot fail to excite an ardent Christian zeal in the mind, on which they have their full operation. The ruined creature is translated from darkness to marvellous light-Inspired with right fentiments respecting God and his government-Led to refield on his own guilty, depraved, ruined condition-To view the whole human family in circumflances equally deplo-

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rable; and to understand and embrace the wonderful play of Redemption, through the interpolition and fufferings of the Son of God. Thefe are not fubjects for barren, unfeel. ing speculation. Constrained by the love of Christ-de. lighted with the excellencies of his Golpel, and penetrated by a view of the odious nature of fin, the Christian is led to exclaim, "What thall I render to the Lord for all his benefits?"-How thall I manifelt to the world, the love and gra. titude I owe to a Saviour, who died that I might live? In the word of God he finds an answer to these inquiries, which perfectly accords with his prefent temper. Instead of those carnal weapons, with which many, under the name of zeal for God, have made havock of his Church, he is cloathed with humility-he is meek and gentle, and eafy to be entreated-disposed to do good to those that hate him, and to prav for those who difrespectfully use, and perfecute him.

It is probable that a zeal thus tempered with benevolence, forbearance, and other mild Christian dispositions, has had a greater influence on finners, and has operated more effectually in divesting them of their prejudices against the truth, than any other means which have ever been used. And on the contrary, nothing has ever been more prejudicial, to the interests of Christ's kingdom, than a furious uphallowed zeal, for meats and drinks, and the Shibboleth of a party; under the influence of which, men have been disposed, to call for fire from Heaven to confume their adversaries.

It ought not, however, to be forgotten, that Christian zeal, though always mild, is likewife firm, when the caufe of God is affailed. It differs widely from a cool indifference to truth, which under the fpecious name of liberality, or extensive charity, rejects no doctrines as heterodox or dangerous objects against no crimes, as inconfistent with the Christian character.

There are too many, who having witneffed, perhaps, fome of the evils attendant on intemperate zeal, and feeling little concern themfelves, for the profperity of Zion, are ready to reprobate every appearance of religious zeal; and effecially if a Christian is feen "contending earnestly for the faith once delivered to the Saints," he is branded with the approbrious name of partizan, or bigot, or enthusiast; and men who on no other occasion have discovered any fumptoms of religious fensibility, clamorously require his excommunication. Such people feldom manifest the fame degree of apathy on other fubjects. Are they in putfuit of liberty, or wealth, or reputation? the object is confidered fufficiently important to juffify the most zealous efforts in the purfuit. And is it supposed, that the glory of God—the happiness of mea—the everlasting interests of our own fouls, are objects too trivial to excite our warmest zeal for their promotion? Must these give place to the momentary concerns of the present life? Let the word of God answer: "Seek first the kingdom of Heaven—Work out your falvation with fear and trembling— Be fervent in spirit, ferving the Lord—for what would it profit a man to gain the whole world, and lose his foul."

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How will men, who are blind to the difference between truth and error, juftify the anathema pronounced by the Apottle Paul against perverters of the Gospel? "If any man preach any other Gospel unto you, than that which you have received, let him be accurfed?" Human frailties and miftakes, not subversive of religion, he viewed with forbearance. Personal reproach and persecution, he bore patiently; but if even an Apostle manifested an inclination to diffemble, or act with duplicity, his zeal kindled, and he withstood him to the face. View him brought before Kings and Rulers, no a pestilent fellow, and an heretic: Is his zeal for truth now extinguished? Does he diffemble, or use any artful subterfuge to escape their censure? No: These circumstances demanded, and excited his warmest zeal.

"This I confeis, that after the way which they call herefy, fo worfhip I the God of my fathers," Hear him, in the prefence of an unrighteous Ruler, reafon on righteoufnefs, temperance, and judgment to come, until a Felix trembles. Every thing connected with the peace and profperity of Zion, was confidered by the Apofile deeply interesting; but when led to celebrate the riches of divine grace, or to extol the compafion of a Saviour, he is instantly fired by his fubject, his heart glows, and he labors for language to express, "the height and depth—the length and breadth, of the love of Chrift, which paffeth knowledge." These expressions bring to remembrance the following lines of the celebrated Doctor Young, of which Saul himfelf would doubtles have approved :

"O ye cold hearted, frozen formalifts!

"On fuch a theme 'tis impious to be calm ;

"Paffion is reason, transport temper here."

The advantages refulting from fervent Christian zeal, are incalculable. The difficulties to be furmounted by every Christian, whether he may be called to move in a higher, or

lower fphere, will fubfide, in proportion as his heart is warm. ed with zeal in the fervice of Chrift. This truth is confirm. ed by the patience manifelled by the primitive Christians in their fufferings-and more efpecially, by the example of the great Apolle of the Gentiles: Had he not been actuated by an inextinguishable, unabating zeal, in the fervice of his Lord, how often mult he have thrunk from difficulties, which he well knew awaited him? But fuch was his perfuation of the goodnefs of his caufe, that he confidered not his life dear, provided he could finish his Christian coulde honorably. Obliacles therefore, which might have proved infurmounta. ble to a perfon lefs zealous, had no tendency to retard him in his Christian course-For Christ, he was willing to fuffer pe focution, and reproach, and firipes, and imprifonment, and the loss of all temporal blefings; "knowing in himfelf, that he had in Heaven, a better and an enduring fubiliance." Fervent zeal, not oul fortifies the Christian against every oppofition, and bears him triumphantly through every difficulty; but in fach, the Christian who manifests a proper zeal, and " fets his face as a flint," will generally meet with much lefs oppolition, from those who are mimical to the interests of Chrift's kingdom ; than the professor, who, by his lukewarm. nefs, and timichty, gives them realou to expect, an eafy victo. ry over him. Were the opposes of Christianity poffeffed of power, the moll zealous Chrittian would probably first feel its 1-fluence; but whilit the tongue is the only weapon; they are permitted to ule; their prudence induces them, to affail thole, who through natural mability, of in confequence of a want of z al, are capable of making the weakeft liefence.

The Chrittian who would be uteful, must be zealous. The most superficial acquaintance with the doctrines contained in the Bible, must convince any perion, that a firm pertuation of their truth, will ever be accompanied by a zeal, corresponding to their acknowledged importance. And however, the wicked may, in their focial hours, condemn, or brand with affected approbrium, the Christian, who manifests a zealous attachment to the caufe of Christ; they know well, that he acts a confistent part; and that he would be an object of just centure, did he profess faith in Christ, with a heart indifferent to the interests of his kingdom. The zealous Christian only, may expect to filence his adversaries, and "out off occasion, from fuch as feek an occasion, to speak evil of the things which they understand not." Wite Breachers and people, "actuated by this not a principle, were they fervent in spirit,

# On certain Objections against the Bible.

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alk frishing and a material with ferving the Lord, what a pleafing profpect must it afford to the friends of Zion? Did love to Chrift, and gratitude, and zeal, arge his people, to crowd his temple gates, with fongs of praife; finners could not be indifferent foeclators in fuch fcenes. They mult at any rate be "almost perfunded to become Chriffians." Dreadful infenfibility must possels the heart of that wretch, who can not fee, or relufes to acknow. ledge, that to be engaged zealonfiv in the worthip of the God who made us, is the molt noble employment of which we are capable. For this we were made-In this we enjoy fweet intercourfe with the Deity .- Every mental power finds fweet employment here; and Heaven dawns upon us, with a brightnefs proportioned to our zealous efforts to fecure its rewards.

But should we life fight of our connection with our Maker, or become infenfible, that to devote soul and body, zealously to kim, is our reasonable service, we mull at once become a mullery to ourfelves, and be led to fulpect, that, though every creature is formed with powers united to its grade in the fcale of being; man was made in vain. "Let Chrillians, therefore, "be fledfaft, immovable, and zealouf. ly abounding in the work of the Lord; forafmuch as they know, that their labour is not in vain, in the Lord" O! that they would carefully avoid that floth and inactivity; that Laodicean fpirit, which is fo pointedly condemned by their gracious Saviour, and has fo often occasioned the work to fufpeet, that Christians ferve a hard Matter. Muft not every Christian tremble at the thought, of bringing fuch a reproach on the caufe of that Saviour, who, for him "endured the Crois, defpifing the lhame, and is now feated at the right hand of the Throne of Gop?" Brethren, "let us consider HIM that endured fuch contradiction of finners against himself," and with renewed zeal. " press toward the mark for the prize of our high calling," until we arrive at that world, where we fhall no longer need to provoke each other to zeal, or love, or good works.

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## On certain O'jections against the Bible.

ther topics contain ? or treated of, in the bible, difficulties. of no finall magnitude occur. But it ought to be carefully confidered and kept in mind, that, properly fpeaking, these are not bible difficulties. If the bible were wholly fet afide, these same difficulties would, in all their force, meet the mind. It is a fast that evil is in the world : It is a fast that we inhe. rit evils from our parents : It is a fact, admitted by all except Atheifls, that God governs the world : It is a fact on which all focial intercourfe among mankind depends, that man is a free or moral agent, accountable for all his voluntary actions. These are flubborn undeniable facts, without the bible. It is not from the bible that we first learn them-They are not fomething which the bible first of all reveals, or brings to our knowledge, and which we fhould not otherwife be required to believe. Had the bible never exifted we must both have known and believed them .- What, then, is the juft flatement in regard to this fubjed? Simply this-The account which the bible gives of these facts, and the principies which it teaches in regard to them, the friends of the bible are concerned to vindicate-Nothing more is incumbent on them. As the facts are not to be denied, it remains with those who contradict or ridicule what the bible teaches, to teach fomething better, fomething more reasonable, more credible, and easier to be received. Let them be put to do this,-They are in reason bound to do it-The facts are to be disposed of by them, as well as by the friends of the revelation. They find fault with the way in which revelation difpofes of the facts-Let them then point out a better. Let them take the wide field of corjecture and employ in the fervice all the powers of imagination. When they have done their beft, let their account of thefe things be compared with that which the bible gives of them. All experience hitherto has demonstrated that whatever real difficulties there may be in what the facred foriptures teach relative to the abstrule points, they are infinit. ly lefs than those which offer when the wit, or wifdom of man becomes the teacher-What the bible teaches is credible-What men has ever yet taught, contra-. ry to it, is abfolutely incredible, abfurd and ridiculous. Confider the doctrines of the Magi and the Gnoffics about the origin of evil : recollect the fate of the ancient Stoicks, and the predefination of the modern Turks, and you have a fair fpecimen of what men do in folving these difficulties, when they depart from the scripture. It is among these men, not. guided by fcripture, that you find fentiments on the points in queltion, fo monstrous as to shock all reason and common

## A Meditation.

fenfe. Among christians, at least in practice, you do not find them. On the whole, the friends of revelation fhould always confider what are properly the difficulties of the facred fcriptures, and what are not, and when the enemies of the bible object against the statements it gives, relative to certain doctrines of natural religion, let them be required to give better and more confistent flatements of their own .--And it will deeply concern those who are thinking of entering the (chool of infidelity, to confider ferioufly whether, if they reject the fcriptures altogether, they will get rid of any of their speculative difficulties. They may be affured that they will retain them all, and add unfpeakably to the number, whenever they give up their bibles. Whatever is useful in practice, the word of GoD plainly teaches-It does not protefs to explain things which perhaps our faculties in this world do not permit us fully to comprehend.

## A MEDITATION.

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N walking across the fields a few evenings ago I was attracted by the full appearance of the fetting sun. What a glorious object, faid I, do mine eyes behold ! But how much more glorious is he, by whom the sun was created and made ! JESUS, thou Sun of Righteousness, how far furpassing this are the beauties with which thy person is arrayed, and which all around encircle thee ! Yonder is an object that is given to change: A few hours pall, he thone with meridian fplendor; his luftre was fo bright that I was unable to look at him; but now he has confiderably exhaufted his frength, and mine eyes are foarcely affected with the fight. But thou O JESUS, art always the fame, with thee, the great fountain of light, 'there is no variablenefs, nor thadow of turning'-Truft, O my foul, this unchangeable friend. If thou believest not, vet he abideth faithful; he cannot deny himfelf. His word of promife, like an anchor to the foul, is both fure and ftedfaft.

Looking fill at the sun as he gradually defcended below the horizon, I confidered again, thou, O Sun, wilt at one time fet to rife no more, thy glory fhall ultimately fade and die; and as the great monarch of the fkies, thou must ceafe to reign. But thy glory, O JESUS, is permanent and eternal. "I know that my Redeemer liveth," though he once fubmite

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ted to die. That he is now at the right hand of Gop, exclued to reign, and all his Saints thall finally reign with him, and behold his glory for ever. O that I may be one of that bleff.d number !

> When thall this happy day of vition be? . When thall I make a near approach to thee!

> Be loft in love, and wrapt in ecflacy?

\* \* \* \* \* \* Lord hafte the hour

Of joy and fweet repofe! transporting hope !

It grieved me that I was now interrupted in my reflections; for before I could find an opportunity to renew them, the sub had totally difapppeared. How animating is the profpect of poffeffing a world, where none of the things which now break in upon our ferious moments shall ever be fuffered to intrude

June 19th, 1800.

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# ANECDOTES.

## "A good book is never lost."

THE truth of this common adage has been often exemplified, but feldom in a more extraordinary way than by the following fact. communicated to us by the Rev. S. Douglafs, of Chelmsford. There lived in the town of C .--. a perfon of the name of Johnson, by profession a Painter, and much effeemed in that line of bufinefs - Notwithflanding he had been priviledged with a religious education, his connexions in the world led him into the company of fome perfons of a deiffical turn, by whom his mind was much injured, though he was not without occasional checks of confeience, and flavish fears of death. From this miferable flate it pleafed the God of all grace to deliver him, in the year 1795, in the following fingular manner :- His wife, in paffing along the fireets, picked up, and brought home, three or four books, which had been loft by one of the members of a bookfociety in the town, among them, was the four miffionary fermons, with the portrait of Captain Willon,-being a Painter by profession, the picture first engaged his attention, and after dipping a little into the book, he refolved, as illnefs corfined him at home the following Sabbath, that he would read

123

#### Anecdotes.

ever the four fermons; the bleffed confequence was, that the Holy Spirit fent home the truths contained in them on his heart, and from that day he was a new man. For fome time he attended the ministry of Mr. D. with much profit, and at length died full of faith, and of the Holy Ghoft. Thus we fee that circumftances very trivial in themfelves, may, by the application of the Divine Spirit, be made effectual to the convertion of fumers; and even the lofs of a book may prove, through his bleffing, the finding of a foul.

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A certain man, ou the Malabar coaft, had erquired of various devotees and priefts, how he might make atonement for his fin ; and at laft he was directed to drive iron fpikes, fufficiently blunted, through his fandals; and on these fpikes he was to place his naked feet, and walk (If I midake not) 250 cofs, viz. about 480 miles. If through lofs. of blood, or weakness of body, he was obliged to halt he might wait for healing and fireugh. He undertook the journey, and, while he halted und r a large thirdy tree, where the Golp I was fometimes preached, one of the millionaries came, and preached in his hearing, from thefe words, The blood of Fesus Christ cleanseth from all sin. While he was preaching, the man role up, threw off his torturing fandals, and cried out aloud this is what i want; and he became a lively witness, that the bloud of Jetus Chrift does cleanfe from all fins indeed.

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A Jew went from Paris to Rome, in order to acquire a just idea of the Christian religion, as at the fountain head. There he beheld fimony, intrigue, and abominations of all forts ; and, after gratifying his curiofity in every particular. returned to France, where he gave a detail of his observations to a friend, by whom he had been long folicited to abjurd Judailm. From fuch a recital, the Christian expected nothing but an obflinate perfeverance in the old worfhip; and was itruck with amazement when the Jew acquainted him with his refolution of requelling babulen, upon the following grounds of conviction : - I hat he had feen at Rome every boby, from the Pope down to the beggar, using all their 'endeavours to tubvert the Chillian faith ; which neverthelefs, daily took deeper and firmer root, and mult therefore be of divine inflitution. and the arrest of an of

# To the Editors of THE VIRGINIA RELIGIOUS MAGAZINE,

#### Messrs. Editors,

The two following hymns were composed by a youth, in an obscure station of life, and destitute of liberal education. Should you think them, accompanied with this remark, deferving of a place in your Magazine, their infertion will gratify HIS BROTHER.

#### PRAISE FOR REDEMING LOVE:

- ALL glory to the dying Lamb Who left his throne above,
  Who came to raife our ruin'd frame To liberty and love.
- 2. How great and glorious was his love That brought him down to die,
- And by his own almighty pow'r To bring falvation nigh.
- 3. 'Twas pity bro't him down from heav's Our nature to reffore;
- To purify our fouls by grace That we might fin no more.
- Dear Lord, we blefs thy dying love, Thy condeicending grace;
  Till we arrive at brighter worlds And fee thy lovely face.

#### A MORNING HYMN.

## To be sung before day.

- AWAKE, my foul, arife and fing The great JEHOVAH's praife;
  To him a grateful tribute bring Who lenghthens out thy days.
- 2. Shout to his praie, bright morning flar, Ye fparkling planets fing ;
- Proclaim his glories from afar, And blefs the heav'nly king.
- Shine to his praise, then filver moon. Amid the shades of night;
  Associate the glories of thy noon To his superior light.

Peetry.

4. B'eff be the Lord whole gracious pow's Still faves my foul from death, And every day and every hour Supports my feeble breath.

5. Thus will I raife a grateful fong Each morning as I rife; May the still air the found prolong. And bear it to the skies.

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#### FOR THE VIRGINIA RELIGIOUS MAGAZINE.

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# THE YOUNG COMMUNICANT.

 JESUS, full of truth and grace, Here reveals his fmiling face;
Spreads to day the gofrel feaft, Bids me come and be his gueft.

Shall I hefitate to go?
Why fhould guilt affright me fo?
None who go thall be deny'd,
'Twas for finners Jefus died.

 Needy I before him fland, Nor does he a price demand: He my helplefs miffry knows, Freely his falvation flows.

4. He provides me heav'nly food, Bids me tafte his flefh, his blood t Does not this his mercy prove? Can I doubt his dying love?

5. Lord, I hefitate no more, Thou art bounteous to the poor: To thy table I draw near, Saviour let me meet thee here.

 With immortal bread and wine Cheer this fainting foul of mine :
Chanfe my heart, my guilt forgive, Bid the dying finner live,

ASPASIO.

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## FOR THE RELIGIOUS MAGAZINE,

... Poetry.

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### Verses written on leaving the house of a friend.

FATHER of mercies, bow thine ear, And grant thy suppliants humble prayer: As 1 have here fiveer friendsh p found, O let thy love my friends furround.

Within their hearts let peace abide, Their fleps let heav'nly wifdom guide: Through all the cares of life attend, And be their Guardian and their Friend.

On thy kind promifes of grace May they their firm reliance place: In thee, their Father, let them reft, 117 And find content their conftant gueft.

In trouble, Lord, their fouls futtain, . Soften their toils and foothe their pain : Thus lead them to that blitsful from . Where we shall meet to part no more.

ASPASIC.

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## THE DYING CHRISTIAN TO HIS SOUL.

VITAL fpark of heavenly flame, Quit, oh quit this mortal frame Trembling, hoping, lingering, flying, On the pain, the blefs of dying. Ceafe fond nature, ceafe thy firife, And let me languith into life.

Hark! they whilper, Angels fay, Siller fpirit, come away, What is this abforbs me quite, Steals my fendes, thats my fight, Drowns my fpirits, draws my breath, Tell me my foul, can this be death?

The world recedes, it difappears, Heaven opens on my eyes, my ears, With founds feraphic ring. Lend ! lend ! your wings ! I mount ! I fy ! " O grave ! where is thy victory ? " O death ! where is thy fling ?"