

THE

# SPIRIT OF THE PILGRIMS.

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It has for some time past appeared exceedingly desirable, that there should be published in Boston a periodical work, in which that portion of the community, usually denominated orthodox, can easily and frequently express those views of truth and duty, which, after a full and fair examination, are judged to be of great importance. At present, although there are several respectable religious magazines in our country, none of them can be made to accomplish here, all the beneficial ends, which the interests of the church now require. After serious and prayerful deliberation, therefore, it has been determined to establish a new magazine. The determination was not made without duly weighing the responsibilities to be assumed; and, since made, it is regarded with much satisfaction by those who formed it, and by many others to whom it has been communicated.

Were there no experience on the subject, we might safely conclude, that a magazine, devoted to the defence of truth and the refutation of error;—to a free and candid discussion of those great topics, which are connected with the character and destiny of man as an accountable and immortal being;—and to those objects of expansive benevolence, which distinguish the period in which we live, must be one of the most powerful and happy instruments that could be employed. A monthly publication, which can be preserved in the form of a book, and is sufficiently large to admit of extended discussion, combines as many advantages, perhaps, as are to be had in any use of the periodical press; especially as applied to grave and solemn subjects. While literature, science, and the arts, avail themselves, to a very great extent, of the facilities afforded by monthly magazines, it cannot be doubted that these publications are equally fit to promote useful investigation in morals and religion.

But we are not left to inferences, however certain they might appear. Taking a retrospect of what has been done, during the last thirty years, both in Great Britain and America, for the promotion of practical godliness, or of harmony and brotherly cooperation,

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or of Christian enterprise,—it is found, that almost every advance has been made, through the instrumentality of religious magazines. These have proved the most convenient and respectable vehicles of thought and communication, on all matters relating to the prosperity of religion; and without such vehicles of some kind, it would not be possible that ministers and churches should feel that strength, or derive that mutual support, or make those exertions for the common good and for the salvation of their fellow men, which are the result of free public discussion and united counsels.

There are many now living, who well remember the impulse, which was given to the more intelligent part of the Christian community, by the establishment of the *Theological Magazine* in New York, about the year 1796, or 1797, to which some of the first ministers in our country were contributors; particularly, that profound reasoner and able divine, Dr. Edwards, president of Union College, and son of the great president Edwards.

The *Connecticut Evangelical Magazine* was commenced not long afterwards; and was continued, with one short interval, for about fifteen years. During this period, it exerted a most salutary influence in many respects; but especially in exciting the proper spirit, and obtaining the necessary resources, for those evangelical operations, under the auspices of the *Connecticut Missionary Society*, by which churches were organized, revivals of religion experienced, and the regular preaching of the Gospel established, in very many new settlements, which would otherwise have remained a moral wilderness, with little prospect of being reclaimed for generations to come. And here it may be proper to say, in passing, that the trustees of that Society, a truly venerable succession of men, are entitled to rank high among those, who prepared the way for all the enterprises of Christian beneficence, in which our country now takes a part. No person, at the present day, entertains juster sentiments, than they uniformly felt and expressed, in regard to the duty of sending the Gospel to every part of our widely extending territory; and, during more than a third of a century, they have actually sent forth missionaries, beginning with four or five, and increasing to more than fifty, into the most remote and destitute settlements. This hasty tribute to their enlarged views, and faithful labors, we could not withhold.

Several other magazines, devoted to the same general objects, were published at different times in New York, Philadelphia, and other places. The design of this article does not require a particular enumeration of them.

The *Panoplist*, however, published in Boston from 1805 to 1820, in sixteen volumes, should not be omitted here. Besides exerting an important influence in the establishment and patronage of Bible, Missionary, Tract and Education Societies; besides furnishing a channel for the communication of thoughts on the

most interesting topics, to which the attention of the religious public was drawn; it rendered incalculable service to the cause of truth, by compelling Unitarians to leave the concealment, by which they had so long been gaining influence, and in which lay the far greater proportion of their strength. The charge of such concealment was indeed most indignantly resented, though the witnesses adduced in support of it were distinguished Unitarians, and their testimony was perfectly explicit. It is still more remarkable, that these Unitarian witnesses were not publicly reprehended for having given their testimony, nor was their veracity called in question, while the Reviewers in the *Panoplist* were bitterly reproached for republishing their statements from pages written by a leading Unitarian, for the express purpose of giving an authentic history of American Unitarianism. It is a curious fact, that the *Christian Examiner*, which is far the most important Unitarian publication in the United States, ten years after the charge was made in the *Panoplist*, found occasion to repeat and confirm it. The disclosures, to which we have here referred, led the way to the controversy of 1815, which called forth the talents of the late Dr. Worcester, so much to the advantage of the cause which he espoused, and of which he proved so able an advocate. We are among those who believe, that all the controversies with Unitarians, since the name was known in this country, have accelerated the progress of correct sentiments; have given strength, union and consistency to the orthodox; and are now contributing, in their natural and predicted consequences, to the return of Boston and the vicinity to the cordial reception of those doctrines, and the exemplary practice of those duties, which so honorably distinguished the first settlers of New England. Believing all this, we cannot doubt that a publication, which aided so essentially in the necessary developments, must have had an indispensable share in producing those great and happy effects, which are now witnessed. Unless we are greatly mistaken, the Unitarians will agree with us in saying, that if any good is to be derived from the Theological Seminary in Andover; if true religion is promoted by the erection of new churches for orthodox assemblies in Boston; if the doctrines of the Reformation, as preached in these assemblies, are to be approved; if revivals of religion, as the orthodox understand the phrase, are to be desired; if the education of hundreds of ministers, and ultimately of thousands, under the fostering care of charitable institutions, is to bring down countless blessings upon our land; if the sending of the Gospel to the heathen, by Christians in America, is a good work, upon which the blessing of God may be expected:—in fine, if the whole system of religious instruction and charitable exertion, as sustained by the orthodox, is a blessing to mankind;—then must the *Panoplist* be allowed to have discharged an important service, as it promoted and defended all the measures,

which led to these results, and was the organ of many original suggestions respecting them.

It is true that the magazines, which have here been mentioned by name, and many others, were successively discontinued; but this no more proves that they were not extensively useful, than the death or removal of a minister proves, that his labors, through a long succession of years, were of no value to his people, or to the church at large. A periodical publication may have a certain great work to perform; and when that is accomplished, it may peacefully and honorably repose. The fact is, that religious magazines in our country have been supported by personal sacrifices, on the part of their projectors, editors, and contributing patrons, of which the public at large have never had an adequate conception. No class of men have deserved more credit for generous and persevering devotion to the public good; and if they have not received this credit, so far at least as the pious and the wise are concerned, it is solely because the true circumstances of the case have not been known.

It should be added, with reference to the general utility of religious magazines, that they obviously prepared the way for religious newspapers, which are now exerting a very great and a very salutary influence in our country; but which, though destined to render essential service to all extensive operations of benevolence, do not supersede other uses of the periodical press.

The reasons, which have led to the establishment of a new religious magazine in Boston, are briefly the following.

First:—There has been for several years past, and especially of late, a great increase of attention to religion, in this city and the vicinity. We mean, not only that the number of individuals, who are resolved to make religion their highest personal concern, has been greatly augmented; but also, that many others have had their curiosity so far excited, and their minds so far aroused, as to make them inquire what religion is;—what orthodoxy is;—and what Unitarianism is. A spirit of investigation has gone forth,—a spirit of free inquiry,—a spirit that determines to examine for itself, to hear for itself, to think for itself, and not implicitly to confide in the representations of partisans; and this spirit is all the while adding to the number of those who hear orthodox preaching, who converse with orthodox ministers, who associate with the members of orthodox churches, who read the Bible with seriousness and with an anxious desire to ascertain its real meaning, and who admit the reasonableness of making religion the first, the constant, and the greatest object of attention. This spirit of investigation is a noble spirit, and it should be cherished, and cultivated, and satisfied.

In this connexion it is proper to say, that the inhabitants of Boston, and of many other parts of Massachusetts, are, to an

unusual degree, an intellectual people. They are hereditarily and constitutionally a thinking race of men; and though opiates have long been administered to the conscience, and much reproach has been thrown on discriminating views of religion, still a state of torpor, or mental stagnation, is to them an unnatural state. No subjects are so proper to occupy the minds of the community, at the present time, as those which relate to the distinction between true and false doctrine; and thus, to the great realities, which are disclosed in the word of God. What can be plainer, than that additional means of meeting this disposition to investigate should be furnished?

Again; it is undeniable, that a large portion of the community has been totally deceived, in regard to the doctrines and preaching of the orthodox. Many have recently discovered the deception practised upon them, and others are almost daily discovering it. Both classes wish to know how *far* they have been deceived. They are willing to hear from the lips of the orthodox themselves, and to learn from books what is really believed and taught.

In this state of things, nothing can be more reasonable, than that the orthodox should explain their own faith; and that they should have the means of doing it conveniently and easily, in writing as well as in public discourses. They must themselves tell what they believe, or be content that Unitarians should do it for them. They must give the reasons for their belief, or their adversaries will have it, that they believe without reason.

The cause of truth has already suffered greatly in this way. Misrepresentations, the most palpable and injurious, of the doctrines, preaching, and motives of the orthodox, have been common for many years; and the continual repetition of them has by no means ceased. The apparent object has been to keep the members of Unitarian congregations from entering the doors of an orthodox church; and this, to a very unhappy extent, has been the effect hitherto. There are not a few proofs, however, that these misrepresentations are soon to recoil upon their authors with unexpected violence. When those, who have been misled, determine to hear and examine for themselves, they find every thing different from what they had been taught to anticipate. They exclaim at once, 'This cannot be orthodoxy. For aught that we can see, this is reasonable, scriptural, and in agreement with all that we observe within our breasts, or in the world around us. There is nothing here that violates common sense, or the experience of mankind. Either this is not orthodoxy, or we have been grossly imposed upon respecting it.'

The attempt to render the doctrines held by our fathers odious and absurd, by giving distorted views of them, has pushed its authors into an unpleasant dilemma. Those who have been deluded are naturally impelled to say, 'Your views of orthodoxy

are either correct or incorrect,—fair or unfair. If correct and fair, then the preaching in new churches at Boston, and the teaching at Andover, though usually called orthodox, have really no resemblance to orthodoxy, and you can have no objection to our regarding such teaching and preaching with respect, and to our frequenting those places of worship where these doctrines are usually heard. But if all the descriptions of orthodoxy, which we have heard from Unitarian pulpits, are incorrect and unfair, we shall know what reliance to place on statements from the same quarter hereafter.'

It is hardly necessary to inform our readers, that the latter horn of this dilemma is the one, from which peculiar danger is to be apprehended. How many of the misrepresentations here alluded to have been intentional, and how many the result of ignorance, it might be a difficult matter to settle; but ignorance is a very unsatisfactory excuse for erroneous statements, which are intended to make the cause of an adversary odious and contemptible, and which relate to the great and everlasting interest of immortal beings.

While Unitarians have generally been very slow and reluctant to tell definitely what they themselves believe, and have contended that it is a hardship, and an insult, that they should be required to do so, they have been very ready to tell what the orthodox believe; and to tell it in such a manner, that their people should be in no danger of forming predilections for orthodoxy: thus volunteering to do that for their neighbors, which they will hardly do for themselves, after years of intreaty, argument, and expostulation. Now we have serious objections to this course of proceeding. We wish to state our own views of divine truth, in our own manner, and to defend them by our own arguments. We suppose we can express our own creed more accurately, than our adversaries can express it for us. At any rate, we are desirous of making the experiment; and of repeating it as often as shall be necessary. It is known, indeed, that Unitarians, while they insist on the right of judging for themselves on all subjects, claim the privilege of judging for the orthodox too, with respect to the terms of communion, ministerial exchanges, and the manner in which the orthodox are to regard them. This privilege they would gladly enforce, as unquestionable facts evince, even to punishing orthodox ministers, who do not yield to it, by ejecting them from their parishes. It is presumed that they will not claim the exclusive right of making creeds for others; but there would be nothing more inconsistent in this, than attempting to control the *religious practice* of others, in reference to a matter of vital importance to the church; and such a religious practice, as results necessarily from the orthodox creed.

Secondly:—Unitarians have a magazine published here, upon which they spare no labor, and which is constantly employed in



promoting their cause. We must have the means of meeting them on this ground; it being impossible to do as much through the medium of works published at a distance, as can be done on the spot. They have found it necessary to make strenuous efforts to keep up the publication and circulation of their magazine; and surely, with our views of truth and duty, we cannot do less than they.

Thirdly:—There have been great accessions of numbers and strength to the body of orthodox Christians in Boston and the vicinity, within a few years past. We mention the fact with gratitude, but not with boasting. To God be unceasing praise, that he has so evidently begun to turn back the captivity of his people. Human agency could never have effected what has been done, and to God alone be the glory.

These accessions of numbers and strength require additional means of improvement, of instruction, of confirmation, of encouragement. As readers are multiplied, there is more need of writing; as invitations to labor are strongly presented, they prompt to seize the proper occasions, and the proper topics, for discussion; and as the cause of truth advances, it is plain that new measures and new efforts will be constantly demanded. The present day is not a time for inaction, nor for hesitating and dilatory movements.

Fourthly:—The Unitarian controversy, as it is now conducted in Great Britain, Germany, and the United States, embraces nearly all the great points of fundamental truth and fundamental error. It is, as we firmly believe, one of the last great controversies, which is to afflict the church; and, although we would by no means advise to have it introduced where it is unknown, still there is little doubt that it must, for a time, attract the attention of many individuals, in almost every part of our country. The history of this controversy, so far as it has already proceeded, does not furnish any ground of alarm for the future; but, in order to make a proper use of advantages, as well as to correct misrepresentations, it is necessary that the orthodox should have some regular channel of communicating with the public.

For these reasons a new magazine has been commenced, to which *The Spirit of the Pilgrims* is considered an appropriate name.

Those principles, which were the glory of our fathers, and by which New England, and other parts of our country settled from New England, have obtained a name and a praise in the earth, are still entertained by a vast majority of their descendants. There has been, it is true, a serious and lamented defection from orthodoxy, in the most populous parts of Massachusetts; but, even in this commonwealth, if the whole number of decided Unitarians were ascertained, we feel authorized by their own publications to

assert, that this sect comprises but a small minority of the whole number of inhabitants. This minority has, indeed, by various means, which cannot be described here, but which may be fully developed in our future numbers, gotten possession of the most venerable and best endowed college in the United States; and enrolls among its adherents not a few men of cultivated talent and respectable literary acquisitions. It is intrenched also in great wealth. Out of Massachusetts, however, Unitarianism has little strength. Taking New England together, with all its schools, colleges, theological seminaries, churches, and other means of influencing public opinion, the orthodox have no occasion to shrink from a comparison with their opponents, in regard to talents, learning, eloquence, public spirit, enterprise, and charitable exertions of every kind. As to labors for the conversion of men, and the salvation of souls, it is not known that Unitarians, as a body, or that any considerable number of them, feel any solicitude on the subject, or would wish to have it believed that the souls of men are in any great danger. Looking, then, at the present state of things among all the classes of professed Christians in our community, the orthodox feel themselves to be *the proper and legitimate representatives of their pilgrim fathers*. They consider this claim to be no assumption; nor does it savor of ostentation, whether reference is had to their numbers, their principles, their designs, or their motives as explained by their conduct.

We would not intimate, that the first settlers of New England were never mistaken in their views of truth and duty; much less that they were not exposed like other men, to passion, prejudice, and all the common frailties of the human condition. But we regard them as a very extraordinary race of men, whose minds were enlightened by an intelligent and prayerful perusal of God's word; whose hearts were habitually under the influence of divine truth; whose passions were, to a very remarkable extent, chastened and subdued; whose aims were great, noble, and comprehensive, embracing all the important subjects of human interest, reaching forward through all future ages, and taking hold of eternity. We do not contend, that they drove every pin exactly right in the tabernacle which they set up, on their first arrival in the wilderness. And when they gradually reared the great moral and political edifice, upon which their hands were so industriously employed, we do not suppose that every stone was laid in precisely the best place for it, or that the symmetry of every part was absolutely perfect. Still, it was a grand edifice, built on a broad and solid foundation, rising in goodly proportions, and in a magnificent style, an imperishable monument of the skill, science, and public spirit of the builders; and we will venture to predict, that the more this edifice is examined and studied, the more it will be admired, even down to the latest ages of the world.

We would by no means encourage an indiscriminate reverence for antiquity; and a blind partiality for the institutions of our fathers, merely because they *were* the institutions of our fathers, is certainly not to be cherished. Unless we are greatly mistaken, however, it will be admitted in all future times, that the pilgrims were distinguished for possessing all the stamina of an illustrious character; and that they were thus enabled to act so wisely, as they did, for posterity and for the world. Among the admirable traits, which their history makes apparent, even to a cursory reader, the following should not be omitted on this occasion.

The fathers of New England were remarkable for entertaining *a habitual reverence for the word of God*. The Bible was their polestar, their guide, their universal directory. They studied it; they neglected no helps within their reach for understanding it; they were familiar with the original languages, in which it was written; they knew the English translation to be able and faithful; and they expected all the people to read and understand it, in the vernacular tongue.

They were *men of prayer*. They did not suppose that the Bible would ever be properly understood, unless by those who besought the teaching of the Holy Spirit. Upon every measure, whether of a private or a public nature, they invoked the divine blessing. This led them to examine well, as to the character of every enterprise, in which they engaged, and to inquire whether all their measures were such as God would approve.

They cultivated *the religion of the heart*. Forms and ceremonies, and even creeds, professions and covenants, were never suffered to usurp the place of internal principle; nor to be any thing more than signs of what the man actually was, or ought to be. There never was a country, in which so little reliance was placed upon externals; and in which the minds of all, even of the least intelligent, were so constantly directed to the heart.

They sought primarily *the prosperity of the church*. It was for the sake of the church that they came into voluntary exile. 'Tis Christ and the church they consecrated every thing dear to them; well knowing, that if religion prospered, and the people generally became friends of God and heirs of his heavenly kingdom, their temporal interests would never be in danger.

They were *men of great public spirit*. Next to genuine religion, this is the noblest trait in the human character; and it is never found, in its highest excellence, separate from religion. There have been, indeed, many instances of inflexible magistrates, and other laborious public servants, who generously disregarded their private interests, and were intently devoted to the public good, from motives of ambition, consistency of conduct, and a strong sense of what was fit and becoming, without any proper feeling of accountability to God. And this is so different from the ordinary selfishness

of mankind, that it commands universal respect. The Pilgrims were public spirited from the highest motives, and to the greatest extent. Had it not been so, the American colonies would have sunk into semi-barbarism, instead of rising, as they regularly did, in the scale of improvement.

The Pilgrims had gained a true knowledge of human nature. They embraced no vain theories. They tried no Utopian experiments; even in circumstances, where, to philosophical minds, let loose from the Bible, the temptation to experimenting would have been irresistible.

It was because our ancestors possessed these great qualities, that they were able, simultaneously, and at the very moment of entering the wilderness, to accomplish three of the grandest objects, which ever attracted the attention of men as social beings, and as preparing for an endless state of existence hereafter. These three objects were the establishment of a civil government, which proved the strongest, the least burdensome, the most free, and the most faithfully administered, that the world had ever seen,—the provision for universal education, so that all the people might read the word of God, and understand their true interests,—and the provision for public worship, so as to bring the plain and faithful teaching of religion within a moderate distance of every man's dwelling. These things had never been done before, in so perfect a manner.

And when we look at the improvements of more than two centuries, in those respects where improvement has been greatest, what do they all amount to, but a very moderate use of those advantages, which were derived from the wisdom and public spirit of our fathers? On the subject of education, for instance, what more enlarged and thorough plan could be devised at the present day, than that every neighborhood should have its school, at which every child should be expected to attend? The college, too, founded in the very infancy of the state,—what a testimony it bore to the foresight, and zeal, and well-directed enterprise of the founders? and though now in disastrous eclipse, it will yet shine forth, and repeat the honorable testimony to admiring ages, which shall rise up in long succession, and call its early patrons blessed.

We have made this hasty reference to the claims of the Pilgrims upon our reverence and gratitude, principally for the sake of explaining our reasons for the name we have chosen; and not because we supposed it possible, in so short a compass, to do justice to the talents and virtues of these illustrious men of whom the world was not worthy. A more deliberate survey of the character and actions, by which a foundation for a vast empire was so skilfully laid, will probably occupy some pages of a future number.

In the course of the preceding remarks, the terms *orthodox* and *orthodoxy* have been used; and doubtless it will be expedient to

use them, in many instances, hereafter. It seems proper, therefore, to explain the meaning, which we attach to them.

To avoid tedious circumlocution it is necessary to describe classes of men, or of opinions, by a single epithet: and this, when fairly done, far from being an evil, as some have thought it to be, is in fact a great convenience. Thus, in the present case, we shall have occasion to speak of men in our community, who agree in receiving a certain system of religious doctrines. How shall this body of men be described, unless by applying to them some epithet, which, from long established usage, has a definite meaning, and which, when thus applied, leaves a correct impression upon the mind of the reader? Shall we be obliged to repeat the doctrines, which we believe, as often as we refer to them? So clumsy an expedient will not surely be recommended.

In selecting a term, by which to designate that class of doctrines, usually called the doctrines of grace, or the doctrines of the reformation, we do not find any which is preferable to the word *orthodox*; nor any which is more fair and proper, either as it respects our adversaries or ourselves. They will not accuse us of begging the question, merely because this word is derived from two Greek words, which signify *correct opinions*. Nor will they imagine that we are so silly as to contend, that our opinions are of course correct, merely because we *call* them so. We do indeed believe them *to be* correct, but for weightier reasons than their having a good name attached to them. We speak of Unitarians; but we do not mean to admit, that those who have assumed this name are the only believers in the divine unity. The orthodox have uniformly, and without a single exception, believed in this cardinal doctrine of revelation; and any implication, or insinuation, to the contrary has always been unjust. Still, as the term Unitarian is now understood, there seems to be no danger in using it.

If it be asked, What do the orthodox believe, and how is the term now to be understood? we answer; that from the reformation, (and there is no need that we should go back further,) a certain system of doctrines has been called orthodox. These doctrines contain, as we believe, the great principles of revealed truth. Among them are the following: viz.

That, since the fall of Adam, men are, in their natural state, altogether destitute of true holiness, and entirely depraved:

That men, though thus depraved, are justly required to love God with all the heart, and justly punishable for disobedience; or, in other words, they are complete moral agents, proper subjects of moral government, and truly accountable to God for their actions:

That, in the unspeakable wisdom and love of God, was disclosed a plan of redemption for sinful men:

That, in the development of this plan, God saw fit to reveal so much concerning the nature and the mode of the divine existence,



as that he is manifested to his creatures as the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; and that these Three, each partaking of all the attributes of the Deity, and being entitled to receive divine worship and adoration, are the one living and true God:

That the Son of God, laying aside the glory which he had with the Father from everlasting, came down from heaven, took upon himself man's nature, and by his humiliation, sufferings and death, made an atonement for the sins of the world:

That in consequence of this atonement, the offer of pardon and eternal life was freely made to all; so that those, who truly repent of sin and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, will be saved:

That men are naturally so averse to God and holiness, that, if left to themselves, they reject the offers of salvation, and neither repent of sin nor truly believe in a Saviour:

That God, being moved with infinite love and compassion, sends forth the Holy Spirit, according to his sovereign pleasure, by whose beneficent energy an innumerable multitude of the human family are renewed, sanctified, and prepared for heaven; while others are suffered to pursue the course which they have freely chosen, and in which they obstinately persevere till the day of salvation is past:

That God, in his providential dispensations, in the bestowment of his saving mercy, and in his universal government, exhibits his adorable perfections, in such a manner, as will call forth the admiration and love of all holy beings forever:

That believers are justified by faith, through the efficacy of the atonement, so that all claims of human merit, and all grounds of boasting, are forever excluded:

That the law of God is perpetually binding upon all moral beings, and upon believers not less than other men, as a rule of life; and that no repentance is genuine unless it bring forth fruits meet for repentance, and no faith is saving unless it produce good works:

That those, who have been renewed by the Spirit, will be preserved by the power of God, and advanced in holiness unto final salvation: and

That Christ, as the Great King of the Universe, the Lord and Proprietor of created beings, will judge the world at the last day, when the righteous will be received to life eternal, and the wicked will be consigned to endless punishment.

The foregoing propositions have been drawn up in haste, neither in the words of Scripture, nor of any human creed, nor with any design of exhibiting exact theological precision. We much prefer, on ordinary occasions, to express our views of religious truth in an unrestrained, popular manner. In this way, the Scriptures announce religious doctrines; and, in this way, the same great truths may be communicated by different writers and speakers, who will naturally fall into an almost infinite variety of

expression. We do not insist, that others should adopt our form of words; but we have no doubt, that the obvious meaning of these words is in accordance with the Bible, and can be sustained by an appeal to that infallible test. It is unnecessary to add, that we have not attempted to present the reader with a summary, which should comprise *all* the important truths of revealed religion.

These doctrines, and all others necessarily connected with them and forming a part of the same system, have been received in all churches and by all individuals, who have been understandingly called orthodox. These doctrines we believe, and in them we rejoice. We believe them, because we think them to be clearly revealed in the word of God, and not because they have been held and defended by such men as Luther and Calvin, Hooker and Owen, Baxter and Edwards, however pious and eminent these individuals may have been. We call no man master. We submit to no man's authority. We hold ourselves bound by the law and the testimony; and if any man's arguments or theories will not abide this ordeal, they are to be rejected. Our motto is, *Let God be true, but every man a liar.*

It is common for the projectors of a new periodical publication to give a general outline of the several classes of subjects, which they intend to embody in their work. To this practice there seems to be no reasonable objection. We therefore proceed to specify some of the larger divisions of subjects, which will solicit the attention of our readers: premising, however, that we are not scrupulous to present these divisions, in the order of their relative importance; and that all are not to be expected in every number.

From what we have already said it is apparent, that a principal object in the establishment of a new magazine is the promotion of truth; which is to be done not only by explaining what the truth is, and proving it when explained, but also by exposing error, even though we should be obliged to speak boldly and plainly, of artifice and sophistry. Discussions of this kind are what is usually called controversy; and against religious controversy some serious and reflecting persons have formed a prejudice, which, however ill founded, should be regarded with tenderness. Some of the reasons, why we think religious controversy may be, and often is, lawful, expedient, and an imperious duty, are the following.

1. Men are exceedingly prone to fall into error on religious subjects. This is evident from Scripture and the whole history of mankind. But such error is highly injurious to the souls of men, and should therefore be exposed, that as many guards as possible may be set up against it. These guards, when set up in season, do actually accomplish their end.

2. The example of prophets, apostles, and the Saviour himself, warrants a resort to controversy, whenever the interests of truth require it; and of this exigency a well instructed disciple is to

judge, as well as of any other. The prophets made all the arts and practices of idolaters as odious and contemptible as possible. Our Saviour exposed all the perverse doctrines and unauthorized traditions of the scribes and pharisees, although such an exposure was in the highest degree mortifying and exasperating to their minds. The apostles spoke with great severity of the heresies rising in their day, and warned the church against others, which were subsequently to appear.

Is it said, that the prophets and apostles were inspired, and that our Saviour was the fountain of wisdom itself? True; and on this very account their example is perfect, and may be safely followed; unless, indeed, it be assumed, that uninspired men cannot distinguish error from truth, and therefore have no right to be confident in any thing, nor to express an opinion either for or against any position. But if universal skepticism, in regard to all the great doctrines of religion, is to be the favorite system, where is the use of revelation? There is no more arrogance in deciding that certain doctrines are erroneous, absurd, and demoralizing in their tendency, than there is in deciding that certain other doctrines are true, consistent with each other, and salutary in their influence. Indeed, we may safely go further, and affirm, that on many subjects, it is easier to decide that certain doctrines are wrong, than to ascertain satisfactorily what is right. Error is very apt to be palpable, variant, and easily exposed; whereas the truth, in cases where revelation has not made it clear, may elude the researches of the keenest human intellect.

3. The inspired writers directed the church, in all future ages, to contend for the faith, to expose lurking heresies, and to silence gainsayers. When Paul said of 'many vain talkers and deceivers,' that their "mouths must be stopped," he doubtless intended that their errors should be refuted, in so decisive and unanswerable a manner, that nothing more could be said; and a thousand times, since the days of Paul, the abettors of error have been effectually silenced.

4. The success of the Reformation is an illustrious attestation to the value of religious controversy. What could Luther have done, if he had been forbidden to say any thing about error in doctrine, or in practice? How could he have taught the truth without aiming a deadly blow at error? How could he have gained the public ear, or attracted the public eye, if he had not fearlessly exposed the enormous abuses of the Papal system?

5. Controversy has always been the great instrument of recovering individuals and communities from the dominion of error. Ignorance never enlightens itself. Prejudice never corrects itself. Abuses never reform themselves. Depravity never purifies itself. In all these cases, there must be an extraneous and opposing influence, or there can be no remedy. We would not intimate, that all

errors are equally dangerous, nor that all originate from depravity. It is not to be concealed, however, that those doctrines, which are subversive of the Gospel, have their origin in the pride of the human heart, which prepares the way for the delusions of a vain philosophy.

6. The descendants of the Puritans should be the last men in the world to doubt respecting the efficacy of religious controversy. There is not a single principle of civil liberty or of religious toleration, there is nothing virtuous or honorable among men, for which, in some form or other, and at some time or other, the Puritans were not obliged to contend against dangerous error, as well as against the arm of power and oppression; and, from the first settlement of this country to the present day, with the exception of a few transient slumbers, the children of the Pilgrims have not shunned to declare the whole counsel of God, both in the annunciation of truth, and in the exposure and refutation of error.

Among the most common objections to religious controversy are several, which we will now proceed to specify.

It is said that controversy *sours the temper, both of the writers and the readers*, and is therefore injurious to the character of all, who are affected by it. Candor requires that we admit there is danger of this. Men are sadly depraved; and are exposed to danger from every quarter. Whoever undertakes to write, on any controverted point, should see well to it, that his motives are good, his statements and reasoning fair, and his manner such as not to give unnecessary offence. He should not forget his own weakness, nor his own sinfulness; and especially he should be continually mindful of the approaching judgment, when a final decision will be pronounced upon his own character and the character of his adversaries. Before this tribunal, neither misrepresentations, nor names, nor numbers, nor professions, nor confidence, will avail anything. But to say that no man shall argue on the subject of religion, till he is totally exempt from weakness and sinfulness, would be equivalent to saying, that no man shall attempt to discriminate between truth and error, on any subject which relates to his standing in the sight of God and to his eternal destination.

Again; it is said, that *religious controversy does no good*. In some cases, no doubt, this is true. The topic under discussion may be so insignificant, or so much a mere matter of speculation, as to be unworthy of controversy; or it may be conducted in so violent a manner, on both sides, as to do no good, but much evil. Whether this is so, in any given instance, the writers and speakers must judge, under a proper sense of their responsibility. The same rules, however, should be applied to other subjects, as to religion. Is all political discussion to be proscribed, because violent partisans make it an instrument of inflaming the worst

passions in the community? Shall physicians never express their thoughts, in regard to the nature and causes of a disease, for fear they should sometimes lose their temper, or fly off into extravagant theories?

The fact is, that controversy does much good; and it is by bold, determined, and persevering controversy, that religious truth has been defended against prevailing error, and brought out, from under the accumulated rubbish of centuries, and presented to the delighted eyes of millions, who would otherwise never have seen its pure and heavenly light. In a well instructed, intelligent community, where the truth is generally received and obeyed, controversy is usually unnecessary, and might be very unprofitable. In such a community, where suitable talents are employed, and proper vigilance exerted, the direct teaching of the truth, without much reference to opposing error, is altogether preferable to controversial discussion. But when false doctrines have *crept in privily*, nothing but a decided testimony against them, and a clear exposure of their inconsistency with God's word, and with enlightened reason, will meet the exigencies of the case. And here we must be permitted to remark, that one of the grandest distinctions of truth is, that its champions are bold, fearless, and frank, even when their number is small and a world is in arms against them; while the patrons of error work in secret, and conceal their motives, views, and objects, till they have gained strength enough to insure a good degree of popularity to their measures and opinions, as they are cautiously and gradually developed. This mark, indelibly fixed by the pen of inspiration, and confirmed by all experience, is of great value in ascertaining what is truth and what is error.

Further; it is objected to religious controversy, that it *separates friends, makes dissensions in neighborhoods, and even destroys the peace of families*. This is just what our Lord declared the Gospel itself would do; and, in a most important sense, was *designed* to do. Shall we then decline to accept the Gospel? Religious controversy may interrupt the peace of families, by inducing some of the members to receive the truth in the love of it, and thus disturbing the consciences and irritating the minds of other members who hate it: and this, far from being an occasion of reproach or grief, is a good ground for joy and exultation, which could only be increased by the cordial reception of the truth, on the part of all the members. Such is sometimes happily the case; but our Saviour's words imply, that it is not ordinarily to be expected. It very frequently happens, however, that those members of a family, who bitterly opposed the truth, when it forced itself upon them, fell under its influence, one after another, till they all blessed the day when it first excited their attention.

Once more; it is said that *controversialists sometimes employ ridicule and satire*, and thus exasperate each other, without making



any advances in the discovery of truth. We cheerfully admit, that a habit of resorting to ridicule and satire is not to be cherished. Grave subjects, should, in general, be discussed in a grave manner. Yet the Bible contains examples of the keenest satire and the most confounding irony. Elijah, Isaiah and Jeremiah, presented idolatry in very ridiculous attitudes. If a writer, whatever may be his pretensions, is evidently advocating a bad cause by unfair means; and if a just representation of his arguments, inconsistencies, or vain boastings, causes him to appear ridiculous, we see not why it is unlawful thus to expose him. But the case should be clear, and the offence unquestionable, before resort should be had to this weapon.

The foregoing objections are sometimes made to religious controversy by real friends of truth; but always, in such cases, as we think, in consequence of misapprehension, or because the subject is not viewed in all its bearings. Others object for very different reasons; that is, because they are themselves the abettors of error, and wish to pursue their secret course undetected and unopposed. These persons talk loudly of the evils of controversy, while they are managing their own side with all imaginable dexterity. They seem to think it no more than fair, that they should be allowed to present *their* sentiments in the most favorable light, and to throw just as much discredit upon their adversaries, as they can do without provoking determined resistance to their plans. After arrogating to themselves all the learning, and wisdom, and liberality, and candor, they will sometimes be so kind as to admit, that among those who hold a different system there are some well meaning people, though of quite narrow views. Now we do not think it becomes the friends of truth, of any age or country, to remain silent in such circumstances. In doing so, they would be traitors to that Divine Master, to whom they are bound by so many and so strong obligations; and traitors to the church, in which they are set for the defence and confirmation of the Gospel.

We would never justify controversy for selfish or sectarian purposes. We would utterly discountenance every thing among Christians, which looks like seeking preeminence, or personal exaltation. And to bring the matter home to our own times, and our own pages, we intend to do nothing, which should give pain to professed disciples of Christ, to whatever denomination they belong, who receive the great truths of revealed religion, and adorn their profession by exemplary lives. That there are many such, called by various names, we not only believe, but rejoice in believing. Every man, who gives evidence that he loves the Lord Jesus Christ, we gladly receive as a friend and brother; even though he should appear to be under the influence of some remaining error. In the controversial department of our work, we should be sorry to have anything found, which will grieve such a man; and we

confidently hope that nothing will be admitted, which shall give to such a man just ground of complaint or alarm.

The feelings, which Christians are to entertain towards those, whom they regard as opposers of the truth, and subverters of the Gospel, should be benevolent only; but this benevolence should be qualified, according to the character of those toward whom it is directed. Such a man as Voltaire, for instance, is to be regarded as the enemy of the human race, and far more guilty than the greatest tyrant or oppressor that ever lived. A more decent infidel, like Hume, does an injury to society incomparably greater, than falls within the power of ordinary transgressors against the laws of morality and decorum. Yet, toward such men even, we should feel no emotions inconsistent with good will. We should desire, indeed, that the inclination to do evil may be taken from them; and that they may be made sensible of their guilt and danger, and penitent for their sins.

If any serious and professedly Christian writer should teach principles utterly subversive of the Gospel, (and Paul would support us in making a much stronger supposition,) we cannot regard him otherwise, than as *an enemy of the cross of Christ*. In judging what is utterly subversive of the Gospel, we are bound to be candid, and to be guided by the Scriptures only. If we are not to rely on our own understandings, nor to decide according to our preconceived opinions, it is equally true that we are not to give up the Scriptures out of deference to the understanding of our adversaries, or respect for *their* preconceived opinions. If we conscientiously believe, after impartial examination, that a writer is laboring to destroy the whole fabric of Christianity, it is no infringement of the law of love for us to declare what we believe. Nay more, the law of love may impel us to such a declaration. And here we would express an earnest desire, that all opposers of the truth, by whatever name they choose to call themselves, and in whatever party they are found, may be rescued from their perilous condition, brought to sincere repentance, and made partakers of the divine favor.

In any discussions of a controversial nature, which shall appear in our pages, it is our intention to avoid invidious personalities. By this phrase we mean all attempts to present the character of individuals before the public, in an unfavorable light, except as their character is disclosed in their own writings, or by their known official conduct, and as an exposure is demanded by a regard to the highest interests of men. Especially shall we avoid the application of offensive epithets to individuals, in such a manner as would seem intended to make them personally odious.

These general views and principles, on the subject of religious controversy, we have thought it our duty to express, at the first announcement of our designs. It is not to be understood, however,

that our work is to be exclusively controversial; or that controversy is to predominate. In some numbers it may occupy a considerable space. In others, perhaps, it will not be found at all. Beside discussions of this kind, it is contemplated that something will appear, in almost every number, under several other general divisions, which the limits of this article will not permit us to describe at large.

The *doctrines of the Bible*, in the form which is sometimes called *didactic theology*, should be occasionally stated, explained, and proved, for the edification and consolation of the pious, and the benefit of all classes of the community.

*Revivals of religion*, those glorious manifestations of divine power and love, by which our country has been greatly distinguished, should be presented in their true character; and every religious magazine should act as the guardian of the churches in this respect. The nature of revivals, the proofs of their genuineness, the best means of promoting them, and their happy results, afford topics for many interesting papers.

To the department of *Reviews* a considerable portion of our pages will be devoted; and here we shall seek that variety as to subjects, the length of the articles, and the style of writers, which will be likely to make the work an interesting inmate of well educated Christian families. Under this head, brief notices of new publications will find a place. It is obvious, also, that reviews furnish occasions for all the various kinds of discussion, which will be most likely to command public attention.

A religious magazine, conducted on proper principles, will be the friend of all *great plans of Christian benevolence*. The exertions of the present day, in favor of the universal dissemination of the Bible, the preaching of the Gospel throughout the world, and the religious education of all classes of people, in every country, will require to be sustained by able writers, in all the departments of literature.

*Miscellaneous communications* on preaching, and other means of public instruction, on the morality of the Gospel, on the pernicious tendency of fashionable amusements, on the odious character and demoralizing effects of war, and numerous other subjects of general interest, will find a ready admission. Brief hints, useful suggestions, and pithy exhibitions of important truth, though requiring but little room, often produce great results. Pieces of this kind, judiciously expressed, will be very acceptable to the conductors of the work, and doubtless to their readers.

*Remarks on public measures*, which have a bearing on the interests of religion and morality, and thus on the prosperity of the Redeemer's kingdom, will not be deemed unsuitable to our work. nor shall we feel bound to abstain from examining the conduct of public men, whenever it has an important relation to these great

interests. In all such examinations, however, we shall not fail to give *honor to whom honor is due*, while we shall not even allude to political parties, as such, but shall speak, as occasion may require, with a manly independence of demoralizing practices and measures.

In a word, *the Spirit of the Pilgrims* is designed to be such a publication as the descendants of the Pilgrims will acknowledge to be subservient to the great cause of religion and morality, of civil freedom and expansive benevolence. It will endeavor to meet the exigencies of the times; and will aspire to a high rank among those works, which are consecrated to *Christ and the Church*; to all the great purposes of human society; and to the promotion of every design, which is truly beneficial and praiseworthy.

In making these declarations, we know ourselves to be sincere; and shall claim the right of being considered so, at least till something like evidence appears to the contrary. That we may not swerve from a course of the strictest Christian integrity, nor forget the high responsibility of furnishing materials for the press, and thus sending abroad an influence, the extent of which can neither be foreseen by human wisdom, nor controlled by human power, we humbly commit ourselves and our labors to the guidance and blessing of God.

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## REVIEW.

EVANGELISCHE KIRCHEN-ZEITUNG, *herausgegeben von Dr. E. W. Hengstenburg, ordentl. Professor der Theologie an der Universität zu Berlin. Erster Band. Erstes Heft. Juli, 1827. Berlin, bei L. Oehmigke.*

EVANGELICAL CHURCH JOURNAL, *edited by Dr. E. W. Hengstenburg, Professor ordinarius of Theology in the University at Berlin. Vol. I. No. 1. July, 1827. Published by Lewis Oehmigke.*

The Protestant Church can never forget that Germany was the birth place of the Reformation. When more than Egyptian night was spread over all the countries of Europe, and the inhabitants lay wrapt in the most profound slumber which the magic and soporific spell of the Vatican could bring upon them, then the star of Luther arose, and shot its rays athwart the gloom. The mists of night began gradually to disappear. Some, here and there, were awakened by the light which was beginning to gleam, and roused up to action. But ere this star had advanced to its zenith, whole nations were put in motion. It spread its cheering light over Germany, Switzerland, many parts of France, over Denmark,

Norway, Sweden, England, Scotland, Ireland; and even portions of Austria, Hungary, Italy, and Spain itself were illumined by its beams.

The star of Luther has long since sunk below the horizon. But it did not set in darkness. It left a flood of glory behind, which brightened the face of the whole heaven. Its beams have kindled up a galaxy of light in the firmament, which has continued to shine until the present hour. This has, indeed, sometimes waxed and waned, but never suffered a total eclipse. It will never more be quenched, until the luminary of day shall be blotted from the skies. It will continue to shine, brighter and brighter, unto the perfect day; when all nations will feel the genial influence of its rays, and darkness being chased from the earth, and gross darkness from the people, the whole world shall be filled with light and glory.

This is no visionary reverie of enthusiasm. He who hath begun the good work, will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ. We do believe, and we have good authority for believing, that Zion will arise and shine, that her light will come, and the glory of the Lord arise upon her; that nations will come to her light, and kings to the brightness of her rising; yea, that all the ends of the earth will see the salvation of our God. Nor have we any doubt, that the glorious Reformation, begun by Luther, and still diffusing its influence wider and wider, was destined by heaven to prepare the way for the final diffusion of true Gospel light among all the nations of the earth.

We have no hostility to Roman Catholics, as individuals. We believe, that there have been, and that there now are, in the bosom of that church, those who sincerely love the Saviour, and are devoted to his service. But the spirit of the system of Popery, is not the spirit which animates them. The spirit of Jesus has predominated over it. We separate such persons, in our own minds, from the community to which they professedly belong. The spirit of Popery, such as awoke the resistance of Luther and his cotemporaries, and such as now stretches the iron hand of despotism over Italy, and Spain, and Portugal, and South America, and the greater part of France, and a considerable portion of Germany, is a spirit so alien from that of Christ, and so hostile to the eternal interests and to the rational liberties of man, that we are compelled, from the bottom of our hearts, to be Protestants; and to believe, that Germany gave to the world, in the person of Luther, one of the greatest benefactors of the human race.

That interesting country has never ceased, since the days of Luther, to produce many able and enlightened defenders of the true principles and doctrines of the Reformation. It were easy to make out a long list of names, to be inscribed on the wreath of honor which adorns its head. But our present design does not



admit the performance of so grateful a task, and we must pass them by in silence.

With but small and partial interruptions, of little consequence, the doctrines propagated by Luther and Melancthon continued to be cherished throughout the Protestant part of Germany, until within about half a century from the present time. Chemnitz, Gerhard, Calixtus, Spener, Pfaff, Carpzoff, Buddaeus, Canz, Wolf, Baumgarten, and others, are names which formed a bright constellation over the country of which we are speaking, and whose glory will never be obscured. The theological chairs in the universities were filled with men of this stamp; with pious, devoted, humble, profoundly learned, and evangelical men, such as Luther would have applauded, and such as kept alive the spirit of the Reformation which he had commenced.

But with all their excellencies, some defects were mingled. As reasoning theologians, they were, we had almost said, of the sect of Aristotle. The philosophy of the Stagyrte had for many centuries exercised an unbounded influence over the forms of logic, and the modes of reasoning, employed in every kind of treatise, to whatever department it belonged. The angelic doctor, also, Thomas Aquinas, one of the most acute of all the metaphysical and hair-splitting theologians who have ever lived, although a Romanist, was yet studied and admired by all the Protestant divines, who made pretensions to the higher acquisitions in theology. The applause and study of Aristotle was unbounded and universal. How was it possible, that the theologians of Germany should escape the general infection of the age? It was not. They did not escape. The fruits of this infection appear, in all the works which they composed. It is, in many of them, carried so far as to become almost an object of loathing, to readers of taste, educated in the more simple and intelligible principles of the logic and metaphysics, which are taught among us, at the present day. Theology, or the science of religion, as developed by them, is not a simple, connected, intelligible system of truths, few and plain, which all men may in some good measure see and comprehend; but it is a piece of the most complex machinery which can well be thought of. No common eye can trace and distinguish all its parts. Only a connoisseur from the schools of Aristotle, can analyze it, or even comprehend it. The ten categories are not only applied, but even multiplied. The whole doctrine of *essence* and *attribute*, in all its consequences as deduced by the old metaphysicians, and in all its ramifications, is applied to the spiritual beings, about which religion is conversant. A student of their works cannot even divine their meaning, in many places, until he becomes well versed in all the tenuious and minuscular logic and metaphysics of the genuine scholastic ages.

Such was the uninviting form, in which the fashion of the times induced these great and good men, for the most part, to present their works to the world. But this condition of theological science was too constrained and unnatural to continue long. The Gospel, which was designed for the benefit of Hottentots and Hindoos, and Sandwich Islanders, as well as for the philosopher and the divine, could not long wear this stiff, and uncomfortable, and unwieldy dress, which by mistake had been put upon it. There was danger in the experiment of so representing a simple religion. The philosophists of the age learned to scorn; the common people to look on theology as too deep and abstruse for them to meddle with. An all-wise and over-ruling Providence, in kindness to the church, prepared the way for this cumbrous dress to be rent off, and the original simplicity of divine truth again to make its appearance.

It was, however, one of those mysterious events, which He, whose ways are unsearchable, sometimes brings about, one might almost say, in order to exhibit his sovereign prerogative to bring good out of evil. So it is in the kingdom of nature. The earthquake, the volcano, the hurricane, the tempest, are all instruments of chastising men, and of convulsing the natural world; but it is past a doubt, that all have their use in the great system which the Almighty is carrying into effect, and that ultimate good is accomplished by them.

The last generation of theologians in Germany, witnessed a shock not unlike to these, in the element in which they moved. Semler, who was first colleague, and then successor of Baumgarten at Halle, in the theological chair, was the great instrument in bringing about the mighty revolution, which has taken place in Germany. He was a man of vast and various learning, of distinguished genius, of daring speculation, of enthusiastic fancy, of bold and fearless adventure, upon the ocean of conjecture, and withal of such profound acquaintance with the metaphysical theology of the day, that he knew where all its weak points lay, and consequently knew where to make his attacks in the most successful manner.

Not long after he became sole occupant of the chair of theology, in Baumgarten's place, he commenced his attacks. The first assaults were made upon the sacred criticism and exegesis of the times; and here, there was indeed a naked exposure to his assaults. Of course, he triumphed in his onset. His books spread wide through all Germany, elicited unbounded attention and discussion, and excited all, who were before growing uneasy under the load of metaphysical distinctions, which had been inadvertently and injudiciously imposed upon them, to throw off this load, and set themselves at ease.

Semler was not wanting in the power of discerning, how he might employ the diversion thus made in his favor, to the most advantage. He pushed on with great ardor, and urged the conquests he had made, so as to give him still farther advantage. For nearly forty years he waged incessant war with the systems and principles of his predecessors, and died apparently in the arms of victory. But before his death, he had raised up a multitude of others, who took sides with him, and entered warmly into the great contest. With no less learning than he, united with far more taste, and system, and patience, and wariness, many of them pushed the conquests that he had begun, until a victory almost complete, appeared to be gained. Eichhorn, and Eckermann, and Herder, and Gabler, and Bertholdt, and Ammon, and Paulus, and Stäudlin, and Justi, and a multitude of other theologians and critics, enlisted in the cause of Semler, and many of them spent their lives in promoting it.

The consequences have been most appalling. Never before did evangelical religion suffer an assault from such combined and exalted talent, and such profound learning as to all objects of human science. Nearly every university and gymnasium in Germany has been won by this party; and almost all the important, and nearly all the popular publications, have been in their hands, these thirty years or more. So completely has this been the case, that the celebrated Gesenius, in making out, some years since, a catalogue of the various religious and critical Journals, published in Germany, mentions as a rarity (*Seltenheit*) ONE among all, which defended the *supernatural inspiration* of the Bible. To the immortal honor of the Tübingen theologians, Storr, Flatt, and their associates, this was published there.

So it has continued to be, even up to the present time, or at least, very nearly up to this time. All the Reviews were in the hands of the Naturalists and Neologists.\* Did any evangelical writer publish a book; if it were very able, it was passed by in silence; if it were liable to attack, it was hunted down at once. The victory seemed to be completely won; and the principles of Luther to be almost eradicated from his country. The notes of triumph were echoed from every quarter, while the opponents of evangelical truth exulted, in the hope that she had fallen to rise no more. Ministers and people, noblemen and peasants, princes and subjects, have united in the song of triumph, chaunted as it were at her funeral. While the humble and trembling believer in Jesus, who trusted in the precious assurance that all Scripture is given by inspiration of God, was weeping in secret places, for fear that the doctrines of the Reformation were no more, and that piety had taken her flight from the earth along with them; and, while he was prostrate in the dust before Him who seeth in secret, and asking, with deep sighs, O

\* That is, the advocates of the new theology.

Lord, how long? all was exultation and triumph without. Nor could he appear, in the face of open day, as a follower of the great Reformer, without having the finger of scorn pointed at him, or the laugh of contempt directed toward him.

But during the time of the greatest apparent triumph of Naturalism in Germany, there never was a season, in which there were not some, in every province, and in almost every town, who mourned over the fall of the Reformation doctrines. Here and there a solitary Professor in a university; here and there a pastor in the humble villages and parishes; was to be found, who wanted nothing but sympathy and a few rays of hope for encouragement, to draw him out, and make him bold, in the same cause which Luther pleaded. A Reinhard, a Knapp, worthy of apostolic days, a Noesselt, a Morus, a Storr, a Flatt, a Titmann, still lived, and studied, and prayed, and lectured, and acted, and wrote; but their voice was drowned amid the din of the exulting multitudes, goaded on by powerful and energetic and learned leaders, and encouraged by princes and potentates.

Such was the state of things for some twenty years or more; when the pastor Harms, at Kiel, raised the note of alarm so as to be heard over all parts of Europe, which professed to be following in the steps of Luther. In the year 1817, the third grand centennial jubilee from the time when the Reformation began, (a most opportune season for his purpose,) he published to the world a new edition of the celebrated *Theses* of Luther, which embrace all the fundamental principles of the reformation proposed by him, and added some of his own, with appropriate remarks on the whole. The book spread far and wide, in spite of every effort to check the diffusion of it. Harms was laughed at, ridiculed, called enthusiast, treated with contumely, argued against, but all to little purpose. *Lutherans* were appealed to by him, and their obligations to know in what *Lutheranism* consisted were so powerfully urged upon them, that many admitted the claim. Others scorned, because Harms was neither a Professor in a university, nor a man of distinguished learning. But of those who did examine seriously the *Theses* of the great Reformer, some became convinced, in earnest, that they had indeed abandoned the ground of the Reformation. From that day to the present hour, a counter-revolution, in favor of the principles of the real evangelical church, has been going on in Germany; and, as we shall see by and by, it is now beginning more openly to break out, and to shew a formidable array against the adversaries who have been triumphing at their success, in banishing from the country of Luther, the sentiments which he avowed, and which he defended at the hazard of his life.

But we must stop a moment here, for the sake of some remarks, which we cannot refrain from making, upon the deeply interesting facts that are now before us.

Nothing can be more evident to an intelligent and thorough reader of such books, as give a true and circumstantial account of the great revolution which has taken place in Germany, than that the defects in the manner of teaching and presenting the science of theology, which were connected with the reigning modes of study and instruction in that country, contributed exceedingly to the triumphs of the Neologists. Semler had been educated in all the formal, logical, metaphysical, Aristotelian hair-splitting of his predecessor Baumgarten, and others before him. He even published the system of Baumgarten, with a most learned preface, in which he gives a very instructive history of the most important Christian doctrines. Semler had imbibed, in the course of study necessary to write such a preface, a strong conviction of the ever varying and often contradictory nature of human opinions. He saw, (what every man of any age or country must see, who examines for himself, and does not believe on the credit of another,) that nothing important, in respect to distinguishing doctrines, can be proved from the ancient Fathers, inasmuch as real unanimity in the manner of explaining hardly any important points, can be found among them. He transferred this principle to the modern systems of theology. He began to examine how Aristotle had contributed to their form. He betook himself to the critical study of the Scriptures. Here he found still greater deficiencies. Whole masses of texts had been brought forward as witnesses, which, on examination, he found not to have testified as they had been understood to do. He was disgusted at this. Revolt succeeded disgust. From warm and enthusiastic attachment to the theology of Baumgarten, such as he felt when he published his system, he went over to the opposite extreme, and broke down all restraint, and overleaped all bounds. From attacking the school theology of modern days, he advanced to the Biblical authors themselves; and applying to them the doctrine of *Accommodation*, (that is, a principle of interpretation, which represents a writer as merely speaking in accordance with the prejudices of those whom he addresses,) he explained away every vestige of orthodoxy, which could apparently be found in any part of the Scriptures.

Such are the unhappy consequences of loading the simple and plain principles of religion, with a drapery which is foreign to their nature, which always sits uneasy, and which, whenever it is thoroughly examined, will be cast off with more or less violence. Such is our corrupt nature. We go from one extreme, far, very far, into the opposite. So did the revolutionists in France. They had reason, good reason, for complaint. They were oppressed. But when they burst the chains of oppression, they exulted not only in their liberty; they triumphed in their licentiousness. In another department of action, Semler did the same thing. The same laws of the human mind, the same imperfection of our



nature, led him into such an error. The ardor of contest, the keenness with which he felt the reproaches that fell upon him, when he first set out in his new career, and the pride of victory, urged him on, until there was no retreat, and to conquer or die seemed to him the only alternative.

Educated as he had been, we have seen that he was intimately acquainted with all the weak places in the citadel, into which his opponents had thrown themselves. The keen sighted coadjutors, which his powerful writings had raised up, soon learned from him where to deal their blows; and thus, by degrees, the doctrines of Luther became a general object of rejection and even scorn, because the costume imposed upon them had been repulsive and cumbersome.

We do trust, that the great Head of the church has taught, by these events, all who love his simple truth, as he has revealed it to men, to guard well against exposing it to rejection and scorn, by superadding too much costume of their own invention. There can be no rational objection to *systems* of theology. They are altogether desirable, and in a certain sense necessary, for a correct and extensive view of theology *as a science*. They are of real importance to theologians by profession. But let these systems be **BIBLICAL**. Let them be founded on an interpretation of the Scriptures, which will withstand all the assaults of critical investigation, not on *a priori* reasoning, deduced from the reigning philosophy or metaphysics of the day. Otherwise, some Semler will, sooner or later, make his appearance, and, not content with blowing away the chaff, will, along with it, throw away the wheat.

The few able and undaunted adherents in Germany to the real doctrines of the Reformation, have been, step by step, retreating from all the old ground of metaphysical school theology, and coming, for these twenty years, gradually, and at last, fully, upon the simple ground, that **THE SCRIPTURES ARE THE SUFFICIENT AND THE ONLY RULE OF FAITH AND PRACTICE**. And why should not God's word deserve more credit, than that of fallible men?

In the mean time, the system of their opponents has greatly changed. At first, much regard for the Scriptures was professed by them; and the Bible was set in opposition to all the human systems then in vogue in the church. But the sense of the Bible was every where to be made what they wished it to be, by virtue of philosophy and the doctrine of *accommodation*. But when the old school systems were given up by the defenders of true evangelical principles, because of their repulsive form, and their defective exegesis, and the Scripture was solely appealed to in support of these principles, and that on acknowledged maxims of exegesis, then the ground of opponents began to be shifted, as one might easily suppose. The next ground was Naturalism, under the gentle and alluring appellation of *Rationalism*. This is now

the altogether prevailing system of the Neologists. The reigning heresiarch in this new kingdom, (new in name, not in reality,) is Dr. Wegscheider, present professor of theology at Halle-Wittenberg; whose *Institutiones* exhibit not only all the arguments employed by Hume against the possibility of miracles, but many more superadded. It is enough to say, that the book has had unbounded popularity, and gone through seven or eight large editions in the course of a few years, to shew what the reigning passion of the day is, in the interesting country, which gave birth to the most important Reformer of modern times.

Since the publication by Harms, mentioned above, the friends of the evangelical cause, who before were, for the most part, lying on their faces in the dust, have begun to gather up themselves, and to strive for the attainment of an erect position. Several periodical works have been engaged in by them, and unexpectedly found more support than was anticipated. Schwartz, Professor at Heidelberg, has, for some time, published a thoroughly evangelical work, with much success. Occasional volumes, pamphlets, and even systems of divinity, have appeared, which are decidedly of the evangelical cast. The king of Prussia, who is generally understood to be in favor of the genuine principles of the Reformation, has gathered around him, and placed in his celebrated university at Berlin, and in the pulpits in that city, some of the most learned and powerful men in Germany, who are altogether on the evangelical side. He has recently sent one of these to Halle, very much against the wishes of the Naturalists there, to fill the place vacated by the death of the truly apostolic and excellent Dr. Knapp. Since the death of this last mentioned veteran in theology, his Lectures, (read for some forty years or more, and corrected and enlarged more or less at every reading,) have recently been published, and exhibit a body of Scriptural Divinity, which we hope and trust will ere long come before our public. The work is not, like that of Storr, broken up by notes, illustrating bare propositions; but is continuous, judicious, deep, warm hearted, and well worthy of perusal and study. The exegesis is of the most fundamental kind, and will stand the test of trial.

In this state of things, the noble corps of defenders of evangelical sentiment at Berlin, felt that it was time to make an open demonstration, once more, in behalf of the cause of the Reformation, in the face of all Germany, and of the world. Communication with others of like sentiment confirmed this opinion; and the Magazine, whose title stands at the head of this article, is the first fruits of their labors.

The work is designed for the learned and the unlearned. It is to contain pieces of a high wrought character, and much that is popular and adapted to all classes of readers. But we shall give more satisfaction to our readers, if we lay before them the

Prospectus of the work itself, prefixed to the first number which now lies before us. We shall give it in a free translation.

The influence of Journals, in the formation and direction of opinions at the present time, is universally admitted. The more certain this is, the more is it to be lamented, that the Evangelical Church\* has hitherto had no organ of this kind, which was devoted to establishing and maintaining with strenuous uniformity, Gospel truth, as it is taught in the Holy Scriptures, and received from them into our Creeds. Neither has any publication of this nature exhibited clearly the distinction between evangelical doctrines and those of an opposite cast; nor is there any one, which, by communicating information respecting the state of the church in all countries, and of missionary operations, with their effect upon the heathen, has labored to awaken a lively sympathy in the affairs of the church, and a conviction that there is a real unity of purpose in all who love the truth. The undersigned, therefore, yielding to often repeated solicitations, and relying upon divine aid, has undertaken, with the cooperation of no inconsiderable number of theologians who are entitled to respect, the publication of an evangelical journal, under the title of **THE EVANGELICAL CHURCH JOURNAL.**

It will commence with the first of July. It will not be devoted to any party, as such; but solely to the interests of the Evangelical Church. To those, who have attained to a lively and established belief in the truth of Gospel doctrine, it will afford the means of improvement and of edification. It will lift up a warning voice against the various errors, which, at all seasons of great religious excitement, are apt to arise, even among those who in the most important respects have embraced divine truth. It will strive to promote in individuals the feeling of unity both with the Evangelical Church, and with the Christian church in general. It will endeavour to promote a general union among all the true members of the Evangelical Church.

In particular, it will be an object with the Evangelical Church Journal, to have respect to the wants of those, who, being in readiness to embrace the truth, know not where they must seek for it, nor where they can find it. A sense of such religious wants is now beginning to be powerfully awakened; and more powerfully, in proportion as the necessity of a belief in Revelation is felt.

Many, however, of those who are honestly seeking after truth, remain in a constant state of fluctuation, because they are afraid of going from one extreme to another. The Evangelical Church Journal will strive to remove the prejudices, which have led them hitherto to make opposition to the truth; to clear up their perplexed views; to make a plain distinction between evangelical Christianity, and the manifold departures from it; and to direct their views to the signs of the times, and make them better acquainted with the memorable events in respect to the church, which are taking place in the neighboring, and in foreign countries.

The Editor hopes to attain these ends in the best way by distributing the contents of this Journal in the following manner; viz.

**I. ESSAYS.** These are divided into four classes. (1.) Essays on important passages of Scripture, exhibiting an interpretation of particular places that are difficult, and also of larger portions, which, at the present time, are entitled to peculiar consideration. (2.) Representations of true evangelical doctrine, in opposition to the widely spread errors of our times, in regard to faith and practice; instruction respecting the true nature of the Christian church, and its development in the world, &c. (3.) Communications pertaining to the department of ecclesiastical history, in regard to the most ancient times, so far as these may have a bearing upon the present times. Sometimes copious extracts will be admitted, which are taken from books that are inaccessible to the great mass of readers. Communications of this nature, however, will not be mere lifeless extracts, but will be introduced and accompanied with appropriate remarks, which will adapt them to the present time. (4.) Theological Essays of a practical nature, made by such as have the care of souls committed to them, and the experience derived from the discharge of their official duties.

\* This is the appropriate name of the Lutheran Church in Germany.

II. LITERARY NOTICES. These are not to be learned reviews simply, but critical notices of, and extracts from, the more important books; and this, not merely of books which have recently made their appearance, but of those writings which have been forgotten, and deserve again to be brought into notice. This department will also contain warnings against worthless and dangerous books, that have become current.

III. HISTORICAL INFORMATION. This will respect the history of the Christian church, at home and abroad. It will exhibit biographical notices of persons worthy of particular regard, who moved in a larger or smaller circle; historical communications respecting the external condition of religious parties, and of their relation to each other; missionary intelligence, not with the design to supply defects in Journals devoted to this purpose, nor to supplant them, but partly with the design of giving general and compressed views of these subjects, and partly to exhibit those characteristic and individual sketches, which are conspicuous, omitting all useless repetitions and mere indistinct representations. In a word, the intention is to communicate whatever may be of interest and importance to the Evangelical Church. The materials for such intelligence will be drawn, partly from correspondents at home and abroad, and partly from various works and documents appropriated to such a purpose, which are published in Germany, France, England, Scotland, and America.

That the tone of the present work will be somewhat exclusive, follows of course from the preceding representation. Only those can expect to have a part in it, who have an established conviction respecting the fundamental truths of revealed religion. Still, all variety of views, among those who belong to the same Christian community, will not be excluded. It appears altogether desirable, that there should be an animated interchange of views among those who hold fast the fundamental truths of the Gospel. The publishers of this Journal deem it very important to afford every facility in their power, for the accomplishment of this.

All those, who feel a sincere inclination to contribute to the design of this Journal, are invited to do it by the publishers of the same; who are satisfied that the object in view can never be accomplished, except by the united efforts of many, who devote their strength to the service of God. The larger contributions will in all cases be considered as having a claim to pecuniary remuneration, unless this is expressly declined.

Although the object of the Evangelical Church Journal is simply to inculcate what is true, and to build up rather than to pull down; yet, as the Gospel from its very nature must encounter opposition, disputation cannot altogether be avoided. Still, it will conduct with forbearance in judging of individuals, and as far as possible, avoid all personalities. Remote from all bitterness, it will shew by its example, that unwavering conviction in respect to evangelical truth is altogether consistent with mildness and affection, such as the Gospel demands of those who acknowledge its obligations. At the same time, it will point out to all such, the source to which they must go in order to learn these important virtues, and from which only they can derive them.

Such is the Prospectus of this very interesting publication; one which we might, with a few alterations, adopt as a Preface to our own. We cannot hope, indeed, to rival our brethren of the land of universities, in the extent and variety of their literary, and critical, and exegetical, and antiquarian researches and essays. But feeling ourselves to be, in several respects, situated very much as they are, we would go hand in hand with them, in the great principles, which they have thus so plainly and so boldly announced to the world. We shall have some advantages over them, for the *practical* and *experimental* departments of our work. This is a land of Revivals; it is so, in a manner which excites the curiosity and astonishment of Christians in the transatlantic world. In regard to every thing connected with missions, benevolent socie-

ties, &c., we are in the very focus of action, and shall have an important advantage from this circumstance. We shall not affect to rival our German brethren in learning. This generation cannot do it. The next, we trust, will be able to speak a different language.

It will be natural for our readers to inquire, whether the Evangelical Church Journal is only "the daring of a single combatant," or whether combined talent and energy are pledged for its support? The answer to this question is a cheering one to the friends of truth, on this side of the Atlantic, and especially to all, who live on the very ground, which is the arena of the great contest that is going on, at the present time. The Journal in question, lifting up its voice in the very ear (a listening one too) of the king of Prussia, published at his favorite university, which now holds the second, if not the first rank of all the literary institutions in the world, is not the solitary work of one man, nor of a few men whose names are unknown, beyond the boundaries of a small hamlet. Some of the flower of the German *Corps d'Elite* have united to support it. To give their names, will be sufficient proof of this, to all who know the present state of theological acquirements in Germany.

"Among my fellow laborers," says Dr. Hengstenberg, the editor, "I am permitted to name Dr. Neander, professor in the university of Berlin; Dr. Strauss, court preacher at Berlin," (mark this;) "Dr. Tholuck, professor at Halle-Wittenberg; Dr. Heubner professor at Wittenberg; Drs. Hahn and Lindner, professors at Leipzig, and also Dr. Heinroth, at the same university; Dr. Von Meyer at Frankfurt on the Mayne; Dr. Scheibel, professor at Breslau; Dr. Steudel, professor at Tübingen; Dr. Th. Krummacher, at Bremen; Dr. Olshausen, professor at Königsberg; and Dr. Rudelbach, at Copenhagen."

To those who are acquainted with the literary condition of Germany, it will be entirely unnecessary to say, that many of these are some of her choicest and most distinguished *Elites*. Dr. Neander is the acknowledged *Coryphæus* of ecclesiastical history and antiquities. Dr. Heubner is a very distinguished and excellent scholar. Dr. Tholuck is a kind of prodigy in Arabic, Rabbinic, and other oriental learning, and has been placed, as we have already mentioned, in the chair of the venerable and excellent Dr. Knapp. Dr. Heinroth is distinguished in metaphysics and anthropology. Dr. Hahn has given to the world some admirable proofs of his learning, criticism, and judgment, in his Essay on the gospel used by Marcion, and some other publications. Dr. Olshausen has given scarcely inferior evidences of his learning and abilities, in his "Genuineness of the Four Gospels," recently published. Dr. Von Meyer has published a very popular amended version of the whole Scriptures. Dr. Steudel is the successor of Bengel,



in the able work of "The Archives of Theology." The other gentlemen are distinguished, also, as teachers or preachers. We bid *God speed* to such a noble array, in defence of the doctrines of evangelical truth. If Luther could rise from his grave, it would be to bless and encourage them.

Of the work itself, which they stand pledged before the public to maintain, (three numbers of which have come to hand,) we shall have occasion to say more hereafter, and to present specimens of it to our readers, which will enable them to judge for themselves, both of the spirit and of the ability with which it is conducted. We shall employ the brief space which can be allowed us at present, in some closing remarks on what has been laid before our readers, in the preceding pages, designed to prevent any misapprehension of our true meaning, and to shew, that the friends of Gospel truth here have a deep interest in the undertaking of our German brethren, and that we have much reason strongly to sympathize with them.

When we have spoken with implied disapprobation, of the old systems of theology in Germany, the attentive reader will perceive, that it is of the *costume*, not (if we may so express ourselves) of the *person*. Let any one take up the *twenty two* quarto volumes of Gerhard's *Loci Theologici*, (the great Coryphæus of the Lutheran systematical writers,) and he will see, by opening the book at a venture, what we have aimed to express. The mind is overwhelmed with the infinitude of divisions and subdivisions. It is grieved by frequent offences against the laws of sound exegesis, which appear in the introduction of irrelevant witnesses from the Scriptures. It is even disgusted with the heaps upon heaps of metaphysical chaff, which is not only scattered over the wheat, but often mixed among it. Must it not be difficult to read with pleasure, when we are constantly exposed to such emotion? It is only those, for the most part, who have introduced metaphysics, by a *priori* argumentation, into their system of theological truth, and made them an essential part of it, and who are better prepared, in this way, to say what the Bible *ought* to mean, than what it does mean; it is almost only such, that will read systems drawn up in this manner, with satisfaction. Good taste is revolted by them. Simple, scriptural inquiry seems to be overwhelmed, by the immense mass of other questions, which are forced upon the reader.

When theological writers compose in this manner, they are preparing the church for disquietude and for revolution. There never will be wanting, sooner or later, some bold and independent inquirers, who will raise a breeze to scatter the chaff; and well will it be, if this breeze does not increase, until it becomes a tornado, and carries away the wheat also. There is no calculating where a revolution will stop, when it begins from causes of grievances like these.

It was, however, a most deplorable mistake in Semler to urge on the reform, (as he would fain have it,) in the manner, and to the extent, which he did. What was the offence of the old theologians? Was it any real departure from the doctrines of the Reformation? This is not pretended. What then was it? Why, it was mixing a great deal of chaff along with the grain which they presented, and bidding you regard the whole as grain. We might well say, as standing fast in the liberty wherewith Christ has made us free, and as professing to receive "the Scriptures as the SUFFICIENT and ONLY rule of faith and practice," We will not receive the chaff for the wheat. But is it wise, is it becoming, to throw away the whole? Because those great and good men, who wrote in the manner that has been described, participated in the general faults of their day, as to style, and as to the *mode* of treating the subjects which they discussed, it is surely not the part of candor, and of just regard to real and distinguished merit and piety, to treat them with indifference, and even with contumely. Such, however, has been the injustice which they have suffered from the present age. No language scarcely is sufficient, to express the contempt which many feel for them. For ourselves, we cherish a state of mind totally diverse from this. All the cumbrous dress, with which they have unwittingly loaded theology, we would throw off, without any scruple. Simple, biblical theology is all we want, and all we ever can have which will be stable. All that rests upon the philosophy and metaphysics of the day, must forever be as fluctuating and inconstant as men are. But in the old theology, with all its faults of manner and its forbidding exterior, many a radical investigation of topics in divinity is to be found; many an overthrow of error is triumphantly achieved; and much, very much, of a glowing and ardent spirit of piety is also to be found. The reader who does not feel, that the faults of *manner* are not in a great measure redeemed by such sterling virtues as these, is not prepared to harmonize at all in opinion with us. We must say, that with all their faults, we should be among the last to abandon the use of the works of such Lutheran divines, as have been named above; or of the works of Calvin, Pictet, Turretin, Van Maestricht, Vitringa, and others, in the Reformed church.\* We are fully alive to their faults. But we are not blind, as to their virtues; and the latter are vastly predominant.

Yet we do rejoice, after all, that God is bringing his church to more simple credence in his word. It cannot be denied, that there is much, in all these old systems, which stands on the simple basis of human philosophy. But they have now gone through the fire, and a great part of the dross is melted away. Most perfectly visible is this, in such a plain, simple, consistent, and

\* We use the phrase Reformed church as it is used by Mosheim, to designate the Calvinistic churches of Europe, as distinguished from those of the Lutheran persuasion.

scriptural plan of theological truth, as is presented in the Lectures of the most excellent and venerable Dr. Knapp, late of Halle. How different from Gerhard; and yet exhibiting and defending the same great truths! Both loved the same Gospel; but the one loved philosophy too, and the other shunned it, whenever he undertook to represent the simple system of truth which the Scriptures contain.

Every weak spot, in the whole building of the Reformation, has now been spied out, and assaulted, by the keen-sighted, active, energetic, and powerful enemies of evangelical truth in Germany. It has been, indeed, tried as by fire. The wood, hay, and stubble in it, have, we trust, been burned up; but the solid materials all remain. The God of truth has made these of elements, which resist all assault or decay. He has taught the friends of his Gospel, by the awful castigation which they have received, how dangerous it is for them to mix their philosophy with his word. He will have men whom he has made, and sanctified, and redeemed, to exhibit simple confidence in his declarations, and not to rest on the wandering speculations of imaginary reason, and boasted human philosophy. Sooner or later, in every country, he will chastise those who set up human authority above his word, and who attach principles and nice distinctions to his Gospel, with which he never meant it should be cumbered.

We trust our readers will see where we stand, in regard to old and new theology. In a strict sense, theology, as true doctrine, is, and ever has been, one and the same. But the *modes* in which men have developed it, have been very different, at different times. Some of these are much less entitled to approbation than others. For ourselves, the simplest and most scriptural method, as remote as may be from all the reigning metaphysics of the day, (which are perpetually changing,) will ever be the subject of highest approbation. But we should be among the very last to cast away, to despise, or to load with contumely, the older writers of theological systems, because the costume, which they have put on, differs from that of the present age.

We trust, after so ample a declaration on this subject, that we shall not be misinterpreted nor misunderstood. We have only to add, that the awful experience of Germany makes us devoutly wish that the teachers of religion in our country may none of them expose us to a like revolution, by insisting upon mingling wheat and chaff together, and making the whole pass for *bona fide* wheat. The experiment is too fearful a one. The consequences should be well weighed. The enemies of evangelical truth are active, vigilant, eagle-eyed, all-intent on its overthrow, and some of them are able and learned. We must not expect, that any breach in our walls will remain unespied or unattacked. The closer, then, we keep to the Bible, the more simply we keep there, the better for

the cause and the better for us. The whole dispute, then, will soon turn upon one single pivot, as it now does in Germany. And then our ground of contest will be clear, and we shall no longer combat with such as assail us from behind the trees, the bushes, the fences, and from cavities in the earth, so that we scarcely know which way to turn, in order to make the most effectual defence.

We congratulate our readers, and the church of God in this country who are contending for evangelical truth, on the prospect that the question is here soon to be, Whether the Bible is indeed an inspired book, and its decisions final and authoritative in the Christian church? The time has been, when a suggestion of this nature would have brought down a storm of obloquy upon the man, who dared to venture on making it. The time now is, when some of the younger, bolder, more thorough-going, more open-hearted young men, and a few of the older ones, do not hesitate, when among the *initiated*, to answer the question above in the negative; nor do some of them hesitate even to preach what implies a negative, although they are somewhat guarded in their assertions, on account of the yet remaining *prejudices*, (as they style them,) of their hearers, or at least of a portion of their hearers. These open-hearted men, (whose sincerity we do not feel at all disposed to question, and whom we, on every account, respect far more than we can those who are not bold and honest enough to make an open profession of their belief,) only need a little more of a common centre around which they may rally, some able, and learned, and fearless defender of their cause, to come out with an entirely open face, and avow substantially the Naturalism, which Dr. Wegscheider now teaches at Halle-Wittenberg. Some of the opponents of evangelical truth may strenuously deny this; they may even raise a hue and cry against us, as slanderers of great and good men. But we have measured our ground here. We know where we stand, what we speak, and whereof we affirm. The journals and periodicals of the day, devoted to pulling down the edifice of evangelical belief, may make an outcry, as they have learned abundantly to do, of late. But we give them a word of caution on this subject; which is, that it is not expedient for them, at least for some of *theirs*, that we should be obliged to verify what we have said above, by appeal to *individual* facts. This, they well know, we can do; and we assure them, we shall not fail to do it, in due time.

As to ourselves, we thank God for the hope, that the church in our country is not to go through with the dreadful struggle which she has had in Germany. There are in this region, where error substantially the same with that of the German Neologists has so long prevailed, many redeeming and encouraging circum-

stances. The existence of a work like the present, called forth not by disputants among the clergy, but by the spontaneous voice of the laity—imperiously called forth, is not the least encouraging circumstance which may lead us to hope, that the flood tide of opposition to the doctrines of the Reformation has reached its height among us, and that it is beginning to ebb. Some few years since, there was *only one* Congregational church in Boston, that retained the sentiments of the Pilgrims. Now we number eight. Our orthodox brethren, too, of the Episcopal, the Baptist, and the Methodist denominations, have been increased and strengthened. We have other signs of the times, also, which are hopeful. The opponents of evangelical sentiment, in their periodicals, their journals, and their private *soirees*, are beginning to pour forth, in torrents, the language of contumely and indignation. Nothing exhibits so well the apprehensions which they entertain, as this. We do hope and trust, that these apprehensions are well founded. As immortal beings, and accountable to Him who redeemed us by his blood, we cannot look on with indifference, when the question is pending, Whether his Gospel is to be received or rejected.

Such a question we do, from our inmost hearts, believe to be pending. The opponents of the doctrines which we, who profess to be the strenuous advocates of liberty of conscience, feel bound to defend, will surely not blame us, in the moments of cooler reflection, for standing forth, in defence of all that we hold dear, before God and the world. For them, we cherish no disrespect, no feelings of enmity. As men, as citizens, as men of learning, as ornaments of our country in a civil and social respect, we pay them all that regard which they could wish from us. But when the question is one which concerns our immortal well being, one which *essentially* respects it; then, we cannot hesitate how to act. We take our stand, fearless of consequences, and commit the issue to Him, by whose blood we have been redeemed.

Our friends, we trust, will all rejoice, that powerful coadjutors are raised up, in the native land of the Reformation, to the great cause which we have espoused. Sympathy with them we cannot help cherishing. We are embarked in the same cause. We are, in very many respects, placed in the like circumstances. We have the spirit of unbelief to contend with, although it is, as yet, less open. We feel encouraged by their example; and we doubt not we shall have their sympathies. Let us strive to keep pace with them, in the arduous contest. And if, after all, neither we nor they live to see all the fruits of our toils, and struggles, and sufferings, we shall at least indulge the hope, that our successors, of whose triumph we entertain no doubt, will say of us, when they visit our graves, and call to mind our history, *È magnis exciderunt ausis*.



**COMMUNICATIONS.**

## THOUGHTS ON REVIVALS OF RELIGION.

To the Editor of the Spirit of the Pilgrims:—Sir,

Lest it should be supposed that your work is intended to be exclusively controversial, which, to some extent, it certainly ought to be, I shall, with your permission, communicate, from time to time, through the medium of your pages, a few reflections under the general title of "Thoughts on Revivals of Religion." I do not propose to write in numbers, nor with any reference to system. But, having been favored with some opportunity for observation, I am disposed to employ such intervals of leisure as I may be able to command, in placing upon record such reflections and results of experience as might otherwise be lost.

It is a matter of no small importance that young Christians should understand early the nature and evidences of true religion. Like children, they receive deep and abiding impressions early, which give a complexion to their character and conduct through life. Habitual cheerfulness, without levity, is a source of great personal enjoyment, and an efficient auxiliary to truth in the conversion of men; as a melancholy temperament is one of the greatest calamities, and a fruitful occasion of prejudice and unbelief. Often the abiding temperament of the Christian, as cheerful or otherwise, is determined early, and by the force of circumstances, over which deliberate attention and judicious instruction exerted but little control. A vast amount of suffering may be avoided, and an equal amount of enjoyment and vigorous action may be secured, by just views of Christian character, and of its attendant evidences, in the early stages of the divine life.

On this subject, however, are erroneous opinions more common. There is, from some cause, a general expectation, that religion, at its first commencement in the soul, will be indicated by a degree and distinctness of feeling altogether above what will ordinarily be experienced. It is expected that some things will pass away, which never will pass away; and that some new things will appear, which will never be realized.

It is important, therefore, that young Christians should understand correctly what religion does not do, and what it does accomplish, on finding a place in the soul.

1. Religion accomplishes no change in respect to natural faculties or personal identity.

Something almost like this is often expected. And, when a change is experienced, which cometh not with observation, and whose reality and greatness is evinced by silent tranquility, and

humble love, and cheerful resignation, and implicit reliance on the Saviour, and a spirit of new obedience, it is something so different from what was anticipated by the subjects of the change, that their very tranquility alarms them, and the impossibility of exciting fear, makes them afraid. It does not, at first, occur to them, that this is religion; for they are the same unworthy creatures who trembled and wept. The same intellect, and conscience, and hopes, and fears, with all the unchanged tokens of identity, remain. They resist, therefore, these indications of a spiritual life, and go in quest of new alarms, as the means of a conversion whose characteristics shall correspond with their unfounded expectations.

The enemies of revivals fall into the same mistake. A late writer adduces, as presumptive evidence that revivals are not the work of God, the fact that the supposed converts seem to be the same persons, affording not the least evidence of the creation of any new powers and faculties. But the necessity of such a change is no where taught in the Bible, or ever realized in Christian experience. It is a new creation; but it consists in new affections, produced by the influence of truth, and of the Holy Spirit.

2. Religion does not change the natural temperament.

If a man was ardent before his conversion, he will be so afterward; and if he was phlegmatic, though religion may add a powerful stimulus, it will never make him quick and ardent. The characteristic of temperament will remain, modified, but not obliterated, by religion.

3. No change is accomplished by religion in the instincts, passions and appetites, excepting that which is indirect, and which consists in their subjugation to the laws of evangelical temperance.

Nor does that inordinate power of appetite or passion, which is the result of habit, cease of course, without watchfulness, self-denial and prayer. Religion in the soul is not an instantaneous omnipotence, putting down, in a moment, all insurrection in the heart, and suspending, in a moment, the bias of every passion which may have become inordinate by indulgence. It comes to aid the man enslaved by sin, in regaining his liberty, but not to give it to him without prayer and energetic efforts. It is, of course, no evidence that a man is not a new creature in Christ Jesus, that his old habits are sometimes the occasion of temptation to him, as it certainly would be, should he make no resistance, and fall again under their uninterrupted dominion. Faith conquers, but not without a conflict.

4. The commencement of religion does not extirpate entirely from the soul any one sinful passion or affection which belongs to our common depraved nature.

It impairs the power of every one, but expels wholly not one. The Canaanite still dwells in the land, and is driven out only by little and little. The power of sin, though impaired, is still great.

A new empire is set up in the soul, but it is in the presence of a long established and vigorous opposition. To sin a deadly wound is given; but it is given to a giant, in whom a fearful vitality yet remains, and who terrifies the victor with frequently renewed and powerful onsets. Religion has conquered, but it holds its dominion over captives impatient of subjection, and ready every moment to mutiny and throw off the yoke. It is a war which the Christian is destined to maintain for life, in which there is neither sleep, nor truce, nor rest. For though benevolence sways the sceptre, selfishness, with evil eye, watches every moment to usurp the throne, and gains too often a temporary victory. Though humility keeps the door, pride besets it also, with sleepless vigilance, to rush in at the first unguarded moment, and finds, alas! too many opportunities. These onsets of remaining sin are unanticipated, and greatly alarming to the young Christian, who sometimes gives up his hope entirely, and often, through fear of death, is subject to bondage. That very conflict which is the result of grace, alarms him, and he is needlessly troubled by some of his best evidences.

5. The commencement of religion in the soul does not cause the subject of it to appear to himself to be growing better.

In the sight of God he has become better, and is destined to advance in sanctification, until he shall, at length, be made meet for the inheritance of the saints. But the effect of sanctification is never the increase of self-complacency, but rather of self-abasement. Religion includes both a new moral sensibility to evil, and a new illumination to disclose its existence. The law of God becomes the rule of feeling and motive and action; and every approximation to this law in holy feeling, serves only to make every relative defect appear more plain, and more exceedingly sinful, inasmuch, that though the real process of the believer is from strength to strength in holiness, his path shining more and more to the perfect day; the real effect on himself is, deeper views of the deceitfulness and wickedness of his heart, an increasing sense of the burden of his sin, deeper humiliation before God, stronger desires to be delivered from sin, a more vigorous resistance of it by self-denial and prayer, and a more grateful sense of the goodness of God in sending his Son to make atonement for sin and give his people the victory over it.

But when these developements of remaining sin begin to be made, they are so unexpected as always, at first, to excite serious alarm; and unless timely explanation and advice are given, they produce a fear which obliterates hope, and protracts darkness and despondency, sometimes for years, and even through life. There is no subject on which misapprehension is productive of so much practical evil,—where hope expires, and health fails, and nervous disease invades, as on the subject of the apparent effects of sanctification,—the views and feelings in respect to himself, which religion

produces on entering and enlightening and purifying the heart of a sinner.

Instruction should be given constantly on this point in the progress of a revival, until all the happy subjects of grace are made acquainted with the experimental phenomena of sanctification. From the first dawn of hope, till its happy establishment, line upon line is needed, to enable the young Christian to appreciate as his best evidence a state of feeling so contrary to all his anticipations.

This exposition of the humbling effect of sanctification is needful also to remove a provoking prejudice from the minds of worldly men, who, invariably almost, apprehend that their friends and neighbors, on becoming Christians, feel as if they were now very good, and set themselves up as much better than others, and are disposed, with pharisaical pride, to say, Stand by thyself, for I am holier than thou. It cannot be denied that hypocrites, who think that they are something when they are nothing, are always puffed up with spiritual pride; and that real Christians sometimes, and young converts often, if they are prematurely and injudiciously thrust forward, to relate their experience, and pray, and exhort in public meetings, are, in this manner, lifted up of pride, to fall into the condemnation of the devil. But, it is denied most strenuously, that it is the religion of the Christian which produces his spiritual pride. It is the occasion, the innocent occasion; while that pride which is called spiritual, is the same principle which, before the reign of grace commenced, held undivided sway over the soul. It is a sin which grace has not eradicated, usurping over holiness a temporary power. But the real estimate which a renewed man forms of himself, instead of being raised by a change in his views and affections, is greatly reduced. Uniformly, in our natural state, we think more highly of ourselves than we ought to think; and begin to think soberly and truly, only when religion has furnished us with the correct standard of comparison, and inspired us with some correct moral sensibilities. Always, we take the upper room first; and never, until Jesus comes, do we begin, with true humility, to go down to our proper place. So far is the real Christian from saying to his neighbor, I am holier than thou, that he ascribes to himself less excellence, and more moral evil, than unrenewed men in general are ready to admit as being true in their own case.

6. Religion does not produce intuitive knowledge of what is morally right in all cases, or supersede the ordinary modes of obtaining a knowledge of duty by the study of the Bible, and by observation, reflection and prayer.

It does not qualify a man to preach by inspiration, without the preliminaries of knowledge and mental discipline; and, although a right state of the affections is an excellent preservative against error and preparation to perceive the truth, it does not belong

to the heart, and does belong to the understanding by reason of use, to discriminate between truth and error. The confidence which by some is reposed in strong feeling, as the guarantee of infallibility, is unauthorised, and has been the source of all the dishonor which has come upon religion by the fanaticism of good men. Mere feeling is blind; and he who consents to dismiss his reason and give up the helm to feeling, will not long escape shipwreck. The maxim that strong feeling is indispensable to qualify a man to judge of fitness and propriety in religious matters, would seem to be as wide from the dictates of common sense and experience as any absurd proposition that can be conceived; and yet multitudes are disposed to regard the weaknesses and indiscretions which attend Christians as evidence decisive that their faith and hope are vain.

7. Nor does religion prevent the actual doing of that which is sinful.

Habitual sin it does prevent. No immorality can be persisted in without extinguishing wholly all evidence of Christian character. And therefore no immoral man can be admitted to the church, or be suffered to retain his membership if he has been admitted. And yet, the history of Abraham, and David, and Peter, admonish us that men of eminent piety may be overcome by temptation. If angels, and Adam our great ancestor, might fall from a state of perfect rectitude, what is the poor, imperfect Christian, that he should be thought incapable of being overcome? And yet, how often do we hear the argument against experimental religion derived from the failings and sins of professors, urged upon principles which imply that if a man is a Christian he must be sinless? Is not such a thing wrong? Yes. Well then, how can he who has done it be a Christian? Because Christianity is heaven's most merciful plan for raising men who are spiritually dead to life. Because the first beatings of life in the renewed heart are feeble, and are powerfully counteracted by all the antecedent tendencies of spiritual death. The church is not heaven, where the spirits of the just are made perfect; but a spiritual hospital, in which the first movements of holiness are cherished and strengthened, and raised up to confirmed and perfect health, in heaven.

The great Physician began the good work on earth, and carries it on unto perfection in glory. But shall his skill be questioned, and the efficacy of his prescriptions and the progress of his patients be denied, because, all the way to heaven, the symptoms of disease hang upon them? Is the man not convalescent, who has been sick unto death, until his health is made perfect? Is not the subject of suspended respiration rescued from death by indefatigable effort, until all the debility and every injurious effect of drowning have disappeared? Would any who had stood over him as a dead man, and watched the process of resuscitating life, maintain their incorrigible infidelity that no change had taken place, and no good been



done until the last effect of suspended respiration had disappeared? Is the slight trembling about the heart, nothing? The low and languid vital heat driven to the last citadel of life, and lingering there to announce that life has not yet retired? Is the returning spasm, the sigh, the groan, the open eye, and at length, articulation, nothing, because, as yet, the patient is weak as an infant? If the doctrine of regeneration were, that men, on becoming Christians, became perfect, the world might well indulge the most inveterate incredulity. But to insist upon it that no new affections have begun to operate in the heart so long as the evidence of relative imperfection remains, is as unphilosophical as it is uncandid, and unscriptural, and contrary to fact.

The subject is, I perceive, extending itself beyond my anticipations. There are several other things which religion does not do, of equal importance with those which have been named, which, with the entire account of what religion does do, may, if providence shall permit, appear in the next, or in some future number.

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*To the Editor of the Christian Examiner.*

SIR,

Though I have not the honor to say that I held a correspondence with you some time since; yet, possibly it may not have escaped your recollection, that I addressed a series of letters to you explanatory of some mistakes and evasions upon which a reviewer in your pages seemed to have fallen. I have received no answer to those letters. But, as in matters of importance I am not disposed to stand about trifles, I take the liberty of addressing you once more concerning some other mistakes of an equally serious nature, contained in the *Christian Examiner*, No. V. p. 431, in the Review of a note contained in a late edition of my sermon on the Government of God.

In the article to which I replied sometime since, I am charged with giving for Calvinism a system decidedly anticalvinistic, amounting to misrepresentation if I did it knowingly; and my ignorance on such a subject, if I did it ignorantly, being such as to make it a sin for me to write upon it in so confident a manner. To which was added the charge of artifice and unfairness in quotation. All this, I had some reason to hope, my reputation had survived, both among Calvinists and Unitarians. But in the article before me, I seem to the writer to have made statements which place me out of the pale of reputable controversy, and which if not done ignorantly, must leave a deep stain upon my character.

Whether my reputation will survive this last attack, it is not for me to predict. I shall submit cheerfully to the public decision, when I shall have done my duty in giving them the means of forming a correct judgment. It may not, however, be amiss to admonish the reviewer of the inspired caution, "Let not him that girdeth on his harness boast himself as he that putteth it off;" and to remind him, that we live in a community where the public sentiment will not permit a reputation, earned by the effort of more than half a life to do good, to be undermined without cause, or fail to visit unmerited attempts to do it with a retribution more severe than any good man could desire.

From early life I had heard that somebody had, sometime and somewhere, said, that infants not a span long were in hell, and that hell was doubtless paved with their bones. And I must admit that for once, traditionary fiction retained a verbal accuracy of statement not surpassed by written documents. Until, however, I became acquainted with the state of things in Boston and its vicinity, I had supposed this rumor was a falsehood, which, upon the principle of moral affinities, had found its element, and had flowed down, in its own proper channel, among the irreligious and vicious, and was a part of the imagery which adorned the drunkard's song. But, as my acquaintance with this city and the region around increased, I perceived that honest and respectable people in the community were led to believe, not only that *some* Calvinists of other ages had uttered such a sentiment, or that some Calvinistic writers of the present age had taught it; but that it was a sentiment inseparable from the system of Calvinism, and believed and taught by Calvinists generally of the present day. Nay, as evangelical religion increased in this city and the country around, I became satisfied that the people who were under Unitarian influence, and had not the means of knowing otherwise, were led to believe that the Orthodox around them, did hold to the doctrine that infants are lost, as a part of their system; and that, instead of relying on truth and argument, attempts were made to prejudice an honest and well meaning community against their brethren, the children of the Pilgrims, by the circulation of such unfounded reports.

In these circumstances, being requested to republish a sermon which had some reference to the number of the saved, I supposed it a duty indicated by the prevailing misapprehensions around me, to disclaim, in behalf of myself and of the Orthodox generally, in this city and vicinity, and in New England, and in behalf of the great body of the Congregational and Presbyterian ministers in the United States, the believing or teaching any such doctrine.

In the execution of this purpose, I wrote and published the following note.

I am aware that Calvinists are represented as believing and teaching the monstrous doctrine that infants are damned, and that hell is doubtless paved with their bones. But, having passed the age of fifty, and been conversant for thirty years with the most approved Calvinistic writers, and personally acquainted with many of the most distinguished Calvinistic divines in New England, and in the middle and southern and western states, I must say that I have never seen or heard of any book which contained such a sentiment, nor a man, minister or layman, who believed or taught it. And I feel authorised to say, that Calvinists as a body, are as far from teaching the doctrine of infant damnation, as any of those who falsely accuse them. And I would earnestly and affectionately recommend to all persons who have been accustomed to propagate this slander, that they commit to memory, without delay, the ninth commandment, which is, "Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor."

This note, as the reviewer supposes, was not written in ignorance or without examination. It was intended to say to the community distinctly, that the report so industriously propagated, that the Orthodox in Boston and its vicinity, believe or teach that infants are damned, is false; and equally false in respect to the great body of Calvinists in New England, and in the United States. In doing this, it was my purpose to compel those who had been accustomed to circulate such reports, to cease from their slanders, or to assume, in some tangible form, the responsibility of uttering them. The note has produced its intended, though, I must admit, not its anticipated effect; for I did not believe that there was a man living, who would have the hardihood to charge the Calvinists of Boston, of New England, or of the United States, with holding the doctrine that infants are damned. A writer in your pages has made the charge. And yet I am so fearful that he may be tempted to deny that he has made it, that I deem it proper, first to cut off his retreat, by an exhibition of the evidence that he has done so. For though the charge is not libellous, it is as odious and injurious to the character of a Christian denomination as if it were so.

The following considerations show that the Calvinists of New England and the United States, are charged with holding the doctrine that infants are damned.

The whole stress of my disclaimer in the note, respects not the dead, but the living. The offence stated is, that I have never seen a man, neither minister nor layman, who believed or taught the doctrine. And the reference to the "most approved Calvinistic writers," was not primarily for the purpose of vindicating the dead from unjust aspersion, though this would have been a duty, but to vindicate the living; to disencumber myself and my brethren, and the whole Calvinistic body in New England, and the United States, of the odium attached to us by the circulation of such a falsehood. The not having met with the sentiment in the most approved Calvinistic writers is alledged in proof that it is not a sentiment adopted by Calvinists of the present day, upon the principle, that if the most approved writers do not teach it, and a living man had not been found by me who believed or taught it, the imputation must be a slander. And when, upon these grounds,

I proceeded to state my disclaimer, it had, as my complaint had, exclusive reference to the living. It is that Calvinists, as a body, are as far from teaching the doctrine of infant damnation, as any of those who falsely accuse them. And my closing exhortation that those who had circulated the slander, that Calvinists hold to the doctrine that infants are damned, should commit to memory without delay the ninth commandment, which is "Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor," was upon the supposition that the neighbors whom they slandered were living Calvinists, and not the dead of other ages.

In this manner, I am happy to perceive that the reviewer understood me. For he says, "If Dr. Beecher had merely told us he thought the doctrine of infant damnation a false one, that *he* did not believe it, and that they who say *he* does believe it, bear false witness against their neighbor, our remarks and citations would have been spared. But to deny it in the name of a party, whose most accredited organ he would fain be considered; to deny it in the name of the most approved writers, who expressly state it, and, in some instances seem almost to think it a slander to be said not to hold it; and for him impudently to accuse those who, with us, charge it upon those writers and their system, of a breach of the commands of their God; this, has rendered it our bounden duty to appear in self defence, &c."

Now, though the reviewer, in summing up his charge against me, shrinks from the responsibility of charging the Calvinistic party directly, and in so many words, with holding the doctrine of infant damnation, and lets the charge slide off upon "those writers and their system," yet we are not to be deceived by such finesse, for he does declare that the system, which living Calvinists avow does contain the doctrine that infants are damned; and he does give as one reason for its being his bounden duty to appear in self-defence, that I have, in the name of the Calvinistic party, disclaimed the doctrine of infant damnation, and charged him and others, with bearing false witness against their neighbors; not surely their neighbors under ground, but against living Calvinistic men.

If I have misunderstood the reviewer, and he chooses to say, that he and his party have not, and do not charge the Calvinistic party who are alive, with holding to the damnation of infants, much of what we have said, and have yet to say, may be spared. But he is, I apprehend, cut off from saying this, because it would be both false in fact, and in opposition to the language which he has used in the review; for he does state two considerations which have made it his bounden duty to come out in self-defence; one of which is, that I have declared that Calvinists, as a body, do not hold to the doctrine of infant damnation, and the other, that I have made a similar denial in behalf of the most approved Calvinistic writers.

Now if the reviewer and his friends, had not charged the Calvinistic party with holding to that offensive doctrine, a denial on my part that they do hold it, could create surely no implication of the reviewer as bearing false witness against his neighbor, nor become one of two reasons which make it his bounden duty to come out in self-defence.

He has come out then to defend himself and his Unitarian friends, for having charged the Calvinistic party with holding to the doctrine that infants are damned.

And now I am thankful that the time has come, when a charge so injurious, and so long circulating in the dark, is made public, upon the responsibility of a work, which may be considered as the accredited organ of the Unitarian party.

The reviewer may be assured that I shall neither "palter" nor "evade," nor must he expect to be permitted to avail himself of any such liberty. The eye of an intelligent community is upon us both; a community which can understand an argument, and will not permit their confidence to be abused, or their neighbors to be falsely accused with impunity.

In opposition to the claims of the reviewer, I shall show: 1, That the Calvinistic system does not teach, nor imply, that infants are damned. 2, That it never has been the doctrine received by the churches denominated Calvinistic. 3, That it is neither believed nor taught by the Calvinists, as a body, at the present day.

It would be hoping against hope, to expect that a Unitarian writing against Calvinism will define anything, or prove anything except by the power of assertion; otherwise, in a formal setting out to prove that "the damnation of infants is connected with essential vital principles of the Calvinistic system," we should have looked for a definition of Calvinism, or at least, a specification of those "vital principles with which the destruction of infants is so inseparably connected;" with some little attempt to show the connexion between the principles and the doctrine of infant destruction. But none of this. "Ipse dixit" must suffice.

The Calvinistic system contains but two points out of the five, that can have any possible relation to the question about the future state of infants. Those are, the doctrine of original sin, and the doctrine of predestination. But the doctrine of original sin, in its most exceptionable form, neither asserts nor implies that infants are lost. It teaches simply and only, that infants by the imputation of Adam's sin, are depraved and guilty; and on this account, children of wrath, and exposed justly to future punishment. But that this deserved punishment is in fact inflicted, the doctrine does not say, and does not imply. And yet a belief in the depravity of infants and their just exposure to punishment, is the only argument the reviewer has adduced, which goes to prove that Calvinists, as a body, ever did, or do now, believe in the damnation of infants.



Calvin, as quoted by the reviewer, teaches only that infants are depraved, and under condemnation, which makes them *justly liable* to future punishment, but not that they are actually sent to hell. And Turretin, that "the guilt of original sin" is "*sufficient* for the *condemnation*" of infants, but, not that the punishment deserved is inflicted. Edwards also, as quoted, reprobates a sentiment which would deny that infants are "not *exposed* to any proper punishment at all on account of Adam's sin." Bellamy teaches also, that if they (infants) die and go into eternity with their native temper, they must necessarily be miserable, "in being what they are, unlike to God, and incapable of the enjoyment of him, and contrary to him." He holds that they are as really under law in eternity, and may as justly be punished if they sin in that state, as they might have been if they had lived and acted out their depravity in time. But that they *do* die and go into eternity with their native temper he does not say. He teaches that the condition to which man is reduced by the fall, as exposed to eternal punishment without the Gospel, is worse than non-existence. But he does not say, that the actual eternal state of all the race is worse than non-existence.

He teaches that there is hope of the children of believers who are trained up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord; but he does not say, that there is no hope for the children of believers who die in infancy. Nor does he say, that there is no hope for the children of unbelievers dying in infancy, or that they are sent to hell.

These authorities, which teach, simply and only, that infants are the subjects of such depravity as disqualifies for heaven, and, not removed, would render their exclusion certain and just, the reviewer deems quite conclusive. It is in such evidence that he exults, as showing that the ablest and most approved supporters of Calvinism "expressly stated and enforced" the doctrine that infants are damned. This, we say, and will show more fully in the proper place, is the only evidence the reviewer has adduced to prove that the Calvinistic party ever did, or do now, as a body, believe and teach the doctrine of infant damnation. But the reviewer need not have troubled himself to prove that the Reformers, and Edwards and Bellamy taught the doctrine of the imputation of Adam's sin, as entailing depravity and a real and just *exposure* to future punishment upon the entire race, commencing with the earliest infancy. But does he really think, that when this is proved or conceded, his work is done, and the Calvinistic belief in infant damnation established? Will he avow the maxim, that to teach the *desert* of punishment, is the same as to teach "expressly" its actual infliction? Does he imagine that he possesses power of logic sufficient to persuade his readers that all men in this life, are punished who deserve punishment?

As the entire triumph of the reviewer turns on the new discovery, that to believe and teach the *desert* of punishment, is to teach "expressly" that it is *inflicted*; I shall take the liberty, for his edification, and that of his admiring readers, to reduce his argument to syllogistic form: To believe and teach that a subject of law is guilty and deserving of punishment, is the same as to believe and teach "expressly" that the punishment deserved is actually inflicted. But Calvinists, as we have abundantly shown, have believed and taught that infants are depraved and justly exposed to future punishment. Therefore, "the doctrine of infant damnation has been expressly maintained by leading Calvinists, and is connected with essential vital principles of the Calvinistic system." Review, p. 431. There is certainly no fault to be found with this reasoning, if the major be true, that to believe in guilt and desert of punishment is the same as to believe its actual infliction.

But if the position is just, it brings upon us all, whether infants or adults, Unitarians or Calvinists, fear as desolation, and destruction as a whirlwind. For then, what becomes of those "elect infants" which Calvinists supposed so safe, whose guilt and desert, however, they admitted; and what hope remains for elect adults, whose guilt and just condemnation is admitted? Nay, should we turn Arminians, we must hold to desert of punishment, and the necessity of repentance and faith. But how can repentance and faith avail, provided that to deserve and to suffer are inseparable? And, alas! for the reviewer and all his brethren, the Unitarians and Universalists, who hold that we are saved by grace through the tender mercy of God! for what sort of grace is that which forgives a debt which is not due, and what sort of tender mercy is that which remits a penalty which is not deserved? But if it is deserved, then who can be saved?

These conclusions, to which the reviewer's logic is driving himself and us, far from heaven and hope, are the more terrific, as, if they are true, the Bible sanctions our doom, "for he [God] hath concluded all under sin," all "children of wrath, because children of disobedience." Who then can be saved?

I should hope, that by this time, the reviewer might be as well satisfied as he seems to think I must be; and that he will perceive, that his premises are "a bed shorter than that a man can stretch himself on it, and a covering narrower than that he can wrap himself in it," and that, between his premises and his conclusion, a great gulf is fixed, which must forever preclude all sort of intercourse between them. Should the infatuation, however, which has produced such obliquity of reasoning harden him to defend his premises, that to teach guilt and desert of punishment is to teach "expressly" the infliction of the punishment deserved, we shall be somewhat comforted by perceiving into what honorable com-

pamy we are fallen, and with what a cloud of witnesses we are surrounded.

The primitive Fathers, those rank anticalvinists, if they were not, as many insist, Unitarians even, did most assuredly believe, in some sense, in original sin, as is clearly indicated by the stress they laid on baptism, as taking it away. Platon, the metropolitan of the Greek church, gives as her doctrine, "that through the first transgression the door of sin was opened, which, by infecting the whole human race, at last brought them into the utmost misery." "In this nature, formed after the image of God, not one *feature* of that image was to be observed." "In such a state rational man fell under the severity of God's wrath." "Out of this state of utter ruin, the human race could have no hope of saving themselves."\* The Greek church therefore, according to the logic of the reviewer, teaches "expressly" the damnation of infants, because it is admitted that they are all depraved and deserve to die. The good old church of England, and her daughter the American Episcopal church, come in to share with us in the blood of the little innocents; for they teach that "Original sin standeth not in the following of Adam, as the Pelagians do vainly talk, but it is the fault and corruption of the nature of every man that naturally is engendered of the offspring of Adam, whereby man is very far gone from original righteousness, and is, of his own nature, inclined to evil, so that the flesh lusteth always contrary to the spirit, and therefore, in every person born into this world, it deserveth God's wrath and damnation." And even our brethren of the Methodist Episcopal church hold, that "Original sin standeth not in the following of Adam, as the Pelagians do vainly talk, but is the corruption of the nature of every man that naturally is engendered of the offspring of Adam, whereby man is very far from original righteousness, and of his own nature, is inclined to evil, and that continually."

The other doctrine of Calvinism, which may be supposed to have relation to the future condemnation of infants, is the doctrine of Predestination or Election. But this decides nothing. It teaches only, that God, in his infinite mercy, has determined to reclaim, and forgive, and save a portion of the human race. How many, and whom, it says not. Especially it does not determine, that infants may not be included in this merciful purpose. The phrase "elect infants" which, in his usual way, the reviewer takes for granted implies that there are infants who are not elect, implies no such thing. If the reviewer had understood the principles of Calvinism, and the sentiments of the "most approved Calvinistic writers," he might have escaped the downfall into which he has so heedlessly plunged. He would have understood that while Calvinists believed that some infants were certainly elected and saved, they did not teach that any infants were certainly damned.

\* Pink. Gr. Ch. p. 99—102.

They did hold, that the infants of believers, dying in infancy, were saved; but in respect to others, as they professed not to know anything on the subject, the great body of most approved writers said nothing, but referred them to the unerring disposal of God.

Thus Dickinson, president of Princeton college, and one of the most illustrious divines of his day, states the objection to original sin. "It may be further urged against this proposition, 'That it dooms multitudes of poor infants to hell, who never committed any actual sin; and is therefore a doctrine so cruel and unmerciful, as to be unworthy of God.'

"To this I answer, that greatest modesty becomes us in drawing any conclusions on this subject. We have indeed the highest encouragement to dedicate our children to Christ, since he has told us, *of such is the kingdom of heaven*; and the strongest reason for hope as to the happiness of those deceased infants, who have been thus dedicated to him. But God has not been pleased to reveal to us, how far he will extend his uncovenanted mercy, to others that die in infancy.—As, on the one hand, I do not know that the Scripture anywhere assures us, that they shall all be saved: so, on the other hand, we have not (that I know of,) any evidence, from Scripture or the nature of things, that any of these will eternally perish.—All those that die in infancy, may (for aught we know,) belong to the election of grace; and be predestinated to the adoption of children. They may, in methods to us unknown, have the benefits of Christ's redemption applied to them; and thereby be made heirs of eternal glory. They are (it is true,) naturally under the guilt and pollution of original sin: But they may, notwithstanding this, for anything that appears to the contrary, be renewed by the gracious influences of the Spirit of God; and thereby be made meet for eternal life. It therefore concerns us, without any bold and presumptuous conclusions, to leave them in the hands of that God, whose *tender mercies are over all his works.*"\*

In the same manner, according to Van Mastricht, the Reformers decided. Therefore he says "they (the reformers) thought certain infants might be exposed to reprobation, as they were exposed to (or the subjects of) original sin, Rom. v. 12, 14, as being unsanctified and impure, 1 Cor. vii. 14, and placed without the covenant of grace, Gen. xvii. 7, 8. Acts. ii. 39. In the mean time, concerning the infants of the faithful, because they are called pure, 1 Cor. vii. 14, likewise in covenant, Acts. ii. 39. compared with Gen. xvii. 7, because also they are held as being parts of their parents, they judged more favorably. But the infants of unbelievers, because the Scriptures determine nothing clearly on the subject, they supposed were to be left to the divine discretion."† This, according to the reviewer's own

\* Dickinson's Sermons, p. 205.

† Lib. iii. Ch. 4. p. 308.

showing, is the opinion of a very large class of Calvinists; for he says those Calvinists called moderate, "do not pronounce a decided opinion on the subject. They express a hope, but have no confidence. They earnestly wish, but do not with complete confidence expect, that the doom of infants for Adam's sin may be less dreadful than the fires of hell." Ah! these moderate Calvinists then, do not believe and teach that infants are damned. But do they not believe in the doctrine of original sin? If not, they are not Calvinists, the reviewer himself being judge; and if they do hold to, and teach the doctrine of original sin, then they do teach as expressly as Edwards and Bellamy teach, the doctrine of infant damnation. The reviewer admits, however, that they do not hold to the damnation of infants, and thus gives up his argument, that Calvinism teaches it, and vindicates those whom he had aspersed, and condemns himself as having knowingly slandered both the Calvinists and their system. I have only to add, that I have nowhere asserted that Calvinists, as a body, teach that all infants are *certainly* saved. I am aware, that many, with Dickinson, and the Reformers, and "moderate Calvinists" have hoped that they are saved, and referred the event to the unerring discretion of heaven.

But is there no difference between not teaching positively, that infants *are* saved, and teaching positively that they are damned? Did Socrates deny "expressly" the immortality of the soul, when he could not determine what became of it; and said we must wait until some one shall be sent from God to teach us? And yet the reviewer drives on to his conclusion, and celebrates his own triumphs as if not to teach that infants are saved, is to teach "expressly" that they are lost. Bellamy, he says, "suggests no hope," concerning the children of unbelievers; therefore, he teaches "expressly" that they are damned. And Dr. Emmons does not "tell us" that he has any more hope for heathen, Mahommedan, deistical, or Unitarian infants, than for their parents; therefore he teaches that they are damned. Both, like the Reformers, do not profess to know what becomes of the infants of unbelievers, therefore, according to the reviewer, it is an article of their faith, that they are damned. We do hope the reviewer will go back to his horn book, before he attempts to reason again for the edification of readers who are blessed with common sense.

In closing my remarks on this head, I deny unequivocally, that the Calvinistic system teaches or implies the doctrine that infants are damned; and I challenge the reviewer to *name* a single doctrine of the system from which it follows logically. I call upon him to state a doctrine of Calvinism which implies that infants are damned, and to point out, coolly and clearly, the connexion between the premises and the conclusion; and if he cannot do it, then I call upon him to make such amends, openly, for misrepresenting the doctrinal opinions of a large denomination of Christians,



as public justice demands; as honor, magnanimity, and conscience cannot fail to make. In the mean time, since the reviewer seems to be offended, that I should recommend to him and his brethren the commitment to memory of the ninth commandment, I will take the liberty to recommend, as a substitute, the following verse in Sternhold and Hopkins, which, should it be observed, will be as great a safeguard to Calvinists against misrepresentation, as the ninth commandment.

O Lord, my heart not haughty is,  
My eyes not lofty be;  
Nor do I deal in matters great,  
Or things too high for me.

I am, respectfully, yours,

LYMAN BEECHER.

(To be continued.)

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## MISCELLANEOUS DEPARTMENT.

### PROTESTANTISM IN FRANCE.

In the preceding pages may be found an account of the progress of evangelical religion in Germany. The increase of piety in France will be a subject of sincere congratulation to every intelligent Christian. Scarcely any people upon earth could do more for the extension of the Gospel and the renovation of the world, than the French people might accomplish, if they were generally to become the true disciples of the Lord Jesus. We are happy to state, that among the Protestants of France, there is much more inquiry as to the nature of religion, and the best means of promoting it, than formerly. The instances of conversion from the Romish church are multiplying. The publication and distribution of religious tracts would indicate a readiness to make efforts for the diffusion of correct sentiments; and the zeal and alacrity, with which books are received and read, seem to announce the approach of a new era.

We have been greatly pleased with the account, which a plain man, whose name is Peter Bayssiere, master sadler, of Montaigt, department of the Tarn and Garonne, has given of his conversion from the darkness of Popery; or rather from the infidelity, which Popery has very extensively occasioned. This account takes the form of a letter to his children, and is admirably adapted to be useful as a tract. In this way, we hope it will visit multitudes, who are too much enlightened to be pleased with the mummeries of superstition, and who may derive saving benefit, by having their minds powerfully directed to the Scriptures, as the great source of religious knowledge.

We propose to give, in this and following numbers, a translation of the tract in question.

Before we proceed, however, it may be well to make two general observations. The first is, that whenever a man becomes deeply and actively religious, the change appears very great to himself, and to all his acquaintance. He seems to have emerged from the region and shadow of death, and rejoices in the light that shines from heaven. This is almost equally the case, whether he has escaped from dark heathenism, cold infidelity, chilling

Unitarianism, dead formality,—or even from barren and heartless orthodoxy. The second is, that every man, who becomes strictly religious, especially if he is compelled by his conscience to leave his former friends, must expect to have his motives impeached, and his name cast out as evil.

When the Montaigut sadler became in earnest to ascertain what the New Testament really teaches, he applied himself to the investigation with a diligence, that reproveth the carelessness of many Protestants. His example is worthy of being followed in several respects; but especially as he examined one subject after another, with his mind intent upon a single subject at a time. He could find no doctrine of purgatory, though he sought for it diligently. Unitarians profess to believe in the doctrine of deliverance from hell, after an unknown period of suffering there; and some Unitarians profess to receive the decisions of Scripture as authoritative and final. Let persons of this class look thoroughly from Genesis to Revelation, and see if they can find a single passage, which speaks of any escape from the world of punishment, after the lost soul has entered it.

*Letter to my Children on the subject of my conversion to the true Christian religion, and of the motives which have induced me to pass from the communion of the Romish Church, in which I was born, into the Protestant Church, in which I desire and hope to die.*

My dear Children,

The narrative, which I propose to give you in this letter, of my conversion to the true Christian religion,—such as our Lord Jesus Christ and his apostles established,—such as was professed during the two first ages of the church,—and such as is again found faithfully followed by Protestants and reformed Christians: this narrative, although the courage which I feel to give it to you is unshaken, surpasses much my feeble means; and would demand from me a different education from that which I have received, and more talents for writing than I possess.

A plain mechanic, and my education in childhood having been much neglected, it is difficult for me to express as I would wish, the thoughts which crowd upon my mind and the feelings which fill and agitate my heart.

Nevertheless, great and numerous as may be the difficulties, which such an attempt presents, I am persuaded to undertake it by the tender affection which I bear you, and by the desire and hope of being useful to you; and I hope that God will be my help, to prevent me from being discouraged by any obstacle, and that he will give me grace to acquit myself of what I regard as a sacred duty.

Yes; it is a sacred duty for me to let you know the true motives, which have influenced the most important, most solemn, and most decisive step of my whole life.

It is a sacred duty for me to give glory to God for the inestimable favor which he has deigned to grant me, in bringing me out of darkness into his marvellous light;—in opening to me the treasures of his infinite mercy;—and in giving the hope of safety by faith in his holy Son, who alone has the words of eternal life, being, alone, the way, the truth, and the life.

It is a sacred duty for me to instruct you by the lessons of my experience; to show you the way, by which it has pleased the Lord to lead me to the truth; and to the fountain of the living waters of his grace; and to attempt, imploring his assistance, to make you participate in the peace and joy, with which my soul is now overwhelmed under the celestial influence of his word.

It is a sacred duty for me to fortify you, by a simple and sincere declaration of my religious principles, against the effects of corruption, falsehood and calumny, which endeavor to asperse my intentions and impeach my integrity, in ascribing to my proceedings dishonorable motives, which never have had the least access to my heart.

May this writing, my dear children, being blessed from on high, contribute to the triumph of the Gospel, and to the glory of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ, in filling you with a love for truth, and placing you in the way of pure Christianity.

It is at the age of thirty three years, in the present year, 1826, that I have openly embraced and professed the Protestant religion, after having submitted it to a most serious and attentive examination, and after having recognised it as the true religion of Jesus Christ, and in every thing conformed to the revelation of the Gospel.

Like you, my dear children, I was born in the Romish church; but birth does nothing for religion. It may, indeed, be a source of prejudices with regard to it, and serve as a pretext to timid men, the slaves of a sordid interest, and those who are totally indifferent, to justify their external adherence to doctrines, and to a worship, which their heart disapproves. As Jesus Christ declared to his disciple Peter, it is not *flesh*, nor *blood*, which *reveals* to us the knowledge of the true God, the Creator, Preserver, and Saviour of men. Faith, which alone gives us the right to be called children of God, and true members of the church of Jesus Christ, is a gift of the Holy Spirit, and not a gift which we receive from our parents. This is what the Gospel teaches, when it says, in St. John, i. 12, 13. "But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God."

We are neither Catholics nor Protestants by birth: and it is a great error to believe ourselves engaged to this or that communion, because we were born in it. Like all the sciences, religion ought to be studied and considered; and one is not truly a member of any communion, until he understands the principles of it, or adheres to it with a deep conviction and an entire persuasion. Until this takes place, one is only credulous, ignorant, superstitious, the slave of prejudice and habit.

As to myself, my children, although born in the Romish church, I never partook in the belief of it. It is foreign to the end which I propose to myself, to recall here the various circumstances of my infancy and youth, which prevented me from being introduced into the bosom of Catholicism by the customary practices and ceremonies. It is sufficient to tell you that God, by his Providence, so ordered it, that I made no vow, by which I might afterwards believe myself bound to the Romish communion.\*

Unknown to me, that is, at an age when I knew not what was done, baptism was doubtless administered to me; but as this act was done without any participation on my part, I have never considered it an engagement to the Catholic church, not having myself contracted it.

That which they call the *first communion*, which is the ratification and confirmation of the baptismal vow, and which I hold to be a solemn and obligatory engagement, if there ever can be one, at least when contracted at a mature age, and with a knowledge of the subject; this first communion I never partook of in the Romish church; nor did I ever receive what they call the sacrament of confirmation.

When I was going to unite myself by the sacred bond of marriage with your virtuous and very dear mother, they imposed upon me the duty of *consecrating*; which I did with extreme repugnance, knowing nothing which is a *consecration* same time more absurd, tyrannical and humiliating to man, than this obligation to throw himself at the feet of a priest, a mortal, and sinner, a child of corruption like all men, to make to him avowals, which the offended Deity alone has a right to

\* *I might have thought*, but I am far from believing that *I ought to think*, myself indissolubly bound to the Catholic church by any sacrament, which I might have received, or by any engagement, which I might have contracted with it. On the contrary, I lay it down, as an incontestable principle, that all vows and oaths are null, and neither can nor ought to retain us in a communion, from the moment when the error is discovered, or the essential doctrines or practices are evidently opposed to the word of God, and disavowed by the conscience. Truth alone, and a deep conviction that we follow truth, is the only bond, which ought to attach us inviolably to any church whatever. From the moment, that this conviction ceases, and we find ourselves in error, it is a sacred duty to abandon a profession, which does not accord with our true sentiments; and we become hypocrites, despisable in the eyes of good men, and condemned before God, if we persevere in it.

exact, and to expect from him absolution of faults, which do not at all concern him. I could not be married without confessing. It was a necessity to which I submitted; but no power could have compelled me to go farther. All my thoughts and feelings had from childhood revolted from the communion, as the Roman Catholics receive it. Under various pretexts, then, I succeeded in dispensing with the pretended sacrament of the altar, and, notwithstanding that, I obtained the nuptial benediction.

The Lord, who never leaves himself without a witness in doing us good, though we offend him in so many ways, deigned to bless our union. Your birth, my dear children, placed me and your good mother at the height of our wishes, and left us no desire but to see you grow and prosper, and to devote ourselves to rendering you happy. Alas! in our mutual joy, in mingling our cares for you, we little thought that it would so soon be interrupted, and that death would deprive us of her, who had given you birth. But our great God, whose ways and purposes, though often unfathomable, are always full of wisdom, thought proper to separate us for a time; you from a tender and excellent mother, and me from a friend, who possessed my esteem, and a companion much beloved. She died after an illness of a few days, and left me overwhelmed with grief and regrets, which I should vainly attempt to describe.

Notwithstanding, terrible as was the blow which smote me, and painful the separation which then rent my heart, I now feel that the trial which sovereign mercy dispensed to me was necessary, and one of the links in the providential chain, by which it has pleased the Lord to snatch me from the miserable state in which I slept, and lead me to the source of grace and true peace.

The death of your poor mother was the cause of the circumstances, which some time after, by drawing my attention and inciting me to an examination of things with regard to which I had till then remained ignorant and careless, developed an activity of mind, of which I did not believe myself capable; and finished, without the possibility of doubt, by engaging me seriously in the study of religion. I ought here to give you some details, which will show you how God can bring good out of evil, and which will inform you, that it was a Catholic priest, who set me in the way which leads directly to Protestantism.

The funeral obsequies of your mother were Catholic, that is to say, I spared nothing within my power to honor her burial. I still wished, either in conformity to custom, or to please my relatives, affected by the terrors of purgatory; or because I myself partook of the error, that purchased prayers can relieve the soul from sin; or because all these motives acted upon me simultaneously with the grief, which filled my heart, and exalted my imagination; I wished still, I say, to have a *neuvaine*, or the nine masses, which it is customary to have said for the repose of the deceased.

The priest, to whom I first applied, told me that he was too much occupied to take upon himself the whole; but for three I might rely upon him. I found another priest, who undertook to say the six others, and indeed was not slow to satisfy me. Every Sunday, for a long time, I returned to the first to inquire if my three masses had been said during the week. He had always some one more urgent than I, "he had always promised, or he was overburdened, he had more masses than he could say." Thus from February to June this priest sent me away under various pretences. At length, weary of so many useless steps, I resolved to put an end to them. My dissatisfaction was extreme. I expressed it to your aunt, the sister of your mother. Your aunt inquired, if I had offered to the priest the money for the masses, which he had promised to say for me. I answered, no; the thought had never occurred to me; but if it had, I should not have dared to do it, for fear of offending him. I added, with derision, it was hardly the custom to pay before being served, and that few persons would have thought of advancing to me the price of a saddle before I had made it. No matter, said your aunt, I advise you to return to the priest, and offer him the money for the masses which you wish him to say.

I followed her advice, and for that time my request was favorably received. Having seen a crown, containing six francs, which I laid on the table, the priest seized it, looked at me and said, "Do you not wish me to say six?" No, said I, with a feeling of indignation, which I could hardly suppress; no, sir, I wish only three; return me the rest; poor men cannot spare so much at a time.\*

\* It is probable, from this passage, that the price was six francs for six masses.—Ed.

I left this priest, ashamed of having contributed to satisfy his avarice; and strongly tempted to believe, that all that is given for religion is owing to a tissue of fables and impostures, to which avarice and the thirst of gold had given birth. I cannot tell you all the sad and painful reflections which I had during the rest of the day. I was overwhelmed with them and saw the night arrive with pleasure, hoping to find relief in sleep.

I went to bed; but vainly endeavored to sleep. Constantly agitated by what had so disgusted me, a thousand thoughts succeeded each other in my mind. I knew that all, which the priests teach and practise in the different parts of worship, they pretended that God had prescribed in his word; and that this word of God, in which I then had the misfortune not to believe, was contained in the Old and New Testament.

Although in reality, I believed neither in purgatory nor in the Holy Bible, considered as the word of God, I nevertheless conceived the wish, and fixed upon the design, of seeking to discover whether this doctrine, so lucrative, was founded on the Gospel, and how it was there established. Recollecting at that moment, that I had on the chimney piece of my room a New Testament, which I had used to learn to read, and which I had not opened since I was nine or ten years old, I jumped out of bed immediately and dressed myself, resolved to begin my researches on purgatory.

Having this object alone in view, I read the four Gospels, the book of Acts, the Epistles and the Apocalypse, without directing my attention to anything, but what might establish or contradict the doctrine which I sought. The reading of the whole New Testament, which I did without interruption, except to take my meals, so desirous was I to resolve my doubts; this reading proved to me that the doctrine of purgatory was not in the Gospel, and must have been taken from another source.

In short, my dear children, I did not find a single passage which spoke of it, directly or indirectly; on the contrary, I was struck with many passages, which established an opposite doctrine.

Thus I read, Matt. xxv. 46. "The wicked shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal;" which absolutely contradicts the idea of any intermediate state between hell and heaven.

I read the song of Simeon, Luke ii. 29, 30, from which it appears clearly, that this good old man did not think that he must stop on the road to heaven, and that he must endure any purging fire before arriving there, for he said, holding the infant Jesus in his arms: "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation."

(To be continued.)

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#### NOTICES.

THE reader of the introductory article of this work, and of the Review which follows it, cannot but observe the striking coincidence between the Prospectus of the Evangelical Church Journal and that of the Spirit of the Pilgrims. This coincidence is so remarkable, that it will be supposed, that some hints at least had been taken from our brethren at Berlin. What is said, in both documents, of the reasons for a new magazine, the necessity of controversy, the undesirableness of personalities, the temper to be cultivated, &c. would seem to indicate some dependence of the one upon the other. The intelligent reader, who looks critically at this matter, will be surprised at the declaration, which we make solemnly, that the writer of the introductory article had not seen, till after that article was in type and had received the last correction, a syllable of the Prospectus of the Evangelical Church Journal; nor had he learned, in any manner whatever, a word of what it contained. The writer of the Review, in like manner, did not know anything of the introductory article, till both pieces were in type; nor has he yet seen but a very small part of it.

These facts will prove to every candid mind, that there was need of a truly evangelical magazine at Berlin, and at Boston; that these works were commenced from a sacred regard to the cause of Christ, and not from sectarian motives; and that, in both cases, there are strong inducements, and great encouragements, to persevere in these responsible undertakings.

In our next number may be expected a long article on *the rights of churches*, involving the question whether, according to some late legal adjudications, the churches, which our fathers founded, were either non-entities, or, perhaps, a different name for towns and parishes; or whether they were, as we assert them to have been, independent, well defined bodies, perfectly known in law.



THE

# SPIRIT OF THE PILGRIMS.

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## COMMUNICATIONS.

### THE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCHES OF MASSACHUSETTS.

THE Congregational churches of Massachusetts were intended to be formed after the model of the first Christian churches, and in all the late discussions respecting them, they have been compared with those of the primitive age. For this reason, it may be necessary to preface the remarks which follow, with some account of the apostolical churches.

I. There were churches in the days of the apostles, *distinct from congregations*, or from the whole number who often attended the worshipping assemblies of Christians. This is evident,

1. From the account given of the manner in which the primitive churches were gathered. From the vast congregation, assembled on the day of Pentecost, three thousand were *separated* and *added to the Lord*.—The preaching of Philip at Samaria excited much attention, and drew a great congregation after him, out of which, in due time, a church was gathered, of those who believed and were baptized. (Acts viii. 12.) Paul preached at Corinth, and collected a congregation, some considerable time before he gathered a church. (see Acts xviii. 1—8.) And so at Ephesus, when many of his congregation “were hardened, and believed not, but spake evil of that way before the multitude, he departed from them, and *separated the disciples*.” (Acts xix. 9.)

2. From the directions of the apostle to the Corinthians on the subject of *speaking with tongues*, we learn that numbers were accustomed to frequent their assemblies, who were not of the church. “If all speak with tongues, and there come in those that are unlearned, or *unbelievers*, will they not say that ye are mad?” (1 Cor. xiv. 23.)

3. It is evident, from the *vast numbers who were added to the primitive churches*, that unbelievers must have attended frequently, on the ordinary means of grace. For if such characters did not

attend, how were they enlightened and convinced; how were they brought to renounce their errors, and embrace the truth; and how can it be accounted for, that the primitive churches so rapidly increased? There must frequently have been persons, in the assemblies of the early Christians, in all the different stages between open idolatry and a public and open profession of Christianity; just as such are found now, in the congregations of missionaries, at many of the stations among the heathen.

4. The presence of unbelievers in the first Christian assemblies may be inferred from the general *object of preaching*, and from the *manner* in which the apostles preached. The object of preaching the Gospel is not merely to edify and comfort Christians, and benefit those who are already of the church;—a farther object is, to instruct, convince, and convert the *ungodly*. This farther object the apostles well understood, and they preached accordingly. Let any one examine the different specimens and accounts which are left of their preaching, and he will be satisfied that they often had in view those whom they did not regard as fellow-disciples. They went forth and preached every where that men should *repent*—and besought their hearers to become *reconciled* to God. But why preach after this manner, if their worshipping assemblies were mere church-meetings, and if no distinction between church and congregation was admitted?

5. The fact of this distinction is demonstrably certain from the practice of *excommunication*. That provision is made in the New Testament for the exclusion of unworthy members from the church, and that such were, in primitive times, excluded, will not be doubted.\* But if there was then no distinction between church and congregation, what did this act of exclusion import? What was *done* to the excommunicated person? He surely was not debarred from attending public worship, and from ever appearing more in a Christian assembly. He was not excluded from these *ordinary* means of grace—a privilege granted, at all times, to heathens and publicans,—to the vilest and the worst of men. He still might be present in the worshipping assembly of Christians; but he was separated from the communion and privileges of the *church*.

Indeed the church, in the primitive age, was a distinct and well defined company. The public teachers knew who their members were, knew their names, and knew their number. The number of names, immediately after the resurrection of Christ, was *an hundred and twenty*. On the day of Pentecost, *three thousand* more were added. And shortly after, the church at Jerusalem had increased to *five thousand*. So accurately did the apostles

\* Chief Justice Parker admits the practice of *excommunication* in the primitive church. For he says, "All the people were present at *church censures*—and none were restored without the knowledge and consent of the whole diocese."

keep the number of their members, and mark the distinction between the church and the world.

II. We have evidence, not only of a distinction, in primitive times, between the church and congregation, but of the *ground* on which the distinction was made. This was, *evidence of faith*, or a visible, credible *profession of piety*. It was "those who gladly received the word," and "who continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine, and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers;" those, in short, who *gave evidence of piety*, who were baptized and received into the church, on the day of Pentecost. Immediately after, we read that "the Lord added to the church daily *such as should be saved*"—such as possessed, and appeared to possess, that *piety* which is the condition of salvation. It was not till the Samaritans "*believed Philip, preaching the things concerning the kingdom of Christ,*" and in this way furnished evidence of *piety*, that they were baptized, and admitted to the church. When the eunuch expressed a desire for baptism, Philip replied to him, "If thou *believest with all thine heart*, thou mayest. And the eunuch answered and said, "*I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.*" The Holy Ghost fell on the family of Cornelius, and thus satisfied Peter of their *piety*, before he would receive them to the church, and administer to them the ordinances of the Gospel. Ananias objected to baptizing Paul, till a voice from heaven assured him of the *piety* of this former persecutor. "He is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel." After the baptism of Lydia and her household, she said to Paul and his company, "If ye have *judged me to be faithful to the Lord*, come into my house and abide there." The Epistles to the churches all proceed upon the supposition that the members were *saints*, at least by profession. "*Holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling*"—"Beloved of God, called to be saints"—"To the *saints and faithful brethren in Christ*"—this is the style in which the apostles addressed the primitive churches, necessarily implying, that all their members were *professedly pious*.

Persons destitute of piety sometimes gained admission to the apostolical churches; but the terms in which they are spoken of shew that they came in by deceit, and had no right there. They are said to "have *crept in, unawares*." (Jude 4.) Barriers were erected to keep the irreligious out; but, by deception or stealth, some of this character had "*crept in, unawares*."

It has been previously shewn, that there was a wide distinction in the primitive age, between the church, and the congregation or world; and we here see the *ground* of this distinction. It was *visible piety*. Those who appeared and professed to be truly pious, and who desired admission to the churches, were by con-

sent of the brethren admitted ; but those who failed to exhibit good evidence of piety, were rejected.

III. The church, in the primitive age, was a *religious society*, or a *voluntary association* of persons for religious purposes. Its members were *united* by some agreement or covenant, expressed or implied, that they would regard the instructions and precepts of Christ, and observe the ordinances of his religion. They "first gave their own selves to the Lord, and to one another by the will of God." Hence the primitive church is spoken of, as a *body*, a *building*, a *household*, a *commonwealth*—terms implying a definite and most intimate union. Tertullian describes the church in his day, as "a body united for the conscientious performance of religious duties, by an *agreement in discipline*, and a *covenant of hope*."\*

The primitive churches, constituted in this way, had all the *powers* and *rights* pertaining to other voluntary associations. They had the power of *deliberating*, and *acting* upon any subject that might properly come before them. They had the power of *admitting* and *excluding* members. They had the power of *choosing their own officers* ; and this power they exercised even in the presence of the apostles. (Acts i. 23. vi. 3—5.) They also had the power, and they exercised it, of *holding* and *managing their own property*. The apostle, speaking of widows, says, "If any who believe, have widows, let them relieve them, and let not the church be charged ;"—a form of expression which implies that the church had funds, which it disposed of at discretion. (1 Tim. v. 16.) The church at Jerusalem, was, early, in the possession of property to a considerable amount. It held the property of all its members. For "as many among them, as were possessors of lands, or houses, sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold, and laid them down at the apostles' feet." The church had the possession and control of this property ; and not even a heathen government would interfere to take it from them.

We now pass to a consideration of the *Congregational churches of Massachusetts*, which were intended to be formed after the model of the apostles. On these we remark,

I. There have been churches in Massachusetts, distinct from towns, parishes, or any other mere civil incorporations, from the first settlement of the country.—The early existence of Congregational churches in Massachusetts is not denied ; but it is pretended, on no less authority than that of the Supreme Judges of the Commonwealth, that, at the first, "there was no very familiar distinction between the church, and the whole assembly of Christians in the town." Almost, if not quite all, the adult inhabitants were church members ;" and there was "little practical distinction be-

\*  $\Delta$ pol. ad Gen. cap. xxxix.

tween church and congregation, or parish, or society, for several years after our ancestors came here.\*

In reply to this, let it be observed, there is no evidence that nearly all the first settlers of this country were members of the church. Doubtless, people were then more generally members than they now are, or perhaps have been, at any period since. But all were not members, and, in some places, not even a majority were such. The company who commenced the Massachusetts settlement, consisted of three hundred and fifty persons. From these, the first church in the colony was gathered, after their landing, in Salem, and numbered only *thirty communicants*;—leaving three hundred and twenty who were not of the church.† The church in Boston commenced with but *four members*.‡ The church in Newtown, (now Cambridge) consisted at the first, of only *eight members*.|| Thomas Lichford, “a discontented attorney,” who visited this country in 1637, and returned much dissatisfied with his reception and treatment, says, “*Most of the persons at New England are not admitted of their church, and therefore are not freemen.*”§ Doubtless some allowance is to be made in receiving the testimony of this man; but in 1646, the number of those not connected with the churches in Massachusetts and Plymouth was so great, that they petitioned the courts of both colonies, and afterwards the British Parliament, praying, as they say, in behalf of “*thousands,*” that the disabilities under which they labored, might be removed.¶ The testimonies here cited are sufficient to shew, that there were many in Massachusetts from the first, who were not connected with the churches.

But supposing this were not the case—supposing all, or nearly all the early settlers were members of the church; how does this prove that they did not distinguish between church and town, or between their ecclesiastical and civil capabilities and rights. For a church and a town are entirely *distinct* bodies—as distinct almost as heaven and earth—even though they may include precisely the same individuals. They are distinct in their *nature* and *constitution*. The one is a civil body; the other an ecclesiastical body. The one is formed for the better enjoying of civil privileges and rights; the other, for the better performing of religious duties. The one looks directly to the affairs of this world; the other, to things pertaining to the life to come. This radical distinction between their civil and ecclesiastical state was well understood by our pious ancestors. Their charter constituted them “a body corporate and politic;” their covenant with God and with one another, constituted such of them as consented to it, an ecclesiastical community. The one they derived from their temporal

\* Mass. Tern Reports, V. XVI. pp. 498, 514.

† Neal, V. II. pp. 229, 230.

‡ Morton's Memorial, p. 160.

|| Winthrop, V. I. p. 130.

§ Hutchinson, V. I. pp. 26, 451.

¶ *ibid.* pp. 145—149.



sovereign; the other from the King of heaven. When they assembled in town meeting, they acted in their civil capacity; but when in church meeting, in an ecclesiastical capacity. Their civil officers, governors, assistants, &c. were not chosen in a meeting of the church; nor were their church officers chosen in a meeting of the town. Their colonial laws were not church regulations; nor were their church regulations the laws of the land.—To be sure, owing to their strictly and fervently religious character, our ancestors were wont to carry religion, more or less, into all their business and concerns. They endeavored to act every where under its influence, and with a view to its interests. Still, they understood the distinction between church and state, and they maintained it broad and palpable. If any doubt this, let them read the seventeenth chapter of the Cambridge Platform, in which the different powers of the church and of the magistrate are perhaps as clearly defined, as they have ever been since.

In opposition to the doctrine, that, in the early settlement of Massachusetts, there was no practical distinction between church and town, but all who *inhabited within the same parochial limits*, and *assembled for worship in the same place*, were regarded as members of the same church, we have the most decisive testimony, from ecclesiastical writers of that age.

NORTON, who emigrated in 1635, and was settled first at Ipswich, and afterwards at Boston.—“The form of a church is constituted, *not by cohabitation, or by meeting in the same place for public worship*; because Turks, and Papists, and heretics may inhabit the parish, and meet in the same place of worship; not by a profession without a covenant; not by baptism;—therefore *by covenant.*”\*

HOOKE, who emigrated in 1633, and was settled first at Newtown, and afterwards in Connecticut.—“*Parish precincts, or the abode and dwelling within the bounds and liberties of such a place, cannot give a man a right, or make him matter fit for a visible church.* If parish precincts should have a right to church fellowship, then Atheists, Papists, Turks, and profane ones, who are enemies to the truth and church, yea, men of strange nations and language, who neither know, nor be able to do, the duties of church members, should be fit matter for a church, because they have abode in such places.”†

DAVENPORT, who emigrated in 1637, and was settled first at New Haven, and afterwards at Boston.—“This is not sufficient to make one a visible member of this or that church, that he is joined to it in hearty affection, or in a neighborhood of habitation, or in an ordinary hearing of the word preached among them.”‡

\* Responsio, p. 22.

† Survey of Chh. Discipline, pp. 13, 14.

‡ Power of Cong. Churches, p. 28.

CAMBRIDGE PLATFORM, adopted in 1648. That which constitutes a church is—"not cohabitation. Atheists and Infidels may dwell together with believers."\*

Farther evidence will be adduced in support of the point here under consideration, by shewing,

II. That the Congregational churches of Massachusetts consisted, at the first, of such, and only such, as made an *open profession of their faith*, and *entered into a solemn covenant* with God and with one another, to obey the precepts, and observe the ordinances of the Christian religion.

In this way were constituted the Independent or Congregational churches of England and Holland, from which those of Massachusetts originated. The church of the celebrated Mr. Robinson of Leyden, was formed in the North of England, in 1602. The members "entered into *covenant to walk with God*, and *one with another*, in the enjoyment of his ordinances, according to the primitive pattern in the word of God."†—The first proper Congregational church in England was formed by a Mr. Jacob, a disciple and particular friend of Robinson, in 1616. The members, standing together, joined hands, and *solemnly covenanted with each other, in the presence of Almighty God*."—"It was a practice of the Independents," says the editor of Neal, "at the *first formation* of their churches, to *sign an agreement or covenant*, which they entered on their church books."‡

That this was the way in which the churches of Massachusetts were originally constituted, we offer the following decisive testimony.

COTTON, who emigrated in 1633, and was settled in Boston.—"The church of God is a mystical body, whereof Christ is the head, and the members are *saints, called out of the world, and united together by holy covenant*. Such, and such only, are lawfully received as members, who do, before the Lord and his people, *profess their repentance and faith in Christ*, and subjection to him in his ordinances."||

NORTON. "A particular church is a meeting of the faithful, united by a *visible covenant*, for maintaining the faith and ordinances of the Gospel."§

DAVENPORT. "It is the will and appointment of Christ our Lord, that his churches, under the New Testament, be constituted by the *public and mutual covenanting of the saints* with one another, and with the Lord."¶

CAMBRIDGE PLATFORM. "A Congregational church, is, by the institution of Christ, a part of the visible church militant, consisting of a company of *saints* by calling, united into one body by a

\* Chap. iv.

† Morton's Memorial, p. 17.

‡ Neal, Vol. II. p. 126. and Vol. IV. p. 216.

|| Cotton on Holiness, p. 1.

§ Responsio, p. 22.

¶ Power of Cong. Churches, p. 22.

*holy covenant*, for the public worship of God, and the mutual edification of one another in the fellowship of the Gospel.”\*

DR. INCREASE MATHER, son of Richard Mather, who emigrated in 1635. “A particular church, as to the matter of it, ought to consist of such as are, in the judgment of rational charity, *saints and faithful brethren in Christ*. The form of a church is a *covenant*, or agreement to walk together in the observation of all the ordinances of the Lord Jesus Christ.”†

If farther evidence were necessary, as to the manner in which the first Congregational churches in Massachusetts were constituted, we might cite hundreds of church covenants, to which all who became members expressed their assent. The following is from the covenant of the oldest church in the colony, drawn up by Mr. Higginson the teacher, in 1629, and *literally subscribed* by all the members. “We covenant with our Lord, and one with another. We bind ourselves, in the presence of God, to walk together in all his ways, according as he is pleased to reveal himself to us in his blessed word of truth. We avouch the Lord to be our God, and ourselves to be his people, in the truth and simplicity of our spirits.”‡

The following is from the covenant of the original church of Christ in Boston, organized Aug. 27, 1630. “In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, and in obedience to his holy will, and divine ordinance—we, whose names are underwritten, desiring to unite in one congregation or church, under the Lord Jesus Christ our Head, in such sort as becometh all those *whom he hath redeemed*, and *sanctified to himself*, do hereby, solemnly and religiously, as in his most holy presence, promise and bind ourselves to walk in all our ways according to the rule of the Gospel, and in all sincere conformity to his holy ordinances.”§

The church at Watertown was organized July 30, 1630, when “forty men *subscribed a church covenant*.”||

In 1635, a church was formed at Newtown, in place of the one which had previously removed, with Mr. Hooker, to Connecticut; when “such as were to join made *confession of their faith*, and declared *what work of grace the Lord had wrought in them*. Then the *covenant* was read, and *they all gave a solemn assent to it*.”¶

We might proceed with evidence of this sort, but we must think it unnecessary. It cannot and will not be disputed, that the original churches of Massachusetts consisted of such *only*, as made a *credible profession of their faith*, and entered into a *solemn covenant*, to obey the precepts and observe the ordinances of the Christian religion.—Between churches constituted in this way, and

\* Chap. ii.

† Disquisition concerning Councils, p. 6.

‡ Neal, V. II. p. 230.

§ Emerson's History, p. 11.

|| Winthrop, V. I. p. 94.

¶ *ibid.* p. 130.

those mere civil corporations denominated towns or parishes, who can believe there was no practical distinction? There must have been a distinction wide and visible, which every one understood and felt.

III. The Congregational churches of Massachusetts have been, from the first, *religious societies*, or *voluntary associations* for religious purposes, possessing, like all other associations for lawful purposes, the power and the right of self-organization, preservation, and government.\* They are, when regularly assembled, *deliberative* bodies, capable of moving and acting upon any subject that may properly come before them.

They have ever had the sole right of *admitting* and *excluding* members. This right is expressly recognized in the Platform (chap. x.) and, so far as we know, has not been disputed.

They have also the right of *choosing their own officers*;—by which we mean their pastors and deacons, and other officers if they shall think proper. This right is not only secured in the Platform (chap. viii.) but is most strictly and clearly a *natural* right. What voluntary association for any lawful purpose, was ever denied the right of electing its own officers?

The right here claimed for the churches has not been disputed, except in relation to the choice of *pastor*. The discussion before us may therefore be confined to the right of the churches to *choose their own pastors*.

And here let it be distinctly understood, that we assert no right, on the part of the church, to choose a minister for the parish. The parish, like the church, is a body of itself. Like the church, it has its own powers and rights; and among these, the right of choosing its own religious teacher. The church has no more right to choose a minister for the parish, than the parish has to choose a pastor for the church. The parish may, if it pleases, give up its right of choice to the church, saying virtually, "We will accept for our minister, him whom you shall please to choose as your pastor;" and then the church may exercise this right, without criminal usurpation. Or the church and parish, as it is for their mutual interest to operate together, may enter into a compact, expressed or implied, that they will have a *concurrent* choice;—the church agreeing not to establish a pastor, in opposition to the will of the parish; and the parish agreeing not to contract with a minister, in opposition to the will of the church. But, antecedently to any such compact, or relinquishment of right, the power of choice remains entire, in each body. The church cannot, without criminal usurpation, attempt imposing a minister on the parish; and neither can the parish, nor any other civil power, without criminal usurpation, attempt imposing a pastor on the church.

\* Chief Justice Parker describes a church as a "voluntary association," and "an organization for religious purposes." *Mass. Term Reports*, vol. xvi. pp. 425, 504.

We have spoken of the *right* of the churches to choose their own pastors. It should be insisted farther, as we pass along, that this is a right which they are not at liberty to relinquish,—a right which they are *bound* duly and faithfully to exercise. They are bound by the example of the apostolical churches, and by the institution of Christ himself. The Great Head of the churches has intelligibly signified his pleasure on this subject, and his pleasure they must regard. They cannot surrender the right of choosing their pastors, without betraying his cause; and no earthly power can wrest it from them, and be innocent.

With this exposition of the right and duty of the churches, in regard to the choice of pastor, we proceed to exhibit the manner in which this right has been exercised, from the first settlement of Massachusetts to the present time.

The Massachusetts colony commenced in 1629. Until 1641, a period of eleven or twelve years, no law is known to have passed on the subject, and Chief Justice Parker thinks, “without doubt, the *whole assembly* were considered the church,” and were entitled to vote in the choice of pastor.\*—We have shewn already, that the whole assembly, at this period was *not* considered the church; but the church was a distinct and well defined body, whose members had made a public profession of their faith, and entered into solemn covenant with God. It may now be shewn conclusively, that the *churches*, at this early period, *chose their own pastors*.

1. This, as we have seen, was their *natural right*, and their *bounden duty*,—a right and a duty which they well understood, and agreeably to which it is to be presumed they practised, unless we have positive evidence to the contrary.

2. It was the invariable practice of the Congregational churches in *England*, to choose their own pastors. After the formation of the first Congregational church in England, in 1616, in the manner already pointed out, “Mr. Jacob was chosen pastor, by the *suffrage of the brotherhood*, and others were appointed to the office of deacons.”† In the Savoy Confession, framed a few years after the settlement of this country, but expressive of the practice of the Congregational churches in England from their first organization, it is stated expressly that the church “has full power, within itself, to *elect* and ordain all church officers;”—that “pastors, teachers, and elders are to be *elected by the suffrage of the church*;”—and that ordination “conveys no official power, without a previous *election of the church*.”‡

3. We have farther evidence of the practice of the churches, during the period in question, from the *Cambridge Platform*. This was framed only nineteen years from the commencement of the colony; and most of the earliest ministers, such as Wilson,

\* Mass. Term Reports, vol. xvi. p. 514.    † Neal, vol. ii. p. 126.    ‡ Ibid. vol. vi. p. 216.



Cotton, and Norton of Boston, Elliot of Roxbury, Shepard of Cambridge, and Mather of Dorchester, were members of the Synod who framed it. They drew the Platform, says Gov. Winthrop, "according to the *general practice of the churches*,"\* with which they could not but be well acquainted. And yet they say, "officers are to be *called by the churches* whereunto they are to minister." And again; "a church, being free, cannot become subject to any, but by a *free election*." And again; "the churches have power to choose their officers and ministers."†

4. But we have stronger evidence even than this. We have the practice of the very first churches which were instituted in the colony. After the formation of the church in Salem, in 1629, the brethren "*chose* Mr. Skelton their pastor, Mr. Higginson their teacher, and Mr. Houghton their ruling elder."‡ The first church in Boston, instituted in 1630, not only exercised, from the first, the right of *choosing its pastor*, but for almost an hundred years, "was alone concerned in fixing the minister's salary, and in making all pecuniary appropriations."|| "In the year 1632, Mr. Thomas Weld was prevailed with, *by the importunity of the Roxbury church*, to accept of a pastor's office among them."§ After a church had been formed at Newtown, in 1635, the members "*chose* Mr. Shepard for their pastor."¶ In 1636, Mr. Samuel Whiting "removed unto Lynn, the *church there inviting him to be their pastor*."\*\* In 1637, "the *church* at Concord *chose* Mr. Buckley teacher, and Mr. Jones pastor."†† In 1638, Rev. Ezekiel Rogers came into the colony with a church, and settled at Rowley. Here the brethren "*renewed their church covenant, and their call of Mr. Rogers to the office of pastor*, according to the *course of other churches*."‡‡ In 1639, "the *church* of Dorchester, not contenting themselves with a single officer in the ministry of their church, *invited one Mr. Burr*, and *gave him a call to office*."§§

It would be easy to multiply instances such as these. Indeed we may safely challenge any one, versed in the early history of Massachusetts, to produce an instance, in which persons residing here, who were not in covenant, were called a *church*, or in which any person was constituted the pastor of a church, but by the *free election of the brethren*.

The period, to which the preceding inquiry has been limited, is only the eleven or twelve first years of the colony; as this is the only period concerning which there has been, or can be the least dispute. In 1641, it was by law determined, that "every church

\* Hist. of N. Eng. vol. ii. p. 231.

† Chap. viii.

‡ Neal, vol. ii. p. 231.

|| Emerson's History of the first church in Boston.

§ Hubbard's Hist. p. 183.

¶ Winthrop, vol. i. p. 130.

\*\* Mather, vol. i. p. 455.

†† Winthrop, vol. i. p. 217.

‡‡ Ibid. p. 279.

§§ Hubbard's Hist. p. 277.

hath free liberty of *election and ordination of all her officers* ;” and “of admission, recommendation, dismissal, and expulsion of officers or members, according to the rules of God’s word.” In 1668, this law was re-enacted, with important additions. The church was explained to mean “such only as are in *full communion* ;” and power was expressly given to the church, of choosing, not only a pastor for itself, but a minister for the town.\*

In 1692, soon after the erection of the colonies into one province by the charter of king William, it was enacted, that “every minister, being a person of good conversation, able, learned, and orthodox, that shall be chosen by the major part of the inhabitants of any *town*, at a town meeting duly warned for that purpose, shall be the minister of such town, and the whole town shall be obliged to pay towards his settlement and maintenance.”†—This law is usually represented as depriving the church of its right in the choice of a pastor. But the law itself says nothing of this, and we do not see on what the inference is founded. The subject of the law is, not the church and its pastor, but the town and its minister. And what is taken from the church is, not, as we understand it, the right of choosing its own pastor, but that of choosing a minister for the town.

The law, however, was not sufficiently explicit, and in many places could not be enforced. Accordingly it was repealed the next year, and in place thereof it was enacted, “that each respective gathered *church*, in any town or place, being in want of a minister, shall have power, according to the directions given in the word of God, to *choose their own minister* ; and the major part of such inhabitants as do there usually attend on the public worship of God, and are by law duly qualified for voting in town affairs, *concurring with the church’s act*, and the persons thus elected and approved accepting thereof, and settling with them, shall be their minister,” &c.‡ In addition to this, it was provided, in 1695, “that when at any time a church shall make choice of a minister, and the inhabitants of the town or precinct shall deny their approbation of the church’s choice, the church may call in the help of an ecclesiastical council ; and in case the council shall approve the election of the church, such minister, accepting the choice, and settling with them, shall be the minister of the town or precinct ; but if the council shall not approve, the church shall proceed to the election of another minister.”§

Here the subject rested, until the adoption of the Constitution, in 1780 ; a period of eighty-five years. During all this while, the church continued to choose its own pastor, and the town or parish its own minister ; and the choice falling ultimately, in almost every case, upon the same person, the churches had rest, and the

\* Colony Laws, pp. 101, 104.

† Province Laws, p. 255.

‡ Ibid.

§ Ibid. p. 286.

interests of religion were secured and promoted. But one instance has been mentioned, or is recollected, in this long course of years, in which church and parish so seriously disagreed respecting the choice of a minister, that a separation was the result. This occurred at Middleborough in 1744. Of the particulars concerning this case, we are not informed; but the fact, that it stands alone in the books of those who feel interested to disparage the state of our ecclesiastical affairs previous to the adoption of the Constitution, is evidence strong of the general harmony which at that period prevailed.

In the third article of the bill of rights prefixed to the Constitution of Massachusetts, it is provided, "that the several *towns, parishes, precincts, and other bodies politic, or religious societies*, shall at all times, have the *exclusive right of electing their public teachers*, and of contracting with them for their support and maintenance."

This language has been thought by some to take from the church the right of electing its own pastor, and to place it, in this respect, entirely within the power of the parish. But to this conclusion we can by no means subscribe. We are unwilling to charge those venerable men, who framed the Constitution of this Commonwealth, with so great and needless an innovation upon the immemorial usages of the country; and still more, with so gross impropriety and injustice, as the interpretation above given would imply. Would they, by a single clause, take from perhaps five hundred churches, a right which had been guaranteed to them by immemorial usage, by long established laws, and (as they supposed) by Christ himself? Would they take from five hundred associations of persons for the most solemn purposes of religion, a right which is claimed by all voluntary associations—the right of *electing their own officers*, and oblige them to receive as officers, as pastors, who should preside in their meetings, administer their ordinances, and break to them the bread of life, those whom other and foreign bodies, mere civil corporations, should please to set over them, or force upon them? The supposition cannot be admitted; and we desire to be thankful that it need not be.

We shall endeavor to shew, first, that the passage above quoted from the Constitution is *not inconsistent* with the right of the churches to choose their own pastors; and, second, that it *secures to them this right*.

1. It is *not inconsistent* with the exercise of this right.—If it is inconsistent with it, and was intended and known to be, at the time of its adoption, how can it be accounted for that its adoption was not strenuously *opposed by the churches*. Why did they acquiesce in it? How could they, indeed, without surrendering their dearest natural rights, abandoning all previous usage, reproaching the memory of their fathers, violating acknowledged duty,

and betraying the cause of their Lord and Master? And yet they did acquiesce, so far as we know, without a murmur. And the fact that they did, is evidence of the *strongest kind*, that no apprehensions were then entertained that so dear a right as that of *choosing their pastors* was about to be wrested from them.

That the part of the Constitution above quoted is not inconsistent with the rights of the churches, is evident from the *very face of it*. The Constitution says "that towns parishes, precincts, &c. shall have at all times the exclusive right of electing their public teachers," &c. And so say we. It is their natural right, and they ought to have it. The church has no right to impose a religious teacher, an officer, upon the town or parish, against its will. Let the parish have, what the Constitution gives it, the exclusive right of choosing its own religious teacher.—But is the exercise of this right on the part of the parish at all inconsistent with the rights of the church? We think not. The parish has a right, by the Constitution, to choose a minister for itself; but no right to choose a pastor for the church. The church is quite another and distinct body—distinct in *nature* as well as fact; and the right of one body to choose officers for itself, conveys no right to choose officers for another body. The right of the parish to choose and contract with an officer for its own benefit, conveys no right or power to constitute an ecclesiastical officer, and establish him over the church.

But we have *farther* evidence that the Constitution is not inconsistent with the right of the church to elect its own pastor. The truth is, the churches generally have exercised this right, ever since the adoption of the Constitution; and what is more, they have done it by the *advice and recommendation* of the highest judicial authority in the State. Says the Hon. Judge Sedgwick (in *Avery vs. Tyringham*) "the mode of settling ministers has continued in every respect the *same*, since the establishing of the Constitution, that it was before. The church call the minister; the town, at a legal meeting, concur in the invitation and vote the salary; and the minister, after solemn consideration, accepts the invitation," &c.\* Chief Justice Parsons, in the same case, speaking of these ancient usages, observes "They so manifestly tend to the preservation of good order, peace, and harmony among the people, in the exercise of their religious privileges, it may be presumed that a *departure from them will never be admitted* by any town, but in cases of necessity."† Chief Justice Parker, speaking on the same subject, says, "We agree with him" (C. J. Parsons) "in *estimating highly these ancient usages*, protected as the people are by the constitutional provision, and in *hoping that they may be observed in future*, as they have been in past times."‡—We have

\* Mass. Term Reports, vol. iii. pp. 171, 173. † Ibid. p. 180. ‡ Vol. xvi. p. 510.

here the testimony of our Supreme Judges, that, since the adoption of the Constitution, the churches have elected their own pastors, as they did previously; and what is of much more consequence, we have their *earnest recommendation* that the practice may continue. But would these high expositors and guardians of the Constitution recommend a practice which was *inconsistent* with the Constitution—*repugnant* to it—and which the Constitution was designed to abolish? It cannot and will not be believed. We infer therefore, conclusively—and we challenge any one to deny us the inference—that the Constitution of Massachusetts is *not inconsistent* with the right of the churches to elect their own pastors.—So far from this, we observe,

2. That the Constitution *secures to them this right*. The Constitution says, “that the several towns, parishes, precincts, and other *bodies politic*, or *religious societies*, shall, at all times, have the exclusive right,” &c. The only question is, can Congregational churches be fairly included among the public bodies here specified? We say they *can be* and *are*. They are not towns, or parishes, or precincts, we acknowledge; but they are “*bodies politic*,” and were so considered, at the time of the adoption of the Constitution. They are now, and were then, “*religious societies*.” Reserving the proof of the *corporate* existence and powers of the churches to be exhibited in another place, suffice it to observe here, that they are frequently spoken of, by our early ecclesiastical writers, as “*incorporate bodies*.” This is precisely the phrase which Mr. Wise, in several instances applies to them.\* They are called in the Platform “*political churches*.” (chap. iv.) The learned editor of Winthrop speaks of “each of our churches as a *body corporate*.”† In the law of 1754, which was re-enacted in 1786, but a few years after the adoption of the Constitution, churches are expressly denominated “*bodies politic*.”‡

And unquestionably they are “*religious societies*.” What shall we call a voluntary association of professedly religious persons for purely religious purposes, if not a *religious society*? Indeed, Chief Justice Parker admits, that churches, distinct from parishes, “may be *religious societies*, under the statute of 1811.”§—We speak here, let it be observed, merely of the *phraseology* which has been used on this subject; and we see (without going at present into the proof of the *actual corporate existence* of the churches) that they may be fairly included among these “*bodies politic or religious*”

\* See Vindication, &c. pp. 49, 89.

† Winthrop, vol. i. p. 95.

‡ Province Laws, p. 606. Perhaps it will be said, that by “*bodies politic*” in the statute, are intended, not churches, but the deacons of churches. But the statute, in the section referred to, is “limiting the income of *church grants*,” and provides, that the income to any one *such body politic*, shall not exceed three hundred pounds per annum.” The church then is here called a “*body politic*.” Indeed, if it is not so called, then the statute does not “limit the income of *church grants*,” but merely such as are made directly to the deacons.

§ Mass. Term Reports, vol. xvi. p. 505.



societies," to which the Constitution secures the "right of electing their public religious teachers, and" (if they please) "of contracting with them for their support and maintenance."\*\*

This right is secured to the churches, not only by the Constitution, but by *existing laws*. We refer particularly to the law of 1800, which provides, "that the respective *churches*, connected and associated in public worship with the several towns, parishes, precincts, &c. shall at all times have, use, exercise, and enjoy all their *accustomed privileges and liberties*, respecting divine worship, church order and discipline, not repugnant to the Constitution."—The churches, in 1800, had been accustomed to enjoy the "privilege" and the "liberty" of electing their own pastors. Hence, the statute secures to them the *continuance* of this privilege, unless it shall be found repugnant to the Constitution. But we have shewn, beyond all question, that the exercise of this privilege on the part of the churches, is not repugnant to the Constitution. Would our Supreme Judges, once and again, recommend the continuance of a practice which was repugnant to the Constitution? Can Chief Justice Parker be supposed to hold "a usage in high estimation," and to "hope it may be observed in future," which is repugnant to the Constitution of the Commonwealth?—The right of the churches to elect their own pastors is not then to be regarded as repugnant to the Constitution; and if not repugnant to it, then this right is *firmly secured to the churches*, by the statute to which we have referred.

It may be inquired here, whether, according to the exposition given of existing laws, any *alteration* has been made by the adoption of the Constitution. And we answer, an alteration in a single particular, has been made. The provision of the law of 1695, by which, in case of difference between church and parish, the church, with the advice and consent of an ecclesiastical council, might impose a minister on the parish, is annulled. Under the Constitution, the church has no such power as this; and we are quite willing it should be so. We ask no such power for the church, and if it remained, we should hope it might never be exercised. The church still retains the exclusive right to choose its own pastor, as the parish does to choose its own minister; and this is enough.

But it may be asked, what will be the effect, in churches and parishes "connected and associated in public worship," of giving to each the exclusive right of choosing its own religious teacher? And we answer, The effect will be according to circumstances. If, owing to radical differences of opinion, or to any other cause, the

\* We shall shew by and by, that the first churches in Massachusetts not only chose their pastors, but *contracted* with them, and assessed and collected money for their maintenance. The first church in Boston, it seems, continued this practice, for almost an hundred years. Many churches have the ability to do this now, and ought to have the *right*, if they please to exercise it. We are thankful that this right is secured to them by the Constitution.

choice of each cannot be made to fix upon the same person; then *they must separate*—as it is undoubtedly best they should. But if they *intend to remain united*; then care must be taken, that the eyes, the hearts, and the choice of each may ultimately rest upon the same individual. A spirit of conciliation and kindness must be cultivated, and each must endeavor (so far as duty will allow,) to meet the views and wishes of the other. When things are prepared for an event of so much interest, the church has a meeting by itself, and makes its choice. The parish also has a meeting by itself, freely chooses the same person, and contracts with him accordingly. After an acceptance of overtures, and ordination in the usual form, this person sustains a *twofold office or relation*. He is the pastor of the church, and the minister of the parish. As pastor of the church, he is to guide its devotions, administer its ordinances, and preside in all its meetings for business. As minister of the parish, he is to take the lead in its worshipping assembly, teach the doctrines and duties of religion, and perform customary parochial services. To a person sustaining this twofold office or relation, it not unfrequently happens, that one part of the connexion ceases, and not the other. His ecclesiastical connexion perhaps terminates, while his parochial contract and office remain. Or his contract with the parish terminates, while his connexion with the church remains. We know several clergymen in Massachusetts, who are now placed in one or the other of these situations.

But it may still be asked, whether no legal provision exists, in case the church and the parish do not choose the same person, for bringing the one to submit to the other. And here we are brought to a *new epoch* in the legal history of our churches, occasioned by some late decisions of the Supreme Court respecting them. Opinions were expressed, particularly in the case of Eliphalet Baker and another vs. Samuel Fales, (alias the celebrated Dedham case) which, much as we respect and honor the distinguished individual who pronounced them, we must think unsupported by reason, or the laws, and of fatal influence upon the liberties, if not the existence, of the churches. We reserve to another place a particular consideration of the opinions here referred to, and of the Report of this decision generally. At present, we shall merely *exhibit the views* of the Judges, so far as they bear upon the right of the churches to elect their own pastors.

When church and parish disagree in their choice of a religious teacher, an officer common to both; and neither body is disposed to yield; and the house of worship is the property of the parish; we cannot consistently complain, and we do not, that the church should be compelled to withdraw, and institute worship by itself. But this surely is all the sacrifice which the church, in such case, should be required to make. If its members are willing not only to leave the house of worship, but to abandon their interest in it

as members of the parish, and provide other accommodations for themselves; this is sacrifice enough. But our Judges have so interpreted the Constitution and laws, as to feel compelled to say, that this is not enough. The church, it is decided, *cannot withdraw*. It is indissolubly bound to the parish; and in no case of disagreement, however irreconcilable, or of oppression, however severe, can it disconnect itself. Its members may vote to withdraw, and may withdraw, in a majority of ten to one; but they withdraw only as individuals—they leave the *church* behind. Yea, if all go, and go by solemn vote, they do but commit ecclesiastical suicide; they extinguish the church, but cannot remove it. Hence, in case of disagreement between the church and parish, in regard to the settlement of a minister, there is now nothing left to the church, but to inflict violence upon itself, and perish by its own hands, or to receive a pastor, to preside in its meetings, administer its ordinances, and break to it the bread of life, whom it cannot love, approve, or choose, but whom the parish has placed over it, against its will. Now this, we are compelled to consider a hardship. We are compelled to regard it as unjust and cruel.

To the views of the Judges, as here exhibited (and it will appear that the account is not exaggerated) our objections will be offered before we close.

(To be continued.)

#### THOUGHTS ON REVIVALS OF RELIGION.

(Continued from p. 42.)

In continuation of my remarks, I would observe,

8. That the commencement of religion is not indicated by any exact order or method of divine manifestation.

The change which takes place, is a change in the affections. A change from selfishness to benevolence;—from sin to holiness; and from a supreme love to the creature, to a supreme love to God. This benevolence is, in its nature, that love which the law of God requires, and which, when perfect, is the fulfilling of the law. In its earliest existence, it is the generic principle of the Christian graces, every one of them being only love or holiness, diversified in its operations, and distinguished by other names, as it terminates in different objects. Thus, repentance is the sorrow which a holy mind feels for sin; and faith is the affectionate reliance of a sanctified heart, upon Christ; and resignation is a benevolent acquiescence in the divine will; and meekness is self-possession, and good will toward enemies, under circumstances of provocation; and brotherly love is the complacency which one Christian feels for another Christian. But if the question were urged, Which of

these Christian graces actually exists first in the soul? the answer must be, That on which the mind's eye is fixed, when the sacred principle of holy love commences its operation in the soul, and which, of course, will correspond in some degree with the kind of instruction which is given, and the particular points of the divine character and government, which have engaged the attention, and interested the feelings. If a man born blind, should be suddenly restored to sight, what external object would he see first? Undoubtedly, that which happened to be in the line of vision, when his eyes were first opened. In the same manner, when the eye of the understanding is first opened, that specific affection awakes first, which is first called for, by that divine object which is first presented to the mind. It may be repentance, or submission, or faith, or love to enemies, or brotherly love, or a spirit of prayer, as the object in the mind's eye shall call forth specific holy affection.

This account corresponds with the phenomena of conversion. Scarcely any two persons commence a spiritual existence with precisely the same views and affections. Nor is there anything more hopeless, than the attempt to reduce to method or order, the first movements of divine life in the soul; nor any fear of young Christians more unfounded, or more common, than that their experience may be deceptive, because, in the first religious exercises of other persons, they do not find the exact image and superscription of their own. The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit. There is, amidst indefinite circumstantial variety, a universal, general likeness: as the constituent parts of the human countenance are the same, though combined with all that difference of color and proportions, which constitutes the evidence of individuality.

9. The existence of religion does not imply the perceived existence at once, of all the Christian graces. The nature of the mind does not admit of it. The affections can exist only in the view of the proper objects of affection, presented to the heart, through the medium of the understanding. But the understanding can no more simultaneously, look at as many objects, as there are Christian graces, with such distinct contemplation as is indispensable to emotion, than the eye can pour its concentrated inspection many objects at the same time. The Christian graces *must*, therefore, be successive in their order, as the mind can only present and inspect in succession, their several objects. Besides, the coexistence of some religious affections, is, in their nature, incompatible. How can mourning for sin, and deep prostration of spirit, consist with the elevation and vivacity of joy, and gratitude, and praise. Some of the Christian graces, such as unconditional submission, and repentance for sin, may exist without any appre-

hension of pardon and personal safety; while to gratitude and praise for pardon and sanctification, *hope* is indispensable. And yet it is no uncommon thing for the young Christian to sit down, and search his heart, as with a candle, to see if he can find in it at once, every one of the Christian graces; and, in default of such a discovery, to feel alarmed and disquieted, lest his hope should be vain.

10. Nor does the existence of religion enable the Christian to call up at bidding, for his inspection, any particular Christian grace. For the affections do not move at the word of command. They can be produced only by mental attention, bestowed upon the objects of the affections. It is while we muse, that the fire burns. Nothing is more sure to extinguish religious affection, than to make upon the heart a direct demand for it. The heart cannot feel, but as the objects of affection are presented. But, while the understanding is employed in categorical demands of love, repentance, and faith, and in watching and waiting to see if the heart obeys; it is turned off from the glorious objects which can alone inspire affection, and the poor heart becomes motionless and dead, during the cold chills and darkness of the disastrous eclipse. To demand of the heart feeling, that we may inspect and analyze it at pleasure, is, therefore, the most preposterous demand that could be made; and of course, it is always, and justly refused. And yet, there are multitudes, who thus torture their hearts, with the demand for religious affections, while the only possible means by which the heart can act, are withheld. For the eye may as well be expected to see, in the absence of all objects of vision, as the heart to feel, in the absence of all the proper objects of religious affection.

The proper way to examine the heart, is, to watch its movements while in action, and almost unsuspecting of the inspection. And the way to call forth the affections, is to turn the mental eye upon God, his works and word; upon Jesus Christ, his glorious character, his love, his compassion, his sufficiency and willingness to save.—And another way to make a holy heart beat perceptibly, is, **BY VIGOROUS ACTION FOR GOD.** Many Christians, who doubt and fear concerning the existence of spiritual life in their souls, sit down with heavy heart and downcast eye, to feel their own feeble pulse; and while they sit inactive, and almost breathless, to catch the slow and feeble stroke, it always will be feeble; for vigorous action is as indispensable to a vigorous spiritual life, as it is in the animal system, to a vigorous tone. If a man were doubtful whether his vital organs were sound, how would he ascertain the fact? Let him not sit down, to watch, with hesitation and fear, the throbbings of the vital organ; but rather do with his might what his hand findeth to do, and action itself will bring its own evidence. The powerful throbbing of the great organ of life will soon convince him that the central energies are in order,



by the blush of health, and muscular tone which their powerful action will send through the system. In like manner, let feeble, downcast, doubting Christians shake off their sloth, and rouse up to action. Let them read, and pray, and act for God with all their might, and the spiritual pulsation will rise, and a spiritual vigor will diffuse itself through the soul.—If Christians would act for God with more decision, they would not need a microscope to make their graces visible.

11. It is not to be anticipated, as the result of a saving conversion, that one unvarying state of enjoyment shall mark the Christian course.

This, however, until experience has corrected the mistake, is almost ever the expectation. But, commonly, the first manifestations of divine things, and the first exercises of pure joy are followed by darkness. The morning without clouds, which the happy soul thought would surely shine more and more unto the perfect day, is suddenly overcast, and all his new born hopes blasted. The Christian life is, however, only the alternation of conflict and victory, of hope and fear, of light and darkness. The great principle of holiness gains strength, on the whole, through every vicissitude; but nothing is more changeable than a Christian's frame. From the state of his health, of the atmosphere, of worldly cares, as well as from bodily fatigue, his affections are liable to frequent variations;—as they are, also, from the relative degrees of his fidelity in keeping his heart: to which must be added, the unavoidable limitation of high emotion to short seasons, from the utter incapacity of the nervous system to endure protracted excitement, without intervals of exhausted sensibility. And yet, many Christians keep themselves, through fear of death, all their lifetime subject to bondage, because they cannot always be on the mount. "Oh, could we but feel constantly, as we feel at times, we could not doubt. But, alas! how transient are these delightful frames; and by what seasons of darkness and stupidity are they followed." Yes, and until we are blessed with spiritual bodies, high pleasurable emotion cannot but exhaust feeling, and induce insensibility—misnamed stupidity. Let young Christians remember, then, that changing frames are the condition of our terrestrial existence, of our alliance with bodies; and while they dread that stupidity which is the result of inattention, forbear to tax themselves with an amount, and constancy of feeling, which the very laws of our being forbid: and as they do not tremble every time the sun hides his face behind a cloud, let them not be filled with amazement and fear at every variation of spiritual light, and every fluctuation of religious affection. Let them remember, that justification is by *faith*, and not by *works*; and that salvation is of *grace*, through the *merit of Christ*, and not through the *merit of comfortable frames*; and that our strength and safety are in the *immutability of Christ*, and not in our own ever varying feelings.

To the Editor of the Christian Examiner.

SIR,

This second letter I write, to apprise you and the reviewer of what you ought to have known long since, viz. that the doctrine, that infants are damned, has never been the received doctrine of the churches denominated Calvinistic.

I might content myself, simply, with an analysis of the quotations which the reviewer has produced in evidence against us; for, however ignorant of Calvinism, and negligent of inquiry, I may be, HE, doubtless, has "ransacked public libraries, importuned his friends, and taken *whatever means*," to obtain from Calvinistic authors, evidence of the doctrine of infant damnation. He has, also, from his most ample materials, made his own selections, and given from Calvin, he thinks, the "strongest quotations." It might suffice, therefore, in order to repel the charge, to show that his proofs are nugatory. But, as Calvinism has so long been misrepresented on this point, and the memory of the illustrious dead blackened with calumny, I choose to take a wider range, and show, that in every age, the most authentic documents stamp falsehood upon the charge so long repeated, that Calvinists believe and teach the damnation of infants;—that it is made and propagated, not only without evidence, but against evidence; and is, probably, an instance unparalleled, of a slander so long sustained in the face of indubitable evidence to the contrary.

I have another motive for this course. As evangelical light returns to the nations, and the malignity of papal and heretical opposition subsides, the Reformers, those suns of other days, to whom the world owes its emancipation from civil and religious despotism, are destined, I doubt not, to rise again, and to receive from grateful millions, that undivided homage which their intellectual greatness, their illustrious piety, and sublime moral daring in the cause of God and man, so eminently deserve. The Sun of righteousness, as he rises, will dry up the marshes and miry places, and drive away the dark vapors, and put to silence the croaking which for ages had been without intermission.

The proper evidence of the sentiments of a denomination of Christians is to be sought in their public formularies of doctrine, and in their most approved writers; and if, in neither the one nor the other, an odious sentiment ascribed to them can be found, the allegation, of course, is false.

That the Calvinistic creeds from the Reformation to this day teach no such doctrine as that infants are damned, is a matter of perfect notoriety. I do not believe the reviewer can find a Calvinistic creed, the work of any age, which teaches the doctrine of

infant damnation, or any doctrine which either directly or remotely implies it. I have before me, A HARMONY OF THE CONFESSIONS OF THE FAITH OF THE CHRISTIAN AND REFORMED CHURCHES, WHICH PURELY PROFESS THE HOLY DOCTRINE OF THE GOSPEL, IN ALL THE CHIEF KINGDOMS, NATIONS, AND PROVINCES OF EUROPE; and though it does not belong to me to prove a negative, I volunteer to do so, that the Christian public may see the documents for themselves, and know that they teach no such thing as the doctrine of infant damnation. They all teach the imputation of Adam's sin to the whole human race, infants not excepted; and that, in consequence, they are depraved, and children of wrath, and justly exposed to eternal death; but they do not teach, as Van Mastricht testifies, that they are actually damned, but refer them to the divine discretion.\*

THE CONFESSION OF AUGSBURG, is Lutheran, and, though stronger than any Calvinistic confession, does not teach that infants are damned; for the Lutheran church, though their symbol remains, hold to the doctrine that infants are saved, with more decision probably, than any other.

The article on original sin is, "All that come into the world are, through Adam's fall, subject to God's wrath, and eternal death." (By "subject" is to be understood, liable to, exposed to; otherwise, they would be made to teach the damnation of all men.) "This original blot is sin indeed, condemning and bringing eternal death even now also upon them which are not born again by baptism, and the Holy Ghost."† This respects adults as well as infants, and asserts the necessity of regeneration, in consequence of original sin, in respect to both adults and infants; but no more decides that infants, dying in infancy, are damned, than it decides that all the adult subjects of original sin are damned. Mosheim, a Lutheran, who has written a treatise to prove that infants are saved, says, "This depravity of our nature, although it is voluntary, and is underived from our first parents, is, nevertheless, imputed to us as sin, in the chancery of heaven; wherefore, if no other sin were added, we should be *exposed* to divine punishment on account of this depravity itself."‡ Did Mosheim teach, therefore, expressly, the doctrine that infants are damned?

THE HELVETIAN CONFESSION.—"Such an one as he (Adam) became by his fall, such are all his offspring, ever subject to sin, death, and divers calamities." And by the death to which man is exposed, they say, "we understand, not only bodily death, but everlasting punishment, due to our corruption and to our sins."||

\*The question at issue now, is not whether the doctrine of original sin by imputation of sin is true, or is expressed in language which is most intelligible or suitable at the present time, but simply and only, Did they teach in any form, the damnation of infants?

† Harmony, p. 71.

‡ Elementa Theologia Dogmata, vol. i. p. 540.

|| Harmony, p. 58.

**CONFESSION OF BASIL.**—"He (man) fell into sin, of his own accord; by the which fall, whole mankind is made corrupt and subject (liable) to damnation. Hence it is, that our nature is defiled, and become so prone unto sin, that, except it be removed by the Holy Ghost, man, of himself, can neither do, nor will, any good."\*

**CONFESSION OF BOHEMIA, or the Waldenses.**—"Whereby he (Adam) stripped and bereaved himself and his posterity of the state of perfection, and goodness of nature, and the grace of God, and those good gifts of the justice and the image of God which were engrafted in him; he partly lost them, and partly corrupted and defiled them, as if with horrible poison one should corrupt pure wine; and by this means he cast, headlong, both himself and all his offspring into sin, death, and all kind of miseries in this life, and into punishment eternal after this life:" i. e. *exposed* himself and all his posterity to eternal punishment; for they did not hold that all men are damned.

**FRENCH CONFESSION.**—"We believe that all the offspring of Adam is infected with this contagion which we call original sin; that is, a stain spreading itself by propagation, and not by imitation only.—We believe that this stain is indeed a sin, because that it maketh all and every man (not so much as those little ones excepted which as yet lie hid in their mothers' womb) guilty; i. e. deserving of eternal death."† This philosophy, which supposed that guilt and depravity might be transferred by a divine appointment, and that moral qualities might be transmitted, like physical properties, without knowledge or volition, obliged the Reformers to make the existence of depravity coeval with the existence of the body. This philosophy, however, Unitarians know full well, has been long since exploded in New England, and throughout a great portion of the Calvinistic churches of our land, as we shall have occasion to show.

**CONFESSION OF BELGIA.**—"We believe that through the disobedience of Adam, the sin that is called original, hath been spread and poured into all mankind, wherewith the very infants in their mothers' womb are polluted, and is alone sufficient to the condemnation of all mankind."‡

**CONFESSION OF SAXONY.**—"We say, that all men, since the fall of our first parents, do, together with their birth, bring with them original sin. Therefore, original sin is, both for the fall of our first parents, and for the corruption which followed that fall, even in our birth, to be subject to the wrath of God; to be worthy of eternal damnation, except we obtain remission for the Mediator's sake."||

\* Harmony, p. 63.

† Ibid. p. 65.

‡ Ibid. p. 70.

|| Ibid. p. 75, 76.

**CONFESSION OF WIRTEMBERG.**—"For his disobedience he (Adam) was deprived of the Holy Ghost, and made the bondman of Satan, and subject (liable) both to temporal and eternal damnation; and that evil did not stay in one only, Adam, but was derived unto all the posterity."\*

**THE ENGLISH CONFESSION.**—"We say also, that every man is born in sin, and leadeth his life in sin." The 39 articles say, "In every person born into the world it (original sin) deserveth God's wrath and damnation."

**THE SYNOD OF DORT** was a most ample representation of the opinions of the whole Calvinistic world. They were convened to adjust the first public opposition which had ever been made to the doctrines of the Reformation. They discussed with the Remonstrants the distinguishing doctrines of Calvinism. But their views are in exact accordance with the Reformers; and no indication is given of the doctrine of infant damnation, either in their doctrine of predestination, or of original sin. Upon the latter subject they say "Such as man was after the fall, such children also did he beget. From a corrupt parent proceeded corrupt children, corruption being derived, by the just judgment of God, from Adam to all his posterity, Christ alone excepted; not by imitation, (as the Pelagians formerly taught,) but by the propagation of a depraved nature. Wherefore all men are conceived in sin, and born children of wrath."\*

**THE SYNOD at CAMBRIDGE, 1648**, which represented, not Massachusetts only, but New England, adopted, unanimously, "the Confession of faith published of late by the reverend Assembly in England," judging it "to be holy and orthodox, and judicious in all matters of faith." The same Confession was, in 1608, adopted by the churches in Connecticut represented at Saybrook, as the symbol of their faith; and the same is now the Confession of faith of the Presbyterian church in the United States. But this Confession, which represented the Calvinism of Old England and New, and which expresses, also, the doctrinal opinions of the church of Scotland and of the Presbyterian church in the United States, teaches neither directly, nor by implication, that infants are damned. The language of this Confession is, "By this sin they (our first parents) and we, in them, fell from original righteousness, and communion with God, and so became dead in sin, and wholly defiled in all the faculties and parts of soul and body. The guilt of this sin was imputed, and corrupted nature conveyed, to all their posterity. Every sin, both original and actual, doth, in its own nature, bring guilt upon the sinner, whereby he is bound over to the wrath of God, and curse of the law, and so made subject to death, with all miseries, spiritual, temporal, and eternal."

\* Harmony, p. 77.

† Acta Dordrechtana, p. 256.



But, beside these public general Confessions of faith, it has been the custom of each particular church, from the beginning to this day, to frame and adopt a Confession of faith and Covenant of her own, as the ground of her existence, and of her recognition by sister churches. These Confessions of the first, and of succeeding generations of churches, are extant. Probably there is not a Calvinistic church in New England without an orthodox Confession and Covenant of her own. I apprise the reviewer of this fact, that he may "ransack" the creeds of the first generations of churches, and take "whatever means" to explore those which have been formed successively, and which now exist; and I challenge him to produce a sentence from one which asserts or implies that infants are damned. And could one be found, it would be an anomaly, an utter exception to the general fact. It is needless to quote from these Confessions; for, with a most wonderful diversity of language, they all teach the great doctrines of the Bible, which were taught at the Reformation. Framed with great variety of expression, and a liberty of conscience, unshackled by standards, there is not on earth a body of churches more intelligent and harmonious in doctrine than the churches of New England. With the Confession of faith subscribed by the Professors at Andover, Unitarians, I believe, are acquainted, it having afforded them no small occasion of disquiet. But, after all that they have seen, or thought they saw, of evil in it, they have never been able to find in it the doctrine that infants are damned; though there is reason to apprehend that some Unitarians have not been sparing in their efforts to create the belief that the Professors do hold to that doctrine.

Thus it appears that a reviewer in a distinguished Unitarian periodical, has publicly charged Calvinists with holding a sentiment which their system does not contain, and which has never been avowed in a Calvinistic Confession of faith, or implied in anything taught in one, from the Reformation to this day.

The next source of evidence concerning the faith of Calvinistic churches, is to be found in the most approved Calvinistic authors. But here we shall show, that the authors chiefly relied on by the reviewer, viz. Calvin, and Turretin, and Edwards, and Bellamy, teach no such thing in the passages quoted; and that the two who seem to teach it, are not, in any such sense, standard authors, or "most approved writers," as justifies the application of their peculiar sentiments to Calvinists as a denomination, and much less to the Calvinists of New England.

CALVIN.—His testimony, as quoted by the reviewer, concerning infants, is, that "they are born infected with the contagion of sin,"—"are, in the sight of God, polluted and defiled,"—"are all by nature children of wrath,"—that "*infants themselves* bring their damnation (condemnation) with them from their mother's womb,"—that "their whole nature is, as it were, a seed of sin, so that it can-

not but be odious and abominable to God." But, does the reviewer need to be told, that, while all this is testimony absolute that Calvin believed in the depravity of infants, and their just *exposure* to damnation, it contains not a syllable which teaches or implies the fact that they are *actually* damned, which does not prove, just as conclusively, the eternal damnation of *all* mankind.

The next paragraph might startle us as translated by Professor Norton, in his *Views of Calvinism*, and also as translated by the reviewer, provided it were correctly translated. I shall give the original; the translation of Professor Norton; and that of the reviewer; and of Allen, the late English translator; with my reasons for supposing that by Allen to be correct, and that Professor Norton and the reviewer have both mistranslated Calvin.

"Iterum quæro, unde factum est ut tot gentes, una cum liberis eorum infantibus, æternæ morti involueret lapsus Adæ, absque remedio, nisi quia Deo visum est. Decretum quidem horribile, fateor."\*

This passage the Professor translates as follows: "I ask again, how it has come to pass that the fall of Adam has involved so many nations, with their infant children, in eternal death, and this without remedy, but because such was the will of God. It is a horrible decree, I confess."†

The translation of the reviewer is as follows: "How has it happened, that the fall of Adam has involved so many nations, with their infant children, in eternal death, but because it so seemed good in the sight of God. It is a dreadful decree, I confess."‡

Allen's translation: "I inquire again, how it came to pass that the fall of Adam, independent of any remedy, should involve so many nations, with their infant children, in eternal death, but because such was the will of God. It is an awful decree, I confess."||

The meaning of this passage, as a proof of infant damnation, depends on the collocation or omission of "absque remedio" (without remedy) in the translation. As Professor Norton has placed it, following strictly the collocation of the words in the original, the passage teaches that "many nations, with their infant children, are involved in eternal death, and that without remedy;"—and the reviewer, omitting "absque remedio" (without remedy,) though it belongs to the sentence, and controls its meaning so entirely, makes Calvin teach that "the fall of Adam has involved so many nations, with their infant children, in eternal death;"—while Allen, by placing "absque remedio" (without remedy) in the translation before "tot gentes" (so many nations,) makes Calvin say, simply what himself and all the Reformers had said, viz. that, inde-

\* Institutes, lib. iii. cap. 23. sec. 7.

† Christ. Examiner, vol. iv. No. 5. p. 432.

‡ Norton's *Views of Calvinism*, p. 14.

|| Institutes, lib. iii. cap. 23. sec. 7.

pendent of any remedy, the fall involved all mankind in eternal death.

That this is the true construction, the context does not permit us to doubt; for the subject of discussion was, whether it is any where "declared in express terms, that Adam should perish by his defection." Not whether he should actually be damned, but whether he should, by that act, be condemned and exposed justly to eternal death. And, among other reasons to prove that the defection of Adam did expose him to eternal death, by a divine constitution or decree, he alleges the fact, that the loss of salvation by the *whole race*, in consequence of the fall, was by a divine constitution, and not by any natural connexion of cause and effect; and demands, if the effect of Adam's fall upon his posterity was to subject them to eternal death, how it can be supposed that the effect upon himself, should not have been, at least, as fatal to him as to his offspring. "What prevents their acknowledging concerning one man, what they reluctantly grant concerning the whole species. The Scripture proclaims that all men were, in the person of their father, sentenced to eternal death." Then follows, after a few lines, the sentence in question, which is a pressing home of his conclusion, from the foregoing premises: "I ask again, how it came to pass that the fall of Adam, independent of any remedy, should involve so many nations, with their infant children, in eternal death, but because such was the will of God."—Now, "so many nations," means, undoubtedly, not a few nations, a part of mankind, but is synonymous with what the same premises included above, as no one who examines the passage can fail to see. It is the "whole race," "the whole species," "all men, in the person of their father, sentenced to eternal death," of whom he speaks in the phrase, "so many nations." This being the fact, if you place "absque remedio" in the translation where Professor Norton places it, it represents Calvin as teaching the damnation of "the whole race," "the whole species," "all mankind, and this without remedy," as the consequence of Adam's sin. Will the Professor maintain that Calvin taught the doctrine of the universal actual damnation of all mankind? And yet his collocation of "absque remedio" in the translation, compels him to do so, for the very introduction of the sentence, "Iterum quæro," shows that Calvin urges the same argument now which he had just urged above. The omission of the reviewer to translate the words "absque remedio" at all, so indispensable to the lucid interpretation of the sentence, and affording such decisive evidence to his purpose, if translated correctly by Professor Norton, seems to imply that he saw the mistake, and did not dare to repeat it, lest it should be detected; and did not dare to translate it correctly, lest the discrepancy between the reviewer and the Professor should attract notice, and thus expose the mistake. If the reviewer and the Professor were fellow-laborers in collecting

evidence, and writing the Review, it is not impossible that we have, in the omission by the reviewer of "absque remedio," the joint wisdom of them both.

It should not be forgotten, that the Institutes were published by Calvin both in Latin and in French, and that Allen had the benefit of both, and that the translation was made while a keen controversy about Calvinism was going on, when any prominent mistake would be sure to be detected. Far be it from me to insinuate a suspicion of the Professor's integrity. Much less of his ability to translate an easy passage in John Calvin. I have only to regret the fact, without being required to account for it, that there should be but one light in the text to redeem it from perversion, and that the Professor and the reviewer should both, though in a different manner, put it out; the one by a wrong collocation of the words in his translation, and the other by omitting them altogether.

The reviewer is so hot upon the track of Calvin, in quest of the doctrine of infant damnation, that he ever overruns his game, and would fain prove that Calvin held that some infants of believing parents, dying in infancy, are damned. Grotius, it seems, had slandered Calvin, as Unitarians now do, representing it as his doctrine, "that, from the breast of the same Christian mother, one child was conveyed to heaven, and another to hell." And Rivet, as we now do, vindicated Calvin, maintaining that "Calvin, and Calvinists in general, taught that the infants of believers, dying before they were capable of any moral act, were saved." And, really, we should have supposed Rivet's express testimony, and Calvin's express words, to be as good evidence as the reasoning of the reviewer to the contrary. Not so the reviewer. Rivet, he seems to admit, did hold to the salvation of the infants of believers. But Calvin, he thinks, cannot have believed as Rivet does, because "it implies a hereditary succession to the aristocracy of the saints; of the continual transmission of the privilege of election by birthright; of the being born an heir of salvation, in virtue of natural descent. When thus stated, the doctrine cannot be believed by any one. It is too gross, and too inconsistent with obvious facts." But Rivet, it seems, believed it, although "it cannot be believed by any one." And why might not Calvin? Did Calvin believe nothing which the reviewer is pleased to call absurd? But Calvin, he insists, puts the children of believers "on no better ground than the infants of Jews, or rather than all Jews during the whole period of their history." And, as many of the Jews perished in every period of their history, if Calvin places infants on no better ground, it would seem, that he must have taught the damnation of all the infants of believers, dying in infancy.

What then did Calvin hold, on this subject?

1. That the children of believers are "so exempted from the fate of the human race, as to be separated to the Lord;" by which

he meant, not that all others were damned, or that all the children of believers would, of course, be saved; but that they became, in such a sense members of the visible church as to be entitled to baptism.

2. That such children as are engrafted by baptism, and fail in adult age to obey the Gospel, are cut off; and

3. That all the children of believers, dedicated to God, and dying in infancy, are saved.

The reviewer says, that he (Calvin) speaks of predestination as applying equally to infants and adults. He does; but he does not say that any are actually reprobated. The discrimination between Jacob and Esau, has no relevancy to the future state of infants. Had Esau died in infancy, it would have been to the purpose; but then, it would not be Calvin, but the Bible, with whom the reviewer would be at war.

I have followed the reviewer through his windings, and mistranslations of Calvin, not because I could not wipe off, by a shorter course, the aspersion cast on him; but that the public may have an opportunity to decide what degree of credit is due to this anonymous Unitarian partizan writer; with what limited knowledge of his subject, and with what unauthorised confidence, he has spoken of the sentiments of Calvin concerning the future state of infants. I subjoin the following letter from Calvin to Knox, the Scotch reformer.\*

“But, because, in a proper use of baptism, the authority of God and his institution ought to be a sufficient reason for us, it is proper for us to inquire whom God, by his own voice, invites to baptism. Now, the promise comprehends, not only the offspring of each of the faithful in the first degree, but is extended to a thousand generations. Whence it happens that the interruption of piety which takes place under popery, will not have taken away the vigor and efficacy of baptism; for the origin and reason of baptism, and its nature, are to be estimated from the promise. I do not, therefore, at all doubt, but that the offspring of holy and pious ancestors, although their parents and grandparents were apostate, do still pertain to the body of the church.” Cal. Letters, p. 322.

Now, 1. Calvin did believe in the salvation of all infants, dying in infancy, who are within the compass of the promise which is made to believers and their children. And, 2. He did believe that the promise extended to children of the thousandth generation, though some of the intervening links of pious descent had been broken. He, of course, believed in the salvation of all infants, dying in infancy, who are within a thousand generations of a pious ancestor. This is Calvin's belief in the damnation of infants.

\* It is in answer to the question, whether the children of Roman Catholics may be baptised.



Calvin, it would seem then, came nearer to teaching the actual salvation of all infants, than the damnation of any. For, sweep a compass round all infants who die within a thousand generations of a pious ancestor, and how many will fall without the blessed circumference of mercy?

Not a syllable, then, has been produced from Calvin, which proves that he taught that infants are damned. Hitherto, the reviewer has made the charge without evidence. And I now call upon him, by all the sanctions of violated justice, to retract the slander which he has so wantonly cast upon the memory of the holy dead.

TURRETTIN, as quoted by the reviewer, teaches the following things.

1. That the guilt of original sin is sufficient for the condemnation of infants.

2. That infants have been infected with original sin.

3. That infants, though not subjects of law as regards action, are as regards disposition; and that volition in infants is not necessary to the contagion and guilt of original sin.

This is all the evidence which the quotation from Turretin furnishes that infants are, in *fact*, damned; and it is gravely quoted as if too plain to need a comment, and too irresistible to be denied. But we take the liberty to suggest to the reviewer, that his quotation from Turretin is nothing to his purpose. He might as well have quoted "Adam, Seth, Enoch," to prove that infants are damned. And, lest he should doubt our word, we will try again to show him, by the help of a syllogism, what an incorrigible aversion his premises and his conclusion have to come together:

Original sin deserves damnation. And whoever deserves damnation, will certainly be damned. But Turretin teaches that infants, as corrupted by original sin, do deserve damnation. Therefore, as we have abundantly proved, Turretin teaches the actual damnation of infants.

And now, elated by such a victory, in true Bonapartean style, he follows us up in our discomfiture, to make an end of us, by pouring in upon us the testimony of AUGUSTINE, a man who lived some ten centuries before Calvin was born, in order to prove that the Calvinists of New England and the United States, between whom and Augustine fifteen centuries have intervened, do believe, nevertheless, that infants are damned. This is the greatest march of mind that I have met with in these marching days; the most fearless act of mental agility, I cannot but think, ever attempted,—to make the premises and conclusion leap a ditch of fifteen centuries to come together. Now let us see how they succeed. At two leaps it is done. 'Calvin thought highly of Augustine, and constantly (often) cited him as the highest authority; therefore, on the subject of infant damnation, Calvin must have believed as Augus-

tine did. But Calvinists of the present day think highly of Calvin, and often quote him as the highest authority; therefore, they believe, on the subject of infant damnation, as Calvin believed.

Now then for the syllogism: He that highly esteems and almost constantly quotes an author as of the very highest authority, must be supposed to believe exactly as he does on all points. But Calvin thus esteemed and quoted Augustine; therefore, as Augustine believed in the damnation of infants, so did John Calvin. But modern Calvinists highly esteem and often quote Calvin as of the highest authority; therefore, modern Calvinists, like him, believe in the damnation of infants.

Now if we were in a court of justice, we should be permitted to cross-question these witnesses. And, as a "deep stain" is likely to be fixed on our character, should we be convicted, I know not why legal evidence should not be demanded. I would take the liberty, therefore, to ask John Calvin a few questions.

*Ques.* Has your high estimation of Augustine led you anywhere to avow, that you believed in every sentiment which he taught?

*Ans.* Never.

*Ques.* Have you anywhere avowed your belief in the particular sentiment ascribed to Augustine—that infants are damned?

*Ans.* Never. "The strongest passages" in my writings, however tortured, cannot be made to teach any such opinion.

We would now put a few questions also to Augustine.

*Ques.* Did you, Sir, believe and teach that infants are damned; meaning by the term damnation, what it is now in common use understood to mean—a condition of excessive and unmingled suffering, bodily and mental?

*Aug.* Horresco! Nunquam, nunquam. Dixi "Contra Julianum, lib. i. cap. 16. Potest proinde recte dici parvulos sine baptismo de corpore exeuntes in damnatione omnium mitissime futuros;" et lib. v. cap. 8, dixi "Ego non dico parvulos sine baptismo Christi morientes, tanta pœna esse plectendos ut eis non nasci potius expediret." Miror! Indignor! O tempora! O mores!\*

You see, Sir, how Augustine feels at your misrepresentation of him—as if he taught that infants were sent to the gloom and torments of a "Calvinistic hell;" when what he taught in fact was, the damnation of infants as consisting chiefly, if not entirely, in the loss of that holy enjoyment in heaven for which their depravity disqualified them; and if they suffered a positive evil at all, it was of the very mildest kind; and such as rendered their eternal

\* I am horror struck! Never, never. I said in my book, *Contra Julianum*, lib. i. cap. 16, "It may, therefore, be truly said, that infants, departing from the body without being baptized, will be in a condemnation of all most mild;" and in lib. v. cap. 8. I have said, "I do not say that infants, dying without Christian baptism, will be filled with such punishment as will make it expedient rather that they had never been born." I am astonished—I am indignant—that I should be represented as having taught that infants suffer the full torments of hell. Oh, the degeneracy of the times!

existence, on the whole, a blessing. A state much happier than that in which thousands and millions of infants have lived in this world; for there have been multitudes so circumstanced in time as that their existence was no blessing to them. And yet this sentiment of Augustine you have quoted to prove that Calvin believed, and that those who are called by his name, now believe, that infants not a span long are sent to the fierce torments of an eternal hell! And it is after such splendid exhibitions of knowledge in ecclesiastical history, and of skill in translation, and accuracy in reasoning, that the reviewer celebrates his triumph in the following strains of exultation:

So much for Calvin, his master, and one of his 'most approved' expositors. How a man ambitious of being considered a leader of the Calvinistic party in this country, could hazard such assertions as those contained in the Note under review, it is difficult to imagine. The damnation of infants is a doctrine so revolting to all the better feelings of our nature, a doctrine so 'monstrous,' to use Dr. Beecher's own word, that we do not wonder Calvinists are anxious to have it considered a 'slander' to charge it upon them or their system; and, if it were a mere remote inference drawn by their opponents from some acknowledged part of their belief, the denial of it might be accounted for and excused. But in the present instance, it is disavowed in the name of a party, the very head of which preached it, and the 'most approved' apostle of which did not hesitate to advance it; and the case is to us inexplicable.

The next evidence relied on is to be found in the extracts "from the most approved Calvinistic writers of later date," quoted in the "very heat of the late Unitarian controversy, when it is not to be supposed for an instant, or by any stretch of charity, they did not meet the eye or ear of him who had never seen nor heard of any book which contained such a sentiment." These quotations from approved Calvinistic writers of later date are contained, we suppose, in Professor Norton's *Views of Calvinism*. Whether we had read it or not, we shall not now stop to say. We certainly have read it since, with a full purpose, if such quotations as he alleges were contained in it, to admit frankly our mistake. But we find no such passages; and Professor Norton is hereby requested to state the passages on which he relies, and to state, in logical form, the manner in which, to him, they appear conclusive. Especially do I call for the proof that EDWARDS gives up infants to "the full torments of hell." The passage quoted from Edwards in proof contains no such sentiment. He is replying to two "dissenting divines, of no inconsiderable note," one of whom supposed that only so much sin of Adam was imputed, as justified the miseries of this life, and of death, or annihilation; the other supposing that no imputation can be consistent with the divine perfections which avers that the future state of infants should be worse than nonexistence.

"But this to me," he says, "appears plainly to be giving up that grand point of the imputation of Adam's sin, both in whole and in part. For it supposes it to be not right for God to bring any evil

on a child of Adam, which is innocent as to personal sin, without paying for it, or balancing it with good; so that still the state of the child shall be as good as could be demanded in justice, in case of mere innocence. Which plainly supposes that the child is not exposed to any proper punishment at all, or is not at all in debt to divine justice, on account of Adam's sin."\*

But, in this passage, what does Edwards say? Simply and only, as all the Reformers had said, that infants are *exposed* justly to eternal death on account of original sin; but that they *suffer* their deserved punishment HE DOES NOT SAY. And yet, such is the authority which the reviewer claims, as "directly and completely to his purpose," to prove that Edwards gave up infants to the torments of hell.

BELLAMY is the next witness whose testimony demands our scrutiny.

"It is plain and evident from *facts*, that *Adam* was considered and dealt with under the capacity of a public head, and that death, *natural*, *spiritual* and *eternal* were included in the threatening; for all his posterity are evidently dealt with *just as if that had been the case*. They are born *spiritually dead*, as has been proved in the former discourse. They are evidently liable to *natural death*, as soon as they are born. And if they die and go into eternity with their native temper, they must necessarily be miserable."—"God must necessarily look upon them in everlasting abhorrence."†

"So that, to a demonstration, God's thoughts of mercy towards a guilty, undone world, did not in any measure take their rise from any notion that mankind had been hardly dealt with, or that it would be anything like cruelty and unmercifulness, to damn the whole world for *Adam's* first sin."‡

"*Mankind were by their fall brought into a state of being infinitely worse than not to be*. The damned in hell, no doubt, are in such a state, else their punishment would not be infinite; as justice requires it should be. But mankind, by the fall, were brought into a state, for substance, as bad as that which the damned are in. For the damned undergo nothing in hell, but what, by the constitution with *Adam*, and the law of nature, all mankind were and would have been, for substance, exposed unto, if mere grace had not prevented."§

"As to *godly* parents, they have such a spirit of love to God, and resignation to his will, and such an approbation of his dispensations towards mankind, and such a liking to his whole scheme of government, that they are content that God should govern the world as he does; and that he should have subjects to govern; and that themselves and their posterity should be under him, and at

\* Edwards on Original Sin. Works, vol. vi. p. 462.

† Bellamy's Works, vol. i. p. 312.

‡ Ibid. p. 321.

§ Ibid. p. 333.

his disposal. Nor are they without hopes of mercy for their children, from sovereign grace through Christ, while they do, through him, devote and give them up to God, and bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. And thus they quiet themselves as to their souls.”\*

“It was at God’s sovereign election,—to give every child of Adam, born in a Christian land, *opportunity, by living, to hear the glad tidings, or only to grant this to some, while others die in infancy, and never hear.* Those who die in infancy, may as justly be held under law in the next world, as those that live may in this. God is under no more obligations to save those that die, than he is to save those that live; to grant the regenerating influences of his Spirit to them, than he is to these.”†

Now all which is contained in these passages, is,

1. That infants, as the subjects of original sin, are depraved, born spiritually dead.
2. That if they should die, and go into eternity with this depraved nature, they could not be admitted to heaven, and would be wicked and miserable.
3. That godly parents have hope for their children, through Christ, who are given to him in faith.

But he nowhere, in these quotations, expresses the opinion that infants are lost; for we have shewn it to have been the common opinion of the Reformers, so happily expressed by Dickinson, the cotemporary of Bellamy, that some infants are elected certainly; viz. the children of believers, dying in infancy. Yet there is no “evidence from Scripture or the nature of things, that any of these [infants] will eternally perish. All those that die in infancy may, or ought we know, belong to the election of grace, and be predestinated to the adoption of children.”‡

Dr. Twiss, though held in high estimation in his day, as a man of a powerful mind, and an able controvertist, belonged to the class of Calvinists denominated Supralapsarian, a very small proportion of the whole body, in any age, and to which, in this country, not one, probably, in ten thousand belong. He was of that class of divines denominated now Hyper-calvinistic and Antinomian, between whom and the great body of Sublapsarian Calvinists, there are almost as few points held in common, and as little affinity of feeling, as between evangelical Christians and Unitarians; and whose system, upon the principle that extremes meet, we regard as being as fatal to the souls of men as Unitarianism itself. If he was ever, in this country, regarded as a standard writer, of which I have no proof, he has long ceased to be considered such; as many other ancient Calvinistic authors have been superseded, as authorities, by later and better writers.

\* Bellamy’s Works, vol. i. p. 336.

† Vol. ii. pp. 369, 370.

‡ Dickinson’s Sermons, p. 205.



Since the days of Edwards, and Bellamy, and Hopkins, and West, and Smalley, and the younger Edwards, the number of transatlantic authors is small, whose authority has been relied on, upon points of doctrine. The New England theology, as it has been called, having so modified the statement of many cardinal doctrines, as to render such authorities nearly obsolete. I never heard Twiss referred to by my theological instructor, Dr. Dwight, as authority in any case, and never referred to at all but in terms of strong disapprobation, on account of the extremity to which he carried matters. To quote Twiss, therefore, as evidence that the Calvinists of Boston and New England hold to the doctrine of infant damnation, is not less unjust than it would be for us to quote the most revolting opinions of Priestley, Belsham, and the German school, as confirmation strong of what is believed in Boston and Massachusetts by the higher and more serious Unitarians, who would be shocked at their licentious opinions as much, perhaps, as I should.

Antinomians are, indeed, called Calvinists; and so are Socinians called Unitarians. But to quote the one as evidence of the opinions of the other, is as preposterous as it is unreasonable. But it seems that Twiss was prolocutor (moderator) of the Westminster Assembly. True. But this is the first time I have ever heard this fact alleged as evidence that the Assembly believed with Twiss on the particular subject of the future state of infants. Did the Synod of Dort agree in all things with their moderator? Do the Convention of the Congregational ministers of Massachusetts agree always with their moderator? And will they take the sentiments of their last prolocutor in evidence for what they all believe?\*

For what purpose the reviewer has produced quotations from Dr. GILL, a Baptist author, who has never in this country been received as a standard writer by Calvinists of other denominations, I am unable to divine; unless it be, that, not satisfied with slandering all the Calvinists of the Congregational and Presbyterian denominations, he desired and sought occasion to throw the same unmerited stigma upon our brethren, the Baptists; for Gill, though a learned man, and, in some respects, a distinguished commentator, has never been ranked by Congregationalists and Presbyterians among their "most approved authors." He has never been received as a standard writer among us at all. His commentaries were recommended exclusively by Baptists; and even these speak in commendation of his work on the whole, and not as approving all that he taught; for it is well known, that on some points he leaned towards Antinomianism, and that one of the most pious and influential ministers of this city† has been heard to deprecate the tendency, and the actual influence, of some of his opinions upon the churches of his denomination in certain portions of this country.

\* Dr. Beecher was himself the last moderator.—*Ed.*

† Dr. Baldwin.

The following testimony from my Rev. Brother, of the Baptist denomination, will show with what wanton injustice that large and respectable class of evangelical Christians to which he belongs, have been, by implication, involved with us in the odium of holding to the damnation of infants.

“In relation to Dr. Gill, although he was distinguished for great learning and piety, yet his Body of Divinity is far from being received as authority by the Baptists. There are comparatively few, who embrace his doctrinal views. I have been a Baptist minister more than twenty one years, and have had opportunities of a very extended acquaintance with ministers of my own denomination, both in Great Britain and in the United States; but, in all my intercourse, I never have heard one individual, either in the ministry, or out of it, express his belief in the damnation of infants. Nor do I think there is one person among the orthodox of any denomination, whose opinions are entitled to the least degree of respect, that admits the sentiment.

Many ministers, both in their preaching and writings, have clearly shewn that infants will be saved. Not so much, however, for the purpose of convincing their own people of this delightful truth, as to correct the misrepresentations, and to remove the reproaches, which had been cast upon them by the enemies of evangelical religion.

DANIEL SHARP.”

*Boston, March 18, 1828.*

THEOPHILUS GALE.—“So great is the Majesty of God, and so Absolute his Dominion, as that he is obnoxious to no Laws, Obligations, or Ties from his Creature: this Absolute Justice or Dominion regards not any qualities or conditions of its object; but God can, by virtue hereof, inflict the highest torments on his innocent Creature, and exempt from punishment the most *nocent*. By this Absolute Justice and Dominion God can inflict the greatest torments, even of Hell itself, on the most innocent Creature.”\*

The reviewer subjoins:

ABSOLUTE JUSTICE indeed! And this doctrine has been taught by men, and has been received by men; and doctrines founded upon it, and which necessarily imply its truth, are still eagerly inculcated and greedily received; and men's understandings have been so debased, their moral sentiments have been so brutified, that they have not had enough sense or spirit or knowledge of right and wrong, to lead them to ask in what the absolute justice of a Calvinistic God, might differ from the absolute justice of the Prince of Hell.†

Having perceived the mistakes of the reviewer in translation, we thought it due to the memory of a “learned” and good man, “the author of a book once very famous,” to examine whether the

\* Court of the Gentiles, part iv. p. 367.

† Christ. Examiner, vol. iv. No. 5. p. 441.

extract gave us, not the "truth" only, but "the whole truth." On turning to Gale, our astonishment was never surpassed. For, in the first place, his views of what he calls absolute justice are not fully explained by the reviewer. He evidently means by it, God's right to do whatever he will, in opposition to any *opposing claim* or *obligation*; a right derived, first, from the absolute and unerring perfection of his will; and secondly, from his right of creation; and thirdly, from the consideration, that what God actually wills, will be for the manifestation of his glory, and the highest good of the universe. In this view of the subject, he asserts, that all whom God creates *may* be dealt with, in respect to happiness or misery, for the general good, without any reference to character. But he does not say that this is the actual maxim of the divine administration. On the contrary, he teaches, most expressly, that it is not. What he calls "ordinate justice," is the actual rule of moral government; to which men had no claim, but which, being adopted voluntarily, and given to them by revelation and by promise, is the immutable rule of the divine administration. And this, reader, is no other than the principle of reward and punishment according to character and deeds, as the following quotation will abundantly show.

"Proposition 5. *So far as God hath obliged himself by the constitution of his own Wil and Word, his ordinate Justice ever regards the Constitution and Qualities of the object.* God's ordinate Justice being the same with his Veracitie and Fidelitie, it alwaies respects such Qualities and Conditions, as its object, by reason of his own constitution, is invested with. For God, in the executions of his ordinate Justice, assumes the qualitie of a Judge: and a Judge cannot duely abstain from the administration of Justice; neither is Justice duly administred, unlesse the Qualitie of the objects, and merits of the cause be fully inspected and considered. God's ordinate Justice as *Rector* and *Judge* of the Al is chiefly exercised in the reduction of althings to that equalitie and order, which his Divine Wisdom and Wil has prescribed unto them. Hence these two things necessarily follow this Divine ordinate Justice: 1. It never exerts it self, but where those Qualities and Conditions, which it has prescribed its object, be found. As it never punisheth any but for sin; so it never rewards any but the Godly, &c. 2. Wherever these Conditions or Qualities are found, it necessarily exerts it self. It cannot but punish sin wherever it be; neither can it but reward holiness if sincere. There is a necessitie, not *Physic* but *Moral*, attendes al its egresses; and that from the free Constitution of the Divine Wil."\*

In view of this exhibition, I remark,

That the reviewer has misrepresented Gale as flagrantly as Professor Norton has mistranslated Calvin. He has quoted his

\* Court of the Gentiles, part iv. p. 373.

ideas of absolute justice in a manner so insulated and unexplained, as makes his unqualified language more alarming and offensive than his real meaning. He has also given Gale's ideas of absolute justice in such a manner as implies that it is the rule by which God actually administers his moral government. And he has produced the glaring passage to prove the doctrine of infant damnation; when, from the whole connexion, it is perfectly manifest, that Gale had, in his own mind, no reference to that subject whatever.

And this is not all. He charges Calvinistic ministers of the present day with giving, and their hearers with greedily receiving, representations of the character of God, which liken him to the "PRINCE OF HELL." And he says that the understandings of these ministers and their hearers, are "so debased," and "their moral sentiments so brutified," that they have not "sense," nor "spirit," nor "knowledge of right or wrong, enough to distinguish between" the character of God and the Devil.

This, we suppose, must be regarded by us as that *speaking the truth in love* of which Unitarians are emulous to set us an example; and that *charity* which Dr. Channing eulogizes as the peculiar delight of Unitarians; and an illustration of those honied accents which flow so smoothly in the last number of the *Christian Examiner*. "We are reluctant to speak anything connected with the sore and bitter irritations of these times. We would to God, that good and sober men could be suffered to pursue their course more quietly. Our very souls are pained and sick of every day's story and every body's strife. May the time come, yet we dare not pray for its speedy coming, when humble and modest men of whatever name, may go to their graves in peace. Yet it is from the natural reluctance which many of us feel to speak of controversy, that we are charged with covering up the differences, or reducing them to matters of small account. Let us then task ourselves to say something of these things."\*

'The words of his mouth were smoother than butter, but war was in his heart. His words were softer than oil, yet were they drawn swords. There is a generation, O how lofty are their eyes, and their eyelids are lifted up. There is a generation whose teeth are as swords and their jaw teeth as knives.'

A hideous figure of their foes they draw,  
Nor lines, nor looks, nor shades, nor colours true;  
And this grotesque design expose to public view;  
And yet the daubing pleases!

Respectfully, yours,

LYMAN BEECHER.

(To be continued.)

\* *Christ. Examiner*, vol. v. No. 1. pp. 2, 3.

## RELIGION IN GERMANY.

To the Editor of the Spirit of the Pilgrims.—Sir,

In the Review, inserted in your last number, of the Evangelical Church Magazine, recently commenced at Berlin in Prussia, information of a highly interesting character was communicated to the public, respecting the past and present state of religion in Germany. I send you some additional particulars on this important subject, which will be interesting to your readers. They are derived from the following sources, viz. *The State of Religion in Germany; in a series of Discourses preached before the University of Cambridge, England, 1825; by the Rev. Hugh James Rose, M. A. of Trinity College, and Vicar of Harsham; who has travelled and resided in Germany.—Reflexions suggérées par l'annonce du Concours qui doit s'ouvrir pour la Nomination de Deux Professeurs à la Faculté de Théologie, Protestante de l'Académie de Montauban, Par M. Stapfer, ancien Pasteur; inserted in the Archives du Christianisme du XIX. Siecle, Septième Année.—A Review of these works in the Eclectic Review. And a Letter from the Rev. B. Kurtz, a Lutheran clergyman of this country who lately visited Germany, dated May 14, 1827.*

The system of the German Neologists is thus described by the Eclectic reviewer.

“The outline of their scheme is this:—That the moral contents of the Bible are a Revelation from God, in the same sense in which all intellectual proficiency and practical improvements are gifts of Divine Providence.—That the book of Genesis is a collection of the earliest traditions concerning the origin and primeval history of the human race, containing some facts, but mingled with much allegory, mythology, and fable.—That the institutions of the Israelitish nation, were the admirable inventions of Moses and his coadjutors; the claim of a divine origin having been cleverly assumed, and ably sustained, to obtain the credit and obedience of a barbarous people.—That the prophets were the bards and patriotic leaders of their country, warmed with the love of virtue, roused by the inspiration of genius, using the name of the Lord to arouse torpid and selfish minds, and having no other insight into futurity than the conjectures which were suggested by profound political views, and by access to the secrets of camps and cabinets. That Jesus was one of the best and wisest of men, possessing peculiar genius, and an elevation of soul far above his age and nation. That, seeing his countrymen sunk in ignorance and superstition, and apprized of the depravity of the idolatrous nations, he formed the grand conception of a pure, simple, and rational religion, founded on the Unity of the Godhead, enjoining universal virtue, having



as few positive doctrines and outward institutions as possible, and therefore adapted to all times and all countries.—That, in order to accomplish his purpose the more readily and safely, he entered into a temporary compromise with the popular opinions and phraseology, assuming to be the Messiah whom the nation expected, and applying to himself various passages of the prophets, such as were calculated to excite the highest veneration.—That, by superior natural science, and by dexterously availing himself of fortunate coincidences, he impressed the bulk of the people with the belief of his possessing supernatural powers,—an artifice very excusable on account of its benevolent and virtuous motive.—That, by the envy, revenge, and selfish policy of the Jewish ecclesiastical leaders, he was condemned to die; that he was fastened to a cross, but (in consequence, perhaps, of previous management by some friends in power) was not mortally hurt; that he was taken down in a swoon, and laid in a cool and secluded recess within a rock, where, by the skill and care of his friends, animation was restored.—That, when recovered, he concerted measures with his confidential adherents for carrying on his noble and generous views; that, from a secure retirement, known to only a very few of his most intimate disciples, he directed their operations; and that, in a personal interview near Damascus, he had the admirable address to conciliate Saul of Tarsus, and persuade him to join the cause with all the weight of his talents.—That he probably lived many years in this happy retirement, and, before his death, had the pleasure of knowing that his moral system was extensively received both by Jews, and by men of other nations.—That this religion, though a human contrivance, is the best and most useful for the general happiness of mankind, and therefore ought to be supported and taught, at least till the prevalence of philosophical morality shall render it no longer needful.

“Such a system as this is held boldly and throughout by some, and by others in various degrees of approximation. They go under the denominations of *Rationalists*, *Neologists*, and *Anti-supernaturalists*; and we have been informed that other terms are employed to express, like the nomenclature of a West Indian population, the differing shades and hues of this belief or nonbelief.

“The most celebrated supporters of this system, in some or other of its gradations, are believed to be, or to have been, Paulus, Eichhorn, Eckermann, Gesenius the author of the Hebrew Lexicon, Gabler, Wegscheider, Bretschneider, Van Hemert of Amsterdam, Schiller the late dramatist and historian; and to these we fear we must add Heinrichs, Niemeyer, and Schleiermacher, the author of *A Critical Essay on the Gospel of St. Luke*, which has been translated into English. These writers have certainly rendered useful services to the cause of Bible learning. In numerous

dissertations, essays, and commentaries, they have contributed stores of Oriental and Rabbinical attainments to the illustration of history, allusions, and phraseology, in both the Old and the New Testaments. It is especially worthy of observation, that, in their bringing out of the grammatical sense of the Christian Scriptures, they frequently state certain opinions and persuasions *as entertained by the apostles*, which are no other than the GREAT DOCTRINES of religion, as held by the orthodox churches of ancient and modern times. These are, the ascribing to Christ those attributes which are peculiar to Deity; the assertion of an expiatory design in the sufferings and death of Christ; the referring of all events to the decrees and providence of God; the reality and necessity of Divine influence in order to true holiness in principle and action; the existence and temptations of wicked spirits; and the immediate happiness or misery of the human soul on its separation from the body. It is to be observed, that, in making these statements, the Rationalist interpreters are most careful to avoid the declaration of *their own* belief; they appear to keep ever in view the character under which they write, that of *mere narrators* of what were the opinions of other men, in a distant age. But it is obvious, that this very character, this confinement to the bare construing of the text, and the cold assertion of its meaning, this very indifference (whether real or affected) to that meaning, and all united with the admitted skill of the writers, in all the critical requisites, renders their *testimony* of greater value. Nor should we forget one consideration more: that, if these interpreters had followed their own *evident* bias, they would have given a sense to each passage, of a very different character from that which they have done. As, when Porphyry and Julien, and the malignant Jew who wrote the *Toldoth Jesu*, admit the reality of our Lord's miracles, but satisfy themselves by referring them to magic as the cause, we feel the value of their testimony, but are unmoved by their arguing; so, in this case, we accept the depositions of enemies to evangelical doctrines, that those doctrines *were believed and taught by the apostles*, while our feelings towards the authors of the depositions are those, not of approbation, but of strong censure and deep pity.

“The Latin writings of Koppe and his continuators, of the younger Rosenmüller, Schleusner, and Kuinöl, have been the chief instruments in making Englishmen, to a limited degree, acquainted with the existence and opinions of this school of spurious theology; and the intercourse of our Bible societies has brought, more effectively than any other method was likely to have done, before the minds of Christians in general, an exhibition of the evil itself, and of the means by which Divine Providence is, we trust, counteracting it. But the Latin works of the authors just mentioned, (of whom the two latter are narrators, not supporters of the system, and E. F. C. Rosenmüller appears, by the more recent publica-

tions of his Scholia, to have relinquished it,) and of some who are less extensively known among us, do not amount to a complete exhibition of the case. It is in the vernacular writings of the authors referred to, that we must seek for the full exposition of their opinions, and the application of those opinions; and it is in the vernacular writings also of some of their countrymen, that we can obtain their best confutation. It is our earnest wish, that the lovers of truth, and of really free and rational inquiry, would do all in their power to promote the study of the German language in our own country; we are persuaded that it would be found the best way of making the poison inefficient, and the antidote successful.

“Mr. Rose gives the following sketch of the radical principles and the character of the antichristian party.

“The Rationalizing divines have done this,—they have chosen to suppose a system which *they think* reasonable, which they think *ought to be* the Christian system; and they resolved to *make it so* at any expense of Scripture. I have no hesitation in saying, that their whole system of historical interpretation is built on these notions, and, loudly as its excellency is vaunted, I cannot but consider it most fallacious and dangerous. That a real and sound interpreter of God’s word must add, to a critical knowledge and complete familiarity with its language, the widest historical knowledge, the knowledge of the opinions, pursuits, and customs of the Jewish, and indeed of the Greek and Roman nations; that, in examining the words and phrases of Scripture, the peculiar opinions and habits of thought existing at the time of the writer, and likely to influence his style, must be investigated, is most true: but this is not the peculiar merit of the Rationalists; this is the old and sound grammatical interpretation which was used by critics far, very far, superior to any one of them, and long before the existence of their school, and which will be used by future critics when that school, its follies, and its mischief, have passed away, and are forgotten. What is *peculiar to them* is this; that, in interpreting the New Testament, their first business is always, not to examine the words, but to investigate the *disposition* and *character* of the writer, and his *knowledge* of religion, the *opinions of his age* on that subject, and finally, the *nature* of what he delivers. From these, and *not from the words*, they seek the sense of Christ’s and his followers’ discourses; and they examine the words *by these previous notions*, and *not by grammatical methods*. They seek for all which Christ said, in the notions held by the Jews in his time; and contend that those are the points first to be studied by an interpreter. They seek thence to explain the history, the dogmatical part of the New Testament, nay, those very discourses of Christ in which he delivers points of faith and morals; and thus to inquire, not what the Founder of our religion and his disciples *really thought or*

said, in each passage and in each sentence, regularly explained on acknowledged rules of interpretation, but what they *might have said* and *ought to have said*, according to the opinions of the times and their own knowledge of religion; not what Christ really meant in such a discourse, but how the Jews ought to have understood it; not *what* the apostles wrote, but *whether* what they wrote is true, according to right reason; not what they actually taught, but what they must have taught from the limits of their own minds and the state of men and things in their days; and lastly, what they would have taught in other times and to other men. This is the Rationalist's style of interpreting Scripture; a style which no commentator even on profane writers would ever dream of adopting.—The worst specimens of this style are not, I believe, in common use among us; but the student should remember, that there is something of this spirit even in Schleusner, a larger portion even in Rosenmüller, and that Kuinöl at least, perpetually details the wildest dreams of some of the wildest of this school."

"This concise and just statement is (from the words "what is peculiar to them," and with the exception of the last sentence) little more than a translation from the venerable Dr. C. C. Tittmann's Preface to his *Meletemata Sacra*, pp. 13, 14, published at Leipzig in 1816. The passage, in that able writer, is followed up by an ample exposure of the *preposterous*, *delusive*, and *pernicious* character of the whole theory. Mr. Rose might have said, that these pretended interpreters do not all set up as the idol to be dominant, that "which they think ought to be the Christian system;" for many of them seem to have no system at all in their minds; to be intent only on pulling down; to have no notions of religion, doctrinal or practical, but a bundle of negative ideas. In addition to his just remark, that what he first describes is "the old and sound grammatical interpretation," we deem it a duty to say, that the whole compass of interpretative theology does not present a more illustrious example of this method of faithful investigation, than is to be found in the commentaries of Calvin. The astonishing sagacity of that Reformer, the clearness of his habits of thinking, his orderly disposal of materials, his early studies in jurisprudence, and above all, the eminent gifts of Divine grace, which shone in him, rendered him pre-eminent as a solid, lustrous, impartial, and *truly rational* interpreter. This praise has been conceded by persons who were far removed from his theological sentiments. We beg also to interpose a suggestion relative to the persons mentioned in the last sentence from Mr. Rose. The excess of caution is the safer side; but the statement is too loosely made. We think much better of Schleusner than to give him over to the Neologists; and we believe that Mr. Rose would be equally unwilling to do so. Can any person of sensibility read his Preface to his last work (*Lexicon in LXX.*) without receiving a strong impression

of his integrity, humility, candor, and, we hope that we may add, piety too? Mr. Rose should have told us whether he means both the Rosenmüllers, or only the son. The observation is, in but a slight degree, applicable to the father. His *Scholia* on the New Testament are a very useful compilation from Grotius and other Arminian commentators, and from the German writers of moderate principles, whose paragraphs are copied abundantly without acknowledgement. With regard to the son, we are glad of this opportunity to state, that, in the recent edition of his *Scholia* on the Pentateuch, the Psalms, and Isaiah, and in his new works on Jeremiah and the other prophets, he has made some important retractions of his former opinions, and has advanced sentiments which will, we hope, forever separate him from Neologist divines. The statement relative to Kuinöl is unfair. Mr. Rose should not have omitted to mention that, though he does indeed state the interpretation of the anti-supernaturalist school, he renders his readers an important service in so doing, as he adduces arguments on the other side for the satisfactory establishment of the truth, though not always, we confess, with so much life and earnestness as we could wish. These friendly remonstrances, justice compels us to make, though we are far from approving of all that Kuinöl says, or of his manner of saying it."

The principal immediate cause of the rise and prevalence of Naturalism in Germany, was stated in the Review in your last number, viz. the Aristotelian garb which had been given to theology by the divines of that country. The following additional causes are mentioned by the Eclectic reviewer.

"1. The unhappy idea, which had a wide and pestiferous influence at the time of the Reformation, of making men disciples of Christ by government edicts and ecclesiastical mandates. From this wretched principle arose the chief evils of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, which produced the oppression and banishment of individuals who would not renounce all at once the Roman Catholic religion, and this by magistrates who had themselves but just quitted that communion;—the murder of Servetus and many other deeds of horrid persecution by even good men;—the division of the Protestant interest into the two parties of the Reformed or Calvinistic, and the Evangelical or Lutheran;—the fierce enmities and intolerance on both sides;—the thirty years' war;—the enforcing of the use of appropriating formularies by the whole population of a country;—the bringing all young people to the sacramental communion; and, in a little time, the training up for the holy ministry those who had given no evidence of being holy persons.

"It is not difficult to perceive, that the inevitable consequences of this state of religious profession would be, first, formalism and



pharisaism, subtle self-righteousness under the names and forms of evangelical doctrine; then, hypocrisy, in all degrees and shapes; then, indifference to sentiment, a mutual and tacit understanding to regard confessions and formularies as articles of peace rather than of faith, the exclusive preaching of the external evidences of revelation, and of a dead morality; and, finally, the avowed repudiation of fundamental truths.

"2. We find another melancholy source of the evil, in the spirit and operation of a State Religion. Hence it is that irreligious men are constituted rulers, directors, and agents in the worship, profession, and government of the church. Such men are radically enemies to the holy truths, as well as duties of God's word; and, in the long run, they are sure to manifest their departure from them. We are far from saying that a man, without renewing grace, lies under a mental inability, or any sort of natural incapacity, for attaining a "true knowledge of theological science." On the contrary, we are persuaded, that nothing is wanting but the moral fitness of the mind, that is, a *right state* of the will and affections, a proper exercise of the voluntary powers, the springs of character and action. These moral powers, in the man who is unregenerate, (we speak not of baptism, but of that divinely conferred and inwardly received blessing which the Liturgy calls *spiritual regeneration* and the *everlasting benediction of God's heavenly washing*,) are so hostile to all true goodness, that, although such a man may understand theological truth never so extensively, in a manner that is merely intellectual and theoretical, he has no perception of its divine excellency, its holy beauty, its intrinsic charms, which, if we may use the well known words, are only *Φωνᾶντα συνταῖσιν*. His mind, because of its governing principles, is "enmity against God;"—"it apprehendeth not that which cometh from the Spirit of God, for it is to him foolishness, and he cannot conceive of it [i. e. aright and as he ought to do,] since it must be judged of according to the principles of divine influence."\*

"3. We esteem as a great accessory cause of this moral pestilence, the separation of a devout and serious spirit from theological discussions and biblical interpretations. This monstrous impropriety did not show itself all at once. It took root, we fear, in the dry gravity and coldness of some commentators of the Remonstrant and Arian schools, whose works were introduced and powerfully recommended in Germany, about eighty years ago. It gradually increased unto more ungodliness, especially in the University Lectures; and quirk, jibe, and inuendo were without scruple used, in close connexion with the most serious and awful subjects. The sacred names and attributes, the Law and the Gospel of heaven, every doctrine and precept, every promise and threatening, of the divine

\* We cite the text according to the paraphrastic, but, we conceive, just translation of Michaelis.

word, were readily associated with any form of jest and silly witticism. We cannot acquit John David Michaelis from a heavy share in this guilt; yet, we must observe, that those of his works which have been translated into English seem, in this respect, more faulty than his Scripture commentaries. So far as our acquaintance with the latter has extended, we have been gratified with observing less intrusion of his constitutional levity, and more seriousness of sentiment and expression, than appears, for instance, in the English Version, by the late Dr. Alexander Smith, of his "Mosaic Law."

"4. We mention one other powerful cause; the miserable intolerance of the Protestant States of Germany. Had religious freedom existed, or even a liberal and paternal toleration of dissidents, the population of a town or village, in which Neologism got possession of the parish pulpit, would most probably have formed a separate congregation with a pastor of their own choice, and the Gospel of the Reformation and of apostolic Christianity would have maintained its ground; yea, it would have flourished and triumphed. But the horror of any approach to popular liberty, united with the inveterate evil of subjecting all public worship to the prescriptive meddlings of the Government, was the characteristic malady of all the German principalities, great and small. In some of them, among whom the Prussian States deserve honorable mention, the evil has been abated in a considerable degree; but in others, particularly those under Austrian dominion or influence, it has awfully increased since their deliverance from Napoleon's iron grasp. Thus, the grand remedy has been shut out, which, otherwise, it is morally certain, would have been applied; and the people, compelled to attend the parish church, or to enjoy no public religion at all, have been brought down, with scattered exceptions, happily now becoming numerous, to the level of their unchristian and antichristian teachers. The same would have been the case in our own country, had not the non-conformists made their self-sacrificing stand against ecclesiastical usurpation, and had not the Revolution under king William secured the liberty of conscientious separation. The cause of the Evangelical Dissenters operated both as a remedy and as an example to the remains of piety in the Establishment. Without it, Popery or formalism would, according to appearances, have secured an ascendancy fatal to all the interests of Great Britain. At the present moment, also, the revival of religion in France is setting strongly into the channel of a peaceable, but uncompromising separation from the Protestant State Establishment, with its salaried clergy, a royal veto upon the appointment of its ministers, and a royal right of arbitrary dismissal."

Of the effects of the prevalence of Neological opinions, and of their inculcation, from the chairs of theological and other Profes-

sors, from the pulpit, and from the press, we have the following account by Mr. Rose.

“The two effects which appear probable, have really occurred. As to the existence of a widely spread indifference, [to religion in general,] I may appeal to the German divines themselves. They have published a very large number of treatises, containing loud complaints of the total indifference existing towards all religious considerations. And it is very remarkable that, in many instances, these complaints come from those very persons who have been foremost in producing the mischief. They who have been most eager in rejecting all that is positive in religion, are surprized that men have become careless as to the negative part which they have left. Bretschneider has published a pamphlet on this subject, called *Ueber die Unkirchlichkeit dieser Zeit*, Gotha, 1822; in which he says, that *so many have been published* that he doubts if anything new can be said. Some of his statements are very strong on the subject. He thinks that the indifference began after the seven years' war, (p. 2.) and I have little doubt myself, that in considering the religious state of Germany at more length than I have been able to do, the distracted state of the country during so large a part of the two last centuries, must be taken into the account, as very unfavorable to the cause. But (p. 3.) he states that this indifference is spread among all classes; that (p. 4.) the Bible used to be found in every house; that very many made it a law to read a chapter every day, or at least every Sunday; that it must have been a very poor family, where a Bible was not a part of the marriage portion: but that now, very many do not possess one, or let it lie neglected in a corner; that (p. 5.) now hardly one fifth of the inhabitants of towns receive the Sacrament, or confess; that few attend the churches, which are now too large, though fifty years ago they were too small; that few honor Sunday, but that many make it a day for private business, or for work; and (p. 9.) that there are now few students in theology, compared with those in law or medicine; and that if things go on thus, there will shortly not be persons to supply the various ecclesiastical offices.”

The other effect mentioned by Mr. Rose of the prevalence of Rationalism is, that “many have openly deserted the Protestant church,” and joined the Catholic communion; seeking “in the bosom of a church, which, in the midst of all its dreadful corruptions, at least possessed the form and retained the leading doctrines of a true church, the peace which they sought in vain amid the endless variations of the Protestant churches of Germany, and their gradual renunciation of every doctrine of Christianity.”

But as our readers are already informed, a brighter day has again dawned upon this land of the reformation, of the revival of

evangelical doctrines and piety in that interesting country, we have the following account from M. Stapfer, and his reviewer in the Eclectic.

“While the illustrious school of Storr has been following out and destroying, one after another, all the sophisms of this system, all its rash fictions, all its gratuitous combinations, the very character of which renders them totally inadmissible in solid exegesis; some profound thinkers (Schelling, Plouquet, Ctinger, Hegel, Bilfinger, C. G. Schmid, Bockshammer, &c. chiefly of the kingdom of Württemberg and from the university of Tübingen,) have been proving to even the most prejudiced minds the doctrine of a miraculous revelation, and displaying, with new evidence, its intimate and perfect connexion with the great designs of human existence, and the sublimest sentiments of the Deity.”...“Eichhorn’s *Introduction to the Old Testament* was written with the design of applying the principles of the school of Heyne, (so happily employed in illustrating some parts of the Grecian mythology, and the origin of many historical traditions of classical antiquity,) sometimes openly, sometimes more covertly, to all the moral phenomena and miraculous events of the Hebrew Scriptures. Every thing is squared to human proportions; and that with such art and show of erudition, as to effect a stealing away from the reader’s attention of the frail foundation which supports, and the purely conjectural nature of the materials which form, the chief parts of this vast structure.—In Germany, a multitude of works have appeared, which search his hypothesis to the bottom, and turn the results of his researches completely upon himself. Jahn, Meyer, Kelle, the pupils of Storr, (in various dissertations published by Flatt, Suskind, and Bengel, in their *Periodical Collections*, 1792 to 1824,) have not left a single one of Eichhorn’s bold assertions without an impartial and solid examination.—Eichhorn had the ascendant from 1790 to 1807. Since that time, his writings have found a counterpoise, and may, therefore, be read with advantage in the country where the controlling works are at the student’s side. Gesenius now rules in Hebrew literature; and he has proved Eichhorn to have been the dupe of his own imagination, and to have thought himself excused from bringing reasons for his opinions that would stand the test of sound criticism.—Numerous authors of the first order (I mention only Krummacher, Lücke, De Meyer of Frankfort, Tholuck of Berlin, Winer of Leipzig,) have not only shown the deepest grief at the profane way in which some celebrated commentators have treated the sacred books, but, in their own exegetical works, they have given examples of the holy reverence which becomes a Bible interpreter. Tholuck in particular, in his spirited *Defence of the Study of the Old Testament*, has proved, by arguments drawn from a profound knowledge, both of the Hebrew code and of the genius of the Oriental nations, that JESUS

CHRIST is the centre, the key, the solution, of the annals and institutions of Israel."

"M. Stapfer goes on to affirm the fact of a *decided and widely spreading change*, among the theologians and scholars of Germany, to an humble submission to the Gospel. We may mention, that the German translator of Mr. Rose acknowledges this fact, (p. 107,) but presumes to impugn the motives of those once distinguished advocates of false Rationalism, who have, as he expresses it, "thrown themselves into the arms of historical faith, or of fanaticism, or of mysticism." He lays down the gratifying fact, that, on the Continent, there is a very perceptible increase of men of letters and science, who maintain the Divine authority of Christianity, and openly profess its distinguishing sentiments. He gives instances, with justificatory citations: Müller, the most learned historian of modern times; Creutzer, the antiquary; Köppen, the metaphysician; Heinroth, the great physiologist. Schleiermacher himself has labored to show, that the way in which he understands the work of Christ in the spiritual deliverance of man, is something more than a moral melioration produced by the purity of his doctrine and the superiority of his example; and he protests against assimilating Jesus to any other benefactors of mankind. Kaiser, Ammon, and De Wette have clearly renounced the self-styled Rationalism.

"The number and excellence of the works now issuing from the Protestant body in that country, and in Switzerland, call for the admiration and the devout gratitude of all who love the Gospel, and are concerned for the best interest of mankind."

On the same interesting topic our fellow citizen, the Rev. Mr. Kurtz, speaks as follows:\*

"In Germany the religion of the Redeemer is gaining ground. *Rationalists*, so called, by which is meant a large and learned class of people in this hemisphere, somewhat similar to our Unitarians; yes, whose principles are often even more objectional than those of the rankest Socinians, are beginning to be ashamed of themselves, and though they formerly gloried in the name of *Rationalists*, they now entirely disclaim the appellation, and their ranks (a few years ago so formidable) have of late been considerably thinned by the increasing and overpowering influence of true evangelic religion.

\* This letter commences thus:—'ERFURT, *Kingdom of Prussia, Augustin Monastery, LUTHER'S CELL, May 14, 1827.* Dear Brother Shaeffer. From the heading of my letter you will perceive that I have selected a very interesting place to write in. Yes, it is a fact, that I am at present in the Augustin Monastery, in Erfurt, seated in the monastic cell of the immortal Reformer, at the same table at which he so often sat and wrote, with his Bible lying at my left hand, his inkstand at my right, and manuscripts of him and Melancthon his coadjutor, suspended in a frame to the wall in my front, and several other Lutheran relics, which are carefully preserved in the cell, to gratify the curiosity of strangers and travellers, who, when they come to Erfurt, never fail to visit this little room with one window, and record their names in a book which is kept here for that purpose.'



In Berlin, the metropolis of Prussia, a very populous and splendid city, where I spent seven weeks, and therefore had an opportunity to become acquainted with the state of religious matters, the cause of Christ is triumphant. A few years since this great city was in a most deplorable condition, both in a moral and religious point of view. Christ was banished from the pulpit as well as from the desk of the Professor;\* unbelief and scepticism were the order of the day; and he who dared to declare his belief in the Scriptures as the inspired word of God, was laughed at as a poor ignorant *mystic*: and now, the very reverse of all this is the fact. In no city have I met with so many humble and cordial followers of the Lamb; in the university a mighty change has taken place, and from almost every pulpit the cause of the Redeemer is ably vindicated, and the efficacy of his atoning blood is held forth and proclaimed in strains at which the very angels cannot but rejoice, and which the stoutest heart is often unable to resist. We also meet with Bible societies all over Germany; and in Saxony, the Lutheran church is, at this moment, forming a missionary society for the evangelization of the North American Indians."

## MISCELLANEOUS DEPARTMENT.

### PROTESTANTISM IN FRANCE.

#### *Letter of Peter Bayssiere.*

(Continued from p. 56.)

I read the promise that Jesus Christ made to the thief crucified on his right hand, who said to him, "Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom." Luke xxiii. 42, 43. If there had been a purgatory, and if any one must remain there some time, it was doubtless this malefactor, condemned by human laws, and probably stained with many crimes. Notwithstanding, the Saviour said to him, "Verily I say unto thee, to-day shalt thou be with me in paradise."

I read in the Epistle of Paul to the Romans, viii. 1: "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus;" a declaration directly opposed to purgatory, which supposes that Christians are, after this life, exposed to a thousand torments.

I read in the Epistle to the Hebrews, ix. 27, that "it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment,"—which proves indubitably, that the destiny of the good and the bad is irrevocably fixed, from the time of their death; and that there is no purgatory from which masses, prayers, or rather gold and silver, can deliver any one.

I read, besides, in the first Epistle of St. John, i. 7, that "the blood of Christ, the Son of God, cleanseth from all sin;" which excludes any other kind of purification, and manifestly contradicts the doctrine of purgatory.

Lastly, I read in the Apocalypse, xiv. 13, that "blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from henceforth: yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them." Another declaration which con-

\*There is a flourishing university in Berlin, with about sixteen or seventeen hundred students, and a proportionable number of Professors.

firms what the preceding passages, and many others which it would take too long to transcribe here, prove in so convincing a manner.

Not having found a single passage in the New Testament, which spoke in favor of purgatory; and, on the contrary, having marked and considered those which I have just quoted, and many others which directly opposed this doctrine, I saw clearly, that the idea of this tenet had never entered the minds of those, whom I was so foolish as to believe the *inventors* of the Gospel. You think rightly, my dear children, that this discovery was not very likely to cement the bonds which attached me to the Romish church, nor to confirm me in a belief, to which I had never been well disposed.

Nevertheless, I was not satisfied; I wished to know positively whence the priests had derived this vain bug-bear. This desire, which did not cease to torment me for several days, led me to think that the pope was doubtless the inventor of it; and from that time, I began to wish to seek again who the pope was, and what were his rights to impose such a belief. I had read often, and had often heard it said and preached, that St. Peter was the chief, the prince of the apostles, that he had been the first pope of Rome, and that all the popes who had come after him, had, in succeeding him, inherited all his rights and prerogatives.

I had a desire to see what the New Testament would say on this subject, and I immediately undertook a second reading with the same feelings with which I at first commenced; that is to say, absorbed by a single object, having in view only to assure myself if the apostle Peter had really been appointed chief of the apostles, and placed at Rome to govern all the other pastors, and to rule over all churches.

This reading, performed with an attention of which I should not perhaps now be capable, resulted in convincing me that the sovereignty of St. Peter was no better established by the New Testament, than the first doctrine which I had sought there; and that, unquestionably, the pope had not an evangelical origin.

I found in Matt. iv. 18, 19, 20, the call addressed to Simon, who was called Peter: but this call did not appear to me, and is not, really different from that which was addressed to Andrew his brother, and to the other apostles.

In chapter x. of the same Gospel, I remarked also, that the first mission which Jesus Christ gave them, was absolutely the same for all, without any particular prerogative to any one. True, Peter is there found the first named; but it is a priority of number only, which does not prove any distinction, or any superiority. It was necessary that some one should be named first. I made again the same remark on the last commission which they received, on the day of the ascension of their Master, and which is related in Matthew xxviii. 19, 20; in Mark xiv. 15; and in the Acts of the Apostles, i. 8. This commission, although expressed in different terms in the three places, is still the same, and does not differ in any thing essential. It is given to all, indiscriminately; and to all it is preceded or accompanied by the same promises, at the same time that it confers on them equal rights and equal powers.

The 18th and 19th verses of the sixteenth chapter of St. Matthew, in which it is said, "Thou art Peter, and on this rock I will build my church," &c. arrested me a moment, and I was on the point of mistaking the true sense of this declaration. But having reflected that Christ had interrogated all the apostles, in verse 15th, and that it was the sentiment of them all that Peter had expressed in his forward answer of verse 16th, I perceived that Jesus Christ had addressed equally to all, the words which seemed to be said to Peter only; and that no supremacy is attributed to him there, any more than in the preceding passages.

I was confirmed in this opinion, when I read in John xx. 23, that Jesus Christ, *speaking to all*, had addressed to them, afterwards, the same promise, saying, "Whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained." I was confirmed in it, by what St. Paul says to the Ephesians, ii. 20, 21: "And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone, in whom all the building, fitly framed together, groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord." And lastly, I was confirmed in it by what St. John relates in the Apocalypse, xxi. 14: "And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb."

In all these passages, and many others which I forbear to mention, I perceived that Jesus Christ was announced as the true foundation, as the corner stone on which the Christian church rests; that all the apostles, and all the prophets,

were equally appointed to be the foundation of it, but only because all their doctrine relates to Jesus Christ, who is the principal object of it; and I was convinced that St. Peter was in no way more distinguished or more elevated, than his companions in the work. Though I did not then comprehend, as well as I now do, the Gospel sense of the 18th and 19th verses of the sixteenth chapter of Matthew, I nevertheless remained persuaded that the papacy, or the sovereignty of St. Peter, could not reasonably be deduced from them.

The last step of my conviction, that St. Peter was in nothing above the rest of the apostles, was seeing what he himself says in his first Epistle, v. 1: "The elders who are among you I exhort, who am also an elder." It was but to see what St. Paul says, 2 Corinthians xi. 5: "For I suppose I was not a whit behind the very chiefest apostles." It was but to see that Paul, as he relates it himself, *opposed Cephas, or Peter, to his face because he was censurable*; and he rebuked him strongly before every body, *because he compelled the Gentiles to live as the Jews*. It was but to see how the faithful of the church at Jerusalem, Acts xi. 2, 3, made no difficulty to reprove Peter, because that he had been, and eaten, with the uncircumcised; how they asked him the reason of his conduct; and how this apostle hastened to justify himself, by recounting to them, in order, in what manner the thing had happened. Finally, it was but to see Acts viii. 14: "Now when the apostles, which were at Jerusalem, heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John."

There is not the least doubt, said I to myself, reading again and again all the testimonies, that Peter was in all things equal to the rest of the apostles, and had no advantage, no jurisdiction, over them. If he had been really, if they had believed him, or if he had believed himself, the chief, the prince of the apostles, the sovereign pastor of the church, is it credible, that he would have called himself *an elder like the other elders*? Is it credible, that Paul would have pretended that he was in nothing inferior to Peter, or would have attempted to oppose him to his face, and to reprove him publicly? Is it credible that private Christians, simple laymen, would have been permitted to dispute with him, would have dared to demand the reason of his conduct; and that he would have felt under obligation to satisfy them, by hastening to justify himself\*?

Is it credible in short, that he would have been sent by the other apostles, that he would have received their orders, when, if he had been the chief, it was for him to command and send them?

Nothing more could be necessary to convince me, that all which the Romish church says, of the pre-eminence of St. Peter, and the sovereignty of the popes, his pretended successors, was a fabrication, stripped of all probability; or, at least, no more taught in the Gospel, than that of purgatory.

If I was astonished at this, I was not less so at not finding in all the New Testament a single word which says, or even led me to suppose, that St. Peter had ever preached, or had ever been at Rome, where the Catholics pretend, and believe, as an article of faith, that he was the first pope.

The book of Acts keeps the most profound silence with respect to it, and gives us no reason to suppose it. All the Epistles, also, leave this fact enveloped with a veil which renders it still more doubtful. In those of St. Paul to the Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, and Colossians, the second to Timothy, that to Philemon, all written from Rome, at different periods, and that to the Hebrews, written from Italy, in which it would be natural to find this fact established, there is no mention of it. In the four last, the apostle speaks of his companions in sufferings, labors, and the work of the Lord; but he says not a word of Peter, as being with him. He would doubtless have named him, as he did Tychicus, Onesimus, Aristarchus, Luke, Demas, Eubulus, Pudens, Linus, and Claudia, if Peter had been at Rome; but, among all these names, we seek for his in vain. It is not there, nor is anything found which relates to the residence of this apostle in the capital of the world. In my opinion, this does not prove that he exercised the popedom there. Lastly, his own Epistles tend no more to prove it. The first, (and without doubt the second also,) was written from Babylon, not to the Romans, but to the strangers, that is to say, the Hebrews converted to Christianity, scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia; countries in which, it appears certain, that this

\* The popes, his pretended successors, have not been so complaisant; they have known better the value of their authority. *Note to the Paris Edition.*

apostle particularly exercised his ministry, after having, for some years, preached the Gospel to the church at Antioch.

Behold, my children, how I obtained the assurance that these two mighty springs of the Romish church, *purgatory* and *papacy*, had not, at least, been forged by the authors of the Gospel. Though before this discovery, I had not been very zealous in the belief of the papists on these two points, I cannot tell you what a singular interest I took in the opinions I had just acquired. The New Testament, which I was then far from regarding as the deposit of Divine Revelation, appeared to me a collection of precious documents; and I can assure you that it began, from that time, by presenting me a new means of power, to inspire me with more confidence, than it had ever before done.

Engaged by the two readings which I had just completed in an effort of of mind, which, though new and laborious for a poor mechanic like myself, nevertheless did not cease to offer some attractions, I felt myself excited to continue my researches.

I have already informed you, my dear children, of my invincible repugnance to commune after the manner of the Romish church. I have told you, that nothing on earth could have persuaded me to this action, by which they pretend that the creature eats his Creator, and I never could think of it without uneasiness and horror. This dogma, which teaches that Jesus Christ is *present in body and in soul*, in the host, and that every communicant is nourished *in reality, by his flesh and his blood*, is, of all the dogmas of papacy, that which inspired me with the most aversion for the Christian religion, to which I attributed it, and which contributed the most to detain me in infidelity.

My whole attention was directed to this dogma, when I re-commenced my researches of the Gospel. I read the New Testament a third time without quitting it, entirely occupied, as before, with the one object which I had in view.

I found nothing in the Gospels of St. Matthew, St. Mark, or St. Luke, which led me to suppose that the authors might have believed in the *real and corporeal presence* of Jesus Christ in the *sacrament* of the *Lord's Supper*. The words at its institution, related by the first, chapter xxvi. 26, 28, by the second, chapter xiv. 22—24, and by the third, chapter xxii. 19, 20;—these words, related, with some slight variations, by the three Evangelists, and which I took great care to bring together and compare, offered to my mind no other idea than that of a commemorative ceremony, designed to preserve and retrace the remembrance of the sufferings, the passion, and death of Christ. In the miserable state of infidelity in which I then was, they could not make me feel the grandeur, the sanctity, and the efficacy of the sacrament; nevertheless, they gave me ideas of it which I still retain.

I did not then find the dogma of the real presence taught there; but I thought I had found it formally established in the Gospel according to St. John, vi. 51, 53—57. When I read these words: "I am the living bread which came down from heaven. If any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever; and the bread that I will give him is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him." When I had read these words, it appeared to me, that they had probably given rise to the belief of the Roman Catholics. I even thought, that he who had committed them to writing, had only a view to found the doctrine of the *real presence*. I was then tempted to stop, and to carry no farther my researches on a doctrine, which I believed I had found clearly taught, and whose absurdity had always been so shocking to me. I felt then an extreme disgust to the Gospel. Nevertheless, inwardly excited by an invisible Power, which was then unknown to me, but which I now recognize as the Holy Spirit, the author of Divine Revelation; drawn, as if against my will, by the Spirit of God, who would one day make me appreciate and receive the truth of his word, and, for the moment, preserve me from an error, which would perhaps have forever removed me from the fountain of living waters;—inwardly excited and drawn by the Holy Spirit, I took up my Testament, which I had for a moment cast aside, and having re-commenced the 6th of John, I read it through, which I had not done before.

When I arrived at the 63d verse, I was struck, as if by a ray of light, which suddenly discovered to me the mistake I had at first made, concerning the signification of the six verses transcribed above, and which made me attach a new value to the Gospel. After having read: "It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing; the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life." I had the key of the chapter, and the dogma of the *real presence* was no longer found there for me. I saw that it was not at all a question there, to receive into the mouth, grind between the teeth, and introduce into the stomach, the *body and blood* of Jesus Christ. I understood that the words *eat* and *drink* were there figuratively used, and signified nothing but to know Christ, to come to him, and believe on him, as it is explained in verse 35th, of the same chapter, in which Christ says: "I am the bread of life; he that cometh to me shall never hunger; he that believeth on me shall never thirst." It was, then, demonstrated clear as the day, that Jesus Christ expected to be eaten and drank only *spiritually*, and, as I now understand it, by faith, which, when it is living and acting in our hearts, unites us to him in a wonderful manner, and clothes us with his infinite merits, at the same time that it purifies and sanctifies our views, our sentiments, our desires, and our wills.

After having thus discovered my error, I felt more inclined than ever to pursue my reading, and to see if the dogma of the *real presence* would not be better established by what remained to be read. The farther I advanced, my dear children, the more I was convinced, that neither Christ nor his apostles had ever thought of it. It would doubtless take too long to relate here, all the passages expressly contradicting this revolting dogma. It will be sufficient to quote a few.

I found in the book of Acts, i. 9 and II, that the apostles saw Christ raised to heaven, supported by a cloud which took him out of their sight, and that two angels appeared to them, and said, "Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so *come in like manner* as ye have seen him go into heaven." Has a priest, said I, has a Roman Catholic, assisting at the mass, and ready to commune, ever seen Jesus Christ come from heaven *in this manner* to place himself in the host? Yet the angels said that he would come from heaven *in like manner*.

I found in the same book, iii. 21. that heaven must receive Christ until the times of restitution of all things. He is not then bodily present upon earth, said I again.

I found in the Epistle to the Colossians, iii. 1, that Christ sitteth at the right hand of God, from which I drew the conclusion, that he was not present in body and soul on so many altars, and in so great a number of hosts, as this doctrine supposes.

I found, in the Epistle to the Hebrews, ix and x, the strongest declarations, not only against the *real presence*, but against the whole system of the mass, by which they pretend to renew daily the passion and sacrifice of Christ. St. Paul says, that "Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us;" and he also says, that "he was *once* offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the *second* time, without sin, unto salvation." He has said, that "by the will of God we are sanctified, through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ *once for all*; who, after he had offered *one sacrifice for sins, forever* sat down on the right hand of God." All this demonstrated, with the utmost evidence, that the dogma of the *real presence* and all that follows from it, was as remote from the faith of the apostle, as the east is from the west, or paradise from hell.

In short, my dear children, the words of the institution, which I found related by St. Paul, I Cor. xi, and on which I stopped and returned several times, left me not the shadow of doubt, that the doctrine of the Romish church on the eucharist, was without foundation in the Gospel, and consequently taken from another source.

In effect, all the discourse of Christ in instituting the Lord's Supper, positively announces, that it is a *memorial* which he established, and which he wished to leave behind him. After having taken, blessed, and broken the bread, he commands that it should be eaten in *remembrance* of him. After having presented the cup to drink, he adds; "Do this in remembrance of me, as often as ye drink it." The words, "This is my body; this cup is the new testament in



my blood," appeared to me only what they really are, that is, figurative expressions, which signify that the bread represented his body, and that the wine represented his blood. These words neither change nor modify in any way the principal idea, the idea of *memorial*, which appears in all this act of Jesus Christ. And if it had been possible that they could deceive me, and that I could take them in the sense of the reality, I should have been soon undeceived by reading the words which immediately follow, which, alone, overthrow the doctrine of the real presence, and the whole edifice of the mass. These are the words; "For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come."

After this declaration, joined to so many others, what more proof was necessary that St. Paul did not believe that the host was Jesus Christ? I saw, then, that he taught clearly by that, that it is *bread* which is eaten at the communion, and *wine* which is drunk, and not the real flesh and real blood of the Son of God. I saw that he taught, that the Lord is not present at the sacrament, in the sense of the Romish church, since he says, that, in partaking of it, we show the Lord's death *till he come*. I saw that, according to St. Paul, it is false that the priests hold in their hands the body and blood of Christ, and that they offer it a sacrifice in the mass.

Here, my children, I suspended my researches. Convinced, as deeply as possible, that the dogma of the real presence was not taught in the New Testament, my conclusion was, that it must have the same origin as papacy and purgatory.

I had been absent from my ordinary employment the whole of the time, occupied by my study and meditation; and being obliged to get my bread and yours by the sweat of my brow, and having no other object at that time, which held my mind in suspense, and demanded examination, I returned to my daily occupations, and discontinued the reading of the Gospel. My Testament had certainly gained much in my estimation; but without stopping to inquire here on what account it had become precious to me, I can say, it was not as containing the word of God, and all the principles of knowledge which belong to piety. Thus, not exciting any real interest in my heart, it was again banished to the place which it had so long occupied on the chimney-piece of my room; and eighteen months or two years passed away without a thought of consulting it again.

In this interval, I contracted my second marriage. Your weakness, young as you were, the thousand cares which your age required, and which my employment and absences made it impossible for me to bestow, were the motives which induced me to take this step. God, in his fatherly kindness, deigned to direct my choice, although I did not think of praying for it, and you found a second mother in her who has never ceased to be to me the best and most esteemed of friends.

In this interval, also, I was more than ever brought back to the thoughts of religion. Although I had only read the Gospel to satisfy my curiosity on the three points of the Catholic doctrine above mentioned, and although my attention had been exclusively directed to what concerned these particular points, it is probable that I had, without suspecting it, received some of the impressions which the word of God is calculated to produce, and that I was already under its secret influence.

I can affirm, that from this period, a vague and confused idea of religion was constantly before my mind. Several times I found myself occupied with the origin of the universe, the vicissitudes and the end of so many beings who present themselves for a few moments on the stage of the world, and who so soon disappear from it. My own destiny then employed my thoughts. But I was far from ascribing it to Him, upon whom it entirely depends. In all these meditations, God was not in the place which he ought to hold. Having only false or uncertain ideas of him, I was as far as possible from regarding him as the living principle, which animates and beautifies every thing to the eye of the Christian, and as the pure light, which enlighteneth every man that cometh into the world.

(To be continued.)

THE  
SPIRIT OF THE PILGRIMS.

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COMMUNICATIONS.

THE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCHES OF MASSACHUSETTS.

(Continued from p. 74.)

We proceed now to assert *another right* for the churches—that of *holding and controlling their own property*.—Many of the churches of Massachusetts came early into the possession of property, to a very considerable amount. Some of this was acquired by purchase, and some by gifts or grants from the proprietors of common lands, or from pious and charitable individuals. In regard to the property given to the churches, the object to which it should be applied was, in some cases, specified; and in others, not. In either case, the property was *given to the churches*, to be disposed of according to their direction and order. Now what we claim for the churches, is, the plain, simple, natural right of holding and managing *their own* property, according to their own discretion. We ask not that the church may be allowed to seize and appropriate the property of the parish, but we do ask that it may have the disposal of *its own*. Says the good man in the parable, “Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with my own?”

As the right of the churches to hold and manage their own property is thought to depend upon their political existence, we shall endeavor to prove, from their early and subsequent history, that they have been regarded as *bodies politic*, known in law, exercising the powers of a *legal incorporation*. In support of this position, let it be considered,

1. That the original churches of Massachusetts were gathered *according to law*. They were gathered with the consent and approbation of the civil powers. For several years after the beginning of the settlement, whenever a church was intended to be gathered, the approbation of the *magistrates* must be first obtained.\*

\* See Winthrop's Hist. vol. i. pp. 180, 217, 275, &c.

And in 1641, a law was passed, giving free liberty to gather churches, with the approbation of the *magistrates* "and the elders of neighbor churches;" but in no other way.\* This certainly looks as though the churches were to be regarded as *legally organized and established*.

2. The churches in Massachusetts, or rather their members, were for many years entrusted with *great civil power*. From 1631, until 1662, none were entitled to the right of *suffrage*, or could be chosen or appointed to any *office*, who were not members of some regularly established church.† The churches, therefore, for more than thirty years, had the power of excluding any person in the country from any office, and even from exercising the rights of a freeman.—Is it possible that bodies possessing so much power were not regarded as *bodies politic*—bodies recognized and incorporated by the laws?

3. We have evidence that in the early settlement of Massachusetts, the churches exercised *parochial* authority. They had similar corporate powers to those which *parishes* now exercise. What is now a *precinct* or *parish*? "A precinct or parish," says Chief Justice Parker, "is a corporation established *solely for the purpose of maintaining public worship*, and their powers are *limited to that object*. They may raise money for building and keeping in repair their meeting house, and supporting their minister, but for *no other purpose*."‡ But there is evidence that the churches, in the early settlement of this Commonwealth, exercised all the power here ascribed to parishes. They built and owned the first meeting houses, and had the power of levying and collecting money for this object. In 1640, says Gov. Winthrop, "the church of Boston (the CHURCH) were necessitated to build a new meeting house, and a great difference arose about the place of situation, which had much troubled other churches, on the like occasion; but after some debate, it was referred to a committee, and was quietly settled. It cost about one thousand pounds, which was raised out of the weekly voluntary contribution, without any noise or complaint; when, in some *other* CHURCHES, which did it by way of *rates*, there was much difficulty and *compulsion by levies*, to raise a far less sum."||

The churches, at this period, had the power of raising money by tax for the *support of their pastors*. Says Gov. Winthrop again, in 1642, "the churches held a different course, in raising the minister's maintenance. Some did it by way of *taxation*, which was very offensive to some. Amongst others, one Briscoe of Watertown, being grieved with this course in that town, the rather *because himself and others, who were NO MEMBERS, were taxed*,

\* Colony Laws, p. 100.

† Ibid. p. 117.

‡ Pickering's Reports, vol. i. p. 97.

|| History, vol. ii. p. 31.

wrote a book against it," &c.\* From the latter part of this quotation, we learn, that the word *church* is here used in its proper sense, as including only *members in covenant*—that the church, in this sense, had the power of *levying and collecting a tax*, for the support of its minister—that the power thus exercised was not mere church power, as it extended to those who were *not members*, and consequently, that it must have been conferred by some *provision or enactment of the General Court*.

These conclusions are all confirmed by Hubbard's account of the same affair. "About this time, some difference happened in New England about the way of raising the maintenance of the ministers, in regard that many CHURCHES proceeded therein rather by way of *taxation*, than by contribution. This new way of easement was offensive to some in the country. Amongst others, it was very grievous to one Briscoe, a tanner, of Watertown; for this man published a book against the way of maintenance, wherein himself, and *those that were NO MEMBERS, were taxed* to maintain the ministers of the place they belonged unto. He was convened before the court to answer for his reproachful speeches; but for his arguments, they were not worth the answering; for he that shall deny the exerting of the *civil power* to provide for the comfortable subsistence of them that preach the Gospel, *fuste potius erudiendus quam argumento.*"†—What was matter of inference from Winthrop's account is here expressly recorded,—that the *churches* were authorized by "the *civil power*" to collect taxes of their members and *others* for the support of ministers; or, in other words, that they were *parochial corporations*.

Indeed, the churches, at the period of which we are speaking, must have had parochial authority, if this existed anywhere; for there were no parishes, as such, in existence, and parochial authority was not given to towns, until several years later. Chief Justice Parker dates the commencement of "legal obligation" on the part of towns to provide for the maintenance of ministers, in 1652.‡

We state it, therefore, as unquestionable fact, that the early churches of Massachusetts possessed and exercised parochial powers. But such powers they could not have exercised, had they not been, in some way, legally incorporated.

4. The act of the General Court, *accepting and approving of the Cambridge Platform*, was a virtual incorporation of the churches. It may not be generally known, that the Synod who framed this Platform assembled by *order* of the General Court||—that the

\* Hist. vol. ii. p. 93. It will be understood, here and elsewhere, when shewing the state of things in the early settlement of our country, that we are merely *exhibiting facts*, without expressing an opinion, one way or the other, as to their propriety.

† Hubbard's Hist. p. 412.

‡ Mass. Term Reports, vol. xvi. p. 516.

|| Gov. Winthrop says, "The *order* was sent to the churches within this jurisdiction; and to the churches in other jurisdictions, a letter was sent withal." vol. ii. p. 269.

members were supported, while in session, at the public charge—that the Platform, when framed, was “presented to the General Court for their consideration and acceptance”—and that the same “was most thankfully *accepted and approved.*”\* “It passed the test of the *whole General Court*, both magistrates and deputies, and the practice of it was *commended to all the churches of the jurisdiction.*”† This order, or act, passed “in the month of October, 1648.” In 1680, the Platform was again approved by the General Court, and “ordered to be printed, for the benefit of the churches in present and after times.” By these acts of the courts, especially the first, the churches were virtually established and incorporated, with all the powers and liberties granted to them in the Platform. But the Platform grants to the churches, through the instrumentality of their deacons, the power of receiving, holding, and disposing of property. “The office and work of a deacon is to *receive* the offerings of the church, *gifts given to the church*, and to *keep the treasury of the church*, and therewith to serve the tables which the church is to provide for; as the Lord’s table, the table of the ministers, and of such as are in necessity.”‡ By the acceptance of this provision of the Platform, the churches were virtually incorporated, with the power of holding and controlling their own funds.

5. The churches of Massachusetts have, from the first, *exercised* the right of holding and controlling different kinds of property. They held, as we have seen, the first houses of worship. They early commenced the purchasing of lands.|| Would they have done this, if they were not allowed to take them in fee, and to hold them in succession? Frequent grants of land, and donations of other property, were made to the churches, all which supposes that they were acknowledged to have the power of holding and improving them. And the property thus acquired, they *did hold and improve*. They have held it, by their deacons, in uninterrupted succession, and (as was proved in regard to the church in Dedham) have “had the *exclusive control and management* of it,” to the present time.§ Chief Justice Parker does indeed suppose that some “feoffee or grantee in trust,” to hold the property of the church, might, in early times, have been appointed by the county court;¶ but the supposition is mere conjecture, without a shadow of evidence to support it. The records of all the oldest churches may be consulted, and the existence of a grantee in trust, appointed by the county court, to take the charge of the church’s property, shall not be so much as intimated in one of them. No; the churches have held and controlled their own property, from the

\* Mather, vol. ii. p. 182.

† Hubbard, p. 550.

‡ Chap. vii.

|| Some of the property of the first church in Dedham was obtained by purchase. See Mass. Term Reports, vol. xvi. p. 489.

§ Mass. Term Reports, vol. xvi. p. 491.

¶ Ibid. p. 497.



first ; and, by so doing, have proved themselves to be in possession of the powers and privileges of legally incorporated bodies.

This argument alone would sustain the corporate existence of the churches, were all that has been said previously to be set aside ; For the churches, it appears, have *so long*, and by *so general consent*, exercised the powers of corporations, in holding and controlling property, that their claim to be regarded as incorporate bodies is well established on the ground of *prescription* or *custom*, if on no other. In Coke on Littleton, it is said, "A body politic or incorporate may commence and be established three manner of ways, viz. by *prescription*, by letters patent, or by act of Parliament." "*Prescription* is a title taking his substance of *use* and *time* allowed by law. Where a man will plead a title of prescription of custome, he shall say, that such a custome hath been used from *time whereof the memory of man runneth not to the contrary*." In Blackstone, it is also said, "With us in England, the king's consent is absolutely necessary to the erection of any corporation, either *impliedly* or expressly given. The king's *implied* consent is to be found in corporations which exist by the force of the *common law*, common law being nothing else but *custom*, arising from the universal agreement of the whole community. Another method of *implication*, whereby the king's consent is presumed, is as to all corporations by *prescription*, which have existed as corporations, *time whereof the memory of man runneth not to the contrary* ; and therefore are looked upon in law to be *well created*."

"It is a well known fact, that *custom* and *prescription* are far from being more restricted here, than in England." It was decided by Chief Justice Parsons many years ago, that "this country has now been settled *long enough*, to allow of the time necessary to prove a prescription."\* Setting, therefore, all other considerations aside, the fact, that the churches of Massachusetts have, by universal consent, and for almost two hundred years, exercised the right of holding and disposing of property, is evidence enough of their corporate existence. They have acted as corporations, "*time whereof the memory of man runneth not to the contrary* ; and therefore are to be looked upon as *well created*."

6. In 1754, an act passed the Provincial Legislature, which went to *confirm* and *establish* the corporate existence and powers of the churches. In this act it is assumed, that grants and donations had previously been made, not only to the churches, but to "the poor of the churches," and to the officers of the churches. It is farther assumed, that "these several grants and donations" were intended to "go in succession." But, "*doubts* had arisen, *in what cases* such donations and grants might operate, so as to go in succession." Doubts might well arise as to what had been given to

\* Mass. Term Reports, vol. vi. p. 90.

“the poor of the churches,” and to the officers of the churches, if not in respect to church property itself. Wherefore, to remove *all* doubt, this law of 1754, was enacted, and “the deacons of the several Protestant churches (not Episcopal) were incorporated, to take in succession all grants and donations, whether real or personal, made either to their several churches, the poor of their churches, or to them and their successors, and to sue and defend in all actions touching the same. And wherever the ministers or elders shall, in the original grants or donations, have been joined with the deacons; in such cases, such officers and their successors, together with the deacons, shall be deemed the corporation for such purposes as aforesaid;—saving, that no alienation of any lands belonging to churches, hereafter made by the deacons, without the consent of the church, or a committee of the church, for that purpose appointed, shall be sufficient to pass the same. And the several churches in this province, are hereby empowered to choose a committee, to call the deacons, or other church officers, to an account, and if need be, to commence and prosecute any suits, touching the same, and also to advise and assist such deacons in the administration of the affairs aforesaid.”\*

Chief Justice Parker asserts that “this statute was predicated upon the fact, that much property had been conveyed to churches, who were *incapable of holding it in succession.*”† But, with due deference, we must be allowed to say, that he is obviously mistaken. This statute does not assert or *imply*, that the churches are “incapable of holding in succession.” But, “*doubts* have arisen,” as, in respect to some of the property intended to be secured by the act, they might well arise; and the act was intended rather to remove doubts, and to *confirm* existing powers and rights, than to create new ones. It is entitled “an act for the *better securing* grants and donations to pious uses;” for their *BETTER* securing—implying, that they were not regarded previously as *insecure*, but the Legislature wished, if possible, to *increase* the security. Indeed, it is evident from the letter of the act itself, that the churches *had been regarded* as capable of holding property in succession. For why were “grants and donations” *made* to churches, “by sundry well disposed persons,” with “the intent and expectation that they should go in succession;” if the churches were not regarded as *capable* of holding in succession?

But it will be said, If the churches were previously regarded as incorporate bodies, then the act, of which we are speaking, which empowered the deacons to hold their property in trust, was an infringement of their existing rights.—This inference would be just, if the act in question had taken the property of the churches entirely out of their hands, and from under their supervision and

\* Province Laws, p. 606.

† Mass. Term Reports, vol. xvi. p. 497.

control. But it did not. It went rather to confirm than to diminish their existing rights. The act, to be sure, incorporated the deacons; but it virtually *incorporated the churches over them* with (as C. J. Parker expresses it) "supervisory powers."\* For, in the first place, the deacons are but the *servants* of the church, who can be appointed or removed at pleasure. And then, while in office, they cannot "alienate any lands belonging to the church" without its consent; necessarily implying that the church still retains a legal hold upon its lands. And besides, the church is expressly empowered "to choose a committee to *call the deacons to an account*; and if need be, to *commence and prosecute any suits*"† against them; and also "to *advise and assist them in the administration*" of the church's affairs.—This act was obviously intended, as it actually goes, to *confirm* the corporate powers of the churches; to protect them in the exercise of their legal rights; and to increase, if possible, the security and certainty, that their property shall descend in uninterrupted succession, and never be wrested from their hands.

The act of which we have been speaking, constructed with so much care and wisdom for the security of the churches, was revised and re-enacted, Feb. 20, 1786, and is now a law of the Commonwealth. Its operation was uniformly happy, and (so far as we know) entirely satisfactory to the churches, affording them all the security they desired, until interrupted by some late decisions of the Supreme Judicial Court—the same to which we have already referred, as depriving the church of its right in the choice of pastor. See number for February, p. 73.

These decisions bear upon the rights of the churches, in both cases, in the same way, viz. by *denying their independent existence*, and making them the mere appendages of a parish. Says Chief Justice Parker, "The only circumstance which gives a church any legal character, is its *connexion with some regularly constituted society*." "A church cannot *subsist*, without some religious community to which it is attached." "As to all civil purposes, the secession of a whole church from the parish would be an *extinction* of the church; and it is competent to the members of the parish to institute a new church, or to engraft one upon the old stock, if any of it should remain; and this new church would succeed to *all the rights of the old*, in relation to the parish." "If all the members of a church should withdraw, leaving not even the deacons, or members enough to elect them, it might be necessary to apply to the Legislature, to appoint some new trustee of the property, until a new church should be organized within the parish. But where members enough are left, to exe-

\* Mass. Term Reports, vol. xvi. p. 501.

† Is not the power here given to churches complete proof, of itself, of their corporate existence? They may, by their committee, "commence and prosecute any suits."

cute the objects for which a church is gathered, choose deacons, &c., *no legal change* has taken place; the *body remains*; and the secession of a majority of the members would have no other effect, than a temporary absence would have upon a meeting, which had been regularly summoned.”\*

These quotations, to which others of a similar import might be added, are sufficient to exhibit the *doctrine* which is now held, and which has the force of law, in relation to this subject. It is substantially this: A church, when once connected in public worship with a town or parish, cannot, but by extinction, be disconnected. It cannot, as a church, withdraw. It may become, in conscience, dissatisfied with the connexion; may vote to dissolve it; and its members, in a large majority, may leave the parish; but they leave it only as individuals; the church, with its property, remains. Indeed, the members may all go, and go by solemn vote; but in this case, they die as a church; their property, however expressly given and secured to the church, is left to the parish; and this “is competent to institute a new church,” which may be more obsequious to its wishes, and “will succeed to all the rights of the old.”

In examining the doctrine here stated, we shall, first, notice the arguments, by which it is thought to be *supported*, and, secondly, those which go, in our opinion, to *refute* and *overthrow* it.

1. It assumed by Chief Justice Parker, that in the early settlement of this country, “there was no very familiar distinction between the church and the whole assembly of Christians in the town. Almost, if not quite all the adult inhabitants were, at this time, church members; and a grant to the church, under such circumstances, could mean nothing else than a grant to the town.” “A person, intending to give property to pious uses, within the first half century after the migration of our ancestors, would denominate the donees the *church*—meaning the whole society of worshipping Christians.”†

In support of the opinion here expressed, Chief Justice Parker adduces several considerations; as,

(1.) The practice of the *primitive* churches, which our fathers, he says, designed to imitate. But is Chief Justice Parker *sure* that there was no distinction in primitive Christian times, between the church and the congregation? We have proved, conclusively, that there was such a distinction, (see number for February, pp. 57—60,) and the proof of it need not be here repeated.

(2.) He refers to the practice of Congregational churches, “before the migration of our fathers to this country,” intimating that in *them*, the distinction between church and congregation did not exist.—We have inquired particularly into this subject, and have

\* *Mass. Term Reports*, vol. xvi. pp. 504, 505.

† *Ibid.* pp. 498, 500.

my own, but merely held in trust, for the benefit of the objects of my previous bounty?

But we will admit, for the sake of argument, what is probably more than the truth, that the property of the church in Dedham was originally and exclusively *designed* for the support of public worship. Still, it must have been designed to be expended under the direction of the church, and for the support of such worship as the brethren should approve; and the parish would receive benefit, only as they were willing to *unite in the worship of the church*. This, undoubtedly, was the way, in which the parish originally came to be benefitted by the church's appropriation of its funds. The church instituted their worship, and others came and united with them in it, and consented to assist them in supporting it. But this furnishes not a particle of evidence that the church is a mere trustee for the parish. Indeed, the whole proceeding implies the *contrary*.

To the supposition, that the church is, and was designed to be, a trustee for the parish, there are, in our view, insuperable objections; and especially so, on the ground taken by Chief Justice Parker, that the church is not a corporate body, and "not capable of holding property in succession."\* If the property of the church was originally intended for the benefit of the parish, why, we ask, was it not given to the parish? The parish, certainly, is a responsible body; and what need of any trustee in the case? And if a trustee was needed, why, in the name of reason, was such a body as Chief Justice Parker conceives the church to be, constituted the trustee? Why trust one body with property, for the benefit of another which is incorporated, when the body trusted has no corporate powers, and is "incapable of holding property in succession?" This is like making the minor trustee for his parents, or the ward for his guardian, or the woman for her husband. Nor is this all the absurdity of the supposition. By the statute of 1754, the deacons are undoubtedly put in trust for the church, and the church may call them to an account for the manner in which the trust is executed. Here, then, according to the doctrine of the Judge, we have the deacons trustees for the church, and the church a trustee for the parish! A most singular state of things truly! Especially, when we consider that the parish is a perfectly responsible body, capable of holding and managing property to any reasonable amount, and of all others least needing a trustee of any kind.

3. Chief Justice Parker insists that his views of the church are "conformable to the *usages of the country*; for," says he, "although many instances may have occurred, of the removal of church members from one church, or one place of worship, to another, and no doubt a removal of a *majority* of the members has sometimes

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occurred; we do not hear of any church ceasing to exist, while there were members enough left to do church service," "a diminution of its numbers will not affect its identity."\*—But did Chief Justice Parker ever hear of a church voting, by a large majority, to withdraw from a parish, and of its withdrawing accordingly, and still of its leaving itself behind? This was the case precisely, on which his Honor was called to decide. What usage of the country can he bring, in support of an instance such as this? No doubt, church members may remove from one place to another; and indeed a majority of a church may remove, as individuals, by dismission and recommendation, and still leave the church behind them. "A diminution of its numbers," in this way, "will not affect the identity of the body." But when a church, in regular meeting, takes up the subject of withdrawing from a parish; deliberates respecting it; solemnly votes to withdraw, and accordingly does withdraw, (although it may leave individuals behind,) we insist upon it that the church is withdrawn; and we challenge any person acquainted with our history to bring any respectable usage of the country, previous to the late decisions, to countervail the sentiment we have expressed.

4. Chief Justice Parker endeavors to support his views of the church, by *analogies* drawn from other bodies. When one parish separates from another, "the effect is, to leave the original body politic entire, however large may be the proportion which secedes. And so it is of all voluntary societies. A refusal of a majority of the members to act, would devolve all power over the subject upon those who might choose to persevere."† But these analogies, it will be seen, do not meet the case. Suppose a parish, in regular meeting, votes, by a large majority, to remove from one place of worship to another. Can it not in this way remove? Or will the minority—it may be a mere handful—who choose to remain in the former place of worship, be regarded as the original parish? "And so of all voluntary societies. A refusal of a majority of the members to act, devolves" the right of acting upon those who choose to persevere. But suppose a majority of the members do *not* refuse to act. Suppose they assemble, and deliberate, and vote, that in future they will hold their meetings on the other side of the street; can they not, in such case, remove? Or will the dissenters, perhaps a very few, who are opposed to the removal, and who choose to meet in the original place, be regarded and treated as the society?

5. "That a church cannot subsist, without some religious community to which it is attached," or in other words, that it is inseparable from the parish, "has been," says Chief Justice Parker, "the understanding of the people of New England, from the foundation of the colonies. *All the numerous laws* which were passed by the

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*shewn*, that in the first Congregational churches of England and Holland, the distinction in question *did exist*. See Feb. number, p. 63. These churches were formed by *covenant*, and consisted of such, and such only, as made a public profession of their faith.

(3.) In support of the opinion under consideration, Chief Justice Parker quotes some sentences from Mr. Wise. It is remarkable that the authority of Mr. Wise should be relied on, as he wrote almost a hundred years after the settlement of the country. But the testimony of Mr. Wise will be duly appreciated, when it is known, that the avowed object of his work was to *vindicate and enforce the Cambridge Platform*. Accordingly, he quotes from the Platform, with high approbation, the following definition of a church. "A Congregational church is a company of saints by calling, united into one body, by a *holy covenant*."\*

(4.) Chief Justice Parker infers, since church membership was essential to the rights of a freeman, that "almost, if not quite all" the early settlers of Massachusetts were members of the church. We have shewn already, that all the first settlers were not members of the church; and in some places, not even a majority were such. See Feb. number, p. 61. But suppose they were so. This would not make the church the town, nor the town the church. The town was a civil body, established for municipal purposes. The church was an ecclesiastical body, established for strictly religious purposes. All who lived within certain prescribed boundaries, were inhabitants of the town. All who entered into solemn covenant, and made a public profession of their faith, were members of the church. Never, in this country, was the distinction wider between church and town, than during the first fifty years after its settlement. A grant to the church, at this period, would mean anything, rather than a grant to the town. No person in his senses, intending to give property for pious uses, could mistake the one for the other.

It is the more remarkable that Chief Justice Parker should hazard the assertions he has made on this subject, since the distinction between church and town is *expressly recognized* in the grants to the church in Dedham—the very grants on which he was commenting. In a grant of the proprietors, made in 1642, "forty acres at the least, or sixty acres at the most, were set apart for public use, viz. for the *town*, the *church*, and a *free school*."† And in 1660, there was a grant made from the *town* "to the *church*."† Yet the Judge would have us believe, that, in the early settlement of our country, "there was no great distinction between the church and the town," and that "a grant to the church, under such circumstances, could mean nothing else than a grant to the town."!!

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2. In support of the doctrine of the late decisions, it has been alleged, that, in holding and managing property, the church is merely a *trustee for the parish*; and, consequently, were the church allowed to disconnect itself from the parish, and remove its property, the trust would be violated. But how does it appear that the church is merely a trustee for the parish? Taking, for example, the church in Dedham, on which the decision before us was made; how does it appear that this church was no more than a trustee, for the benefit of the parish with which it was connected? Is it *so said*, in any of the ancient purchases, or grants, or gifts to this church? No, in not one of them (and they are many) is any such trust expressed or intimated. On what, then, does the conclusion rest, that the church is no more than a trustee for the parish? Why, it is said, that the property of the church must have been *intended* for "the support of a minister, building or repairing the meeting house, or some other object connected with, and promotive of the public worship of God;" and, since all the parish must be benefitted by such an appropriation of church property, therefore the parish have an *interest* in it, and the church hold it merely for their benefit.\*

In reply to this argument, it may be observed, that the property of the church might have been intended for the support of public worship, or it might not. In either case, it was *the church's property*, and, as such, was at the *church's disposal*; in promoting the objects for which it was held, they might do with it as they pleased: and it seems they always had done with it as they pleased. "It was proved," says the reporter, "that the church in Dedham have *always had the exclusive control and management of the property and the funds*, raised from the sales of land before mentioned."†

But it is said, the church did apply some part of their funds, from time to time, as they were needed, "to the support of the minister, and to defray other charges relating to public worship."‡ Very well—suppose they did. They applied them to the support of their own pastor—the officer of their choice and institution. And suppose this officer were also minister of the parish, and that the parish itself was benefitted by the appropriation. Because the church frequently gave money, by which the parish was benefitted, does the parish thereby become entitled to all the benefit of the church's money? And does the church eventually sink into a mere trustee, for the benefit of the parish? Apply the same reasoning to the case of individuals. I have contributed, for a number of years, towards the support of a certain poor family. But has that family now a legal claim to the continuance of my contributions? And has it come to this, that my property is no longer

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But we will admit, for the sake of argument, what is probably more than the truth, that the property of the church in Dedham was originally and exclusively *designed* for the support of public worship. Still, it must have been designed to be expended under the direction of the church, and for the support of such worship as the brethren should approve; and the parish would receive benefit, only as they were willing to *unite in the worship of the church*. This, undoubtedly, was the way, in which the parish originally came to be benefitted by the church's appropriation of its funds. The church instituted their worship, and others came and united with them in it, and consented to assist them in supporting it. But this furnishes not a particle of evidence that the church is a mere trustee for the parish. Indeed, the whole proceeding implies the *contrary*.

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\* Mass. Term Reports vol. xvi. p. 504.

† Ibid.





colonial and provincial legislature, in relation to churches, are *predicated upon a supposed connexion with some body politic.*"\*—That the churches of Massachusetts have usually been connected with towns or parishes, is doubtless true; but that they cannot subsist without such a connexion, or that such has been the understanding of the people of New England, we have no evidence. Some of the colonial and provincial laws speak of the connexion between church and parish or town, as a matter of *fact*, but not one of them as a matter of *necessity*, or in order to the existence of the church. And some of them do not even refer to the *fact* of this connexion. In the act of 1641, respecting the gathering of churches, no mention is made of their being connected with parishes or towns. In the acts of 1642, 1646, and 1658, all, in one way or another, respecting churches, we find no mention made of parishes or towns. And in the celebrated act of 1754, at least in that part of it which relates to church property, no mention is made of parishes or towns.† And in those acts of the colonial and provincial legislatures which do speak of the connexion between church and town or parish, this connexion, as we said, is spoken of merely as matter of *fact*, and not as one of necessity to the church. We might quite as well infer from these laws generally, that a town or parish cannot subsist without a church, as "that a church cannot subsist" unless connected with some town or parish.

6. But, whatever may be the purport of the ancient laws, the statute of 1800 has been relied on, as deciding the point, "that a church cannot subsist," unless in the connexion of which we have been speaking. By the first section of this act, it is provided, "that the respective churches, *connected and associated in public worship with the several towns, parishes, precincts, &c.* shall at all times have, use, exercise, and enjoy all their accustomed privileges and liberties, respecting divine worship, church order, and discipline, not repugnant to the Constitution." But what do we learn from this section? Not "that a church cannot subsist," unless associated in worship with a town or parish, but merely the *fact*, that many churches are thus associated, and that, being thus associated, they "shall at all times have, use, exercise, and enjoy, all their accustomed privileges and liberties." This statute does not affirm that a church cannot exist separate from a parish, or that such churches are not in actual existence. The truth is, there were such in existence, and well known to be in existence, at the time when this law was passed. It is, indeed, silent respecting such churches, taking it for granted that they have nothing to interrupt them in the regular use and enjoyment of their customary privileges. They have no town or parish connected with them, to *encroach* upon their liberties or rights. The statute looks merely

\* Mass. Term Reports, vol. xvi. p. 505. † Col. and Prov. Laws, pp. 100, 102, 605.

to such churches as are *connected* with towns or parishes, and wisely provides that these shall not be interrupted in their appropriate duties, but "shall at all times have, use, exercise, and enjoy all their accustomed privileges and liberties."

We appeal to the candor of the public to decide, whether this is not the proper interpretation of the law we have quoted; and if it is, it surely goes not a step towards establishing the views of the Judges respecting the church.

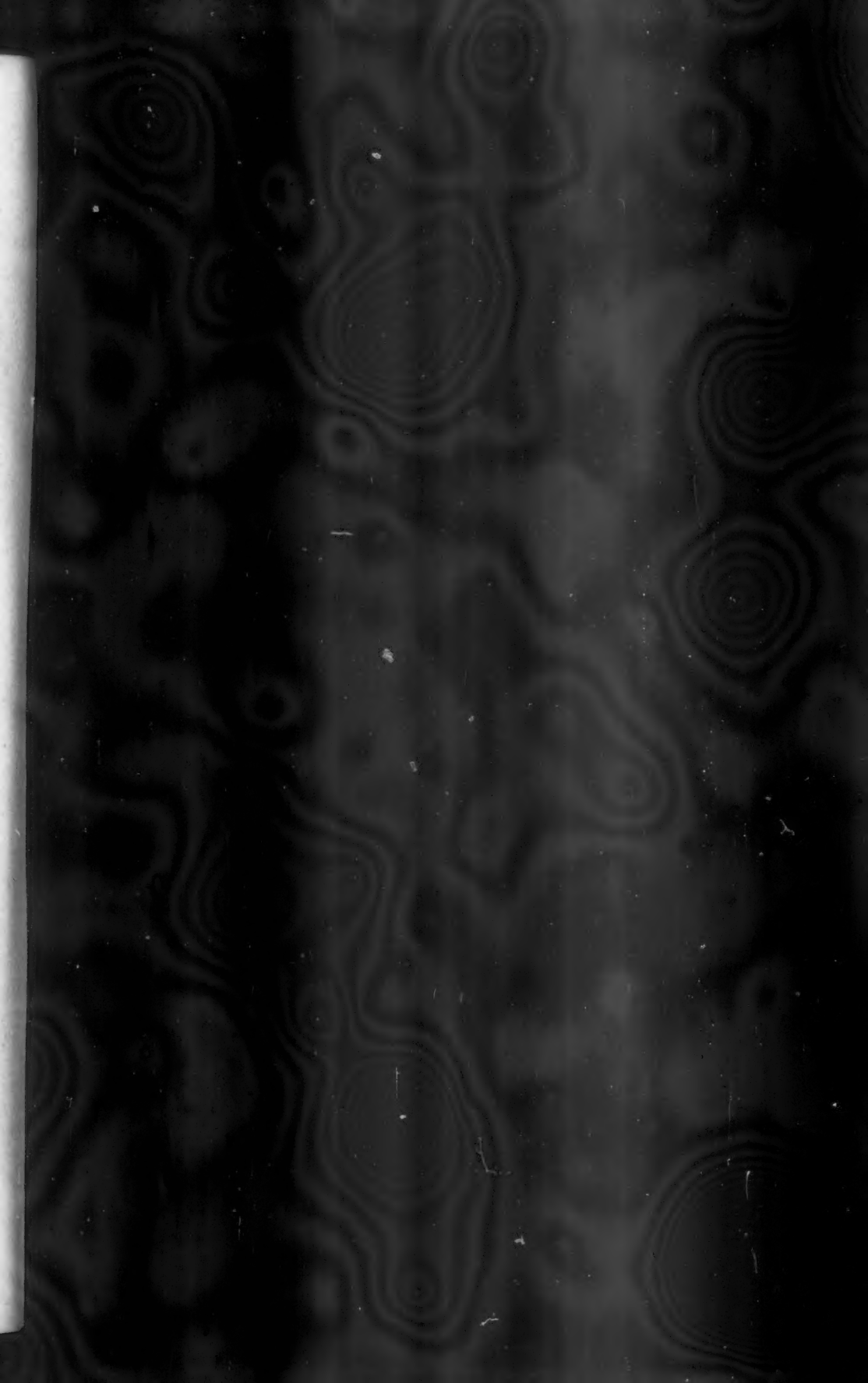
7. Chief Justice Parker urges the correctness of his opinions from the *consequences* of supposing the opposite. "Property bestowed upon churches has always been given," he says, "with a particular view to some associated body of Christians." And were churches allowed to "remove to any other place, perhaps without the Commonwealth, and carry their property with them," the will and design of the donors would be frustrated.\* The right of churches to remove with their property out of the Commonwealth, need not here be asserted or denied. It will be in time to settle the question of this right, when such a removal is seriously attempted. In the case of the church in Dedham, on which his Honor was called to decide, the place of worship was removed only to the other side of the street. But even such a removal cannot be allowed, because, says the Judge, "the property bestowed on churches has always been given with a particular view to some associated body of Christians;" or, in other words, "the property bestowed on churches has always been given" with a view to the benefit of some associated *town* or *parish*. But a discussion of this point would only bring over the question again—a question which we think we have already *settled*—whether the church is a mere trustee for the town or parish. We say, and we think we have shewn, that this is not the case; and accordingly we deny, that "the property bestowed on churches has *always* been given," with a view to the benefit of some associated town or parish, or has indeed *ever* been given with such a view, especially in the ancient grants, except as the inhabitants of a town may be willing to come, and unite in the worship which the church has instituted.

Having now examined the principle arguments by which Chief Justice Parker has endeavored to establish his views of a church, we proceed to offer our objections. And,

1. The views he has expressed are inconsistent with the *natural, inherent* rights of the churches, particularly in respect to the choice of their pastors, and the disposal of their property. Many of the churches of this Commonwealth are now in the actual and honest possession of property. Some of this they have acquired by purchase, and some by grant or donation. But, however acquired, it is *theirs*, and (except where some trust or use is expressed in a

\* Mass. Term Reports, vol. xvi. p. 506.







donation) they have a natural right to do with it as they please. They may appropriate it for the support of public worship, or they may not. And if they do thus appropriate it, & in most cases they probably will, they certainly have the right, and it is their duty, to appropriate it for the support of such worship as they in conscience approve. Is not this the *natural* right of the churches; a right which they may exercise, without reasonable offence to any one? We appeal to the candor and common sense of the community. But, by the late decisions of the Judges, the churches are deprived of this inherent right. They cannot any longer do what they will with their own. Every church is indissolubly bound to some parish, and she must humor the parish in every thing, or she is at once stripped of all. She must receive just such a pastor, and hear just such a teacher, as the parish gives her, and the most she can do with her property, even then, is to have the trouble of taking care of it, and of regularly paying it over to her civil master.

2. The views of the Judges are totally inconsistent, not only with the natural rights of the churches, but with their *corporate* rights, and with existing laws. We have shown at large that the churches of Massachusetts were early in the possession of corporate rights and powers. They were gathered and organized according to law. It was their province to decide for many years, not only who should be eligible to office, but who should exercise the rights of a freeman. They assessed and collected taxes, of their members and others, for the building of meeting houses, and the support of ministers. They were virtually incorporated, by the legal acceptance and approval of the Cambridge Platform. They long exercised the powers of a legal incorporation, in holding and managing different kinds of property. And, finally, their corporate powers were confirmed and settled, by the act of 1754, which went to *secure* them in the possession of their property, and to make it certain, both to them and the world, that it never could be wrested from them. But this most equitable intention of the law of 1754 is set aside and perverted, and the corporate rights of the churches are annulled, by the late decisions. For no sooner now is there a collision between church and parish, and the church is compelled in conscience to withdraw, then the parish tells her, 'You are bound to us for life, and you cannot withdraw. You may vote to withdraw, and may go, in a majority ever so large; but those who remain will be the church, and will retain the property, even to the records. Indeed, if you all go, and go by solemn vote, you go only as individuals—you die as a church—your property remains to us—and we are competent to institute a new church, which will succeed to all the rights and immunities which you have left.'

We thus see that, as the case now stands, there needs but a collision between church and parish, in order to strip the church

of every thing. And the parish can create a collision, at any time, and in many places would be richly compensated for the violence and wrong which it might inflict in doing it.

3. The views we here oppose are wholly inconsistent with the *independence* of our churches.—We call ourselves Congregationalists, or *Independents*. It was their regard for the independence of churches which separated our forefathers from the ecclesiastical Establishments of the old world, and brought them to this country. And here they filled the land with independent churches, each having the power of self-organization, preservation, and government, within itself, and acknowledging submission to no authority but that of the Saviour. Our churches still retain the *name* of Independents, but *nothing more*. By the late decisions, their real independence is clean gone. They are in a state of vassalage, of thralldom; and the reason why they do not all feel it, is, their masters have not yet chosen to exercise their power. Every church is indissolubly bound to some parish; and, let her treatment be what it may, there is no divorce. She may vote what she pleases, but there she is. She may vote, to an individual, to withdraw, and may think thus to withdraw; but, instead of withdrawing, she dies by her own hand, and leaves her inheritance to her persecutor. She cannot choose her own pastor, her teacher, her presiding officer; but must be ruled by one, and taught by one, and receive the ordinances at the hands of one, who is set over her by others, it may be against her will and her conscience. She must hear just such doctrines, and unite in just such worship, as the parish directs; and what is more, willing or unwilling, her property must go to pay for it.—This is not an exaggerated account of the civil state of the churches of this Commonwealth, according to the late decisions. It is their real state, and every church must be made to feel it just as soon as the parish with which it is connected is pleased to say the word.

Where, then, I ask, is the *independence* of our churches? that independence, to establish and secure which, our fathers braved the dangers of ocean, and of exile? It is gone—to the shadow. And there are probably no churches now on earth, in such a state of absolute civil dependence and vassalage, as those of Massachusetts.

4. Notwithstanding what has been said on the civil bondage of our churches, still, owing to the courtesy of parishes, or to their sense of justice, or (what will probably have more influence than either) a regard for their own *interest*, the actual state of the churches may, in most instances, be tolerable. Cases, however, will occur, under the influence of the late decisions, (and this is one objection which we make to them,) of extreme *hardship* and *injustice*. We will suppose one or two, merely as examples.

In one of the oldest churches in the Commonwealth, a sum of money had accumulated, about twenty years ago, from the stated







contributions for the support of the Lord's table. As it was lying useless in the hands of the deacons, it was thought best to purchase with it a piece of land, to be holden by the church, and to be improved, under their direction, for the benefit of their pastor. The plan was carried into effect accordingly, and the land came legally into the possession of the deacons, to be holden by them in trust for the church. Everything was transacted harmoniously, and the plan proved to be a very good one, during the ministry of the existing pastor. But, after his decease, about five years ago, the church and parish disagreed. The parish undertook to impose a pastor on the church, one not only of different sentiments, but, as many believed, of immoral life. The church remonstrated, and entreated; but to no purpose. Supported by the late decisions, the parish would have its own way. Their minister was settled, and the church had no alternative, but to withdraw. It was hard for them to leave the house of worship, and abandon their pews; but, as circumstances were, they thought it harder to remain. They voted, therefore, by a very large majority, to withdraw. But they were soon given to understand that they could not withdraw, except as individuals; and that if they withdrew in this way, they must leave all their property, even to their communion furniture and records, behind them. In these circumstances, what could they do? They knew their property was their own. They had purchased it with their own money; it was held in trust for them by their own deacons; and the parish had no more right to it, than they had to the garments which the church members wore. But what could the brethren of the church do? They could *submit* and *suffer*. They could in patience possess their souls, and wait for justice at a higher tribunal than that of their country.

We may suppose another instance. About ten years ago, there was a feeble church and society, situated in a large and wealthy town. They had struggled through many difficulties, and against much opposition, from Universalists and Deists, from the irreligious and profane; but they had been united among themselves, and had succeeded in maintaining the ordinances of the Gospel. At the time of which we speak, one of the best and wealthiest members of the church died, and left a large landed estate, duly and legally secured to the church. No trust or use was expressed in the legacy, but it was to go in succession, and the income to be annually appropriated according to the discretion of the church. About six years ago, many inhabitants of the town were seized with a great desire to have the control and management of this property. Accordingly they made themselves members of the society, dismissed the existing minister, and proposed settling a man of their own liking. The church did all they could to prevent it, but they were disregarded and overwhelmed, and the society's minister was settled. Still, the church supposed

that they might withdraw, retain their property, and re-establish the minister who had long and faithfully served them. But what was their astonishment and grief, when they found that even this last resource of the afflicted was denied them? They could not withdraw, but as individuals; and in doing this, they must commit ecclesiastical suicide, and leave their inheritance to their persecutors. And the legacy of their dear brother, on whose grave the grass had scarcely begun to grow, must, in any case, be perverted to the support of a ministry which he would have abhorred.

We hope indeed, that instances like those here supposed, will not often occur in this country, under any civil regulations. But why should they ever? And especially why should they, under the sanction of judicial decisions, which have the force of law? Better have no laws on the subject, than laws which hold out, not merely license, but encouragement to wrong.

It is an aggravation of the evil, that, in all the instances, like those we have given, which can occur, the injury will invariably fall upon the more conscientious and religious part of the community. The man of easy principles and conscience, who can slide along any way, as his convenience, his interest, or his passions may dictate, will always escape; while those who feel their obligations to God, and who dare not violate them, must be left to suffer for their integrity.

In reply to what we have here offered, it will no doubt be urged, that cases of great hardship would be likely to occur, were the sole power of electing a minister, and of managing parochial funds, to be vested in the church. But we repeat here, for the last time,—and whatever else may be forgotten, we hope this will be remembered,—that *we do not claim or wish for the church the right to choose a minister for the parish, or the right to hold or control parish property. We only ask, that the church may be allowed to choose its own pastor, and to manage its own funds; and, in case of inevitable disagreement between church and parish, that it may be permitted to withdraw, and support such worship as it can approve.* Is not this a reasonable demand? Is it not conformable to all our ideas of Christian liberty and propriety? Can any cases of injustice or hardship possibly grow out of it? We appeal again to the candor of the community.

5. It may be necessary to observe, although it should be making but a small advance, that the decisions in question are inconsistent with *Scripture*, and with the *institution of Christ*. On a subject such as this, express declarations are not to be expected. It will be sufficient if we shew, that they are manifestly inconsistent with the general *spirit* of the sacred writings. And is not this abundantly evident, from what has been already said? If these decisions are inconsistent with the independence of the churches, and with their dearest natural rights, taking from them that which

Christ and the apostles gave, and opening the way for their oppression and plunder; then they must be inconsistent with the Scriptures. What Scriptures can be found, to give their sanction to proceedings such as these? The churches of Christ are invested by their divine Lord with certain necessary powers and rights, such as that of admitting and excluding members, electing their own officers, and managing, in the general, their own concerns; and no man can wrest these from them, and be guiltless. They are exhorted to "*stand fast* in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made them free;" and wo be to the hand which attempts to bind them.

6. We object to the views expressed in the decision of the Dedham case, that they are too evidently of a *sectarian* character. We do not complain, on the ground merely that this case was decided in favor of Unitarians. But we do complain, that the highest judicial officer in the State, while seated on the bench of justice, should allow himself to go into a discussion of theological questions, and make them a ground of his decision, in a way to favor one religious denomination, and to prejudice others. The Constitution wisely provides, that "no subordination of any one sect or denomination of Christians to another, shall ever be established by law." We would inquire, then, whether it can be constitutional for an officer of the government, whose decisions are to have the force of law, to attempt determining points of theology which are at issue between different denominations of Christians. What would be thought, if such points were brought before the Legislature, to be decided by literal enactments? But they might as well be decided there, for aught we see, as on the bench, since the decisions of the bench, until reversed, are much the same as laws. Why, then, did Chief Justice Parker, in the decision, to which we have referred, take it upon him to say, that "the practice of the Episcopal churches," in regard to the sacrament, "is more conformable to the practice of the primitive Christian churches, than that of most who dissent from their form of worship"? And why did he decide, in exact conformity to the religious views of Unitarians,\* and in as exact opposition to those of the Orthodox, that there was no distinction, in primitive Christian times, between the church and the congregation, but all the assembly were considered the church, and all were invited, without distinction, to come to the "communion table, and receive the sacrament."† The learned Judge will pardon us, if we think these subjects not a little out of his professional sphere. To be sure, as a man, he has the same right as

\* The views of Unitarians on these subjects may be gathered from the *Christian Examiner* for January and February, 1826, and from the *Christian Disciple* for July and August, 1820. This number of the *Christian Disciple* contains a *Review of the Dedham controversy*, and was published but a short time previous to the decision now before us. We think no person can read the *Review*, and the decision, without discovering a striking *resemblance* in opinions, if not in the language, of some parts of the latter, to those of the former.

† *Term Reports*, vol. xvi. p. 499.

any other man, to form his opinions, and to express them, on all religious subjects; but, as the highest judicial officer in the Commonwealth, sitting on the bench of justice, and acting the part, not only of a Judge, but, in some sense, also of a legislator, we really think he may better leave *disputed points in theology* to be determined in their proper place.

7. The late decisions of which we complain, are inconsistent with other and *previous decisions*. In the case of Burr vs. Sandwich, we have the following sentiments from the late Chief Justice Parsons. "We have to decide," says he, "upon the nature and powers of a Congregational church, as *distinct from a parish*."—"A parish and church are bodies with *different powers*. A regularly gathered Congregational church is composed of a number of persons, associated by a covenant or agreement of church fellowship, principally for the purpose of celebrating the rights of the Supper and baptism. They elect deacons; and the minister of the parish is also admitted a member. The deacons are made a corporation to hold property for the use of the church, and they are accountable to the members. The members of a church are generally inhabitants of the parish; but this inhabitancy is not a necessary qualification for a church member."\*

Chief Justice Parker tells us, that "the only circumstance which gives a church any legal character, is, its connexion with some regularly constituted society," and, indeed, "that a church *cannot subsist*, without some such society to which it is attached." But Chief Justice Parsons decides "upon the nature and powers of a Congregational church, as *distinct from a parish*," and tells us, that "a church and parish are bodies with *different powers*."

Chief Justice Parker tells us, once and again, that the church is a mere trustee for the parish, and holds its property for the *use of the parish*. But Chief Justice Parsons says, "The deacons are made a corporation to hold property for the *use of the church*, and they are accountable to the members."

Chief Justice Parker tells us, (what every clergyman in the State knows to be incorrect,) that those "who withdraw from a society, *cease to be members of that particular church*" with which the society is connected.† But Chief Justice Parsons says, "The members of a church are generally inhabitants of the parish; but *this inhabitancy is not a necessary qualification for a church member*."

Chief Justice Parker insists that the property of the church in Dedham was *designed* to be appropriated for the support of a minister; and, as such, is rightfully entrusted to the care of the deacons, to be held by them for the benefit of the parish.‡ But it was decided by Judge Sedgwick, in the case of Boutell and

\* Mass. Term Reports, vol. ix. p. 277. † Ibid. vol. xvi. pp. 504, 505. ‡ Ibid. p. 495.



others vs. Cowdin, that "the deacons of a Congregational church are not a corporation for the receiving and managing a fund for the support of a minister."\* We pretend not to determine which of these decisions is nearest the truth; but, really, we not do see how they can be reconciled, the one with the other.†

8. The doctrine that a church can have no "legal character," and, indeed, "cannot subsist," unless in "connexion with some regularly constituted society," is calculated to introduce the utmost confusion and uncertainty into the ecclesiastical concerns of the Commonwealth. A legitimate inference from the doctrine is this, that when a parish, for any cause, ceases to exist, the church must go out of existence with it. Certainly, if "a church cannot subsist," but in connexion with some religious society, then it can subsist no longer than such society, and when the society is dissolved, both must die together. Now, in the progress of things in this changing world, how very often have societies and parishes gone out of existence? How often in this Commonwealth have they found it expedient, with a change of circumstances, or a change of laws, to shift their form of organization, i. e. to dissolve, and organize anew? Here is a town, which for many years has sustained a parochial character, and has had a church associated and connected with it. But at length the town drops this character, ceases to act as a parish, and a religious society is organized to take its place. In this change of affairs, what becomes of the church? If it dies, in the dissolution of the parochial character of the town, then how can it revive, and become united with the new society, but by a new organization? But, in the progress of things, it is found that the new society is not established in the most desirable way. It is therefore dissolved, and another is established. Again we ask, What becomes of the church? Dying, as it must, in the dissolution of the first society, how does it revive, and become united with the second?

Changes, such as are here supposed, are of frequent occurrence in this Commonwealth. Many are known to have taken place, since the adoption of the Constitution. Yet the churches have not been regarded as dying, in the dissolution of societies, nor have they been re-organized, in accommodation to such parochial changes, we venture to say, in a single instance. How, then, are such churches to be considered? Have they, or have they not, any legal existence? They retain their covenant, and records, and

\* Mass. Term Reports, vol. ix. p. 254.

† It may be interesting to know the history of the doctrine that a Congregational church can have no legal existence but in connexion with some regularly constituted parish. It was first broached in this case of deacons Boutell and others vs. Cowdin, in 1812, by the council for the defendant; but no opinion was expressed by the court. It was next decided in the case of "the deacons of the first church in Sandwich vs. Tilden;" but the case was not reported. It was again decided in the Dedham case, by Chief Justice Parker. It is but about sixteen years, since this strange doctrine was invented; and it has now, for several years, been confirmed as a law of the land.

members, and ordinances, and are in close connexion with regular societies, and appear to be really alive; but it would seem, according to the new order of things, that this is all an imaginary being, their actual existence having long since terminated.

Perhaps it will be said, that, although the *legal* existence of a church ceases, in the dissolution of a parish, its *ecclesiastical* existence continues; and consequently, it stands ready, without re-organization, to assume legal existence with a new society, when such an one is formed. Between the legal existence of a church, and its ecclesiastical existence, Chief Justice Parker intimates that there is a distinction.\* But what better is this than a concession, that the laws of the land, which give to the churches their legal existence, and the laws of Christ, which give them their ecclesiastical existence, do not coincide. Christ owns and blesses certain bodies as his churches, which the State refuses to acknowledge or protect. And even should we admit the distinction here claimed, the difficulty would not be relieved; for many of the churches now in question, are in the possession of property. What becomes of this, when their legal existence terminates? They cannot hold it themselves, for they are legally dead; and it cannot revert to the society or parish, for this is dissolved and dead also. What, then, is to become of it? And how is church or parish ever to get possession of it more? In such utter *confusion* and *uncertainty* does the doctrine of the late decisions involve the ecclesiastical concerns of this whole community.

9. The positions taken, in the decision of the Dedham case, are, several of them, inconsistent with *historical truth*. We shall notice a few, selecting those which are most material to the argument.

Chief Justice Parker supposes, that "*before the migration of our ancestors to this country*, a Congregational church was, as it was in the *earliest times of Christianity*, an assembly of Christians meeting together in the same place for the public worship of God," making no distinction between the church and the whole congregation.† But we have shewn that, both "*before the migration of our ancestors to this country*," and "*in the earliest times of Christianity*," the distinction in question *existed*, and was strongly marked. See Feb. number, pp. 57—59, 63.

Chief Justice Parker says, again, "*There was little practical distinction between church and congregation, for several years after our ancestors came here.*"‡ We have traced the history of Massachusetts to the first years of the settlement, and have found this distinction, from the beginning, wide and palpable—the church comprehending those, and only those, who had made an open profession of their faith, and entered into solemn covenant with God. See Feb. number, pp. 60—65.

\* Mass. Term Reports, vol. xvi. pp. 503. 505.

† Ibid. p. 498.

‡ Ibid. p. 514.

Chief Justice Parker presumes, that, in the early settlement of this State, "almost, if not quite *all* the adult inhabitants of the towns were *church members*."\* We have shewn that this, also, is incorrect. There were many, from the first, who were not connected with the churches. See Feb. number, p. 61.

Chief Justice Parker insists everywhere that the churches of Massachusetts are not, and never were, *legally incorporated*. We know not how the evidence we have exhibited of their corporate existence may strike other minds, but in our apprehension it is incontrovertible and conclusive. We see not how it can be evaded or resisted.

Chief Justice Parker asserts, that, "from the *foundation of the colonies*," the churches have been connected with parochial corporations; and indeed "that they *cannot subsist*," but in such a connexion.† But there were no such bodies as parishes in existence, for many years after the settlement of the country; and the Judge himself allows that parochial power was not committed to the towns, until 1652. Where, then, are the parochial corporations, with which the churches were at first connected, and without which, it is now pretended, that they cannot subsist? So far from being connected with parishes, we have shewn that the first churches, the *communicants*, the *brethren in covenant*, possessed and exercised parochial power. They were authorized by the civil authority to assess and collect taxes, of members and *others*, for the building of meeting houses, and the support of ministers. See pp. 114, 115.

The assertion "that a church cannot subsist," but in connexion with a parish, and that such "has been the understanding of the people of New England from the foundation of the colonies," is refuted by the frequent *removal of churches*, at the period of our early history. The original church at Plymouth was not formed after landing, but came into the country in an *embodied* state.‡ This church afterwards contemplated and *voted* a removal to what is now Eastham; but, on maturer consideration, the enterprise was abandoned.¶ "The first church in Boston was organized in Charlestown, and removed to Boston. The Old South church was also organized in Charlestown." The first church in Dorchester was formed at Plymouth, England, and removed in a body to this country. This same church afterwards removed from Dorchester, and was established at Windsor in Connecticut. The first church at Newtown (now Cambridge) also removed to Connecticut, and was established at Hartford. In both these removals, individuals were left behind; but, contrary to the doctrine of the late decisions, these individuals were *not reckoned the churches*. The churches were gone with their pastors, and their

\* Mass. Term Reports, vol. xvi. p. 498.

† Hubbard, p. 117.

‡ Ibid, p. 505.

¶ Morton's Memorial, pp. 231, 406.

majorities, and those who remained were subsequently formed into churches—at Dorchester by Mr. Mather, and at Cambridge by Mr. Shepard.\* About the year 1639, a church was formed at Lynn, which removed in a body, and settled at Long Island.† The first church in Rowley removed in a body to this country, from some part of Yorkshire in England.‡ The first church in Wenham removed in 1656, and commenced the settlement at Chelmsford.§

We really cannot reconcile facts such as these with the doctrine, “that a church cannot subsist,” but in connexion with a parish—that when thus connected, it cannot be separated—that, if it votes and attempts a separation, the minority who remain are to be considered the church—and that all this “has been the understanding of the people of New England, from the foundation of the colonies.”

10. The author of the decision in the Dedham case, is often *inconsistent with himself*.

“There was no very familiar distinction,” says he, “at the time” of making the grants to the church in Dedham, “between the *church* and the whole assembly of Christians in the *town*.” But in one of the earliest grants to this church, and one commented on by the Judge himself, this distinction is expressly recognized—one part of the land granted being given to the *church*, and another to the *town*.§

Again, Chief Justice Parker intimates that, in the early settlement of Massachusetts, “the distinction between church and town or parish” was not known; so that “a grant to the *church*, under such circumstances, could mean nothing else than a grant to the *town*.” But we are told in another place, that one of the grants to the church in Dedham was made *by the town*; consequently, the town must have made a grant to itself!! And we are told repeatedly that “the church was intended to be a *trustee*” for the town; i. e. (putting both assertions together) one and the same body, call it which you will, was intended to be a *trustee for itself*!!¶

On one page we are told, that “property bestowed upon churches, has always been given for some pious or benevolent purpose, and with a particular view to some *associated town or parish*.” But how can this be true, if, as is asserted on another page, “there was *little practical distinction* between the church and the town or parish, for several years after our ancestors came here.”\*\*\*

In one place it is said, that before the passing of the law of 1754, the church “*held*” their “legal estate as trustees, and used it as such.” But in other places, it is asserted, that the church,

\* See Hutchinson, vol. i. pp. 98, 418. Mather, vol. i. pp. 75, 348, 407. Winthrop, vol. i. pp. 179, 183, 194.

† Hubbard, p. 245.

‡ Winthrop, vol. i. pp. 278, 279.

§ Mather, vol. i. p. 431.

§ Mass. Term Reports, vol. xvi. pp. 495, 498.

¶ Ibid. pp. 495, 496, 500.

\*\* Ibid. pp. 506, 514.

“not being a body politic, could neither *take* nor *hold* a legal interest in land.”\*

It is implied in many parts of this decision, that there is *no such body* as the church, and that church members, as they are sometimes called, are in no way distinguished from other members of the parish. “Those who withdraw from the society, cease to be members of the church.” “The secession of a whole church from the parish would be an extinction of the church.” A minister “ordained over the *parish only*, by virtue of that act becomes the minister of the *church*.” “The condition of the members of a church is thought to be hard, when the minister elected by the parish is not approved by them: but this can only be because they are a *minority*.”†—But, in other parts, it is as strongly implied, that there *is* such a body as the church. Indeed, the *real, separate existence* of the church is essential to the Judge’s argument. There *must be* a church, and there must be *deacons*, to hold the property in trust.

If any person skilled in law, or in anything else, will analyze the following sentence, reconcile its different members, and make sense of the whole, we will be very much obliged to him. “Considering then, that the land granted was for the beneficial use of the assembly of Christians in Dedham, which were no other than the inhabitants of that town who constituted the religious society within which the church was established; these inhabitants were the *cestui que trusts*, and the equitable title was vested in them, as long as they continued to constitute the assembly denominated the *church* in the grants.”‡—Here we are told, *first*, that the grants were made “for the beneficial use of the assembly of Christians in Dedham, who were the same as the inhabitants of the town who constituted the religious society;” *second*, that within this assembly, town, or society, (all meaning the same,) “the church was established;” *third*, that this assembly, town, or society, “was denominated the *church* in the grants,” or *was* the church; and *fourth*, that this assembly, town, or society, were the *cestui que trusts*, for whom the church was trustee. Putting all these assertions together, we bring out the following very remarkable facts,—that in the early settlement of Dedham, the assembly, town, or society, and the church, were the *same*; that *within* this assembly, or church, the church was established; and that this assembly, or church, were the *cestui que trusts*, for whom this assembly, or church, were the *trustees*!! A most wonderful state of things truly.

Finally, we object to the decisions in question, that they *have not been generally acquiesced in*, and *will not be*. They were not, in the case of the church in Dedham. By a great majority of

\* Mass. Term Reports, vol. xvi. pp. 495, 501. † Ibid. pp. 503, 504, 514, 521. ‡ Ibid. p. 500.



the religious people of this Commonwealth, who know anything of the circumstances—indeed, we may say *all*, unless it be the few, whose particular views were met and gratified—the church which *separated from the first parish*, ever has been, and is, and will be, considered and denominated the *first* and *original* church in Dedham, the determination of the court to the contrary notwithstanding. Much as the good people of this Commonwealth are disposed to respect the decisions of their Judges, they have too much respect for their own *common sense* to believe, when a church votes, by a large majority, to withdraw from a parish, and, by a large majority, does withdraw, that still it *leaves itself behind!*

And what has been said of the church in Dedham, may be said of all the similar cases which have occurred since. The views of the court have not been acquiesced in, neither as it respects the name and style of the afflicted churches, nor as it respects their *rights* and *interests*. To be sure there has been, and we trust there will be, no violent resistance; but between a mere abstaining from such resistance, and cordial acquiescence, there is, it will be remembered, a very wide difference. And it is high time that our honorable Judges were given distinctly to understand, that, however much professing Christians throughout the State are disposed to respect them as magistrates and as men, and however ready they may be to sustain them in the distribution of justice, still they cannot look on, and see church after church, which the Pilgrims planted, and which God has blessed, stripped of its natural rights, and its just inheritance, without *deep emotion*. We ask no more for the churches than what most obviously belongs to them, the right of self-preservation, of self-organization, of controlling their own property, and managing, generally, their own appropriate concerns; and when this is refused them, whether under the color of law, or in face of law, (though we can *keep the peace*.) we cannot, without treachery to Him whose are all the churches, we cannot cordially, *acquiesce*. And in saying this, we are confident that we speak the sentiment of thousands, and of tens of thousands, among the most pious and respectable citizens of this Commonwealth.

In his conclusion, Chief Justice Parker endeavors to console the churches, in view of the "inconvenience," as he terms it, which they may be called to suffer, in consequence of his decision. But, unhappily, the consolation he administers is as unavailing to us, as his arguments are unconvincing. "The condition of the members of a church is thought to be hard, where the minister elected by the parish is not approved by them: but this can only be because they are a *minority*, and it is one part of the compensation paid for the many blessings resulting from a state of society."\* Were the members of a church mere members of the

\* Mass. Term Reports, vol. xvi. p. 521.

parish, sustaining no other relation, as it is here implied, they would not speak of hardship, although they might be in the minority. But they are more than mere members of the parish. They do sustain another and higher relation. They are members of the *church*, an institution of Christ; an institution which they love and prize. And their complaint is, not that the parish exercises its own rights, but that the church is stripped and plundered of hers; not that the parish elects its own minister, but that power is given it to elect a pastor and ruler for the church, to place him over her, to force him upon her, and to seize her property for his maintenance.

"It is true," as Chief Justice Parker says, "dissenting members of the church may withdraw; may join any other church or society; or may institute a new society." But *how* may they withdraw? May they go as a church? May they go with all their rights and effects, and institute worship by themselves? If this were granted, in case of irreconcilable disagreement between church and parish, this would be all we ask. But this is not granted. 'You, church members, if you are not suited here, may go; but then you go as individuals, and you leave the church, with all its rights and effects, behind you. Yes, you may all go, and go by solemn vote; but you die as a church, in the moment of your departure, and then your inheritance is ours.'

"It is true," says the Judge, "if there are any *parish funds*, they will lose the benefit of them by removal." But why talk of *parish funds*? What if there are *church funds*? Must they not lose *these* also, by a removal? The church has no control of parish funds, and she asks for none. She merely asks the liberty of doing what she will with her own.

"But an inconvenience of this sort," arising from the loss of funds, says the Judge again, "will never be felt, where a case of conscience is in question."\* Yes, may it please your Honor, it *will be felt*; for church members, as well as other people, have *sensibilities*, and *can feel*. Not felt because "a case of conscience is in question!" It will be felt the more tenderly. The primitive Christians felt "the spoiling of their goods," when "a case of conscience was in question;" and so must Christians now. "If you prick us, do we not bleed? If you please us, do we not laugh? If you poison us, do we not die? And if you wrong us, do we not" —, we had almost written another of Shakspeare's words; but we forbear. No, we will not "*revenge*," if you do wrong us: for our great Teacher hath said, "*Avenge not yourselves*, but rather give place unto wrath. Vengeance is *mine*; *I will repay*, saith the Lord."

In closing, we express the hope, that this subject may be kept continually before the public mind, until it is *well understood*, and

\* Mass. Term Reports, vol. xvi. p. 522.

*deeply felt.* Conscious of the goodness of our cause, we shrink not from close and thorough investigation, but demand it. Let the truth come out, and let it shine, whoever may find himself reproved or condemned. The public *can* be made to understand this subject, and must be.\* Let every thing calculated to throw light on our early history, such as the records of towns and churches, the colony and province laws, ancient journals, annals, memorials, and manuscripts, be diligently searched, and let the result be published to the world. From whatever source relief and a restoration of privileges may come to the churches, whether from a change of opinion on the part of the Judges, or from the Legislature, or from the silent abandonment of the odious work of oppression, the public mind must be first *enlightened*, and the work of oppressing and crushing the churches must be exhibited in its proper colors.

We have only to say further, that nothing here written is to be interpreted as impeaching the professional ability of the Supreme Judges of this Commonwealth. We believe them all, and the Chief Justice especially, to be men of talents, of learning, and of general good qualifications for the stations they occupy. But still we believe them to be *men*, and, as such, liable to be insensibly biassed, or to mistake the truth. Nor need it be thought strange, if, on a subject such as that here discussed,—a subject which they are seldom called to consider, and with which their ordinary professional duties have no tendency to make them acquainted,—if, on such a subject, they should mistake the truth. We expect soon to hear from *another* quarter the sound of angry denunciation, for having audaciously presumed to call in question the judicial decisions of the Commonwealth; but it would be injustice to the venerable Judges to suppose, that they can frown on a fellow citizen, who honestly believes them to be mistaken, and who is endeavoring earnestly, though, he hopes, candidly, to expose their error. And should our humble page ever fall under their notice and perusal, we would affectionately entreat them to look at this subject again. We would ask them to review it, not in the spirit of judicial infallibility, but with a willingness to find the truth, if they have mistaken it; to retract opinions, if any shall be discovered to have been prematurely formed; and to make just reparation to the churches of Christ, if it shall appear that they have injured them.

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\* This subject has commonly hitherto been treated as though it were interesting merely to Congregationalists. We see no reason, however, for confining the influence of the late decisions to the churches of a single denomination. Indeed, we are confident that it *cannot* be thus confined; but the same principles which are employed against Congregationalists, will bear with equal force against Presbyterians, or Baptists, or any churches, which are *connected with parishes* in the support of public worship.

## MINISTERIAL EXCHANGES.

To the Editor of the Spirit of the Pilgrims.—Sir,

I hope the subject of Ministerial Exchanges will soon be thoroughly discussed in your Magazine. When evangelical and heretical ministers are found in the same denomination, it is of immense importance that the principles, by which the practice of the friends of truth in this particular, ought to be regulated, should be well understood. There are still in Massachusetts some ministers professing to be orthodox, who exchange with Unitarians! And renewed efforts have lately been made by Unitarians, to press evangelical ministers, who have Unitarians in their parishes, on this subject. Let some writer, then, who is competent to the task, take up the subject, and shew, as I think may be shown, most convincingly, that both duty and expediency utterly forbid an orthodox minister, in any case, to exchange with a known Unitarian. In the mean time, I send you for publication, the following extract from a letter on this subject, written in 1810, by a distinguished clergyman in one of the Middle States, to a clergyman of Massachusetts.

“Exchanging with ministers of known or suspected heterodoxy, appears to me inconsistent with fidelity to our Master in heaven. With the principles which we hold, we should not dare to preach to our people a *false gospel*. We should consider ourselves, in this case, as falling under that awful denunciation of the apostle, Gal. i. 9: *If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed*. But, if we dare not preach another gospel ourselves, can we innocently be accessory to this sin being committed by others? And is not deliberately sending a man to our pulpits, whom we suspect, or more than suspect, of heresy, fundamental heresy, something very like being accessory to the propagation of that heresy? It is by no means a sufficient answer to this argument to say, that the persons thus sent to our pulpits may not openly preach their peculiar sentiments. Even if the *fact* were so, it by no means relieves the difficulty; because the very circumstance of our people seeing us receive a heretic, and practically bid him God speed, will tend exceedingly to diminish their abhorrence of his heresy, and to make them suppose, either that we consider it as a very small evil, or that we are very inconsistent, if not dishonest men. But the *fact* is not commonly so. These men generally preach in such a way, that attentive hearers may readily perceive, that they reject every fundamental article of evangelical truth. They are not only betrayed by their *omissions*, but also, at every turn, by their

*phraseology*, by their *theological language*; so that, in fact, they seldom enter our pulpits without holding out to our people, false grounds of hope. And is this a small evil? I must conclude, that the minister who views it in this light, has not well considered the subject.

“But, solemn as this consideration is, there is another, which appears to me, in every respect, equally solemn. It is, the tendency of the system of exchanging with heterodox ministers, to *banish the peculiar doctrines of the Gospel from our own sermons, and our own pulpits.*

“I assume, as the basis of this argument, that preaching the peculiar doctrines of the Gospel, in a plain, pointed, pungent manner, is the duty of every Christian minister; and that, without this, he cannot expect the divine blessing on his labors, or hope to see real religion flourish among the people of his charge. I verily believe, that if an orthodox minister could, in conscience, *leave out* of his sermons all the peculiar and fundamental doctrines of the Gospel,—if, without preaching anything *contrary* to them, he were *silent* respecting the *entire depravity* of our nature, *regeneration*, the *divinity* and *atonement* of Christ, &c. &c.,—or if, to put the case in the most favorable light, he *sometimes* advanced these doctrines, but always did it in a *concealed, wrapped up* manner,—I verily believe, that pursuing this course for twenty years, would banish religion from his church, and prepare his people for becoming Arminians, Arians, Socinians, Deists, or anything that the advocates of error might wish and endeavor to make them. If I wished to banish religion from my church in the most effectual manner, I certainly should not come forward *openly*, and preach heresy; this would excite attention, inquiry, and opposition:—but I would endeavor to lull my people asleep simply by *WITHHOLDING TRUTH*; and should expect to succeed by this method, with the least trouble, and in the shortest time possible.

“Now this negative, spiritless, smooth kind of preaching, is precisely that which frequent exchanges with the heterodox is calculated to produce. The most pious and faithful minister living, when he goes to the pulpit of an heretical brother, is under a strong temptation, if not absolutely to *keep back* truth, which he supposes would be offensive; at least, in a considerable degree to *soften* and *polish* it down, that it may be received with as little irritation as possible. Accordingly, he will be apt to take with him to such a place, a discourse prepared upon this plan. If his exchanges be *frequent*, he will *often* prepare such discourses. If they become *habitual*, he will *habitually* preach thus. The consequence is as evident as it is dreadful! To expect that a man who prepares *many* such sermons, will preach *none* of them to his own people, is an expectation not to be entertained; and to hope that



the mind of that man, who preaches frequently in this strain, will suffer no diminution, either of evangelical zeal, or of ministerial faithfulness, is certainly an unreasonable hope. I think there can be no doubt that the apostle Paul, with all the ardor of his zeal for the truth, and all the tenderness of his love to the souls of men, could not, without a miracle, have withstood the influence of such a habit; and that, if he had indulged in it for one or two years, he would have been found, at the end of that time, a less pointed, less faithful, and less successful preacher than before.

“You will perceive, then, my impression to be, that exchanging in ministerial services with the heterodox, is not only unfaithfulness to our Master and his cause; but that it also tends to produce the most unhappy effects on the mind, and on the strain of preaching, of the orthodox themselves; that it can scarcely fail, if habitually practised, to lower the evangelical tone of their ministrations; to destroy that sacred *unction from the Holy One* which can only attend the *simplicity that is in Christ*; and to produce such an accommodation of their discourses, to the taste and feelings of their heretical hearers, as to render them, in fact, no longer preachers of the Gospel. I think it would not be difficult to point out *living examples* in confirmation of these remarks.

“The question has often been asked, what has led to that awful degeneracy of *Boston*, with respect to evangelical truth, which the friends of the *faith once delivered to the saints*, have so long observed and deplored? Various reasons have been assigned for this phenomenon, a phenomenon nearly, if not entirely unparalleled in ecclesiastical history: but I acknowledge, none of these reasons have ever satisfied me. The licentiousness and derangements of the revolutionary *war* were known, and exerted an influence, in other places, as well as in *Boston*. The literary character, and inquiring spirit of the *clergy*, have been quite as much distinguished in some other places, as in that town. The same remark might be made with respect to several other considerations usually offered to assist in solving the difficulty. I have scarcely any remaining doubt, that a principal cause of the effect in question is to be sought in the subject of this letter, viz. *indiscriminate exchanges with all classes of heretodox ministers*. There probably never was a place in which this system has been carried to such a length as in *Boston*. I certainly know of none. These exchanges have, almost unavoidably, led to a strain of general, pointless, inoffensive preaching, in which all would be disposed to agree. This strain of preaching has, of course, banished the knowledge and the love of the peculiar doctrines of the Gospel from most of the churches. The greater part of the present race of clergy, bred up under such ministrations, and finding them most popular, have become their friends and advocates. And the great body of the people, as might have been expected, are distinguished, not so

much by their adherence to any distinct, avowed form of heresy, as by a general belief of the *innocence of error*, and of the almost equal excellence of *all modes of faith*. The more I reflect on the subject, the more I am persuaded, that this has been the principal cause, and the natural course, of the Boston apostacy, and the stronger conviction do I feel, that wherever the same practice is admitted, similar effects will follow.

“Believe it, my friend, that practice, whatever it may be, which induces ministers to preach seldom or superficially on the peculiar doctrines of the blessed Gospel, which places the ambassadors of Christ in circumstances in which they consider delicacy as forbidding them to speak often, fully, and pointedly on the great, distinguishing truths of the Word of life, will never fail to have a most unhappy effect on their own souls, and to lay a foundation for irreparable mischief among the people of their charge. The man who feels willing, or allows himself to be compelled, in the composition of every discourse, and especially in those which he is preparing for *exchanges*, to inquire and balance, in his own mind, how far a gay and polite world will *allow* him to go in declaring his Master’s message, degrades his character, dishonors his Master, is treacherous to his trust, and will soon find himself left to be *filled with his own devices*. I know that there may be a rash and indecorous *mode* of declaring the *truth*. I know that men may be rude, boisterous, and violent, in the sacred desk, and call it *fidelity*. For this I am no advocate. I consider it the duty of every minister to endeavor to *find out acceptable words*, by means of which to convey *the truth as it is in Jesus*; but I would not, for my life, put myself into a situation in which I should be habitually, or often, tempted to *keep back* or *accommodate* to human prejudice, those great and essential truths which I dare not alter or modify to please any man.

“Let every orthodox minister, then, in your region, form the purpose, and let him adhere to it with unalterable firmness, not to exchange pulpits with Unitarians. Let neither the frowns or smiles, the threats or persuasions of opponents move him. I know that it is a trying thing to reject the wishes of those whom we respect, and who respect us. But in this case, it really appears to me that the cause of truth and righteousness for generations to come, is involved. And in *such a cause*, a minister ought to be willing to make *any sacrifice*, rather than turn to the right hand or the left. It would afflict me more than I can express, to hear that my friend had become an Arian, or Socinian. But, believe me, it would be little less distressing to hear that you had consented to exchange with the advocates of fundamental error. I should consider you, in one sense, as having delivered your sword to the enemy.

“I am more and more convinced, that the friends of evangelical

truth in Boston and its neighborhood, must consent, at least for a time, to be a *little, and comparatively despised flock*. They must form a *little world of their own*, and patiently bear all the contempt and ridicule of their proud and wealthy foes. If they do this,—if, instead of despising, or being impatient of, *the day of small things*,—if, like a band of brothers, they humbly wait on God, and, when he tries their faith and patience, instead of being discouraged, still trust in him,—if, in short, they take for their model, the example of the apostles, when all the wit, and learning, and wealth, and power of the world were leagued against them; they will as certainly triumph over the enemies of Christ, as there is a *King on the holy hill of Zion*. But if they suffer themselves to be distracted and divided,—if they are impatient under abuse and contumely,—if they are discouraged when difficulties arise,—and especially, if they suffer the desire of emulating their opponents in worldly wisdom, and worldly grandeur, to gain the ascendancy in their minds; it is as certain, that they will be scourged, and depressed, if not, as a body, ruined.”

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THOUGHTS ON REVIVALS OF RELIGION.

(Continued from p. 77.)

The preceding account concerning what religion does not do, may embolden some to hope that there is no such thing as a change of heart. Accustomed to regard those things which we have rejected, as the sole evidence of a moral renovation, they may be preparing to quiet their fears, and to settle down in the conclusion, that ‘this experimental religion’ is a vain thing; that love to God consists in ‘doing good to men,’ and that it is not a man’s ‘doctrinal belief,’ and ‘certain peculiar feelings,’ but his ‘works,’ his ‘good works,’ by which his Christian character and future destiny will be decided.

The hypocrite, also, finding himself to agree with Christians, negatively, in so many particulars, may endeavor to cheer himself with the hope that all his coldness, and darkness, and stupidity, are only those defects of experience, which he possesses in common with all Christians, and thus continue to flatter himself, until his iniquity shall become hateful.

It is not impossible that some real Christians, while in a state of relative declension, may attempt to quiet their consciences by thinking, while they read the preceding account, ‘True, Christians do not feel alike at all times; religion does not make over our original nature, nor enable us to be always in the vigorous exercise of faith, or to be perfect in all things. We are indeed worldly, and our affections are low, and our exertions are languid; but

Christians are imperfect. By grace we are saved, not by works; God is a sovereign; we can do nothing of ourselves; we must wait God's time, for quickening, which is always the best time. Let such remember, that many of the things which religion does not do, are things which it fails to do from relative defect; and that, to be conformed to Christians in their imperfections, is no more to be regarded as evidence of grace, than conformity to great men in their failings, is evidence of talents. To be like Christians in their deficiencies, and unlike them in the more prominent and positive evidences of piety, is poor consolation.

To prevent misapprehension from what has been said, we propose to show what change religion does accomplish; where its evidences are to be looked for; and what are some of its most prominent indications.

A change of heart consists in new affections. They are holy or benevolent, in opposition to their former limited and selfish nature. Once the subject loved himself more than God, and loved his fellow men relatively, through the medium of some relation they stood in to himself, and more or less as that relation was near or remote. But a change of heart produces a more comprehensive and impartial benevolence, which, while it does not overlook the family, extends to God, and pervades his kingdom. While it admits the claims of nationality, it does not shut out the claims of the world; and while it feels for the interests of time, includes in its desires, and plans, and efforts, the welfare of eternity. It appreciates the importance of the soul, the rights of God, the evil of sin, and the interests of eternity, to which a heart of selfishness is cold, and hard, and blind.

Such is the general nature of that holy love, which he feels, in whom "old things have passed away, and all things have become new."

The evidence of a saving change is, therefore, to be looked for, in the altered state of our affections towards God, his law, his Gospel, his providential government. It is the purpose of God to govern the intelligent universe, not by force, but by love. Benevolent affections, and holy complacency, are the spring of all holy activity, both in God himself, and in his subjects. It is the most blessed of all possible springs of voluntary movement. The blessedness of activity by compulsion, or by fear, is naught, to that of love. The family is happy just in proportion as love is the mainspring of all its movements; and nations, and worlds, are happy, as they are attracted and wielded by the glory of God, and the power of love. Hence "charity," or love, is called "the bond of perfectness." The law of God prescribes the nature, the objects, and the degree of this holy love. And the works, and the word of God, disclose his existence, and his glory; which constitute the central source of being and of excellence, to attract all

eyes, and hold in blessed allegiance all hearts. The law of God, concentrating the affections of the universe upon him, and uniting them, in the fellowship of impartial love, to one another, man has violated, and sunk down into the locality and darkness of selfish affections. It is the object of God, by the Gospel, to revive, in the heart, this extinguished benevolence, which has God and universal being for its object; and to restore again his erring creature man to his high allegiance, and to the holy fellowship of the universe.

We are, therefore, to look for evidence of an evangelical and saving change, to our views and affections towards God, his law, his Gospel, and the general principles and events of his providential government.

Some of the more prominent indications of a saving change in the affections may be looked for in the following particulars.

1. In clearer views of the being, presence, and agency of God, and of the reality of his eternal government. The universe was constructed to declare to his creatures his eternal power and Godhead. And the world we inhabit is a mirror, reflecting, from every object, the evidence of his being and glory. But this flood of light shines into darkness, and is not comprehended. Its concentrated power is thrown upon sightless eyeballs, by reason of the darkness of the heart. Aberration has made us inattentive to the evidence, and willingly ignorant of it; while selfishness has rendered us insensible to the beauty of holiness. The unholy heart of man is the source of this unrealizing state in the midst of evidence, of this unfeeling condition in the presence of such excellence, and of this inactivity while pressed by such a power of motive. While under the influence of this evil heart of unbelief, man departs unceasingly from the living God; is blind, and cannot see afar off; and is dead to all the glorious realities which surround him. The laws of nature are a veil upon his heart, to shut out nature's God; and second causes interpose their opaque influence between God and his soul, and paralyze all the energies of the Moral Sun. There is no remedy for this dark and unrealizing state of mind, but a change of the affections from selfish to holy; for "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." One of the first indications of a change of the affections, therefore, will be, the opening of the eyes of the understanding, to see God, and to realize the presence of God in his works. Now, God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, will shine in the heart. The means of manifestation were perfect before; the mirror did its duty; the heavens declared his glory, and the firmament his handy work; day unto day uttered speech, and night unto night showed knowledge: but the veil of unbelief shut out the light, and broke the power of evidence. But this being taken away by a change in



the affections, the light shines, and is comprehended; the glad heart feels the evidence, which is poured in upon it, of God's being and perfections; his government becomes a reality; and all the operations of nature announce his presence and agency, insomuch that he who once complained that he could not find God—could believe intellectually, but could not realize, now cannot go from his presence. The world is now full of his presence, which, before, was so empty; and his government, with its blessed energies, once believed to exist coldly, and without effect, now becomes a present and a sublime reality.

In connexion with these clearer views, is the apprehended importance of divine things. It was not difficult, before, to compel the understanding to admit that eternity is more important than time, and the soul more important than the body, and that the favor of God is more important than the favor of man. And yet no change in actual estimation followed. The understanding carried the man by force to one conclusion, while the heart, by the power of feeling, carried him to a conclusion directly the opposite. But no sooner is the heart renewed by the power of truth and of the Holy Ghost, than this collision between the understanding and the heart ceases; and an actual estimate of eternal things in feeling commences, in unison, to some extent, with the decisions of the understanding. Now faith begins to be the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen; and, by making eternal things real, obtains the victory. Now the world ceases to reign in the affections; for he looks not at the things which are seen exclusively, but at the things also which are not seen, which, brought alike near to the apprehension, do, by their magnitude, throw the world into insignificance, and by their weight in the scales, render it, in competition, light as air.

2. Another effect of a change of heart, is, that the moral excellence of divine things, their beauty, and glory, are now perceived as they never had been perceived before, and move the affections as before they never moved them.

It was easy to extort the confession before, that God is worthy to be loved, and that the Gospel is worthy of all acceptation. But no power of evidence could warm the heart, or awake any correspondence of actual love. To every demand of love, repentance, and faith, the monotonous reply would come, 'We cannot. We can see, but cannot feel.'

But when the heart is renewed by the Holy Ghost, a blessed coincidence commences between the dictates of the understanding and the affections of the heart. Now, instead of the inquiry, 'Who will show me any good?' the prayer is, 'Lord, lift thou up upon me the light of thy countenance.' The law of God appears to be holy, just, and good; and Jesus Christ is no longer a wandering star, whose dimensions the mind cannot determine, and whose

place it cannot fix ; but the Sun himself, rising upon the soul in a morning without clouds. And the Gospel, once a cold speculation, becomes the power of God and the wisdom of God to salvation.

Religion, then, is indicated at its commencement in the soul, by new objects of supreme regard ; by a new rule of moral obligation—the law of God ; by new sources of enjoyment, found in love to God, and communion with him, in ever active obedience ; by new motives to activity, a desire to please God, a benevolent delight in doing good, and a respect to the recompense of reward, made real and efficacious through faith.

This is but an epitome, a mere outline of what might be said in amplification of preceding topics ; but we prefer to present them in their elementary nakedness, that their nature may be seen ; and in an epitomized nearness, that their relations and proportions may be seen.

We have only to remark, that the view we have given of the positive evidence of regeneration is both rational and Scriptural. The experience of all ages has evinced that man is not benevolent by nature, but selfish ; that his earliest character is not that of holy love to God, but that he loves the creature more than God ; that the affections towards God which are necessary to please him, and make man happy, and obedient, do not exist naturally, and that there is eminent need of a divine illumination which shall banish our darkness, and of a divine quickening which shall wake up holy affection, and put an end to our idolatry, and commence the obedience which shall fit us for heaven. The account we have given of regeneration meets all these admitted exigences of a lost world, and no other view of the doctrine of regeneration does meet them.

Nor is there anything in this account like enthusiasm and fanaticism. Enthusiasm is a love for an object surpassing its relative importance ; and fanaticism is a practical expression of feeling in ways that bid defiance to the dictates of reason. But the love to God which we have described as constituting the new affection in which piety consists, does not surpass HIS excellence. It falls in its highest attainment far below the righteous requirements of his law. And the expression of this love in the language and action of ardent affection, is not fanaticism, but our commanded and reasonable service.

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*To the Editor of the Christian Examiner.*

SIR,

A reviewer in your pages charges Calvinists of the present day with believing that infants, dying in infancy, are damned ; and that the doctrine would now be insisted on, by all real and consistent Calvinistic ministers, if they thought that their people would bear

it. The evidence in support of so serious a charge, is, that it is "a doctrine which follows necessarily from the Calvinistic system," and "has been taught expressly by the prolocutor of the Assembly of divines at Westminster, and by a thousand others."

That it is not contained in the Calvinistic system, I have shown. Though, if it were, or did necessarily follow from that system, it would by no means follow that Calvinists themselves admit the inference; and we know no reason why Calvinists should not be indulged, if they please, in a happy inconsistency, as well as their neighbors, who sometimes find it convenient to contradict themselves. We have ample and reiterated Unitarian testimony to the utter unfairness of charging upon the sentiments of an opponent, as his belief, the inference which we may draw from them, however logically.

I have considered the quotations from several of the "thousand authors" who are said by the reviewer to teach unequivocally the doctrine of infant damnation, viz. Calvin, Turretin, Edwards, and Belamy, and have shewn that their language neither teaches nor implies any such thing; and that the other two authors referred to as authority, are not, and for many generations past, have not been, regarded as standard writers, or "most approved authors," and, in their extremes of Calvinism, have never been followed by the great body of the Calvinistic denomination; and that the sentiment ascribed to Calvinists, as a body, has never been avowed in a Calvinistic creed, as an article of faith, from the Reformation to this day, nor anything that implies it.

This argument, however, from ancient authors, is relied on with such unhesitating confidence by the reviewer, that I beg leave to call his attention, and that of the public, to the real weight, and logical bearing of such evidence, including the testimony of the prolocutor and Gill, and all which the reviewer can find when he has "ransacked libraries, importuned his friends, and taken whatever means." What will the testimony of ten or twenty, or even his "thousand authors," amount to? Is there any possible mode of proving the sentiments of a denomination on all points, by a reference to authors? Do Calvinists, as a *body*, hold to every thing which every author denominated Calvinistic has written? Does not the reviewer know, that, while all Calvinists hold to the points which separate between them and Arminians, they hold even these with great diversity of explanation, while, on a multitude of other doctrines, the shades of opinion are so various, and even opposite, as gives birth to names descriptive of these specific differences among them? Can, then, what one Calvinist has written, be quoted in evidence of what all Calvinists believe? Do Unitarians all believe so exactly alike on all points as that we may quote any sentiment from any Unitarian writer, however extravagant, in proof of the universal opinion of the entire sect? And yet the reviewer

goes on in flippant style, with quotation upon quotation, from musty folios of Calvinistic writers of other ages; and the thought seems never to have fallen within the scope of his imagination, that he had anything more to do, to convict all the living "consistent Calvinistic ministers" in the world of believing in infant damnation. The reasoning, however, is utterly nugatory, except upon the supposition that all Calvinistic authors and ministers, of this and of all ages, do, on all points, believe exactly alike,—a supposition notoriously untrue, both in respect to the present, and to all past generations.

The reviewer, I am persuaded, is not aware of the potency of his argument, or with what dexterity, as with Ithuriel touch, it may bring out all those doctrines which all "consistent" Unitarians believe, and would now insist on, "if they thought their people would bear them." He will permit me, therefore, to edify him with a few specimens of the "monstrous opinions," held by all "consistent" Unitarians in Boston, and in this Commonwealth and nation, and which they would now insist on "if they thought their people would bear them," proved by the express testimony of many of the most approved Unitarian writers.

1. All "consistent" Unitarian ministers disbelieve the inspiration of the Bible, and are, secretly, Deists, and would say so "if they thought their people would bear it."—Proof:

"The writers of the books of Scripture were men, and therefore fallible."—*Priestley's Letters to a Philosophical Unbeliever, Part 2. Preface.*

"Like all other historians they were liable to mistakes with respect to things of small moment, because they did not give sufficient attention to them."—*Same work. Preface.*

"I think I have shown that the apostle Paul often reasons inconclusively; and therefore that he wrote, as any other person of his turn of mind, and thinking, and in his situation, would have written *without any particular inspiration.*"—*Priestley's Hist. Corrup. Christ.* vol. ii. p. 370.

"The Scriptures were written *without any particular inspiration*, by men who wrote according to the best of their knowledge, and who from circumstances could not be mistaken with respect to the greater facts of which they were proper witnesses; but, (like other men subject to prejudice,) might be liable to adopt a hasty and ill grounded opinion concerning things which did not fall within the compass of their own knowledge."—*Priestley's Hist. Early Opinions*, vol. iv. pp. 4, 5.

"The Scriptures contain a very faithful and credible account of the Christian doctrine, which is the true word of God; BUT THEY ARE NOT THEMSELVES THE WORD OF GOD, nor do they ever assume that title; and it is highly improper to speak of them as such, as it leads inattentive readers to suppose they are written under a plenary inspiration, *to which they make no pretensions.*"—*Belsham's Review of Wilberforce, &c. Letter 1.*

"The evangelical histories contain gross and irreconcilable contradictions."—*Evanson's Dissonance*, p. 1.

"The writings of Moses were inspired in so far as they instruct us concerning God, and lead us to God. He could know the age of the world no better than we do. The history of the fall is a fable; and though there is much truth in Moses' history, the dress is poetic. In Joshua, the circumstances of the conquest of Canaan are fictitious. The books of Samuel contain a multitude of falsehoods. There are no prophecies in the Psalms. Daniel is full of stories, contrived or exaggerated by superstition. With the other prophets, Christians have no concern."—*Extracted from the writings of Danem, a German Unitarian, as given in Erskine's Sketches of Church History*, vol. i. p. 84.

"Peter speaks these (2 Pet. i. 21.) according to the conception of the Jews. The prophets may have delivered the offspring of their own brains, as divine revelation."—*Extract from Semler, Professor of Divinity at Halle, as given in Miller's Letters on Unitarianism*, p. 205.

"The Godhead could not have required of Abraham so horrible a crime, [offering up his son,] and there can be no justification, palliation, or excuse for this pretended command of the Divinity. Abraham dreamed that he must offer up Isaac, and, according to the superstition of the times, regarded it as a divine admonition. He prepared to execute the mandate, which his dream had conveyed to him. A lucky accident (probably the rustling of a ram who was entangled in the bushes,) hindered it; and this, according to ancient idiom, was also the voice of the Divinity."—*Extract from Eichhorn, as quoted by Professor Stuart, in Letters to Channing*, p. 144, third edition.

"To walk on the sea, is not to stand on the waves, as on solid ground, as Jerome dreams, but to walk through the waves so far as the shoals reached, and then to swim."—*Extract from C. F. Ammon, Professor of Theology at Erlangen, as quoted by Stuart*, p. 144.

"Ananias fell down terrified; (Acts v. 5;) but probably he was carried out and buried, while still alive."—*Extract from Theiss.—Vide Stuart's Letters*, p. 145.

"This Epistle [Hebrews] however, which contains many important observations and many wholesome truths, mingled, indeed, with some far-fetched analogies, and inaccurate reasonings, was probably written before the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple," &c.—*Improved Version of the New Testament*, p. 531.\*

"The account of the miraculous conception of Jesus, was probably the fiction of some early Gentile convert, who hoped by elevating the dignity of the Founder, to abate the popular prejudice against the sect."—*Improved Version*, p. 2.

"The remaining verses of this, [the first chapter of Luke, from the 4th verse,] and the whole of the second chapter, are printed in italics, as an indication that they are of doubtful authority."—*Ibid.*, p. 120.

\* This work has been republished, with some slight alterations, and circulated, by Unitarians in this country; and all the extracts from this work, in this article, are from the American edition.



“The Unitarians maintain, that Jesus and his apostles were supernaturally instructed, as far as was necessary for the execution of their commission, that is, for the revelation and proof of the doctrine of eternal life, and that the favor of God extended to the Gentiles equally with the Jews; and that Jesus and his apostles, and others of the primitive believers, were occasionally inspired to foretell future events. But they believe that supernatural inspiration was limited to these cases alone, and that when Jesus or his apostles deliver opinions upon subjects unconnected with the object of their mission, such opinions, and their reasonings upon them, are to be received with the same attention and caution with those of other persons in similar circumstances, of similar education, and with similar habits of thinking.”—*Belsham's Calm Inquiry, &c.* p. 451.

“As it is not pretended that there are any miracles adapted to prove that Christ made and supports the world, I do not see that we are under any obligation to believe it merely because it was an opinion held by an apostle.”—*Priestley's Hist. Early Opinions*, vol. i. p. 63.

2. All consistent Unitarians believe that Jesus Christ was a mere man.

“It is the clear doctrine of Scripture, that Christ was simply a man.”—*Priestley's Hist. Corrup. Christ.* vol. i. p. 6.

“The Unitarian doctrine is, that Jesus of Nazareth was a man, constituted in all respects like other men, subject to the same infirmities, the same ignorance, prejudices and frailties.”—*Belsham's Calm Inquiry Concerning the Person of Christ*, p. 190.

“Jesus is indeed now alive; but as we are totally ignorant of the place where he resides, and of the occupations in which he is engaged, there can be no proper foundation for religious addresses to him, nor of gratitude for favors now received, nor yet of confidence in his future interposition in our behalf.”—*Belsham's Review of Wilberforce, &c.* Letter 8. p. 74.

“Of a certain person, who now makes a very considerable figure in the world, it may be said with truth, so far as the civil state of the continent of Europe is concerned, that he is the creator of all these new distinctions, high or low, whether thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers, all things are made by him and for him, and he is before them all, takes precedence both in time and dignity, and by him do all these things consist. Yet who would infer from such language as this, that the present ruler of France is a being of superior order to mankind, much less that he is the maker of the world? The language, which is true of Bonaparte in a civil sense, is applicable to Jesus Christ in a moral view; but it no more implies pre-existence or proper creative power in one case, than in the other.”—*Belsham's Letters on Arianism, as quoted by Dr. Magee on the Atonement.*

“According to the maxims laid down as the guides of our inquiry, this doctrine [of two natures in Christ] could not be established even by the clearest declarations of the Scriptures. For the

testimony of the Scriptures would not prove it to be true; on the contrary, its occurrence in the Scriptures would prove them to be false."—*Yates' Vindication of Unitarianism*, p. 176.

3. All consistent Unitarian ministers deny the atonement of Christ.

"Christ being only a man, his death could not in any proper sense atone for the sins of other men."—*Priestley's Hist. Corrup. Christ.* vol. i. p. 227.

"In the fine parable of the prodigal son, Christ informs us, that God, our true and affectionate Father, is ready to receive all his offending and penitent children, as it were with open arms, without any intercession of others, or any atonement whatever."—*Priestley's Discourses on Evid. Divine Revelation*, p. 264.

"There is nothing in Scripture which represents that Christ has made it just for God to forgive sins now, upon repentance, when it would not have been before."—*Buckminster's Sermons*, p. 249.

"We see, therefore, that God's justice presents no obstacles in the way of his freely pardoning all such as repent and reform, without his requiring any satisfaction for the sins they may have previously committed."—*Christ. Disciple*, 1823. p. 191.

"And can it be supposed, that sinners are more likely to be brought to repentance by the thought that an innocent being has suffered for their sins instead of the guilty, than that repentance only can secure their pardon, and that repentance only is required by a merciful God?"—*Ware's Answer to Woods' Reply*, p. 149.

"We ask for one text, in which we are told that God took human nature, that he might make an infinite satisfaction to his own justice; for one text which tells us that human guilt is infinite, and requires a correspondent substitute; that Christ's sufferings owe their efficacy to their being borne by an infinite being; or that his divine nature gives infinite value to the sufferings of the human. Not one word of this description can we find in the Scriptures; not a text which even hints at these strange doctrines."—*Channing's Sermon at Baltimore*, p. 19.

"God may pardon the sins of his creatures upon any terms which he thinks proper, without exacting satisfaction to his justice."—*Unit. Miscellany*, 1822. p. 180.

"We do not believe, "that Christ has once offered himself up a sacrifice to satisfy divine justice, and reconcile us to God," because this is making the innocent suffer for the guilty, and appeasing the wrath of a being, who, in his very nature, is necessarily benevolent, merciful and good."—*Unit. Miscel.* 1821. p. 19.

"No position in divinity, to my apprehension, is more opposed to the general language of the New Testament, none which reflects greater dishonor on the character and moral government of the Deity, none which is more apt to mislead men in the highest concerns of religion, than the doctrine, that God requires complete satisfaction to be made to his justice for sin, by the vicarious sufferings of our Saviour to propitiate his regard to the repenting offender. This

doctrine represents our God as inexorable in his disposition; it deprives him of those moral attributes, which are the proper foundation of our love and gratitude; it destroys all goodness and mercy in the pardon of the repenting sinner; and supposes that GOD HAS INTRODUCED A PRINCIPLE IN HIS ADMINISTRATIONS, WHICH WOULD DISGRACE ANY GOVERNMENT ON EARTH."—*Bancroft's Sermons*, p. 224.

Dr. Ware says expressly, that "the sufferings of Christ were the means of delivering us from punishment, *only* as they are instrumental in delivering us from the dominion of sin, only as they are the means of bringing us to repentance, only as they operate in bringing us to that state of holiness, which has the promise of forgiveness, and qualifies for it."—*Letters to Trin. and Cal.* p. 93.

4. All consistent Unitarian ministers, to a man, are Universalists, and would preach the doctrine, if they thought that their people would bear it.

"This text, (Matt. xxv. 46.) therefore, so far from giving any countenance to the harsh doctrine of eternal misery, is rather favorable to the more pleasing, and more probable hypothesis, of the ultimate restitution of the wicked to virtue and happiness."—*Improved Version of the New Testament*, p. 72.

"It would be very unreasonable to infer the gloomy doctrine of eternal misery, from the loose and figurative language of a prophetic vision, (Rev. xiv. 11.) in opposition to the plain dictates of reason and justice, and to the whole tenor of divine revelation."—*Improved Version*, p. 596.

"This text (Rev. xx. 10.) has also been alleged, but with little reason, in favor of what has justly been called the *heart withering* doctrine of eternal torments."—*Improved Version*, p. 607.

"It is one presumption against the doctrine of eternal misery—a doctrine of so much importance if true, that it should be left to so slender a defence," &c.—*Letters to Dr. Miller, by a Unitarian of Baltimore.* Letter 5. p. 31.

"What is the foundation of that love of God, which is the first and greatest duty of Christians? Does it not exist in those excellences of his character, which shine forth in his benevolence, his mercy, his paternal kindness, and unbounded love for us? But how can you reconcile these attributes with the idea of his having doomed a certain number of his creatures to an endless misery, a state and degree of suffering, which bear no proportion to any amount of crimes, that a finite and frail being is capable of committing?"—*Same work, same page.*

"The surest and highest, the purest and most permanent influence will be that which arises from such views of the future punishment awaiting the wicked, as are consistent with the character of a sovereign of the world, who has nothing vindictive in his nature; who adjusts punishment to the degree of demerit; who inflicts it solely for the purpose of promoting holiness, and accomplishing the purposes of his moral government, and only to the degree which these

purposes require, and *so long* as they require it."—*Ware's Letters to Trinitarians and Calvinists*, p. 132.

"For myself, I freely declare, that, from a diligent examination of the New Testament, I am satisfied it does not contain the doctrine of punishment, endless in duration."—*Bancroft's Sermons*, p. 391.

"Many who disbelieve the doctrine of eternal punishment, are afraid to avow their opinion, lest it should weaken the restraints of religion. This is not my fear."—*Bancroft's Sermons*, p. 392.

"But what passage of the New Testament states expressly that the wicked shall be preserved in a state of endless misery?"—*Bancroft's Sermons*, p. 409.

"Future punishment will be of limited duration, and will terminate in the annihilation of the wicked."—*Bancroft's Sermons*, p. 407.

"If by everlasting punishment, is meant the proper eternity of hell torments, IT IS A DOCTRINE WHICH MOST UNITARIANS OF THE PRESENT DAY CONCUR IN REJECTING; some understanding by that everlasting destruction to which the wicked are to be consigned, an absolute annihilation; others conceiving of their sufferings as consequential, and indefinite as to their duration; and others, that all punishment will be necessarily remedial, and will end at last in a universal restoration to goodness and happiness."—*Christian Disc.* vol. iii. *New Series*, p. 451.

"The writings of this gentleman, [Belsham,] whether in defending the credibility of the Gospel, and the truths of Unitarianism, or in repelling the wanton and insolent attacks made upon his brethren, or in vindicating the honors of the dead, against those who seek to tarnish them, equally prove him to be learned, *temperate*, acute," &c.—*Unit. Miscel.* 1821. p. 109.

"Here," in the language of the reviewer, "we ask whether any [Calvinist] ever attempted to color or exaggerate doctrines like these?—doctrines taught in so many words by [Dr. Priestley and Mr. Belsham,] and by a thousand others; and which would now be insisted on by all real and consistent [Unitarians,] if they thought their people would bear it."

Will the reviewer say, that Dr. Priestley and Mr. Belsham carried matters too far; and that their sentiments are not to be quoted, in evidence of what all Unitarians now believe? On what principle, then, does he quote Calvin as affording complete evidence of what all Calvinists now believe? Let him admit the Deism and Universalism of all Unitarians, as evidenced by quotations from "most approved" Unitarian authors; or let him have the magnanimity to confess the irrelevancy and futility of his quotations from ancient Calvinistic authors, and retract the slander, that Calvinists hold to the doctrine of infant damnation.

Will the reviewer aver, that Unitarianism has been in such a state of progressive improvement, as renders the authority of Dr. Priestley obsolete? By what exuberance of liberality shall all

improvement be denied to Calvinism, and the whole arrogated by Unitarians? Besides, there are many Unitarians of high distinction, who will be ready to claim that the chief difference between some Unitarians and Dr. Priestley, is, not that they have gone beyond him in improvement, but that they have not yet overtaken him.

In a Review of Dr. Channing's sermon, at the ordination of his colleague, contained in the Unitarian Miscellany, and ascribed to a distinguished Unitarian clergyman of this city, it is said, "We hold it our duty to remark, that we were not pleased with the manner in which the writer speaks of Dr. Priestley. It is true that the merits of Unitarian Christianity are not indivisibly linked with the character of any one of its advocates;\* but it seems to us, that if there is one man to whom, more than to any other, Unitarians can look with confidence, and point with pride, as the honest, zealous, pious, unwearied, distinguished champion of their principles, Dr. Priestley is that man. If the orthodox see fit to revile him, and speak of him as an instance of the injurious tendency and influence of Unitarianism, we can only say, that we wish we had many more like him, to be the objects of their calumny and misrepresentation, and of our pride."†

"But," in the words of the reviewer, "we must have exhausted our readers' patience, and shall pursue our revolting task no farther. Yet, when we look back upon what we have done, and before us at the mass of materials not yet used, our work of proving the [Deism and Universalism of Unitarians] seems but begun. For the public, we doubt not that we have said enough to establish the positions from which we started. And for [the reviewer,] we think he must be satisfied too."‡

We have in reserve one topic more to which we desire to call the attention of the reviewer, and concerning which we ask for satisfactory explanation. It is contained in the fact, that the mode of stating the doctrine of original sin adopted by the Reformers, and from which the reviewer derives all his evidence to sustain the charge that Calvinists now believe in the doctrine of infant damnation, have been exchanged in New England for many years, for views and language which utterly preclude even the appearance which the reviewer thinks he finds of ground for such an inference.

Until the time of Pelagius the common mode of stating the doctrine seems to have been, that mankind inherited a corrupt nature. Pelagius denied this, and asserted that infants are born pure, and become depraved only by breathing a contaminated moral atmosphere, i. e. by example; and that there was no

\* Though the faith of Calvinists is, it would seem.

† Unit. Miscel. vol. vi. No. 46. pp. 208, 209. ‡ Christ. Examiner, vol. iv. No. 5. p. 446.



certain connexion between the sin of Adam and that of his posterity : while Augustine asserted an innate, hereditary depravity, by the imputation of Adam's sin. The Reformers also, with one accord, taught that the sin of Adam was imputed to all his posterity, and that a corrupt nature descends from him to every one of his posterity, in consequence of which, infants are unholy, unfit for heaven, and justly exposed to future punishment. Their opinion seems to have been, that the very *substance* or *essence* of the soul was depraved, and that the moral contamination extended alike to all its powers and faculties, insomuch that sin became a property of every man's nature, and was propagated as really as flesh and blood.

This opinion met with the first open resistance, after the Reformation, from Arminius and the Remonstrants, and was one of the five points keenly controverted at the Synod of Dort. The doctrine of native innocence, and of depravity as the effect of example, was again revived, and again condemned as unscriptural; though, from that time, it gained ground, especially in the English church, where it became the predominant doctrine.

Our Puritan fathers adhered to the doctrine of original sin, as consisting in the imputation of Adam's sin, and in a hereditary depravity; and this continued to be the received doctrine of the churches of New England until after the time of Edwards. He adopted the views of the Reformers on the subject of original sin, as consisting in the imputation of Adam's sin, and a depraved nature transmitted by descent. But, after him, this mode of stating the subject was gradually changed, until, long since, the prevailing doctrine in New England has been, that men are not guilty of Adam's sin, and that depravity is not of the substance of the soul, nor an inherent or physical quality, but is wholly voluntary, and consists in the transgression of law, in such circumstances as constitutes accountability and desert of punishment. This change was not accomplished without discussion. It was resisted by those who chose to be denominated Old Calvinists, and advocated by those who were called Hopkinsians, and New Divinity men, until, for many years, these views of original sin have been the predominant doctrine of the ministers and churches now denominated Evangelical. These, while they disclaim the language held by Calvin and Edwards on the subject of imputation, do, in accordance with the Bible, and the Reformers, hold that there is a connexion, of some kind, between the sin of Adam and the universal, voluntary, and entire depravity of his posterity, so that it is in consequence of Adam's sin that all mankind do sin, voluntarily, as early as they are capable of accountability and moral action.

The pamphlets and treatises on this subject were written, and the subject settled, chiefly before my recollection. But I have

read them, and have searched the Scriptures, and have, from the beginning, accommodated my phraseology to opinions which had been adopted as the result of an investigation which commenced more than seventy years ago, and has been settled more than fifty years; and which is now, with some variety of modification, received substantially, as I apprehend, by two thirds, if not by three quarters, of the evangelical divines in the United States.

The mode, therefore, of stating and explaining the doctrine of original sin, and other kindred doctrines, which I have adopted, and which some affect to consider as new, and an approximation to Unitarianism, without sense enough on my part to perceive it, or honesty enough to avow it, is a mode of explaining and vindicating the doctrines of the Reformation which was adopted in New England more than seventy years ago. Some of the most approved writers on this subject are, Hopkins, the younger Edwards, West, Smalley, Spring, Strong, Dwight; and, in England, Andrew Fuller, one of the greatest and best of men.

The following quotations from several of these writers, will shew the fact, and the nature of the change in the mode of stating the doctrine of original sin.

“It is not to be supposed that the offence of Adam is imputed to them [his posterity] to their condemnation, while in their own persons innocent; or that they are guilty of the sin of their first father, antecedent to their own sinfulness. All that is asserted as what the Scriptures teach, is, that by a divine constitution there is a certain connexion between the first sin of Adam, and the sinfulness of his posterity.”—*Hopkins*, vol. i. p. 319.

The subject is thus stated by Dwight. 1. That by one man sin entered into the world. 2. That, in consequence of this event, all men have sinned. 3. That death, as the consequence of sin, has passed upon all men. And he says “it is clearly impossible that any being except a thinking, voluntary one, should be the subject of either virtue or sin.”

“Please to remember, that your wicked nature is your own, in the most personal sense. For, though we are sinners by Adam; though there is an established connexion between the sin of Adam and the sin of his posterity; though all the children of men are by nature totally depraved in consequence of Adam’s sin; yet *sin is a personal quality*. And as your *hearts and souls* are your own, and not the hearts and souls of other men; as your *thoughts and volitions* are your own, and not the thoughts and volitions of others; so your *sin and evil nature* are your own, and not the sin and evil nature of another. David, in his penitential confession, evidently refers to the established connexion between the sin of Adam and his posterity. For, he says, with the note of attention, “Behold, I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me.” But he does not confess the sin of Adam, any more than the sin of Seth;

nor will any other man who is the subject of a proper share of conviction. For sin is a personal quality, and cannot be transferred from one to another, any more than the heart or soul of one man can be transferred to another."—*Spring's Disquisition, as quoted in Ely's Contrast*, p. 79.

"Adam's first offence was, some way or other, the occasion of the universal sinfulness of his future offspring. And the question now before us, is, *how* his sin was the occasion of ours. 1. Adam did not make us sinners, by causing us to commit his first offence. Nor can we more easily believe, 2. That he made his posterity sinners, by *transferring* to them the *guilt* of his first transgression. The doctrine of *imputation*, therefore, gives us no ground to suppose, that all mankind sinned in, and fell with Adam, in his first transgression; or that the *guilt* of his first sin was, either by him, or by the Deity, transferred to his posterity. Nor can we suppose, 3. That Adam made men sinners, by conveying to them a morally corrupt nature. There is no morally corrupt nature, distinct from free, voluntary, sinful exercises."—*Emmons, as quoted in Ely's Contrast*, pp. 67, 69, 71.

"Men have lost none of their ability to obey his commands by the fall. They are as really able to obey every divine command as Adam was, when he came out of the forming hand of his Maker."—*Mass. Miss. Magazine, as quoted in Ely's Contrast*, p. 75.

"Virtue and vice, or sin and holiness, are predicable of nothing but *moral actions*."—*Hopkins, as quoted in Ely's Contrast*, p. 49.

"Sin is a wrong choice or volition. Holiness is its opposite; a right choice or volition. Nothing else is sin; nothing else holiness."—*Spring's Disquisition, as quoted in Ely's Contrast*, p. 49.

"Infants are born with a nature, which, not by necessity, but by the free consent of the heart, will in all cases actually sin as soon as they are able. Without denying that more is true, I mean to *assert* no more when I speak of the depravity of infants, and when I call them *sinners*. Least of all do I undertake to decide on their condition in a *future world*. In the hands of divine mercy I leave them, and bow in submissive silence."—*Griffin's Park Street Lectures*, pp. 13, 14.

That the reviewer and his brethren were unacquainted with this change in the language of New England Calvinists on the subject of original sin, "is not to be supposed for an instant, or by any stretch of charity." The controversies are extant by which this change was achieved. A Contrast between the language of the Reformers and the divines of New England has been published, with the commendation of eighteen distinguished names of the old school. This Contrast was reviewed, in 1813, in the General Repository, a Unitarian work published at Cambridge, which contains the following passages, and many others like them. "Our ears are assailed and fatigued with the polemical clamor of the Old Calvinists and the New."\* "The

\* No. 6. p. 347.

influence of the Assembly [the General Assembly of the Presbyterian church] must be strictly and exclusively devoted to the defence and support of Presbyterian Calvinism, as distinguished from, and opposed to, Andoverian Calvinism."\* "The Calvinism of Andover and that of the General Associations may safely be considered the same, and they are not at all inclined to yield their 'improvements.'"† "The reformed, amputated, and enlarged state of the Westminster creed, as received at Andover, is quite a different Orthodoxy from the standards of Princeton. It may reasonably be doubted, whether there be a Calvinist in New England who would agree to the explanations of the New York Calvinists."‡ And Dr. Channing says "THE IMPUTATION OF ADAM'S SIN TO HIS POSTERITY IS HASTENING TO JOIN THE EXPLODED DOCTRINE OF TRANSUBSTANTIATION."||

And yet, with all this knowledge, and these concessions, that the phraseology and faith of New England Calvinists is changed on the article of original sin, all those expressions which the Reformers adopted on that subject are quoted in evidence that the Calvinists of New England hold to the damnation of infants! We ask the reviewer to reconcile this conduct with his high standing as a man of letters, in a station which renders bad example conspicuous. We ask him to reconcile it with fairness in controversy, with candor, with liberality, with honor, with conscience, and the giving up of that account with joy on which the destinies of eternity will turn. Can he reconcile his conduct to his friends even, whose abused credulity has betrayed them into a premature exultation?

There is one point of Unitarian management, which we need the reviewer's aid to understand. When the Calvinistic system is explained and defended as it has been for half a century in New England, and honest men, who have heard it misrepresented, are convinced of its truth, and are in danger of throwing upon those who have slandered us, the charge of misrepresentation, then, to parry the charge, it is insisted that it is not Calvinism which we preach, but that it is Unitarianism, or something fast approaching to it.

But, lest these too favorable testimonies should disarm their people of prejudice, and bring them and us to a too frequent and friendly alliance, it becomes necessary to create repugnancy; and then all the offensive passages which can be found in Calvinistic authors are strung together, to deck out the system with appropriate horrors.

Now, we would ask these gentlemen to tell us on which side of these opposite representations is their real opinion,—when it is that their lips still speak the thing they mean, and when they merely take counsel of expediency. Why did the reviewer go back two hundred years for evidence of what Calvinists now believe? And why did he stop short, without a single quotation from modern creeds and authors? Did he perceive that they would furnish ex-

\* Gen. Repos. No. 6. p. 350.

† Ibid.

‡ Ib. pp. 360, 361.

|| Sermon at the ordination of Mr. Gannet.

planations which would break entirely the force of his argument? Why were no extracts given from Hopkins, Fuller, Smalley, West, Strong, and Dwight? Are authors of the last and of the present generations, to be overlooked, in representing the sentiments of the living?

We derive no pleasure from exposing the false reasonings, and disingenuous conduct, and false accusations of the reviewer, but the satisfaction which results from a faithful, and we hope a successful, performance of our duty, in vindicating the cause of the servants of Christ from aspersion, and in fulfilling the obligations of public justice.

The charge so long circulated against Calvinists, that they believe in the damnation of infants, is utterly false; and knowing it to be so, I publicly denied it. A reviewer in the *Christian Examiner*, the organ of the Unitarian denomination, instead of apologizing for so great an injury, justifies the charge, and attempts to produce the truth in evidence. And, in language more supercilious, arrogant, and outrageous, against the laws of common propriety, than any my eyes ever fell upon, on pages usually consecrated to decency; he does not hesitate to charge Calvinists with having their understandings so debased, their moral sentiments so brutified, that they have not "sense" or "spirit" enough to distinguish between the character of God and the Devil; and this on the authority of a passage in an author, whose real sentiments he most grossly misrepresented. In such circumstances, we have spoken not hastily, nor in anger, but deliberately and conscientiously, both as to matter and manner; for we are not of the number who suppose that rebuke can never be deserved, or that it is always inexpedient or inconsistent with the spirit of the Gospel. Instead of this, had we animadverted upon instances of such moral obliquity without correspondent tokens of strong disapprobation, we should have felt that we betrayed the cause of Christ, and gave over the names of his servants to unmerited reproach, and that we set an example of apathy to moral wrong, calculated to destroy responsibility, and deaden the sensibilities of the community to literary aggression.

And as to any supposed severity in exposing the ignorance or weakness of the reviewer, in the language of Edwards, "I would crave leave to say, that I humbly conceive, a distinction ought to be made between opposing and exposing a *cause*, or the *arguments* used to defend it, and reproaching *persons*. He is a weak writer indeed, who undertakes to confute an opinion, but dares not expose the nakedness and absurdity of it, nor the weakness nor inconsistency of the methods taken, and arguments used, by any, to maintain it, for fear he should be guilty of speaking evil of those things, and be charged with reproaching them. If an antagonist is angry at this, he thereby gives his readers too much occasion of suspicion towards himself, as chargeable with weakness or bitterness."



In closing these remarks, I would submit to the consideration of the reviewer, what is demanded of him as a man of candor, as a Christian, and even as a fair reasoner, should he reply. It is required of him, that he retract the charge that Calvinists hold to the damnation of infants; or that he prove it to be true. And to do the latter, it is requisite,

1. That he point out some one doctrine of Calvinism from which he thinks it follows, and specify in what manner it follows. And this must be done by other evidence than that of assertion and declamation.

2. He must show that Calvinists admit and adopt the inference. For Calvinism is what Calvinists believe, and not what others ascribe to them, and which they disavow.

3. The sentiment that infants are damned must be found in Calvinistic creeds, such, and so many, as show it to have been, and still to be, the general belief, before it can be charged upon Calvinists as a body. Calvinistic authors, with whom not a single individual Calvinist agrees, probably, in all respects, much less the whole body of Calvinists, are not to be relied on in evidence that "all consistent Calvinists hold to the damnation of infants." We might as well quote Priestley in evidence that all consistent Unitarians believe that the soul is matter, and is governed according to the laws of matter, without free agency and accountability, and sleeps between death and the resurrection.

4. If authors are to be received in evidence, against a denomination, it must be in support of a sentiment taught by the most approved writers, plainly, and in such numbers in every age, as justifies the conclusion, that it has always been a received doctrine of the entire body. For every rash and eccentric doctrine which any Calvinist may choose to publish, is not Calvinism. Since my last communication, I have seen extracts, said to be taken from Twiss, as much more abominable than ordinary heresies, as they were recommended, and made more dangerous, by admixture with more truth.

5. Above all, whatever may have been the opinion of Calvinistic authors of other generations concerning the damnation of infants, before their views can be lawfully attached to Calvinists now, proof is required that, in some significant and satisfactory manner, we have given our assent to the doctrine that infants are damned: otherwise, I might as lawfully charge a minister of fair fame and credible piety with being an infidel, and when proof is demanded, allege in evidence the infidel opinions of his grandfather.

6. It belongs to the reviewer also to show that no change has taken place, among Calvinists of New England, and extensively through the land, in stating the doctrine of original sin, which renders the language of authors of other generations wholly inapplicable to Calvinists now. It being just as relevant to quote from Socinus, sentiments which, generally, Unitarians have modified or

abandoned, in proof of their present faith, as to quote from Calvin and others, language which later discussions have modified, as evidence of the existing belief of all consistent Calvinists.

Finally, it will relieve the reputation of the reviewer as a fair disputant, to prove that he, and his brethren in whose defence he deemed it his "bounden duty" to come out, were not fully apprized of the change of phraseology in the "most approved" New England authors, on the subject of original sin. Until this is done, I must be permitted to say to the reviewer and his brethren, Why do you persist in misrepresenting the opinions of Calvinists on points of invidious bearing? Are you afraid to meet our doctrinal views fairly, as we choose to state them? Do you fear that honest and fair minded people would say to their ministers, 'If this is Calvinism, you have misrepresented Calvinists, and abused us. Do you rest your hopes of maintaining your own opinions on misrepresenting the opinions of your opponents, and terrifying those who confide in your statements, as children are terrified by superstitious nurses with stories about ghosts and hobgoblins?'

I must be permitted to say to the reviewer, from a very extended personal knowledge on the subject, and a yet more extended information, that the Calvinists of New England and the United States do not hold that infants are damned. And until he has produced, from his ample materials, other and better proof than he has as yet produced, I hope he will not consider me as "impudent," or be offended should I regard it as my "bounden duty," and should I take the liberty, to recommend to him and his brethren the commitment to memory of the Ninth Commandment, which is, "Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor."

I am, respectfully, yours,

LYMAN BEECHER.

GERMAN THEOLOGICAL WRITERS.

To the Editor of the Spirit of the Pilgrims.—Sir,

I have been interested in the extracts, contained in your number for February, which your correspondent has made from several publications, in relation to the subject of religion in Germany. The discourses of Mr. Rose, to which he adverts, I had seen, and partly read before. The Eclectic Review, and the extracts from M. Stapfer, I had also read. The letter of Mr. Kurtz is new to me; and I am very glad to see a confirmation of what we have before heard about the religious state of Berlin, from so respectable and worthy a man.\* But there are some statements,

\* Since the publication of our last number, we have met with the following additional testimony to the fact of a revival of evangelical religion in Protestant Germany. It is contained in an extract, published in the minutes of the last General Synod of the Lutheran Church in the United States, from a letter, occasioned by the visit of the Rev. Mr. Kurtz, and written in 1827, to a Lutheran clergyman in this country, by the Rev. Dr. KNEIWELL of Danzig. "I gladly avail myself of this opportunity, to give you some information on the state of religion in this country. I will merely say a few words on

in the "extracts" from the other writers, which it has seemed to me, ought not to be left unnoticed, while there are ample means in our country of correcting them.

I know not who the Eclectic reviewer may be; but whoever he may be, nothing is more certain, than that he has made some mistakes; and, in a work like yours, they ought to be noticed.

I will not dwell on his statement of the system of the Neologists, though it is, in my view, liable to some exceptions, and communicates but an imperfect idea of Rationalism, as it generally prevails in Germany. But I have some remarks to make on his catalogue of the persons who are, and have been the most famous supporters of this system, in that country. *Cuique suum*, is the dictate of both sacred and civil justice.

Among these are reckoned, Gesenius, Bretschneider, and Schiller. Of Gesenius, it may truly be said, that he is, to all appearance, a thorough Rationalist; but nearly all that he has published, has been *philology*, not *theology*; and very seldom, indeed, does one meet with anything in his works, with which he has reason to be offended. He seems heartily to despise the whole system of *accommodation* in exegesis; and he explains the sacred writers, almost throughout, as meaning what the advocates of evangelical sentiments suppose them to mean.

Bretschneider, so far from being a Rationalist, has published a full System of Theology, more orthodox, and nearer to the old Lutheran ground, than almost any which had appeared in Germany, before his, for nearly half a century. He has often come before the public as a *Supernaturalist*. Of late it is whispered, that he is a candidate for Eichhorn's place at Göttingen, and that he has become, at least, one of the *Moderates*, if not one of the *Liberals*. How much truth there is in this, I know not. I only know, that he has published a pamphlet, in answer to Mr. Rose's Sermons; and that in this, (which I have read,) he avows himself a *Supernaturalist*; although he endeavors to blunt the edge of Mr. Rose's weapons, by interposing a kind of shield between them and all his Rationalist countrymen.

As to Schiller, he was a play writer, a poet, and a historian; but no theologian. If he has ever written on theology, (I know not that he has,) I am quite sure that he was not well enough acquainted with it, to have any considerable influence in Germany.

the Province of East and West Prussia, in which I reside. It is indeed a splendid evidence of the divinity of our heavenly King, and a glorious fulfilment of his promise in Mark xiii. 31. "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my word shall not pass away," that we see the spark of Gospel light, which had long been concealed beneath the darkness of human wisdom, and the traditions of men, warming the hearts of multitudes, and blazing forth with increasing lustre. Since the Gospel is again preached in its purity, and the doctrines, of human depravity, and repentance, and faith in the divine Redeemer, are fully and generally inculcated, public worship is again attended, and religion prospers. The deep interest which is felt in Bible and Missionary societies, the cheerful aid afforded to every object connected with the progress of religion, the erection of new churches, and the repairing of such as were decayed,—all these circumstances afford the strongest evidence that religion is in a very prosperous state."

Instead of these names, the writer should have put Henke, Ziegler, Semler, Herder, Stäudlin in the earlier part of his life, and other master spirits, who have helped to raise and to direct the storm, in the land of the Reformation.

On the other hand, it becomes a more painful duty, to exempt from the commendation which is given in the extracts, several writers who are named as orthodox. One of the most important cases is that of E. F. C. Rosenmüller, the well known and celebrated interpreter of the Old Testament. It is very clear, that his recent Commentaries develop a different spirit and state of mind, from what is exhibited in his early ones. Every new edition brings him much nearer to what is called orthodox exegesis. Indeed, a man of evangelical sentiment, would find but little reason for complaint or disagreement in respect to any of his Commentaries, published within the last five years. I have it, too, from a friend in Germany, who not long since paid him a visit, that Rosenmüller complained, in strong terms, of the abuse of him in England, on the ground of his early Commentaries, and declared, that he considered it very ungenerous, to be always taxing a man with what he was in early years, and to leave him no space for changing his views, in his maturer state, and after more extended investigation.

It is plain enough, that Rosenmüller is not indifferent to the esteem of men who are the friends of evangelical sentiment, and that he is generally very guarded about saying anything which will give offence to them. It is clear, also, that his Commentaries on the Old Testament, are a Thesaurus of philology, which is nowhere else to be found, and which the student cannot well dispense with. They are of high, and permanent, *philological* and *critical* value; dictated by great accuracy of investigation in general, by soundness of exegetical judgment, and by sobriety of thought. We find in them no such conceits as Heinrichs, Michaelis, Kuinöl, Paulus, and even Schleusner, occasionally exhibit;—the absolute excrescences of the human mind, which one wishes to see all cleared away, for the sake of contemplating with more pleasure what lies beneath them. This is true, however, only of Rosenmüller's later editions of his Commentaries. If any one wishes for painful proof of what he could once do, let him read the first edition of his Commentary on the Pentateuch; or what he has said on Isaiah vii. in his first edition; and above all, his introduction to the book of Jonah, in which he suggests the probability, that the book was made from the Grecian story of Hercules being swallowed by a whale. But it would be unjust and ungenerous, not to allow a man room for recantation, in such cases; and this he has abundantly made, as to the two former publications. A new edition of his work on the Minor Prophets, has not been recently published.

After all, one who is thoroughly acquainted with this very useful writer, finds room for deep regret, that he is compelled to

doubt his real sacred reverence for the Scriptures in general. The suggestion is so unpleasant a one, that I must produce the proof necessary to support it.

In the admirable work of Rosenmüller, just published, entitled, *Handbuch der Alterthumskunde*, two volumes of which have come to hand, and contain a Sacred Geography, he states, (part ii. p. 41,) that the king of Babylon, (Belshazzar,) was not slain by Cyrus, after his city was taken, but sent away into the province of Caramania, where he ended his days in peace. And in a note upon this, (p. 89. note 141,) he says, that he makes this statement, on the authority of Berosus and Megasthenes. He acknowledges that Xenophon, (vii. 24. *Cyrop.*) represents the king as slain by Cyrus; and that Dan. v. 30. agrees with this representation. But he adds, "it is strange that the *less credible* historians," i. e. Daniel and Xenophon, "should be believed in preference to the naive and *more credible* ones," i. e. Berosus and Megasthenes. Just the opposite of this, is the judgment of Gesenius, in his Commentary on Isaiah xiii. seq.

Again, in the same publication, (part ii. p. 42,) Rosenmüller says, "The book of Daniel, in general, *cannot be used as a source of history*; because it was composed a long time after the overthrow of Babylon, by some Jew in Palestine, *with altogether a different design than that of giving a true history.*"

What he says, also, on the geography of Paradise, and on several other topics of the like nature, proves beyond all doubt, that he regards a considerable part at least, of the Scriptures, as being of no binding authority, nor even deserving of credit, and that he considers them as full of mistakes and errors.

At the same time, his works are so replete with important information, laboriously collected, and lucidly arranged, that no one who intends to pursue the critical study of the Scriptures, can well dispense with them. In a special manner, his recent works are exceedingly valuable. I can only express my hopes and earnest wishes, that a long life, spent in a most laborious and incessant study of the divine word, may end in bringing him fully to enjoy the precious hopes proffered by it, and the heavenly consolations which it administers.

Of the picture drawn by M. Stapfer, (p. 105. of your No. for February,) I have no certain means of judging. Plouquet, Ettinger, Hegel, Bilfinger, Bockshammer, &c. may be important names in the theological department of Germany; but they are not frequent in the leading Tübingen publications. Perhaps they have been the authors of many of the anonymous essays, which have appeared in the *Archiv* of Bengel, and in other works at Tübingen. But when M. Stapfer states, (on the same page,) that Winer is among those "who have shewn the deepest grief at the profane way in which some commentators have treated the sacred books," he surely must never have examined the manner in which Winer



himself treats them ; for few of the Neologists have handled them with less ceremony or respect, than he. So his Dictionary of the Bible abundantly testifies, not to mention many other of his works.

In respect to Kaisei and Ammon, who are mentioned (p. 106, same number,) as having clearly renounced Rationalism, the evidence is perhaps somewhat hopeful ; but still, it is far from being *clear*. In regard to De Wette, however, it is a most singular fate, which this distinguished scholar and man of genius has experienced among us. Not long ago, a writer in the *Christian Spectator* at New Haven, produced De Wette as belonging to the *orthodox*. Now again, on the authority of M. Stapfer, we are assured of this fact. And yet I have, lying before me, a work of De Wette's, on the New Testament, published the very last summer, in which he has displayed so much skepticism, that even the Rationalists at Halle, and Dr. Wegscheider himself, who is the very Coryphæus of them, speaks in strong terms of disapprobation. De Wette among the orthodox ! Why, he has contributed by his striking talents, and his learning, and his eloquent writings, more, perhaps, than any other individual, during the last thirty years, to support and to propagate Rationalism ; and is he among the orthodox ? I would it were so ; but I could much sooner believe that Saul was *really* among the prophets. De Wette, in his banishment from Berlin, and in the blasting of all his worldly expectations, has been brought, I would fain hope, to a serious view of the end of human life, and of the account of it which lies beyond the grave. He has even courted the society of the orthodox, at Basle, where he now is, in the old University to which the immortal Buxtorf's belonged, and where one of their descendants is still a Professor.

He has, of late, engaged in promoting the missionary efforts of that excellent seminary, under the care of Mr. Blumhardt, in the city of Basle. And rumor now states, within a few days, that he has just published a work, which exhibits a change of mind on the subject of religion. Would to God, this might prove to be true ! But however this may be, M. Stapfer, and the writer in the *Christian Spectator*, were far enough from correctness, when they made their statements respecting him.

My principal object in making this communication, is, to prevent those who may not be acquainted with the authors in question, from being misled, in any purchases which they may make of their works. The Rationalists would not thank the Eclectic reviewer, nor M. Stapfer, for putting them among the orthodox ; nor the orthodox, for being put among the Rationalists. Let each one stand where he chooses to stand ; and then the persons concerned will have no ground of complaint, and the public will not be misled.

Yours, with much respect,

M. STUART.

*Andover, Theol. Seminary, March 26, 1828.*

THE  
SPIRIT OF THE PILGRIMS.

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COMMUNICATIONS.

THE RIGHTS AND DUTIES OF DIFFERENT DENOMINATIONS OF  
CHRISTIANS.

THERE is a powerful partiality in man for his own way ; so powerful, that he is not satisfied with his own liberty of doing as he pleases, but desires to bring others into a conformity to his opinions and conduct. This predilection is often so great, as to render his own way, in his own opinion, exclusively good ; and all other ways, not only inferior, but worthless, and even pernicious. This is not, as some have pretended, a defect peculiar to religious persons or denominations, but one which is common to the race. The philosopher regards his own system of philosophy, as exclusively true, and all other systems as absurd. The physician not only regards his own theories and practice, as better than those of others ; but, often, he regards all others as absolutely pernicious. The politician has his own plan for promoting the national prosperity, and frequently regards every other as absolute destruction. The friends of Religion have not escaped this malady. It appeared in the family of Christ. His disciples saw one casting out devils in the name of their Master. They immediately proposed that he should join himself to their company, and attend personally upon the ministry of Christ. But, on his declining to accept their proposal, they forbade him to cast out devils any more, in the name of Christ. They were of the opinion, that their own way was so preferable to all others, that it were better that good should not be done at all, than that it should be done in any other way except their own. Their Master was of a different opinion. When they stated the facts of the case, he said, "Forbid him not ; for there is no man which shall do a miracle in my name, that can lightly speak evil of me." He cannot be our enemy, for God would not enable an enemy to work a miracle to our injury. And

if he is not our enemy, if he is doing a little good, in his own way, he is our friend; "for he that is not against us, is on our part." And, though his usefulness, compared with yours, may be small, it is not to be despised, or prevented; "for whosoever shall give you a cup of water to drink, in my name, because ye belong to Christ, verily I say unto you, he shall not lose his reward."

By this reproof, he warned them against a vain self-complacency, and taught them to regard moral excellence and usefulness, wherever they might find it, and in however small degrees, or however associated with relative defects, which might in some degree balance its useful tendencies. This reproof implied that, in this sinful world, little good will be done, if none is attempted by man, or accepted by God, beside that which is done in the best possible manner; and that, although God is better pleased with high relative excellence, he finds nowhere such an exuberance of well conducted enterprize, as induces him to cast away the most imperfect efforts of usefulness, on the part of his sincere friends. If one shall give only a cup of cold water to a disciple, prompted by real benevolence, the reward shall not be lost. This lesson of instruction has, however, been nearly lost, unless in these last days, it should be received, and reduced to practice.

The feelings too common among religious denominations, have been those of exclusive self-estimation—trusting in God that they are righteous, and despising others. No doubt, some denominations of Christians embrace more truth than others. Still, there are none so perfect as to be without some defect; and no denomination of *real* Christians is so erroneous, as not to possess things which are true, and excellent, and lovely, and of good report. But these excellences each denomination has been disposed to overlook, in the other, while they amplified each other's defects. They have recognized, perhaps, each other's piety as individuals, and the obligations of brotherly love; while, in their collective capacity as churches, they have felt themselves at liberty to be as barbarians towards each other, and to disregard each other's feelings, rights, and interests, as no man would be authorized to disregard the feelings of a personal enemy. They have allowed themselves to speak evil of each other, and to create and perpetuate prejudices, and to conduct their controversies with invective and ridicule. Judging from facts, they have seemed to think it lawful to bite and devour one another; to undermine the foundation of each other's prosperity; to drive away the shepherd, and scatter the sheep. And this, where the parties concerned profess to regard each other as real Christians, bought by the same blood, worshipping, in spirit and in truth, the same God, through a common Mediator, and on their pilgrimage to a common heaven.

The evils of such conduct have been great. It has embittered

the peace of families, and separated friends. It has, in many places, undermined the support of the Gospel, and prevented its stated preaching in any form; while religion, associated with poverty and weakness, has failed to command respect, or to exert upon the community her purifying power, and has been despised and trodden down by the wicked. A moral wilderness has thus been created, where the fellowship of the Gospel, notwithstanding minor differences, might have made the place as the garden of God.

The great decline of religious instruction in some places in New England, has been caused, not necessarily by the *existence* of different denominations, but by the exclusive and even rancorous spirit, with which they have treated each other.

Instances have existed, in which *profligates* and *infidels* have been treated with less aversion than the members of a rival denomination who afforded credible evidence of piety. The greatest impediment, now, to the extension of evangelical instruction to all the destitute millions of our land, is found, not in the inability of Christian denominations to give a universal extension to the Gospel, but in the resistance they make to each other—in the impediments they throw in each other's way. If we could read the secrets of all hearts as God beholds them, and thus discover the causes of that infidelity which swept Europe as with a besom, and for a time threatened to poison the fountains of life in this country, and of other forms of opposition to the Gospel in different ages and countries, we should find, that the malignity of religious denominations towards each other, has unsettled, and turned against the Saviour, and the word of life, more hearts, than, perhaps, all other causes. The manner in which Christian denominations treat one another, is, *in the mouths of infidels, a standing topic of reproach, and justification of unbelief.*

The mischief and wickedness of this conduct are beginning to be perceived and deplored, by some Christians of every name; and before the universal jubilee, no doubt it will pass away, and be looked back upon with wonder. Even now, men of ardor, ashamed of past discriminations and grounds of separation, would abandon all distinctions, and rush into a precipitate embrace. This, however, would be only to fill up another measure of folly, in the opposite extreme. Religious denominations are not yet prepared, if they ever will be prepared, to give up their distinctive traits; and all the movements of the various denominations to perpetuate individuality, show that anything is sooner to be expected than amalgamation. The ditch, which ages have drawn and deepened between them, is not to be leaped at a bound, or filled up with a few goodnatured feelings of a moment. Radical mistakes have lent their influence to this state of things, which need to be detected and abandoned.

The rights of separate denominations of Christians must be ascertained and settled, before aggression will cease, or each be allowed to do what each has a right to do, without provocation. The division of land by settled bounds, is indispensable to prevent mutual encroachment and collision among contiguous landholders. If each, with no guide but interest, should draw the lines, there would be little beside "debatable ground" and "border war." Something of this kind is the more necessary in this Commonwealth, from the consideration that the largest denomination is the original denomination, which planted the churches, and drew around them, for cooperation in supporting the Gospel, parishes within local limits; to which all our early laws and usages have a reference; by whose influence the Gospel is still supported; and to which many look as to a birthright, and some as to a religious sinecure, into which none of another denomination may come, without the violation of Christian courtesy, and the charge of being wolves in sheep's clothing.

We have no doubt that these parishes gave to the Gospel a universality, and stability, and moral power, which, during the perils of the wilderness, and the expenses of Indian, French, and English warfare, could not otherwise have been acquired; and that they have been the glory of New England. But we believe as fully, that changes have taken place in our circumstances, which render it impossible to achieve the same ends, by the same means; and that they have failed in their efficacy, just when they had ceased to be indispensable; and are, in fact, waxing old, and passing away.

Indeed, if in some parts of this Commonwealth, parishes within local limits are a blessing, the fact is notorious, that in many places they are engines of fraud and persecution; their influence being perverted to destroy the very religion which they were established to maintain; and this, too, by a denomination of recent origin, crept in unawares, which have neither the magnanimity, nor the liberality, to support their own institutions but by invading the rights of others.

Evangelical denominations have also arisen within town and parish limits, composed of real Christians, and receiving, as they ought, by the law of 1811, all possible facilities for the formation of voluntary incorporations; and giving access, to every town and parish, to ministers of every denomination. The result is, that none remain to sustain the parochial institutions of our fathers but those who are attached to them, or those who are too regardless of religion to take the trouble of signing off to another denomination, or those who remain, that, by favor of circumstances, they may pervert them. The consequence is, that these lax members of our old societies, who seldom see the inside of the meeting-house, furnish a convenient corps for the Unitarian aristocracy to collect from the highways and hedges, when it may become necessary, to



overwhelm the majority of the real supporters of the Gospel; thus throwing the religious rights and privileges of all who prize religion, into the hands of men who have no conscientious interest on the subject.

This is an alarming state of things, and brings upon the children of the Pilgrims a persecution as real as that from which they fled, when at first they came hither; and is subjecting them, almost daily, to the necessity of forming voluntary societies, after the example of other denominations, and of laying anew the foundations of those churches, which have been driven from the habitations of their fathers. Of how much value these local societies now are, it is not for me to say; but so great is the change of circumstances in which they exist, that they are distinguished in nothing from voluntary societies which have risen up within their limits, except in the indefinite tenure of membership, and the insecurity of rights to all who are sincerely attached to them, and the legal membership of so many who are not attached to them, and whose agency may at any time be so easily employed to thwart the wishes of all who desire to perpetuate the religion of their fathers. Whether it be expedient to abolish these local societies, or to let them cease by the rapid course of events, I shall not now stop to inquire; but, evidently, the providence of God has brought us into a condition in which all denominations must be considered as having a right to promote their own religious institutions, wherever, in the providence of God, they are able to do it. It is equally clear, that no denomination has, or ought to have, a shadow of legal advantage over another. We all stand, and must stand, only by the goodness of our cause, the favor of heaven, and our own resources. As parish limits have, also, in some places ceased to help the Gospel, they ought not, surely, to be permitted to hinder it. The land is before us, and there is room enough for us all. Only, therefore, let us see to it, that real Christians of different denominations fall not out by the way, for we are brethren.

It will not follow, however, because Christian denominations have a right to establish an interest wherever they are able, that they can therefore do no wrong in this respect; for, while they have rights which cannot be abridged or controlled by law, they are to be exercised under the imperious obligations of relative duty, which cannot be evaded or shaken off. One denomination may have no right to hinder a course of conduct, which, notwithstanding, another may not, in the sight of God, have any right to pursue.

The relative duties of Christian denominations one toward another, need to be, therefore, ascertained and settled, before they will render to each other due benevolence, while all, persuaded in their own mind, shall manage their own affairs peaceably in their own way, and with fervent charity towards all who love our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ in sincerity and in truth.

Another consideration which renders a more definite knowledge on this subject indispensable, is, the increased activity of all Christian denominations to extend the power of the Gospel. This, if not regulated by correct views of rights and duties, which shall cause them to move in their respective orbits, and to bear with the accidental collisions which are inseparable from the doing by each what each has a perfect right to do, may, like the collision of comets, set the world on fire; whereas the attractions and repelances of love, guided by knowledge, will not fail to preserve the balance in the moral system, and secure the silent and harmonious movement of every orb.

To those who understand the law of love, by which Christians are bound to each other, it may seem impossible that it should be so extensively, and for so long a time, violated; and that men, who admit their obligation to love even enemies, should have felt themselves at liberty to indulge jealousy and alienation towards their friends.

Though this anomaly has resulted from the deceitfulness and wickedness of the heart, in good men, there are circumstances, doubtless, which have occasioned the temptation. One of these, may have been, the perversion of the apostolic treatment of heretics. There were those, early in the church, who claimed the Christian name as a cover for errors which precluded all evidence of piety. From such, the churches were commanded to withdraw, and have no fellowship with them. But it was not unnatural, for imperfect men to multiply these fundamentals, until differences, not inconsistent with the existence of piety, should become the occasion of separation, and of such treatment as one denomination of Christians ought never to exhibit towards another.

A more powerful cause, however, of alienation and strife, has been found in the alliance of the church with the civil power. The consequence has been, an attempt to regulate the faith of men, and their modes of worship, by law; and to secure uniformity, not by argument alone, and persuasion, but by civil pains and penalties. From this resulted, persecution on the one part; and, on the other, a keen sense of injury, and deep rooted and long lived opposition. This is the state of feeling, between the Dissenters and the Established church in England. They remember the fire and blood of other days, and feel keenly their civil disabilities, and the double burdens they are now compelled to bear, for the support of the national religion and their own, while their sons are excluded from all the universities of the land. When our fathers came to this country, they came here smarting under a sense of recent and aggravated wrongs, and with all the feelings of men thrust out from their beloved land, and driven to a wilderness, by contumely and oppression. From these circumstances resulted an early prejudice, in this country, between Congregationalists and Episcopa-

lians, which has been marked by an aversion somewhat peculiar, and which has not even to this day wholly ceased.

It might have been hoped, rather than expected, that our fathers, profiting by experience, would have granted to others that religious liberty which they claimed for themselves. But that was not the age of the application of correct principles in respect to religious liberty. The fountains of truth were beginning to overflow, but the waters were muddy, and the streams were yet choked by the rubbish of other ages, which, as yet, their power had not been able to sweep away. Having abandoned all that was dear to themselves in civilized life, for the perils of the ocean and the wilderness, our fathers felt it to be an aggravation of their exile to be molested by other denominations in their wilderness retreat; and, at the first, exercised a legal severity against dissenters from their doctrines and worship, which, though natural enough in that age, and in their circumstances, can never be justified; but which, by no means deserves that severity of rebuke, which some of their descendants have heaped upon them. They might as well be ridiculed, almost, for not employing steam-boats and stereotype plates, as to be censured for not acting in perfect accordance with the principles of religious liberty, before they were fully discovered and clearly defined. But, mild as the censure of their children should be, we may be permitted to regret their mistake; for much of the alienation, and strife, and evil speaking between the Congregationalists and the denominations which have sprung up around them, has arisen from the efforts, on the one part to overthrow, and on the other to maintain, the legal advantages which the Congregationalists established, when they were the only denomination in the State. It ought in justice to be added, however, that the alterations which a change of circumstances made necessary in the Congregational system, as established by law, have been made with a promptitude and cheerfulness wholly unparalleled in the history of the world, and such as in kingly governments could have been achieved only by revolution and blood,—giving a glorious proof of the mild efficacy of republican institutions, and of the sufficiency of a community under the influence of religious principle, to accommodate their government to their own necessities. But it is time that the jealousies and alienations resulting from past collisions should cease; and that we begin to make some atonement for the injury our contentions have done to the cause of Christ, by a studious cultivation of the arts of peace, under the influence of that charity which worketh no ill to its neighbor, but suffereth long, and is kind.

Another cause has lent its aid to the acrimony, which has too much pervaded the feelings of Christian denominations toward each other. It is the influence of worldly men, who, from motives of ambition, have identified themselves with a religious denomination, and, to answer their sinister purposes, have breathed into it

the spirit of a party, and swayed it by the wisdom which is from beneath. The ascendancy of talent, or wealth, or political influence, has been such, as to overrule the counsels of meekness and love. Much of the virulence and heat, which have appeared in Christian denominations, has been the offspring of hearts which have never experienced the power of Christian benevolence. This, in all cases, where the church has been secularized by an alliance with the State, and guided by the influence of mere politicians, has been the chief cause, which has rent the seamless garment. Under the influence of this alliance, it has often happened, that the pious have not been the persecutors, but the persecuted; and that the asperities and cruelties, so freely laid to the charge of Christians, have been inflicted upon Christians by unholy men, and under the influence of a worldly policy, and a carnal heart. This fact evinces clearly, that the churches of Christ can never expect to be influenced wholly by Christian feelings towards each other, until they shall become separate from secular influence, and obey implicitly the laws of our Lord Jesus Christ. But in order to such a consummation, knowledge must lead the way. We must understand the charter of our mutual rights, and the relations of of relative duty, before all sections of the church of Christ will shine fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners.

(To be continued.)

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#### MORAL INFLUENCE OF AN ORTHODOX BELIEF.

In a Sermon preached by the celebrated Dr. Chalmers, in May, 1827, at the opening of the Scotch National Church in London, are the following remarks respecting the practical influence of the doctrines of grace.

“It is this doctrine,”—of justification by faith through the merits of Christ—“that gives to the Gospel message the character of a joyous sound, the going forth of which among all nations shall at length both reconcile and regenerate the world. That were indeed a gladsome land, where this truth was preached, with acceptance and with power, from all the pulpits. It is, in fact, the great bond of reunion between earth and heaven. It is like a cord of love let down from the upper sanctuary among the sinful men who are below; and with every sinner who takes hold, it proves the conductor, along which the virtues of heaven, as well as the peace of heaven, descend upon him. This doctrine of grace is altogether a doctrine according to godliness, and as much fitted to emancipate the heart from the tyranny of sin as from the terrors of that ven-

geance which is due to it. O, it is an idle fear, lest the preaching of the cross should spread the licentiousness of a proclaimed impunity among the people. All experience assures the opposite; and that in parishes which are most plied with the free offers of forgiveness through the blood of a satisfying atonement, there we have the best and holiest families.

“But it may be suspected that, although such a theology is the minister of peace, it cannot be the minister of holiness. Now, to those who have this suspicion, and who would represent the doctrine of justification by faith—that article, as Luther calls it, of a standing or falling church—as adverse to the interests of virtue, I would put one question, and ask them to resolve it. How comes it that Scotland, which, of all the countries in Europe, is the most signalized for the rigid Calvinism of her pulpits, should also be the most signalized by the moral glory that sits on the aspect of her general population? How, in the name of mystery, should it happen, that such a theology as ours is conjoined with perhaps the yet most unvitiated peasantry among the nations of Christendom? The allegation against our churches is, that, in the argumentation of our abstract and speculative controversies, the people are so little schooled to the performance of good works. And how then is it that, in our courts of justice, when compared with the calendars of our sister kingdom, there should be so vastly less to do with their evil works? It is certainly a most important experience that, in that country where there is the most Calvinism, there should be the least crime,—that what may be called the most doctrinal nation of Europe, should, at the same time, be the least depraved,—and that land wherein the people are most deeply imbued with the principles of salvation by grace, should be the least distempered, either by their week-day profligacies, or their Sabbath profanations. When Knox came over from the school of Geneva, he brought its strict, and, at that time, uncorrupted orthodoxy along with him; and with it here pervaded all the formularies of the church which was founded by him; and, from one generation to another, have our Scottish youth been familiarized to the sound of it from their very infancy; and, unpromising as such a system of tuition might be in the eye of the mere academic moralist, to the work of building up a virtuous and well-doing peasantry, certain it is, that, as the wholesale result, there has palpably come forth of it the most moral peasantry in Europe notwithstanding.”

Nor is it only from the advocates of evangelical doctrines that we have such testimony. The opposers of those doctrines have often acknowledged, that the fact, in relation to the character of those who embraced them, has generally been as stated above by Dr. Chalmers. Some of these acknowledgements have been seen by a portion of our readers, in Dr. Beecher's Reply to the Review



of his Sermon at Worcester, and in the Review, published in Boston, of Dr. Channing's Discourse preached at the dedication of the Second Unitarian Church in New York. A learned infidel, while expressing a decided preference of the Arminian to the Calvinistic system, says he thinks himself "in justice bound" to state, that "the modern Calvinists have, in no small degree, excelled their antagonists in the practice of the most rigid and respectable virtues; and have been the highest honor to their own age, and the best models for imitation to every succeeding age."\* Another writer, in a journal for a long time decidedly unfriendly to evangelical opinions, says, "What are we to think of the morality of Calvinistic nations, especially the most numerous of them; who seem, beyond all other men, to be most zealously attached to their religion, and most deeply penetrated with its spirit? Here, if any where, we have a practical and decisive test of the moral influence of a belief in necessarian opinions. In Protestant Switzerland, in Holland, in Scotland, among the English Nonconformists, and the Protestants of the north of Ireland, and in the New England States, Calvinism was long the prevalent faith, and is probably still the faith of a considerable majority. Their moral education was at least completed, and their collective character formed, during the prevalence of Calvinistic opinions. Yet, where are communities to be found of a more pure and active virtue?"† Dr. Priestley, the father of modern Unitarianism, said, forty years ago, of "great numbers of Unitarians" in England, that, "having no zeal for speculative religion, merely because they have no zeal for religion in general, their moral conduct, though decent, is not what is deemed strict and exemplary." And in relation to "the moral character of Unitarians in general," he allows, "that there is in them a greater apparent conformity to the world than is observable in the others," i. e. in the orthodox.‡ A writer in the Christian Register, (the Unitarian newspaper published in Boston,) of Jan. 13, 1827, over the signature of "Layman Junior," says, that it is a question "frequently asked," i. e. we suppose among Unitarians, "but seldom if ever, answered, 'Why the Unitarian preachers do not exhibit the zeal of the Calvinists?' It is, as we say, a question oftener asked than answered, and that too, while *the fact remains confessedly undisputed.*" This inquiry, he adds, "implies a charge of lukewarmness in their vocation, upon those whose duty it is to keep alive a pure flame of religious action among their people;" a charge, of course "confessedly undisputed," since the fact which implies it is "confessedly undisputed." And in another article on the same subject, in the Register of Jan. 27, of the same year, he says "No fact can be more certain, than that the people will never

\* Article on Predestination in the British Encyclopedia.

† Edinburgh Review, vol. xxxvi. p. 237. ‡ Discourses on various subjects, pp. 95, 16.

exceed their pastor in religious fervor." So that it is, according to this writer, a charge, the justness of which is "confessedly undisputed," that Unitarian preachers and people are more lukewarm and have less religious fervor than the Calvinists. A writer in the *Christian Examiner*, (the principal Unitarian periodical published in this country,) for March and April, 1826, says of Unitarians as a body, that their "country societies in general are" almost entirely destitute of zeal, and their ministers are "surrounded by" so much "timidity" among their people, that they "often grow timid themselves, keep to one style of preaching, and one round of subjects, and neither excite, nor are excited to inquiry, decision, and exertion. Much of this," he adds, "is also true of the Unitarian societies in Boston." "The people, though satisfied with ministers of the Unitarian persuasion, and resolved to have no other, are generally unwilling to hear Unitarianism explained or defended, and are therefore not interested in it, nor well versed in its principles." "They are *called* Unitarians, and that is enough." And "when a purpose strictly Unitarian is to be accomplished, they, into whose hands it is committed, know full well that the interest in Unitarianism, as such, is small indeed, and that its resources are soon exhausted."\* But of the orthodox, a writer in the same magazine—the author of the Review of Dr. Beecher's Sermon at Worcester, says, p. 34, "It is a pleasure to us, now and always, to acknowledge the good qualities which recommend our opponents,—their unquestionable sincerity as a body, their laudable zeal in promoting many of the benevolent undertakings that distinguish this age, their endeavors to excite a spirit of greater seriousness and consideration among the people, and to stem the torrent of vice that is forever setting in upon a thoughtless world."

It is then a fact, proved by the most ample testimony, of the opposers, as well as of the advocates, of the doctrines of the orthodox, that they have ever, as a body, excelled their opponents, in no small degree, in the practice of the most rigid and respectable virtues; that those communities, whose collective character has been formed most exclusively by the influence of orthodox opinions, have invariably been of a more pure and active virtue than others; and that, compared with Unitarians, the orthodox have more zeal for religion, and their moral conduct is more strict and exemplary, and they are more zealous in promoting benevolent undertakings, and in endeavoring to excite a spirit of seriousness and consideration among the people, and to stem the torrent of vice. These are facts, and facts which remain "confessedly undisputed."

The moral influence of a system of religious belief, is, moreover, distinguished Unitarian writers themselves being judges, a proper

\* *Christian Examiner*, vol. iii. pp. 114, 115, 116.

test of the truth of that system. Mr. Sparks, in his Inquiry into the Comparative Moral Tendency of Trinitarian and Unitarian Doctrines, says, "There is a close connexion between faith and practice. A man will act according to his convictions, and an irreligious practice can never be the consequence of a right faith." And Dr. Channing says, in his Discourse at the dedication of the Second Unitarian Church in New York, "A religious system can carry no more authentic mark of a divine original, than its obvious, direct, and peculiar tendency to form an elevated religious character." And a far higher authority has said, "Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even as every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit; neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit." And yet, it is maintained that orthodox opinions are false, and Unitarian opinions are true! We appeal to common sense, and the candor of those who disbelieve or doubt the truth of evangelical opinions, and ask, Can it be so?—"An irreligious practice can never be the consequence of a right faith." "A religious system can carry no more authentic mark of a divine original, than its *obvious*, direct, and peculiar adaptation to form an elevated religious character." "A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit." According to the testimony of the opposers, as well as of the advocates of orthodox opinions, those who have embraced these opinions have ever, as a body, excelled their opponents, in no small degree, in the practice of the most rigid and respectable virtues; and those communities whose collective character has been formed most exclusively by the influence of these opinions, have invariably been of a more pure and active virtue than others; and, according to the testimony of distinguished advocates of Unitarianism, the orthodox have more zeal for religion in general than the Unitarians; their moral conduct is more strict and exemplary, and they are more engaged in promoting benevolent undertakings, and in endeavoring to create a spirit of seriousness and consideration among the people, and to stem the torrent of vice. Can it be, then, that orthodoxy is false, and Unitarianism true? If the premises are admitted (and how can they be denied?) is it not manifest that the correct conclusion is the directly opposite of this? Let candor and common sense decide.

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## REVIEWS.

## REVIEW OF TRACTS PUBLISHED BY "THE AMERICAN UNITARIAN ASSOCIATION."

A Review of the Tracts, published by "the American Unitarian Association," was commenced and pursued through eleven of the Tracts, in the late Christian Magazine. It is proposed to resume and continue this Review in our pages. We begin with the twelfth number, entitled, "A Dialogue on Providence, Faith, and Prayer." The Dialogue is between a Mr. and Mrs. Henderson. The occasion of it is the decease of "their eldest daughter, a lovely girl of eighteen." The bereaved parents are "amiable people;" both "professors of religion;" and are spoken of as Christians "in spirit and in life." But Mr. H. has less faith than his sympathizing partner, and cannot so clearly see the goodness of God, in the painful dispensation with which he has been visited; and Mrs. H. is affectionately endeavoring to impart to him those views and consolations with which she is herself sustained. This constitutes the subject of the Dialogue. This Tract is designed, evidently, for persons in *affliction*, and may be regarded as a specimen of the instruction and consolation, which Unitarianism affords, under such circumstances.

Our first remark respecting it, which might have been made on almost any other Tract in the series, as well as this, relates to the *singular phraseology* of Unitarians in their theological discussions. The clergyman who visits Mr. and Mrs. H. "offers them the consolations suggested by his *nature* and his office. The hopes of the Christian faith, and the support of *philosophy*, are pointed out." p. 4. Mr. H. speaks *of himself, and his wife*, as "virtuous parents," who "both *piously* offered prayers for the life of their child." "We prayed," says he, "with the *most pious* and *humble* state of mind." pp. 7, 12, 14. Mrs. H. in explaining the nature of spiritual favors, has the following expressions: "If I find my mind, on any occurrence, greatly disturbed, and if my religious principles and reflections are *unequal* to restoring tranquillity—if my *philosophy* is insufficient, and all common aid fails me; I have then two methods left, which may bring back my peace. On the ground of *philosophy*, I may presume that nothing violent can last long; or on the ground of religion, I may hope that God will do for me, what I cannot do for myself, if I earnestly implore his mercy, to calm the tumult of my feelings." p. 16. On the sentiments conveyed in these quotations, we make no remark. They speak for themselves. We have given them as specimens of Unitarian *phraseology*, in the discussion of theological subjects.

There are apparent *inconsistencies* in the Tract, which its readers will find it difficult to reconcile. The afflicted parents are represented in the commencement, as having "*no disposition to murmur at the dispensations of Providence.*" But expressions are immediately put into the mouth of Mr. H. which plainly indicate a murmuring spirit. "When we see a lovely creature, one calculated to be useful, and to diffuse happiness, as well as to enjoy it; one who has lived an innocent life, and who constitutes the chief joy and hope of virtuous parents; when we see such an one snatched away from their arms, and laid in the dismal tomb, cut off from the innocent delights of the world, and its improvements, while the hearts of all around are crushed by the heavy affliction; when we see this, and then turn, perhaps, to our next door neighbor, and find a beastly, intemperate being, who is a plague to all with whom he lives, and who is incapable of either virtue or happiness himself, or of increasing that of others; and this useless, miserable wretch is left, while our lovely child is taken away; *who can reconcile these things with that perfect benevolence that is represented always to will kindness, and always to be able to bring to pass what it wills?*" p. 7. The person who allowed himself in language such as this, we are told, "*had no disposition to murmur at the dispensations of Providence!*"

Mr. H. is spoken of, not only as wishing to be a Christian, but as one who "*manifests, by a strict conformity to the precepts of Jesus, that he really is a Christian in spirit and in life.*" p. 9. And yet we find attributed to him such ignorance of spiritual subjects, such objections and cavils, as the following. "There is so much," says he, "to excite doubt, that it is difficult at all times to satisfy the mind that all things are ordered in mercy." p. 6. "We ask, and are denied. If we prayed not at all, in what should we be losers?" p. 13. "This phrase [*the grace of God*] is very commonly used; but I never could exactly comprehend its meaning." p. 15. "I have hitherto supposed, that in all the common concerns of life, God holds himself at a distance, and is unconcerned how the world is going on; and that it is only on great occasions, and in uncommon circumstances, he condescends to interfere with the established order of things." p. 21. The author of the Tract must either admit that these expressions are *inconsistent* with the declaration that Mr. H. is "*a Christian in spirit and in life,*" or maintain that they are *consistent* with the spirit and character of a Christian. He may have his choice.\*

Although this Tract is deplorably barren in point of *doctrine* of any sort, we find expressions, here and there, which ought not to pass unnoticed. The deceased daughter is spoken of, as "*innocent,*" and a confidence is expressed of her being in heaven, on the

\* We feel authorised to regard Mrs. H. as expressing the views of the writer of the Tract; and Mr. H. also, when he is not expressly or impliedly controverted.



ground (so far as appears,) that she is innocent; for nothing is said of her trust in the Saviour, or indeed of her standing in need of a Saviour.

Speaking of a religious *education*, Mrs. H. observes, "If our infant notions are correct, our rational convictions in mature life will confirm them, and our faith will be solid and satisfactory." Addressing her husband, she also says, "You fail of reaping the joys of a Christian, from a want of those feelings of faith *which I enjoy, by the blessing of early instructions.*" pp. 9, 10. Highly as we appreciate early and faithful religious instruction, we really cannot attribute to it just such an efficacy as is here implied. Correct infant notions do not always result in a solid and satisfactory faith; nor is it by early instructions alone, that we attain to the joys and feelings of a Christian.

The *paternal character* of God is exhibited in the Tract before us, as it commonly is by Unitarians; but the exhibition, we are satisfied, is widely different from that which is given in the Scriptures. God is represented here as the infinitely kind Parent of all his creatures, whose chief object and endeavor is to make each and all of them happy. "He adapts every circumstance to the exact state of mind of *each individual*, at *all times*; and in such a manner as on the whole to be productive of the greatest benefit to *each one* of his creatures." p. 21. But, with this view of the character of God, how is it possible to suppose that he will make one of his creatures finally and forever miserable? And with this view of God, what is there to keep the *selfish* heart from loving him; and from loving him the more ardently, the more selfish it may be.

But this is not the God of the Bible. We are assured in the Scriptures, that the grand object of God's government is, as it ought to be, to *glorify himself*. "The Lord hath made all things *for himself.*" "I have created them for *my glory.*" For of him, and through him, and *to him* are all things, to whom be glory forever. Amen." In glorifying himself, God will promote, undoubtedly, the greatest *general* good; but he may not produce the greatest possible good of *each individual*, and we have no reason to suppose he will. He may promote the greatest *general* good, and glorify himself in the highest degree, while he makes devils and incorrigibly wicked men, the monuments of his eternal displeasure. In the language of the apostle, he may "shew his wrath, and make his power known, in the vessels of wrath fitted for destruction;" while he "makes known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy which he has afore prepared unto glory." And it is time Unitarians were apprized, if they are not so already, that it is one thing to love and submit to a Being, who they fancy is chiefly concerned *for them*, and is ordering every circumstance with a view to their benefit, and quite another thing, to love and

submit to the Jehovah of the Scriptures, who is overruling all things for his own glory, and the greatest general good; but who, in doing this, disposes of individuals according to his pleasure, and "gives not an account of any of his matters."

The latter part of the Tract is obscurely expressed, and we know not that we understand the speculations of Mrs. Henderson. The idea which seems to be conveyed, is this: God is operating, in various ways, to bring all men to a "state of mind most conformed to his own, and therefore, most capable of rendering them happy. Those who never seek the aids of his grace, and know nothing of religious intercourse with their Maker," he is leading to this happy conformity to himself, by means of what are termed *natural causes*. Those who pray for divine assistance, to draw them near to God, and conform them to him, receive the blessing which they seek, in *answer to prayer*. In the commencement of the Christian era, men were brought to this happy temper, by *miracles*. "The different states of the human mind," says Mrs. H. "which God always regards in his dealings with us, require these different methods to produce the *same result*, which is union with him, and consequent happiness." pp. 18—21.

From the theory here exhibited, which was wonderfully enlightening and impressive to Mr. H., the following conclusions evidently result:

1. God is purposing, and operating in one way or another, to bring all men to a spiritual union with himself, and to consequent happiness; and hence, unless he is defeated, all will be finally and forever happy.

2. He is converting or reforming men, not by the special influences of his Spirit, but, in most cases at the present day, by *natural causes*. And,

3. It is of no importance, except so far as present enjoyment is concerned, whether we pray to God, or not; since, if we are not conformed to him in answer to our prayers, the operation of natural causes will be sure to bring us to "the same result." However we may treat God now, we shall all be brought at last to a spiritual "union with him, and to consequent happiness."

We hope we do not misunderstand or misrepresent this part of the Tract. We certainly do not intend it. And as to the conclusions we have drawn, it would be trifling with our readers to offer a syllable to shew their absurdity, or their inconsistency with the first principles of the oracles of God.

We have said that this Tract was designed for persons in affliction, and may be regarded as a specimen of the instruction and consolation which Unitarianism affords in such circumstances. And in this view, setting all other objections aside, it must be regarded as miserably *defective*. It can never meet the feelings, or satisfy the necessities of bereaved persons. It can be but

a cold comforter to bleeding, aching hearts. Compared with Grovesner's Mourners, Flavel's Token for Mourners, Cecil's Friendly Visit to the House of Mourning, and several Tracts on this subject, which have been published by the American Tract Society, it is as an icicle to a sunbeam. How many things ought to have been said to the doubting, complaining Mr. Henderson, which are not said? How many considerations does our religion present, for the instruction and comfort of afflicted persons, which in this meagre production, are not so much as hinted at? The *Scriptures* are a fountain of consolation to the afflicted; but there is scarcely a reference to a passage of Scripture in the whole pamphlet. The *glory of God* is the grand object of regard with the sincere Christian; and the consideration that God is glorifying himself by afflictive dispensations, is of all others the most satisfying to his pained heart. But this grand consideration is not suggested. The prayer of the suffering Saviour, "Father, *glorify thy name*," is nowhere breathed. The *example of Christ* on the cross, and of his afflicted people in ancient times, has been transmitted to us for our support and imitation in seasons of trial. "Take, my brethren, the prophets, who have spoken to you in the name of the Lord, for an *example of suffering affliction, and of patience*." "Christ also suffered for us, *leaving us an example*, that ye should follow his steps; who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth; who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously." But, in the Tract before us, we find no reference to these instructive topics.\* The humble Christian will think and speak of his afflictions, as a necessary *correction for his sins*. The smart of the rod will remind him that he is a disobedient child, and will lead him to say with the chastened Psalmist, "I know, O Lord, that thy judgments are right, and that in faithfulness thou hast afflicted me. Before I was afflicted, I went astray." But, strange as it may appear, thoughts such as these seem never to have occurred to the afflicted Mr. and Mrs. Henderson. Though conferring together most freely and alone, respecting the severe stroke with which they had been visited, they never once thought of accounting for it, by regarding it as a correction for their sins. It would seem, that the loss of a beloved child could hardly fail of leading its parents to a critical examination of their own hearts, that they might learn why God was contending with them, might form resolutions of amendment, and might quicken each other in the great work of life. But we find, here, no such searching, no such resolving, no such mutual quickening. The mourning parents appear to take it for granted, that

\* Mrs. H. does indeed refer to the prayer of Christ, "Not my will, but thine be done," to justify her in having prayed *conditionally* for the life of her daughter, p. 15.

their duty has been well discharged, and that no alteration or amendment is necessary.

As Mrs. H. was dissatisfied with the temper of mind exhibited by her husband, and hoped, by free conversation, to bring him to better views, how naturally might she have addressed him in language such as this: 'My dear husband, you are greatly afflicted, as well as myself, and seem scarcely able to sustain the stroke with which we have been visited. I had hoped to see your mind more calm, and your consolations restored, that I might share with you the comforts of religion, in this day of trial. Years ago, we together avouched the Lord Jehovah to be our portion, and gave up ourselves to him, to be his servants. And if the Lord is our portion, how can we complain? If the infinite and ever flowing fountain of consolation is left open to us, how can we murmur, though a rill of comfort is dried up? And we should consider, too, how many blessings of a temporal nature still remain,—blessings numberless and unmerited, of which thousands and millions of our fellow men are destitute. And shall we complain of that providence which has removed one of our comforts, while such a profusion of blessings still are left?

'Our departed child, you say, was lovely and dear. To us, indeed, she was so; and perhaps, on this very account, there was the greater danger. Were we not in danger of loving her too well? Was there no danger of her coming between us and our God, and taking that place in our affections which belongs only to him? And in promoting our spirituality and growth in grace, was it not necessary that this idol of our hearts should be removed?

'We should recollect, too, that *the eyes of others are now upon us*. They have heard us speak of the supports and consolations of religion in adversity; and now they are looking to see the truth exemplified. Shall we suffer them to look in vain? Shall religion be dishonored, shall its power and excellence be called in question, by our means?

'Above all, we are admonished that the time is short. "It remaineth that those who weep, be as though they wept not; and those who rejoice, as though they rejoiced not." Our daughter will not return to us, but we must shortly go to her. This consideration should restrain us from wasting our remaining moments in unavailing sorrow for the dead, and should excite us to enter with renewed diligence and faithfulness upon those duties which we owe to our surviving children, to the world around us, to God, and to our own souls.'

We presume not to dictate what Mrs. H. ought to have said to her complaining husband; but merely to suggest some of the things which with propriety she might have said. And we do this for the purpose of adding, that *nothing of this is said*. Not

one of the considerations here introduced—so important to have a place in a Tract for the bereaved—is so much as hinted at.

Our readers, by this time, may have a curiosity to know, what the Tract in question does contain. What is the general scope or drift of Mrs. Henderson's conversation with her husband? Her object appears to be to unfold to him the *paternal character of God*, in the sense already explained and condemned, and to convince him of the reality of a *particular providence*. In other words, she is laboring to satisfy him, that God's great concern is for the good of his creatures—that he is directing events (though often in a manner unknown to us) so as best to prepare each and all of them for happiness—and consequently that it becomes them to exercise submission, under dark and painful dispensations of providence.

She probably did not know that submission, growing out of considerations like these, must be of a very questionable character; that it might be, and perhaps must be, entirely selfish; and that, in its influence upon the final destiny of the soul, it would be more dangerous, because more delusive, than undisguised resistance to the authority of Jehovah. But *submission*, in its best sense, seems to us a cold word, to express the feelings of the Christian under trials. The late Dr. Payson, when asked if he was reconciled to his sufferings, exclaimed, "O, that is *too cold*. *I rejoice—I triumph*." And we think every Christian, in the exercise of grace, will not only *submit* to suffer whatever his heavenly Father is pleased to inflict, but will love him and praise him under trials, and, like the fervent apostle, will be "joyful in tribulation."

We will not say there are no just remarks in the Tract which has been considered. There are passages, and possibly pages, which, if separated from the rest, we might quote with approbation. We refer particularly to what is said on the subject of prayer, in seasons of affliction; and to the view which is given of the providence of God, as extending to the most minute events. It was this latter consideration, more than any other, which seemed to enlighten and affect the mind of Mr. Henderson; and we were pained, on reading the concluding paragraphs, when his former darkness began to break, and his heart to yield, to think that he had no one nigh him, who knew the efficacy of Gilead's balm, who could direct him to the Great Physician, and could pour into his troubled soul the instructions and consolations of the blessed Gospel.

The thirteenth number of the Unitarian Tracts is a "Discourse on being born again; by Mrs. Barbauld." Mrs. Barbauld is known to the generality of the American public chiefly by her "Hymns in Prose, for Children;" some of which have been long and extensively circulated. She was the daughter of a literary gentleman in England, and was favored in early life with the instructions of the celebrated Dr. Doddridge. At the age of thirty-one,



she was married to the Rev. Rochement Barbauld, and the greater part of the remainder of her days was spent in the instruction of youth. She buried her husband in 1808, and finished her earthly course on the 9th of March, 1825. She distinguished herself as a writer, both in prose and verse. She was a Dissenter, and a warm friend of civil and religious liberty. Her husband was an Arian. In early life, at which period we suspect (for we have not the means of certain information) her Discourse on Regeneration was written, Mrs. Barbauld seems to have been, in her speculative views of religion, what has been sometimes called moderately Calvinistic. Subsequently, she adopted Unitarian opinions, in the belief of which she continued till her death, yet with "a sort of leaning towards" the principles in which she had been educated.\* She was distinguished as an instructor of female youth, and contributed not a little, by her writings, and her success as a teacher, to raise the standard of female education in Great Britain. Her works have lately been published in this country, and are evidently the productions of a highly gifted and cultivated mind.

The Tract before us is in the form of a sermon, from the declaration of our Lord to Nicodemus, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." "The beginning of a Christian's life, in his conversion from sin to holiness, is here designed," says Mrs. B., "under the figure of a birth, a new, or a second birth; and it shall be the business of this Discourse to unfold the beauty and justness of the metaphor."

Accordingly she observes, that, as "to be born literally, is to receive being, life, existence;" so, to be born again, is to receive a new spiritual existence. "What a new world of ideas and feelings are opened upon the new-born soul! He had before no organs, with which to discern spiritual things. He had heard of them, but he apprehended them not. There was no faculty in him by which he could take hold of them. But the moment he is born again, the eyes of his mind are opened. He sees, feels, tastes, and relishes the word of God, the bread of life, the gracious influences of the Spirit. He tastes a sweetness in the ordinances of religion, in prayers, and psalms, and sacraments, which before were dry, and without savor to him; which he had attended from Sabbath to Sabbath, as mere matter of form and decency. Before, he was born into the world of sense; now, he holds communion with the world of spirits. Is not this a mighty and important change?" p. 3.

"Again," says Mrs. B., "to be born implies having a father, a descent, a parentage." So, to be born again, brings us into the relation of children to an heavenly Father. "As soon as a child comes into the natural world, its voice is heard. It sends forth a cry, a meaning cry. So also when a believer is born into the life of Christ, his voice is heard, and he *prayeth*." p. 4.

\* See her Remarks on Wakefield's Inquiry on Social Worship.

“Again; a child is not born into the world without great and strong pains. And great are the pains which precede the new birth; sharp are the pangs of repentance; and deep those groanings which cannot be uttered, that *must* pass before the change be wrought.” “But when once a child is born, how great is the joy! And is there not joy when a soul is born? joy of its ministers, joy of the church, joy even in heaven over a sinner that repenteth?” p. 5.

“Again; what further joy is there, if a child be born an *heir*, and entitled to inherit some portion of this vain and perishable earth! And what an estate, what a title, what a heritage, is the Christian born to.” “But let it be observed, the literal heir does not inherit immediately;” and neither does the heir of glory. He is placed “under tutors and governors, until the time appointed of the Father.”

“In the next place,” Mrs. B. remarks, that “though the child is born, it may die.” In applying this remark to the subject of her Discourse, she does not assert that spiritual life, when once imparted, ever finally ceases, but speaks, as the Scriptures do, of the care and exertion which are necessary, in order to its continuance and progress. And no believer in the doctrine of Regeneration supposes that the saints are so kept, that there is a natural impossibility of their falling away. No one regards them as destitute of physical power to apostatise, or questions the propriety of using all possible motives with them, to induce them to be faithful unto death.

Having pursued the comparison thus far, Mrs. B. calls on her readers to examine themselves, and determine, whether they “have undergone the important change of which she has been speaking, and whether they are improving it to the perfection of the divine life.” And, in forming a conclusion, she very properly directs them to ascertain whether they *are spiritually alive*; since, if they are thus alive, they must at some period have been born, although the particular moment when the change occurred may be as a little remembered by them, as the moment of their natural birth. And, in determining whether they *are spiritually alive*, she directs them to inquire whether they “grow in grace;” whether their “appetite for spiritual things is strong and vigorous;” whether their “conscience is sensible and tender;” whether they “relish the word of God;” whether their “sense of invisible things is quick and piercing;” and lastly, whether they “live by prayer.” pp. 7—10.

In conclusion, she exhorts those who have made progress in the divine life, to endeavor “to educate and bring up others to the same state of maturity;” and those who have not yet been made “partakers of the divine nature” to use their “utmost endeavors to procure an interest in that life, to which the being born again is to introduce them.” pp. 10—12.

From this analysis of the Discourse of Mrs. B. it will be concluded, as is the fact, that it contains many things which are true, and which accord with the views of experienced Christians, signified, if not directly asserted,—that regeneration is an instantaneous change, a great and necessary change, the beginning of spiritual life in the soul, implying that, previously, the soul is involved in all the darkness and misery of spiritual death.

Still there are passages in the Discourse which, we think, had better been left out of it. Mrs. B. intimates, on one page, that regeneration sometimes take place “by the gradual unfolding of the human powers.” This looks like running the subject down into Socinian coldness and insignificance. But on the next page, she changes her tone, and suddenly becomes even hyper-calvinistic. Speaking of man previous to regeneration, she says, “he has no *organs* with which to discern spiritual things. There is no *faculty* in him, by which he can take hold of them.” p. 3. Are *new* faculties and organs ever acquired, “by the gradual unfolding of the human powers?” We regard the natural man as wanting, not faculties and organs, but a disposition to use his faculties as he ought. His faculties and organs are well enough, but he has no heart to improve them for God. His spiritual blindness is voluntary—“the blindness of the heart.”

Although there is much of this Discourse which Christians of a certain cast may read with pleasure, none, we presume, will read it with very deep impression. It is ingenious and sprightly, but not weighty. It is fanciful, imaginative, but not sufficiently impressive. The sword of the Spirit is not so wielded as to prick the sinner to the heart. The truth is not so exhibited and enforced, as to lead the sinking soul to inquire, “Men and brethren, what shall we do?” However widely the Discourse may be circulated, we fear it will never prove the instrument of accomplishing that great and necessary change of which it treats.

In reviewing this Discourse, the question has often occurred, Why did the American Unitarian Association publish it? It certainly is at a variance, in many points, with the views commonly expressed by Unitarian writers on the subject of regeneration. Where do we find them representing the new birth as inducing “another nature,” and as being so absolutely *necessary*, that “the bars against the entrance” of the unregenerate into the kingdom of heaven “are those of the eternal difference of *species*, and the immutable nature of things?” Where do we hear them speaking of “the great pains which precede the new birth,” and of those “deep groanings which cannot be uttered, that *must* pass, before the change is wrought?” Where do we hear them describing regeneration as “the beginning of the Christian’s life;” as opening to him “a new world of ideas and feelings;” and enabling him, for the first time, to “see, and feel, and taste, and relish, the word of God, the

bread of life, the gracious influences of the Spirit?" Where, in the writings of English and American Unitarians of the present age, shall we find sentiments and expressions such as these? Safely may we say, *nowhere*. We have often heard these sentiments ridiculed and opposed. We have heard those inculcated of a directly opposite import. We have heard the new birth described as peculiar almost to the primitive age; as not necessary for numbers who are born and educated in Christian lands; and, where it is necessary, as consisting rather in a process of instruction and amendment, than in a deep and radical change. From sentiments such as these, the views of Mrs. B. are certainly very distant; and however she may at any time, have speculated or halted on the subject of the trinity, and other doctrines equally radical, on the subject of regeneration, she had, when she wrote this Discourse, views totally different from those who now think to recommend their series of unscriptural Tracts by the authority and influence of her name.

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We gave some intimation to our readers, in the first number of this work, that we should have occasion again to advert to the *Evangelical Church Journal*. We resume the Review of this publication, in our present number, for the sake of making our readers acquainted with what is going on in Germany, as it respects the cause of evangelical truth; and to shew them some ground of hope, that a second Reformation has commenced there.

About the time when the *Evangelical Church Journal* first made its appearance, Dr. Hahn, who had been a Professor at Königsberg in Prussia, and distinguished in a peculiar manner for his high attainments in literature and science, was elected to fill one of the vacant Professorships at Leipzig, and accepted the invitation. As is usual in Germany, he delivered, in Latin, a *Dissertation*, or *Disputation*,\* as it is named, on the occasion of his inauguration to office. The subject of this Disputation was *Rationalism*; and the object of it, to make out a correct definition of this word, as it had usually been employed by theologians in general.

\* The technical name is *Disputatio pro loco*, i. e. Disputation on the occasion of being introduced to office.

Our readers are aware, that *Rationalism* is the soft and alluring name, which the modern Latitudinarians and Neologists of Germany have preferred, for that species of religion which they profess to maintain. The deception practised by the use of this appellation, is not unlike that which is practised upon our own public, in this country, by the name *Unitarian*. To the question, "What is meant by a *Unitarian*?" the usual reply is, "A *Unitarian* means, a person who believes in *one* God." The implication of course is, that those who are not Unitarians, believe in a plurality of Gods, or, in other words, that they are *Polytheists*. So in Germany; if one in these days asks, "What is *Rationalism*?" the current reply is, "*Rationalism* is a belief in what is *reasonable*." The implication of course is, and is meant to be, that they, who are not Rationalists, believe in what is *unreasonable*, or, in other words, in what is contrary to reason.

It is understood, that Professor Hahn, while he sustained his office at Königsberg, had not made any particular public development of his religious sentiments. The probability is, that had he been known as a man devoted to the sentiments and views of evangelical religion, he would not have been elected to fill the place of a Professor at Leipzig. But, however this may be, his inaugural Disputation has left no doubt what his real sentiments are. It is an interesting composition in itself; and it has given occasion, as we shall see in the sequel, to some occurrences, which deeply concern the prosperity of evangelical truth in Germany.

The object of Professor Hahn, in his Disputation, was, as we have hinted, to define the true nature of *Rationalism*, according to the use of this word, as established by custom, among theologians in general. We shall communicate, as briefly as we can do, the result of his investigations.

The Professor remarks, that two distinguished men in Germany, Dr. Bretschneider, (still living,) and Dr. Stäudlin, (recently deceased,) have made an attempt to exhibit, historically, the true usage of the word *Rationalism*. In this attempt, he thinks they have failed; and he suggests, therefore, the importance of a new and more thorough investigation.

Neither Stäudlin nor Bretschneider, professedly belonged, themselves, to the class of Rationalists. Dr. Hahn thinks it proper, therefore, to inquire what the *professed* friends of Rationalism have done, towards giving a just definition of the appellation by which they are called. Among these Dr. Röhr and Wegscheider stand conspicuous. But the definitions which these gentlemen have given, appear to be incapable of bearing a proper scrutiny. Both deny that Rationalism has the same meaning with *Naturalism*. Röhr says, that Naturalism is *Materialism*; Wegscheider, that it is *Pantheism*. But in this way, says Dr. Hahn, Herbert, Tindal, and others of like sentiments, must be acquitted of the charge of



Naturalism, although they have ever been considered as the very leaders of this sect; for they believed neither in Pantheism nor in Materialism.

Dr. Bretschneider maintains, that Rationalism and Naturalism began to be used as words of the same import, after the general introduction of Kant's philosophy into Germany; and that Gabler and Reinhard, (both recently dead,) were the first to employ these names, in the science of theology.

After shewing the incorrectness of all these statements and views, Professor Hahn goes on to detail the evidence, in a *historical* way, respecting the use of the word Rationalism; and he comes to the following result, which deserves to be explicitly stated.

The name arose in the sixteenth century; and in the latter part of the seventeenth, it was in very general usage. It was employed, during all this period, to designate *those who acknowledged no other religious creed, except that which might be deduced from the light of nature, and by virtue merely of their own natural reason and understanding.*

In regard to *Naturalism*, the theologians of those times divided it into *the refined, the grosser, and the grossest*. The first comprised that species of it, which resembled the highest kind of Pelagianism, i. e. it held the natural character of man to be pure and spotless, and his religious disposition and feelings to be uncorrupted. The second denied the necessity of any special revelation from God. The third was Pantheism, i. e. it held nature, or the world itself, to be God.

But to return to *Rationalism*, which constitutes the special topic of the Disputation under review; in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, this appellation was used to designate *a belief, that reason is the only source and guide of our faith*. J. Amos Comenius, the celebrated undertaker in the reformation of literature and science; whose *Janua Linguarum Reserata* [door of the languages unlocked,] was translated into twelve European languages, and also into the Arabic, Turkish, Persian, and Mogul tongues; seems to have been the first who gave any general currency to the word *Rationalism*, by a work of his, published A. D. 1661. During this century, the name was never employed in a good sense.

A like usage of it prevailed during the eighteenth century. It was employed as being of the same import with what was called *grosser Naturalism*. It was only toward the close of this century, when Neology had spread far and wide in Germany, and the Bible ceased to be regarded as a revelation from God, that *Rationalism* began to be employed, in order to designate that class of men, who still professed to be Christians, but who received only so much of the Scriptures as obligatory upon them, as their own reason approved, and judged to be *rational and proper*.

Since the last period, the Neologists have rather courted than declined the appellation; at least, in the sense which they gave to it. By *Rationalism*, they mean to designate, as stated above, a belief in what is reasonable; and along with this, also to involve the implication, that such as are not Rationalists, believe in what is unreasonable; or, in other words, believe *without* any reason for believing.

One cannot help exclaiming, How truly the same, are the arts of controversy in every country! Here, as we have already remarked, we find *Unitarianism* employed to designate those who believe in one God, with the implication that others do not believe in one; while in Germany all who are not *Rationalists*, are represented as having abandoned the use of their reason, in matters of religion.

Names, however, like these, coined or used for the sake of popular impression and fair profession, can never produce anything more than a temporary influence. In an enlightened community, and, above all, in a free country, sooner or later, the pretence and the injustice will meet with exposure; and those who have been unwittingly misled and deceived by it, will turn with indignant disapprobation upon such as have been the instruments in their deception. It is not a difficult thing to deceive and mislead the multitude in any country, for a while; but in any country, where the press is free, and inquiry is free, it is impossible, that, sooner or later, all such errors should not be rectified. A man may seem to be just in his own cause; but his neighbor cometh after him and searcheth him. It is a merciful provision of the kind and wise Disposer of all events, that deception should thus ultimately defeat its own purposes, and, indeed, be made absolutely subservient to the interests of truth.

In the *Evangelical Church Journal* of July 28, 1827, is contained a notice of the above named Disputation of Professor Hahn, with some important strictures on it, and also on other publications occasioned by it, which we shall name in the sequel.

In the mean time, we cannot pass over some deductions, which Dr. Hahn makes, from the historical facts he has collected and exhibited, in the body of his Dissertation. The first is, that Rationalism had, until very recently, been always considered as inimical to Christianity, and as destructive of it; the second, that the name is not at all a *new* thing, but was given long ago to grosser Naturalism; and thirdly, he avers, that this unfortunate name, as well as the *thing*, came to Germany, out of England, France, Italy, and Holland.

The whole Disputation, which exhibits the matters above noticed, is purely of a historical nature, and conducted with great moderation and impartiality. There was nothing in it, at which the Rationalists at Leipzig need to have taken any special offence. They

might have preserved silence, and let the matter pass by; and this would have been their wisest course. But they were too much disappointed and chagrined, to submit to this. They were indignant, that Dr. Hahn, who had hitherto exhibited himself only as a man of high literary acquisition, and devoted only to the interests of learning, should, on coming to Leipzig, presume to avow, in the face of half a hundred of Rationalist Professors, the sentiment that Rationalism and infidelity were both synonymous terms and things. How deeply they felt this, the sequel will shew.

The *Disputatio pro loco*, which, if we rightly understand the matter, generally passes off without any real respondent or any opposition, proved in this case, to be a disputation in earnest. The members of the Faculty of Leipzig came forward, in public, to vindicate the cause which had been thus implicitly exposed. In general, the dispute was conducted with decorum and moderation. But Dr. Krug, Professor of Philosophy at the University there, who has been *vehement* for *moderation* in theology, and is a most thorough-going disciple of what he calls *reason*, took up the matter in very serious earnest, and came forward, in the presence of all the students of the University, in reply to Dr. Hahn. The Evangelical Church Journal does not give the substance of his extempore addresses; but it states, that "they were wanting, neither in unbecoming jests, nor in fearfully bitter earnest."

In our country, such a contest as this, is, (and we do most devoutly hope, will long be,) an unheard of thing. We are not wanting, indeed, in the "taunting jest," nor the "fearfully bitter earnest," of party spirit. A sense of decorum, however, represses it here, on public occasions, like that of introducing a Professor at a college into his office. But our readers will remember, that in the universities on the continent of Europe, it has been a usage, for almost time immemorial, to give and receive public challenges in disputation, on various subjects, in presence of literati, and members of universities. Mosheim attributes this custom to the military genius of the Crusaders, and their successors, who introduced into the schools and universities a practice of deciding disputes in learning, as it were by combat; like the quarrels of the military knights, which were decided by duels. Be this as it may, it is certain that the usage is quite ancient. In the same city of Leipzig, in the year 1519, there was a most famous dispute carried on by Eckius on the side of the Roman pontiff, and Luther and his friend Carlostadt on the side of the Reformation. The first conflict was between Eckius and Carlostadt; the challenge having proceeded from the former. The second was between Eckius and Luther; the former having, in like manner, called on the latter to defend his positions. The former controversy concerned the doctrine of human liberty, in the *theological* sense; the latter had respect to the authority and supremacy of the Ro-

man pontiff. The dispute, which lasted from the 25th of June to the 15th of July, was carried on in the castle of Pleissenburg; and Hoffinan, then Rector of the University of Leipzig, was appointed the arbiter of it. Literary men from all quarters, as one might easily believe, flocked thither to witness it; and the duellists had a most splendid and imposing audience. Melancthon, the famous partner and colleague of Luther, in his office, sentiments, and labors, by attendance there, first thoroughly imbibed the spirit of Protestantism. Some good, therefore, came out of the evil of such a *theological tournament*.

The late scenes at Leipzig remind us that the days of Luther and Eckius are not wholly gone by, in regard to the practice of public dispute. It was, indeed, not a controversy between a legate of the pope, and the distinguished author of the Reformation. It was not, whether the pope of Rome should govern the Christian world, or the simple dictates of revelation be regarded as supreme law. But, after all, it was not very much unlike this; it was whether self-styled reason, in the room of the pope, should take the place of the Holy Scriptures; and whether what God has revealed, is to be simply and humbly received and obeyed, or to be modified according to the dictates of philosophy—dictates which change with every generation, and assume as many forms, as there are varieties of genius, and temperament, and imagination, and theory, in the world.

Every intelligent reader will easily see, under what disadvantageous circumstances Professor Hahn was placed, in this probably unexpected tournament. Here were, on one side, some half a hundred Rationalist Professors of the University; the magistracy of Leipzig, homogeneous with them in sentiment; and the students, who constitute a large body of young men, most of whom are where their passions and appetites carry them, and that is of course on the side of *Rationalism*. Professor Krug well understood this; and he took all the advantage of it in his power. Ridicule, sarcasm, appeals to the passions and prejudices of the young men, and biting irony, were all employed by him; and not without a measure of the success which he expected. The young men clapped their hands and huzza'd, and testified in various ways their pleasure at finding the goddess of reason exalted at the expense of revelation; not much unlike the manner in which the Ephesians applauded the harangue of Demetrius, the famous maker of the shrines of Diana, in opposition to what Paul and his companions advanced, in favor of Christianity. After all, however, there were not wanting youth, who regarded the whole matter in a serious light, and on whom the sobriety, and modesty, and unpretending earnestness of the advocate for the authority and supremacy of the divine word, in the Holy Scriptures, made a deep impression.

The reflections, made by the writer of the article in the *Evangelical Church Journal* which we are reviewing, in regard to the transaction stated above, are such as deserve the attentive consideration of every rational man. We think it desirable that they should be presented to our readers.

"We cannot," says he, "forbear expressing our opinion, how very improper public disputation is; at least, if not in general, it is so in respect to the subject of theology. If, indeed, all men were as they should be, nothing, perhaps, of much weight, could be alleged against it. But who does not know, that even the best of men, on such occasions, are liable to be taken by surprise, and affected with the love of praise, and the desire for popularity. Who does not know, too, that those who are earnestly engaged, and whose characteristics are deep thought and feeling, may sometimes, for the moment, fail in the powers of utterance and in the command of language, while the loquacious may go on without cessation, and talk forever, although they never hit the point in question?"

If we further consider, also, who the parties in question are, viz. that on the one side, they are striplings, who, at least, mistake what is splendid for what is deep; and in other cases, which are the more common ones, manifest their approbation, by applauding what is most accordant with their own measure of wisdom and party spirit; how plain is it, that the interests of truth must be hazarded by such disputations, even if it have able defenders; and if it have weak ones, then the weakness of the man is transferred to the score of the cause which he advocates.

In the case before us, the youth were inclined to regard that as most true, which was defended with most strenuousness, and which could turn into a jest the arguments of the opposing cause, and so make a kind of apology for their own superficial knowledge. To many, however, the most interesting part of the whole was, that they had now gotten something new to tell; in the relation of which, moreover, they did not always confine themselves within the strict bounds of truth. Under circumstances such as these, it is no wonder that this whole affair has come to be a matter of public conversation." pp. 58, 59.

We accord entirely with these considerations, and congratulate the public seminaries of our country, that they retain only the shadow of the old "literary duelling;" which began in the dark ages, and was fostered by the chivalrous spirit of *knight-errant* princes and literati, and which ought to have gone into oblivion with the ages which gave it birth. The harmless disputations, colloquies, conferences, dialogues, or whatever other name the ingenuity of our collegiate instructors has given to the exhibitions of opposite and polemic sentiments and views, in order to stimulate and gratify their pupils, pass off with as little excitement as the bluster of actors who are known to play a borrowed part, and to whose professions no serious regard of course is paid. This is as it



should be, *apparent*, not *real* dispute; and while it remains in this state, there is no danger from it, either to the peace of our seminaries, or to that of the community.

But let our disputants come to be Professors themselves; and let them come forward before the students of their institutions, and before the world, and in bitter earnest contend with each other, and carry the matter so far as unsparingly to use reproach, sarcasm, jesting, and ridicule, and we should soon see the whole community thrown into a commotion, which it might be difficult for all the wise and good in it entirely to allay. We desire to remember with gratitude, that while in very many respects our literary means are inferior to those of Germany, yet the tone of public sentiment here, will not permit many things which are allowed there, and which can have no other than an evil tendency.

We are happy to find, that no part of repartee, and sarcasm, and bitterness, is attributed, by our reviewer, to Dr. Hahn, in the whole transaction before us. It was, indeed, a fearful trial of his feelings; and he must have been a more than ordinary master of them, to have demeaned himself with entire moderation through the whole, when attacked by such a polemic as Professor Krug. It is very difficult to conceive of a situation more trying. Dr. Hahn was a stranger at Leipzig; he had every inducement to desire that a favorable impression should be made at the commencement of his course; and yet he found himself opposed by some half a hundred of his colleagues, and his jeering sarcastic opposer clapped and huzza'd, while he was scraped and hissed. Truly it needed some steadfast self-possession, to meet such a trial, and go through it with unvarying firmness, moderation and decorum. But he had viewed his ground, before he ventured upon it; and when he found it convulsed with earthquakes, it was no more than he expected; he stood unmoved.

So we would fain have every advocate of truth, and of the honor of the Scriptures, do, in our own country. Let us leave the weapons of sarcasm, and of reproach, and of bitterness to our opponents; some of whom seem to be deeply imbued with the spirit of Dr. Krug. Truth needs no such defences. The clamor of momentary excitement may drown her voice for a while. The jest, and the repartee, and the sparkling wit, and the biting sarcasm, of an opponent, may raise a burst of laughter, or a shout of exultation, or the hiss of contempt; but in vain. After all, the God who made men, has placed a conscience in their bosoms; and all the pains which they take to get rid of it, or to stifle its voice, do but ill succeed. *Si naturam furcâ expellas, usque recurret.* God, who is greater than our hearts, will not that we should cease to be moral beings. The scenes of a future world, the brevity and uncertainty of life, the admonitions of diseases, the disappointments of worldly hopes, the faithful warnings of friends; above all

the still small voice within, which no bustling engagements, no round of giddy pleasures, no contumelious opposition, can always silence; all these are leagued on the side of God, and the Bible, and evangelical sentiment; and in spite of everything, they will now and then bring the most hardened and reproachful enemies of truth, to hear her admonitions. Human passions, we well know, can storm and rage; as the sea of Tiberias did, with the mighty wind which swept across it, when the little bark was on its bosom, which bore in it the Redeemer of our race with his disciples; but he who then said to the raging waves, "Peace, be still," and there was a great calm, can now say, to the troubled ocean of unholy sympathies or rage, Peace! and there will be peace. Let his true disciples, when the winds blow high, and the waves rage, cry out to him. His Spirit can, in a moment, repress the fury of the elements, and make a calm in which the voice of truth shall be listened to with eagerness, and heard with docility.

We do not say, that the weak and incongruous reasoning of such as oppose the interests of vital piety, may not be lawfully and properly exposed. Far from this. But we do believe, that weapons such as Professor Krug employs, had better be left to our opponents; and that we shall do much more, at the last, by putting on only the armor of God.

We must return to the occurrences at Leipzig. It was to be expected, that such events as we have noticed above, would not fail of producing consequences, more or less deserving of attention. Such has, in fact, been the case. Shortly after the public dispute which has been described, appeared a pamphlet, entitled *The Leipzig Disputation; a Theological Memoir. Leipzig, 1827.* The writer of this, endeavors to hold a middle way between Dr. Hahn and his opponent, and to shew that there is no need of any "Disputation," for the parties do not essentially differ from each other. If the Christianity of Rationalists agrees in its main positions, with that of Scripturists, he cannot conceive what ground there is for dispute. These "main positions," are, in his view, "firm confidence in the mercy of God, uprightness of life, and eternal happiness in a future state, through the medium of the Christian church." The Rationalist Christian, and the Scriptural one, both believe these doctrines in common, as he declares with much confidence; and he wonders of what consequence it can possibly be, whether the one goes to *reason* as the source of his belief, and the other, to the Scriptures; since they both unite, at last, in one common sentiment. He considers dispute here, like that which one of Lessing's Fables represents as raised among three sons, to whom their father had bequeathed each a ring. These rings were made so exactly alike, that one could not be distinguished from the other; yet the legatees had a violent dispute how they should be distributed. In this way, he aims to make

peace between the contending parties, and to persuade them, that they are "all Rationalists," and that they are "all Christians."

Our reviewer, in the *Evangelical Church Journal*, does not seem to accept with much thankfulness, this proffered *Irenicum*, or peace-making essay. He wishes to know, which of all the forever varying and discrepant systems of religion, that reason and philosophy have brought forward, we are to select as the best, and as the only true one; and whether, in fixing upon any particular one as the only true one, we shall not be guilty of illiberality toward all the rejected schemes. He inquires whether there is any difference between the *authority* of Plato's Dialogues and of Aristotle's Ethics, and that of the Scriptures; and in what way the Rationalist comes to know, with certainty, whether the scheme of religion, which he embraces, bears the stamp of heavenly origin and authority. Finally, he asks with boldness, whether the disciple of Mohammed would deny the main positions, which the "Peace-maker" advances as the essence of Christianity; and whether we may not receive the devotees of the mosque as fellow disciples, and true *Rationalists*. He avers, too, that the Rationalists are not without some ground for calling themselves Christians; inasmuch as the distinguished theological and ethical truths in their system, were confessedly borrowed from the Scriptures. Yet he thinks, that this ground is nothing more than the anatomist has, for calling the *skeleton* which he has ingeniously put together, *a man*. And since the religion of Rationalism, (so far as it is a religion,) is nothing more than a cold and very imperfect abstract of Christianity, our reviewer wishes to know, by what right Rationalism claims the truths of her system, as her own peculiar property.

These are bold and somewhat perplexing questions. We trust that Professor Krug, who has, in his own view, rendered himself so famous for hair-splitting, in metaphysics, will come out, and in sober earnest, (joking, and sarcasm, and wit apart,) give us some satisfactory answer to them.

In the meantime, we cannot but recommend the consideration of these matters, to our "peace-makers" here at home. No one acquainted with the state of religious sentiment in this country, is ignorant, that there are among us a class of men, who sympathize pretty deeply with the author of the Leipzig Memoir. They do not see any important differences between the present parties in religion. They are all children of one common Father; all aiming to worship the same God, and striving to attain the same moral purity and happiness. If they do not see eye to eye, in all respects and at all times, nothing can be more natural than to expect this. The vision of all is somewhat imperfect, as yet; but by and by, when they meet in a better world, they will see that they fell out about trifles here, when, after all, they were in fact essentially agreed.

We cannot say, that we envy or respect this professedly peaceful sentiment. We do not *envy* it; because we do not, and with our views of the nature of religion we cannot, desire such a state of feeling. From the bottom of our hearts, we must regard it either as a state of indifference with respect to any particular religious sentiment, or as a state of criminal ignorance, as to what the true doctrines of Christianity are. We do not respect it; because we cannot respect a time-serving policy, or a skeptical indifference, in matters of everlasting moment, which concern the souls of men. We must say, that we respect far more the open and unblushing advocates of error; for they afford some evidence of earnestness and sincerity, in regard to these subjects of boundless importance; and it is far more probable, according to the usual dealings of Providence, that such will ultimately come to the knowledge of the truth. The *Moderates*, as they call themselves, and as they wish to be called, that is, the Moderates of the present day, we must ever view as such, either through want of feeling, or want of knowledge, or by reason of skeptical indifference to religion, or from mere motives of policy. The very nature of the subject necessarily implies this. One thing, however, they attain at least, by the course they pursue, which is, the disrespect (if not something worse) of all men, who are seriously engaged to know what religion is, or to oppose its claims and progress in the world. It is a reward which justice dispenses to them, and which sooner or later they receive in full measure, pressed down, and running over.

But we must resume our narration. It could not be expected that Professor Krug would be satisfied with the *moderation* of the "Leipzig Memoir." Among other things alleged in this Memoir, it was said that Dr. Krug "was exercised with strong internal emotion, during the public dispute, and that he even shed tears." This statement, intended, no doubt, on the part of its mediating author, to pay a compliment to Dr. Krug's tenderness of feeling and high susceptibility of impression, was received with strong disdain by the Professor. Forthwith he issued from the press, a pamphlet, entitled *Philosophical Judgment in regard to matters of Rationalism and Supernaturalism; a Supplement to the Leipzig Disputation*. By *Supernaturalism*, Dr. K. means a belief in the divine inspiration and authority of the Scriptures, and the miraculous events which are recorded in them.

The Professor of Philosophy does not fail, here, to develop the same traits of irony, and ridicule, and jesting, which he had before exhibited, in the public dispute. He repels, with scorn, the idea that he was deeply affected on that occasion, in the following language. "I can give assurance, by holy Nepomuck, as well as by St. Rosalia, that during the whole dispute, I never shed one tear; and also, that I do not know why and wherefore I should have been exercised with any degree of emotion." He cannot

imagine the ground, on which such a statement is founded, and thinks that the only cause to which it can be attributed, is, that he "had a headache, which is very common with him, along with a slight cold." The Professor goes on to assure the public, that the whole affair of the dispute took a friendly and peaceable turn, on his part. On the part of his antagonist, indeed, he confesses, that a "gentle side-thrust" was given. But the philosopher was not at all disturbed by this. "I am," says he, "what the Leipzig Memoir styles me, a *cool philosopher*; or, as Horace better expresses it, I have a triple brass about my breast. So, I did not take it amiss."

Thus much for the *manner* of Dr. Krug's performance. A few words as to the *matter*; which concerns us in this country, as well as the Germans in and about Leipzig.

The Professor begins his Philosophical Judgment, by averring, that ever since the lapse of man, reason and its opposite have been in contest. The party of the *unreasonable* must fain conceal their want of reason (*Unvernunft*;) for otherwise they would be in sorry repute. Hence they use all manner of artifice and deceptive language, in order to cover over the thing, and to procure credit for themselves, as if they were really well meaning people, and were contending with corrupt, proud, *erroneous* reason. "*Erroneous* reason!" exclaims the Professor; "a truly wonderful expression! It is just as much as to say, *erroneous truth*; or it is as if one should talk of *iron wood*; it is a downright contradiction of terms." He then goes on to declare, that it is true, indeed, the imagination, arrogating wisdom to itself, and usurping the throne of reason, may be so rash as to throw out her sophisms and phantasms for the productions of reason. But he declaims against those, who permit themselves to be deceived by this; and who do not fully acknowledge, what is so plainly demonstrated, that the *understanding* has to do with sensible objects, while objects that are *eternal* and *above the senses*, constitute the province over which *reason* exercises her power.

In regard to this last declaration, as it is concerned principally with the metaphysical views of what is called *Transcendental Philosophy* in Germany, we shall dismiss it from our consideration. But we have more to say on the subject of reason; and we shall take this opportunity to be somewhat explicit, on this important subject.

After making the above declarations, Professor Krug goes on to concede, that reason, indeed, like all the other faculties of man, is in a state of unfolding, and improving, and advancing. Consequently, as he avers, "it is, at one period, dark and turbid; at another, light and clear: here it is weak, there it is strong; but its nature is never changed. Look well to it, then," continues he, "that reason be duly unfolded; see to it, that the heart be not



corrupted by untamed desires and affections; and then ye may soon convince yourselves, that *reason* is a *sure guide* and *judge* in divine things."

Here is the proper place to enter our protest against this last sentiment, at least against what Professor Krug means to assert by the expression which he uses, and to state our grounds for it. And we do this the more readily, because we wish our views about the nature and province of reason to be explicitly understood, in order that they may not be misinterpreted; and because we feel, that the whole subject has an immediate bearing on the state of our own religious community, and the great questions of dispute, which are now agitated among us.

We take the Professor at his word, viz. that reason is a faculty, "at one time dark, and at another clear; at one time weak, and at another strong;" or in other words, that as it is developed in man, during his present state, "it is in an unfolding, improving, advancing state." In this statement, we think all the Rationalists, in Germany and in our own country, must concur.

Taking this, then, as a true account of the matter, we ask, in what stages of the progression through which reason is to pass, she becomes competent of herself to be "*a sure guide and judge in divine things*?" Is she so, whenever her possessor *imagines* her to be competent? But Dr. Krug himself confesses, that *imagination* not unfrequently *usurps* the throne of reason, and gives out her conceits and phantasms as the productions of reason. Who then is to give us the assurance, when, in any particular case, reason asserts her sufficiency to be "a sure guide and judge in matters of religion," that she is indeed really so? The possessor himself, who makes this obtrusive claim? or some other person, whose reason, in like manner, is yet in its "unfolding" state, or whose imagination has usurped her throne? Is it not lawful to appeal from the judgment of either of these tribunals, and to demand that the judge should *fully* understand the case, before he decides upon it? Who then is ultimate umpire here? Is it Dr. Krug himself, who is to be the high court of appeal; and are we to find in him, reason no longer in its "unfolding" state, but in its absolute perfection—in the very *ἀκρα τελειότητος*? Or if not, in whom is that state of knowledge to be found, which qualifies him to be "a sure guide and judge in divine things?" The greater part of men, obviously, are still in the "unfolding" state, with their reason more or less "dark and weak;" they, plainly, are not competent to be "*sure guides*." Who then are the particular individuals, that may assert a just claim to this prerogative? We long to know. We wish to be humble learners of those, who are "*certain guides and judges*." Let the advocates of Rationalism point them out, and we will turn to them at once a listening ear.

Dr. Krug himself confesses, that "men are somewhat corrupt,

and that the corrupt affections of the heart have a tendency to stifle the voice of reason." Indeed! When men, then, have *some* corruption, and, so far as this goes, it tends to stifle the voice of reason, is reason in them "a *sure* guide?" And if not, in such men, then who are the men that have not *some* corruption in them, and to whom may we commit ourselves for *sure* instruction, in the all important matter of religion?

But here the Professor comes in, and avers, that "it is not *reason*, which is proud, or dark, or self-confident; *men themselves* are all this; *reason*, not at all." Indeed! And is not reason a part of man? or is not man a *reasonable* being; or is it only *reason*, which is *reasonable*; while man himself sustains a different character? But to pass by the distinction made by the Professor here; we ask again, and once more for all, at what stage of man's *perfectibility*, in regard to the faculty of reason, has he attained to such a degree of perfection, as shall afford himself and others sufficient evidence to believe and trust, that he is of himself "a *sure* guide and judge," in the awfully momentous concerns of religion? When this is satisfactorily answered, our great difficulty is removed; but until it be answered, we must remain in the humble belief, that a revelation is indispensable, in order to give that certainty which we need. Philosophy may scoff at our weakness, if she please so to do; but we call on her to point out a source of confidence, equivalent to the witness given by the Spirit of the living God, and by the testimony of Jesus.

We have not yet done, however, with the subject. The claims of Rationalism; above all, the arrogant pretensions, by which she invests herself with the attributes of the infallible God; we regard with high disapprobation, and with a most thorough conviction of their injustice, as well as arrogance. But we dissent, on the other hand, very widely from those, who are in the habit of decrying reason, and of uttering strong reproaches against her, as though she were the great corrupter of the human race, and the determined opposer and enemy of revelation. Things like these we have heard and read, to our deep regret and utter astonishment; and we would fain put all the friends of evangelical sentiment on their guard, against uttering or countenancing them.

Nothing can be farther from the truth, than that revelation requires us to abandon reason. Nay, so far is the case from this, that revelation addresses itself, first of all, to the faculty of reason. It is admitted on all hands, that the Bible does not *prove* the being of a God; it assumes this truth, as already known and conceded. But to what faculty of man, are the evidences that a God exists, addressed? Surely to his reason. Then, as to the fact of a revelation itself, (we mean, the question whether one has actually been made,) to what faculty are the evidences of this addressed? To reason. What is it, that weighs and compares the various

testimonies and evidences, that a God exists, and that he has revealed himself in the Scriptures; and then deduces conclusions from this? Reason. What is it which ascertains the laws of interpretation, for that book which professes to be a revelation from God? Reason. What determines, that God has not members of a physical body like our own, when the Bible seems to ascribe them to him? Reason; i. e. reason, by comparing the various principles of interpreting human language, draws from them the conclusion, that the sacred writers meant to use such expressions respecting the Deity, as ascribe human parts and passions to him, in a figurative manner. Reason, then, is our highest and ultimate source of appeal, in the judgment that we form of things, which are fundamental in regard to religion. Even if a revelation were to be made to us in particular, we must appeal to reason to judge, whether the evidences of its reality were sufficient.

Such being most plainly the fact, we can never join with those, who think they are doing God service when they decry the faculty of reason; a faculty which we regard as one of the highest and noblest proofs, that our nature was formed in the image of God. Shall we say, now, that reason can *never* be trusted; that she is *always* so dark, so erring, that we can have no confidence in her decisions? If so, then why should we trust her decisions in favor of the being of a God, or of his spiritual nature, or of his moral attributes, or of the truth of Revelation? If reason does not decide in favor of all these and many more truths, then what is the faculty of our nature which does decide? and is that other faculty any more secure against error, than the faculty of reason?

Whoever will soberly consider these suggestions, and the sequel of thoughts to which they will necessarily lead, if he has ever been a reproacher of reason, he will learn to feel, that he has used a two-edged sword, as easily turned against himself as against his antagonists. It is a most plain and palpable fact, that if we could undo all our confidence in the decisions of reason, we should, of course, shake all our confidence in the belief that God exists, or that he has made a revelation to men; for of the probability of both these truths, we judge by means of our reason.

If we are right in these positions, (and to us the case seems a very plain one,) then does it follow, that there are two extremes in regard to this important subject, into which men may easily run. Indeed, nothing is more common than to find them running into both. Dr. Krug and the Rationalists are in the one, (a most dangerous one too, in our apprehension;) while some of their antagonists, nauseated with the high and obtrusive claims of a reason which scoffs at Revelation, have fallen into a very undeserved abuse of this most noble and essential of all the human faculties.

Is there not, now, some *aurea mediocritas*, some *golden mean*, which we may choose, and avoid the offensive and dangerous er-

rors of these excesses? It is a question replete with thrilling interest, to the ardent inquirer after truth and certainty. We cannot but think, that it may be answered in the affirmative. Yet it is a question replete with difficulties of no small magnitude; difficulties which indeed are not met with by him who never stops to inquire into the ultimate grounds of the confidence he puts in his own conclusions; but, at the same time, difficulties which every fundamental investigator must cope with, and which he ought to understand.

With the Rationalists, we would unite in applauding reason, and in ascriptions of gratitude to God for this gift, which is one of the brightest evidences of our present resemblance to him. But it is reason, kept within its own province, and exercised with becoming humility and discretion, that we applaud. For the noble faculty in question, we do thank and praise the boundless goodness of God. For the abuse of it, we find fault with and condemn man. And when we are called upon to renounce all that is peculiar and distinguishing in Christianity, because, as it is confidently asserted, *reason* decides against its peculiarities, and never would have devised them or discovered them; we reply, without hesitation, that to us this seems to be the decision of *perverted* reason; of reason viewing things in a discolored light. The God who made us in his image, and made us immortal, and placed us in a state of moral probation, either intended to give us some knowledge of our duty, and of himself, and of his purposes toward us; or he did not. We avow, without hesitation, our full conviction, that *reasonable* men cannot be made to believe that he did not. But if he did mean to give us a knowledge of himself, and of our duty and condition; then we ask, whether reason can shew, that in communicating such knowledge, he has obliged himself to make the *material* creation, and the *dumb* and *material elements only*, to be our sole instructors; or whether he may not have reserved to himself the power and the right, to held out to our view some other book besides that of nature, in which he has pourtrayed his character and designs, and made known his will? Reason, even in a very imperfect state, is surely able to satisfy herself on this question.

We ask again, then, whether the faculties of man, limited, erring, imperfect as they are, in many respects, while in their natural state and their gradual unfolding, are competent to discover and enforce all necessary truth, respecting the invisible world, the tribunal of God, the conditions of acceptance with him, and the final destiny which awaits us? If not, (and we confidently avow our full conviction, that *reason* decides in the negative;) then we need a revelation. Here is the grand point of difference between us and the Naturalists or Rationalists. We have no umpire, indeed, to whom we can appeal, in order to decide the question between us; except the common sense, i. e. the reason, of our fellow

beings. We must submit, and we do cheerfully submit, the question to be decided by this tribunal.

But if a revelation has been made, and reason decides that the evidences of its having been made are such as ought to satisfy our minds, then may we receive many truths on the authority of that revelation, for the discovery of which, reason, not divinely instructed, had never been competent. We are aware, here, that the point of disagreement between us and the Rationalists, is, whether the evidences that a special revelation has been made, are satisfactory? We aver that they are so; they deny it. Here again, there is no umpire between us. Our assertion does not make that true which we assert; nor does theirs: and we must appeal here, then, to the reason and understanding of our fellow beings; we must lay before them the grounds of our belief, and call on them to decide for themselves, in a case of infinite moment, which of the views in question is most consonant with what they consider to be true reason, acting in the province which the Creator has assigned to it. If we can satisfy our own minds and theirs, that a revelation from God was needed, and has been made, and is of supreme obligation, and this by appealing to their reason, while we make use of our own; then we attain, in respect to this subject, all that is attainable by the faculty in question. It is the Power above, that must move the heart.

When the mind has become satisfied as to revelation, then of course the claims of Rationalists to set aside the authority of the Scriptures, in respect to everything which it is above the reach of the human mind to discover or to prove, will come to be regarded as *unreasonable*; and it will be felt, that they have but little claim to the appellation, in which they appear so much to glory.

We may trust reason, then, influenced by our moral susceptibilities, and employed in this manner, in the conclusions which she makes, with regard to the great truths of religion. We are obliged to do this; for what is it we do trust, or can trust, if it be not reason? We cannot then degrade or vilify this godlike faculty; nor countenance any who may think they are doing God service, while they are loading it with the epithets of reproach. We must trust the decisions of reason, in regard to the nature of evidence about religious truth of all kinds. Reason may, and must judge, of what is proposed to her. But it is one thing to be judge of the evidence of truth, when it is proposed; and another thing, to claim the power of discovering or excogitating all the truths, which we are to believe. Here we are widely at variance with the Rationalists. Reason judges; reason interprets; reason combines and arranges; we may add, reason, legitimately used, weighs, and is satisfied with the proper evidence of moral and religious truths, which are proposed to her. Such we believe reason to be. All beyond this, i. e. all claims above this, as to judging or deciding,



in regard to the nature and affairs of the world to come, we believe to be not the claim of sober *reason*, but the claim of *abused* and *perverted* reason.

We are perfectly aware, that the Rationalists, at home and abroad, may appeal from this, and aver that they have a right to judge of the province and claims of reason, as well as we. We concede the *right*. We do not believe in any supreme and final arbiter, among fallible men. But we claim the same right as they, to decide for ourselves. It is in the exercise of this right, that we come to the full conclusion, that the Rationalists *abuse* their *reason*, when they set it above the claims and the authority of Revelation; and that some of their opponents take a position replete with danger, when they decry reason as a faculty too imperfect to be at all trusted.

We hope that we have made ourselves understood, on this important topic; for we feel deeply interested to be explicit, and to make ourselves appear so to others. We will only add, on a review of this matter, that it does appear to us, there is, in the nature of the case, some medium between making a human faculty to usurp the place of the infallible God, and degrading it to a condition in which it is altogether unworthy of our confidence. We do most solemnly protest against the one and the other of these extremes. The one leads to a denial of the Lord that bought us; the other, (if those who run into it would be consistent with themselves,) would lead to universal distrust, in every conclusion which the human mind is urged to make. May heaven defend enlightened Christians from plunging into either of these abysses!

We cannot omit to add, that Rationalists themselves do not avoid the difficulty which they think they avoid, by the adoption of their own sentiments. We mean, for example, that the disciples of La Mettrie, and of Spinoza, would scoff as heartily at what Rationalists call *reason*, as the latter do at what we believe to be true reason. Who then is to be final judge? God, we answer, who has given us our reason that we may believe and worship him, he is to be Judge—*final* Judge, the *supreme* Judge, from whose decision there is no appeal. He will surely decide who *rightly uses*, and who *abuses*, the exalted faculties which have been given us. We do most devoutly wish, that this truth might sink deep into the bosoms of all, who are taking any part, by sympathy or by action, in the great questions which are agitated among us.

We return once more, to the interesting occurrences at Leipzig. It was not to be supposed, that Dr. Hahn, after having ventured upon the offensive definition of Rationalism, to which a *historical* investigation of the use of this word had led him, would be appalled or silenced, by the wit, or the irony, or the metaphysics, of Professor Krug. Accordingly, soon after the appearance of the "Philosophical Judgment," the advocate of the Scriptures came

forward with an "Address to the Evangelical Churches of Germany, particularly of Saxony and Prussia;" an address, says our reviewer, "which cannot fail to attract the notice of all classes of persons, laity as well as clergy." The object of the address is, to make the laity acquainted with the nature of the dispute which is going on in Germany, between the Rationalists and their opponents. Dr. Hahn comes out fully and boldly with the declaration, that Rationalism stands in such direct contradiction to the Scriptures, that the abettors of it have no just claims whatever to be considered as members of the Evangelical [Lutheran] church. He repeatedly and solemnly calls on them, as honest men, to come out and separate themselves from this church; and he appeals to the world, whether common integrity and regard to truth do not oblige them to do this.

Such is the main object of the address in question; a bold measure, indeed, in a country where religion is under the control of the civil magistrate, and where almost all places of importance, in church and state, are filled with Rationalists, or absolute skeptics.

The production in question is characterised, by our reviewer, as indicating a great deal of kind feeling towards those who differ from the writer; and as shewing a most hearty and thorough belief, in the great and peculiar truths of revelation. The reviewer observes that if ever the maxim, *Pectus facit theologum*, [the heart makes the theologian,] could be applied to any one, with propriety, it must be peculiarly so, in regard to Dr. Hahn.

We shall close our present Review, with an extract from the beginning of the address in question, which has deeply interested us.

"I have sought," says Dr. Hahn, "what all seek, who are urged on by a secret, sacred desire in their breast; I have sought with strenuous effort, what it is so difficult, in our times, to find; some certain rule of truth for my own mind, some established conviction, some definite settled direction how to employ my powers, in striving after that which is the highest and noblest, unto which man, formed in the image of God and made immortal, can attain. I have sought it in the most renowned sciences, which the most elevated minds of our race have discovered. I esteem them highly, and thank them much, that they have formed and nourished my intellectual powers, and that they have enabled me to spend many a pleasant hour, animated with the spirit which they had kindled up within me. Thanks, many thanks, to all my teachers, who have imparted the knowledge of the sciences to me; even to those, too, who have departed from this scene of action, and have found a solution of all the dark problems which we are still investigating! I hope to preserve this thankfulness of mind, and to carry it with me to the mansions of the just made per-

fect, to our Father's house, which is so capacious, but as yet imperfectly known. I am under obligations to all my instructors, that I made early and rapid advances in the path of knowledge; and that I have enjoyed the confidence of so many of the disciples of knowledge, I owe to the teachers whom God gave me."

"But that which is the most important of all, that which the immortal soul longs after, and which alone imparts a real worth to all the rest,—that I owe not to any science, which the investigation or the art of man has formed. After this I have sought in vain, in the writings of former days, and of the present times, which we justly commend, and give to the diligent for their instruction. These writings awakened in me, indeed, a sacred desire after what is high and holy; but they did not satisfy it. I have found what I sought, only in the DIVINE WORD; which the children of this world treat with disregard, but which commends itself to all, who honestly desire to regulate the duties of life, and faithfully and zealously to discharge them. I have found it in the heavenly treasure, which our church so carefully preserves; in the pure Gospel history of Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God; whom our invisible Father in heaven, out of love to the world, (which with all its wisdom did not know its own Creator,) sent forth, and gave up to death, that all who believe in him might not perish, but have eternal life. In this Gospel, after which our church is named,\* and in which our fathers found such satisfaction, that they were ready to sacrifice both their property and their blood, on account of their faith—in this, I find laid up, (although concealed from the view of those who have eyes but see not,) all the treasures of truth, which make us truly rich."

"Do I inquire, then, what I am as a man, and what I ought to be, and must be? I look for an answer from the only begotten Son of God, my Saviour, who is also and truly the Son of man. In his person and life, I see (what I find nowhere else in perfection) the true life of man. In the life of the Son of God, and in his lot, the life and lot of all the children of God are open to our view. Their divine origin is disclosed; their heavenly descent; their converse with God; their efforts in his service; and herewithal, too, the enmity of the world, shame and persecution from it, until truth and true goodness finally triumphed, and the world was at last subdued by the very victories which it had won, and its children were converted to a belief in the crucified and godlike Martyr."

Such is the commencement of Dr. Hahn's Address; a commencement, which we think cannot be read without a thrilling interest, by any attentive, inquiring mind, that is both sober and enlightened.

\* The original word here is *Evangelium*, and the Lutheran church, as we have already seen, is called *Evangelical*. [Note of the Translator.]

We cannot withhold one passage more. In another part of the Address, after giving a brief sketch of the evidences in favor of the Godhead of Christ, Dr. H. goes on to describe the consequences of the publication of the Gospel abroad, by the apostles, in the following manner.

“ See! the temples of the gods sink down, one after another. The proud and gaudy fables of the gods of Greece, lose their admirers and believers. The disciples of the wise men of the world come, and listen to that preaching which sets forth the Saviour of the world as once crucified, as having risen from the dead, and procured eternal redemption for all penitent sinners. Men forget to bring their bloody offerings to the gods. To the hitherto unknown, but only living and true God, they make an offering of their hearts. Now commences a new and sacred service, a rational devotion, awakened by a lively faith in the free grace of God, through Christ, toward sinners; a devotion of an established nature, and shewing its gratitude by thankful affection. Old things pass away, and behold! all things become new, where the Spirit of God breathes, exhibiting his energy by giving power to the addresses of fishermen and artisans.”

Again; “ Yea, I believe it, Lord, my Saviour! I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God, sent from our Father in heaven, and come forth into the world, that we might have eternal life through thee. I have learned, I trust, that thou art he. An established, unshaken belief, thou hast made my portion. Thou hast given me peace in my heart, and sacred joy in communion with thee. A longing desire hast thou also imparted to me, to follow after thee in the path of life. No other teachers were able to do this. It is thou whom I am to thank, that the kingdom of heaven has begun on earth for me; and that this material covering of mine envelopes a spring of eternal life, one which issues from a belief in thee. I believe, Lord, what thou hast promised. Thy Gospel, Redeemer of the world, shall yet spread over every land; the ends of the earth, the wilderness and the solitary place, shall hear it. The isles of the sea shall echo with songs of praise in honour of thee; and upon those who sit in the darkness and the shadow of death, without any saving knowledge, light shall be poured in from **THE BRIGHT AND MORNING STAR.**”

Any comment of ours, on passages like these, would be superfluous. They speak to the hearts of all, who, like Dr. Hahn, have “ found him in whom they believe,” and “ whom their soul loveth.”

We congratulate the *father-land* of the Reformation, that the mantle of the great Luther is falling upon such worthy successors. We congratulate the University of Leipzig, and those especially there who love the cause of evangelical truth, that so bold, learned, able, and warm-hearted a defender has arisen, to plead its

cause. We trust, that, in due time, we shall have more good news from this quarter, to communicate to our readers.

In the mean time, we would follow on, although at a humble distance, in the steps of this fearless advocate of the Gospel. We have the same opposition for substance to contend with, as he; although, for the most part, it is masked as yet under another name. But the time of developement, we trust, is near. The mask will come off; and the laity, as well as the clergy, cannot fail to have, sooner or later, a full view of what is doing among us, and an opportunity of judging and deciding, whether Rationalism is here to usurp the place of the Gospel, and self-styled Reason to dethrone "THE WORD WHO WAS WITH GOD, AND WAS GOD."

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### SELECTION.

#### DEATH-BED OF DR. JOHNSON.

The interesting extract which follows, is from an Essay on "True and False Repose in Death," contained in a work recently published in England, by the Rev. S. C. Wilks, and entitled "Christian Essays."

The case of our great English Moralist is a most decisive illustration of the impossibility of discovering any mode of solacing a scripturally enlightened conscience, except that which the Gospel has revealed. Had Dr. Johnson been ignorant of his sinfulness in the sight of God, he might have expired as thousands every day expire, in a blind and fatal repose; or had he been inclined to infidelity, he might have jested, like Hume and others of a similar school, on the subject of his approaching dissolution. Neither, however, of these effects would have constituted that true peace, which his spiritually directed mind so eagerly sought, and which, before his death, he most certainly obtained.

A few practical remarks upon the subject of the last hours of this illustrious man will not only be a forcible comment upon the foregoing propositions, but will tend to show, that what Dr. Johnson's biographers have been almost ashamed to confess, and have industriously exerted themselves to palliate, constituted, in truth, the most auspicious circumstance of his life, and was the best proof of his increase in religious knowledge and holiness of mind.

Whoever considers with a Christian eye the death of Dr. Johnson, will readily perceive, that, according to the usual order of Providence, it could not have been free from agitation and anxiety. Johnson was a man of tender conscience, and one who from his very infancy had been instructed in Christian principles. But he was, also, in the strict judgment of revealed religion, an inconsistent man. Neither his habits nor his companions had been such as his own conscience approved; and even a short time before his end we



find one of his biographers lamenting that "the visits of idle and some worthless persons were never unwelcome to him," on the express ground that "these things drove on time." His ideas of morality being of the highest order, many things, which are considered by men at large as but venial offences, appeared to him as positive crimes. Even his constitutional indolence and irritability of mind were sufficient of themselves to keep him constantly humbled and self-abased, and though among his gay or literary companions he usually appears upon the comparatively high ground of a Christian moralist, and the strenuous defender of revealed religion, yet, compared with the divine standard and test of truth, he felt himself both defective and disobedient.

Together with this conscientious feeling, he had adopted certain incorrect, not to say superstitious ideas, respecting the method of placating the Deity. He seems, for example, to have believed that *penance*, in its confined and popish sense, as distinguished from simple penitence, is of great avail in procuring the divine favor and forgiveness. Thus, when his conscience distressed him on account of an act of disobedience to his parent, we find him many years afterwards remaining a considerable time bare-headed in the rain, exposed in the public streets to the ridicule and the conjectures of every spectator. As far as filial affection and true amiableness of mind are concerned, the actor in such a scene deserves and ensures universal veneration and esteem. Even while we smile at the somewhat ludicrous nature of the action, we instinctively feel a sympathy and respect, which perhaps a wiser but less remarkable mode of exhibiting his feelings might not have procured. But Johnson seems to have performed this humiliation from higher considerations than mere sorrow for the past; for he emphatically adds, "In contrition I stood, and I hope the *penance was expiatory*."

If these words really mean anything—and when did Dr. Johnson utter words without meaning?—he must have intended by them to express his hope that the previous fault was really *atoned for*, in a religious sense, by the subsequent act of self-denial; or, in other words, that God accepts human penance as an expiation for human sins—a doctrine to which revealed religion gives no sanction whatever. Johnson's system appears at this time to have been, as it were, a sort of barter between himself and heaven; and, consequently, his chief fear was lest the equivalent which he presented, should not be sufficient to *entitle* him, in the divine mercy, to the pardon of his transgressions. His trust on the Redeemer, though perfectly sincere, does not appear to have been either exclusive or implicit; for though all his prayers for mercy, and acknowledgments of blessings, were offered up solely through the merits and mediation of Jesus Christ, he seems, in point of fact, for many years to have viewed the Atonement rather as a medium through which God is pleased to accept our imperfect services, and to make them adequate, by the conditions of a remedial law, to the purchase of heaven, than as a sacrifice by which *alone* heaven is fully secured and freely given to the believing penitent. Dr. Johnson's line of reading in divinity was perhaps unfavorable to a full perception of Christian truth.

The writings of Mr. Law, in particular, which he had studied with some attention, were by no means well adapted to his peculiar case. For a thoughtless, a frivolous, or an impenitent sinner, the "Serious Call" might have been eminently useful, in exciting a deep consciousness of guilt, a salutary remorse for the past, and holy resolutions for the future; and as far as these elements of religion extend, the perusal of this celebrated book might doubtless have had some good effect upon the mind of Dr. Johnson. But in the consolatory parts of the Gospel—in the free and undisguised exhibition of a Redeemer, whose sacrifice is perfect and all-sufficient; in the inculcation of the gracious promises of a reconciled Father to the returning prodigal, Law, and other writers of a similar school, are undoubtedly defective; and the same defect seems to have characterised for many years the views of our illustrious moralist. He lived in a perpetual dilemma, by trusting to works which his well informed conscience told him were not good, and yet on the goodness of which, in conjunction at least with the merits of Christ, he placed his dependance for eternity.

To give, therefore, comfort to the mind of such a man as Dr. Johnson, there were but two modes,—either by blinding his conscience, or by increasing his faith; either by extenuating his sins, or by pointing out in all its glories the sufficiency of the Christian ransom. The friends who surrounded this eminent man, during the greater part of his life, were little qualified to perform the latter, and therefore, very naturally resorted to the former. They found their patient, so to speak, in agony; but, instead of examining the wound and applying the remedy, they contented themselves with administering anodynes and opiates, and persuading their afflicted friend, that there existed no cause of danger or alarm.

But Johnson was not thus deceived. The *nostrum* which has lulled millions to a fatal repose, on him, by the mercy of God, had no effect. His convictions of sin were as lasting as they were deep. It was not, therefore, until he had discarded his natural and long-cherished views of commutation and human desert, and had learned to trust humbly and exclusively to his Saviour, that his mind became at peace.

Let us view some of the recorded circumstances of the transaction; and in so doing we shall, as Christians, have much more occasion to applaud the scriptural correctness of Johnson's feelings respecting the value of his soul, the guilt of his nature, and the inadequacy of man's best merits and repentance, than to congratulate him upon the accession of such "miserable comforters" as those who appear to have surrounded his dying pillow.

Finding him in great mental distress, "I told him," remarks one of his biographers, (Sir John Hawkins,) "of the many enjoyments of which I thought him in possession—namely, a permanent income, tolerable health, a high degree of reputation for his moral qualities and literary exertions," &c. Had Johnson's depression of mind been nothing more than common melancholy or discontent, these topics of consolation would have been highly appropriate; they might also have been fitly urged as arguments for gratitude and thanksgiving

to the Almighty, on account of such exalted mercies. In either of these points of view, the piety of Dr. Johnson would doubtless have prompted him to acknowledge the value of the blessing, and the duty of contentment and praise. But, as arguments for quieting an alarmed conscience, they were quite inadequate; for what would it have profited this distinguished man, to have gained all his well merited honors, or even, were it possible, the world itself, if, after all, he should become, as he himself afterwards expressed it, "a cast away?"

The feelings of Dr. Johnson on this subject were more fully evidenced on a subsequent occasion. "One day in particular," remarks Sir John Hawkins, "when I was suggesting to him these and the like reflections, he gave thanks to Almighty God; but added, that notwithstanding all the above benefits, the prospect of death, which was now at no great distance from him, was become terrible, and that he could not think of it, but with great pain and trouble of mind." Nothing assuredly could be more correct than Dr. Johnson's distinction. He acknowledges the value of the mercies which he enjoyed, and he gratefully "gave thanks to Almighty God" for them; but he felt that they could not soften the terrors of a death-bed, or make the prospect of meeting his Judge less painful and appalling. Hawkins, who could not enter into his illustrious friend's more just and enlarged views of human guilt and frailty, confesses himself to have been "very much surprised and shocked at such a declaration from such a man," and proceeded therefore to urge for his comfort the usual arguments of extenuation. He reports that he "told him that he conceived his life to have been a uniform course of virtue; that he had ever shewn a deep sense of, and zeal for, religion; and that, both by his example and his writings, he had recommended the practice of it; that he had not rested, as many do, in the exercise of common honesty, avoiding the grosser enormities, yet rejecting those advantages that result from the belief of divine revelation; but that he had, by prayer and other exercises of devotion, cultivated in his mind the seeds of goodness, and was become habitually pious."

This was the rock on which numberless professed Christians have been fatally wrecked; and to the mercy of the Almighty must it be ascribed, that the great and good Dr. Johnson did not add one more to the melancholy catalogue. For what was the doctrine which the narrator attempted to inculcate but this? that his friend, like the Pharisee in the Gospel, ought to place his confidence upon his possessing more merit than other men, and instead of attributing the praise to Him who had "made him to differ," was to "sacrifice to his own net, and burn incense to his own drag." Can we wonder that with such flattering doctrines constantly sounding in his ears, Dr. Johnson was suffered to undergo much severe mental discipline, in order to reduce him in his own esteem to that lowly place, which, as a human, and consequently a fallen being, it was his duty, however high his attainments or his talents, to occupy.

The snare of spiritual pride, which Sir John Hawkins thus unconsciously spread for his dying friend, was the more seductive from

the circumstance of Dr. Johnson's life having been upon the whole correct and laudable, and from his writings having been eminently useful for the promotion of morality and virtue. The convictions of a profligate man might have been supposed too keen and alarming to be quieted by such commonplace soporifics; but where there was really so much apparent cause for self-complacency and gratulation, as in the case of Dr. Johnson, it must appear almost wonderful that the self-righteous delusion did not succeed.

It would undoubtedly have given this biographer much satisfaction to have heard from his friend the usual language of an unsubdued heart; "I thank God, that upon the whole I have acted my part well upon the stage of life. We are all frail and fallible, but I have no great sins to account for. I have been honest and charitable; my conduct, I trust, has been, with some few exceptions, 'one uniform course of virtue;' I therefore die in peace, looking forward to that happiness which, I trust, my actions have ensured, from a God of infinite mercy and compassion." But to the humble and well informed Christian, the penitential sorrows of Johnson, (springing, as they did, from a heart ill at ease with itself, not so much on account of any one flagrant sin, as from a general sense of the exalted nature of the divine law, and the imperfections of the best human obedience,) will appear a happier and surer pledge of his scriptural renovation of mind than the most rapturous expressions which pharisaic confidence could have produced.

The self-righteous arguments of Hawkins could not, however, touch the case of Johnson. "These suggestions," he continues, "made little impression on him; he lamented the indolence in which he had spent his life; talked of secret transgressions; and seemed desirous of telling me more to that purpose, than I was willing to hear." Happy was it for Dr. Johnson, that his confessor's arguments produced so little effect, and that he was at length instructed by a better guide than his well meaning, but inexperienced friend. Throughout the whole of Hawkins's remarks, the only topics of genuine Christian consolation appear to have had no place. That "blood which cleanseth from all sin," is scarcely, or only incidentally mentioned; and we find the narrator continuing, in the following strain, his inefficient consolations:

"In a visit which I made him in a few days, in consequence of a very pressing request to see me, I found him laboring under very great dejection of mind. He bade me draw near to him, and said he wanted to enter into a serious conversation with me; and upon my expressing my willingness to join in it, he, with a look that cut me to the heart, told me, that he had the prospect of death before him, and that he dreaded to meet his Saviour. I could not but be astonished at such a declaration, and advised him, as I had done before, to reflect on the course of his life, and the services which he had rendered to the cause of religion and virtue, as well by his example as his writings; to which he answered, that he had written as a philosopher, but had not lived like one. In the estimation of his offences, he reasoned thus; 'Every man knows his own sins, and what grace he has resisted. But to those of others, and the cir-

cumstances under which they were committed, he is a stranger. He is, therefore, to look on himself as the greatest sinner that he knows of.' At the conclusion of this argument, which he strongly enforced, he uttered this passionate [impassioned] exclamation; 'Shall I, who have been a teacher of others, be myself a cast-away?'

In this interesting passage—interesting as detailing the religious progress of such a mind as Dr. Johnson's—how many important facts and reflections crowd upon the imagination! We see the highest human intellect unable at the approach of death to find a single argument for hope or comfort, though stimulated by the mention of all the good deeds and auspicious forebodings which an anxious and attentive friend could suggest. Who that beholds this eminent man thus desirous to open his mind, and to "enter into a serious conversation" upon the most momentous of all subjects which can interest an immortal being, but must regret that he had not found a spiritual adviser who was capable of fully entering into his feelings, and administering scriptural consolation to his afflicted mind.

The narrator informs us in this passage, that "he could not but be astonished at such a declaration" as that which Dr. Johnson made. But in reality, where was the real ground for astonishment? Is it astonishing, that an inheritor of a corrupt and fallen nature, who is about to quit the world, and to be "judged according to the deeds done in the body," should be alarmed at the anticipation of the event, and be anxious to understand fully the only mode of pardon and acceptance? Rather is it not astonishing that every other intelligent man does not feel at his last hour the same anxieties which Dr. Johnson experienced!—unless, indeed, they have been previously removed by the hopes revealed in that glorious dispensation which alone undertakes to point out in what way the Almighty sees fit to pardon a rebellious world. No man would or could have been astonished who knew his own heart; for, as Dr. Johnson truly remarked, every Christian, how fair soever his character in the estimation of others, ought to look upon himself as "the greatest sinner that he knows of;" a remark, be it observed, which shows how deeply Dr. Johnson had begun to drink into the spirit of that great apostle, who, amidst all his excellencies, confessed and felt himself the chief of sinners."

What a contrast does the advice of Hawkins as stated by himself in the preceding passage form to the scriptural exhortations of our own church! Instead of advising his friend seriously to examine himself "whether he repented him truly of his former sins, stedfastly purposing (should he survive) to lead a new life, having a lively faith in God's mercy through Christ, with a thankful remembrance of his death, and being in charity with all men," he bids him look back to his past goodness, and is astonished that the survey is not attended with the hope and satisfaction which he had anticipated. But the truth was, that on the subject of religion, as on every other, Dr. Johnson entertained far more correct ideas than the friends around him; and though he had not hitherto found peace with his Creator,



through the blood of Jesus Christ, yet he could not be satisfied with the ordinary consolations of an uninformed or pharisaic mind.

The sun did not, however, set in this long continued cloud; for Johnson at length obtained comfort, where alone *true* comfort could be obtained, in the sacrifice and mediation of Jesus Christ,—a circumstance to which Sir John Hawkins transiently alludes, but the particulars of which must be supplied from the narrative of Boswell, whose words are as follows:

“Dr. Brocklesby, who will not be suspected of fanaticism, obliged me with the following account; ‘For some time before his death, all his fears were calmed and absorbed by the prevalence of his faith, and his trust in the merits and propitiation of Jesus Christ. He talked often to me about the necessity of faith in the sacrifice of Jesus, as necessary, beyond all good works whatever, for the salvation of mankind.’”

Even allowing for the brevity of this statement, and for the somewhat chilling circumstance of its coming from the pen of a man who “will not be suspected of fanaticism,” what a triumph was here for the plain unsophisticated doctrines of the Gospel, especially that of free justification by faith in Jesus Christ! After every other means had been tried, and tried in vain, the simple penitential reliance upon the sacrifice of the Redeemer, produced in the heart of this devout man a peace and satisfaction which no reflections upon human merit could bestow. He seems to have acquired a completely new idea of Christian theology, and could doubtless henceforth practically adopt the animating language of his own church, in her Eleventh Article; “That we are justified by faith only, is a most wholesome doctrine, and very full of comfort.”

There are various ways in which the distressing apprehensions of Dr. Johnson during his latter years, may be considered; of which one is, that of their having been permitted, as a merciful and fatherly chastisement, for the inconsistencies of his life. Both Johnson himself, and his most partial biographer, intimate that his character was not perfectly free even from gross sins; but omitting these painful recollections, we are at least certain that his general habits and companions, during a considerable part of his life, were not such as a consistent Christian would have chosen, because they were not such as could in any way conduce to his spiritual comfort or improvement. Dr. Johnson was indeed called, in the usual course of Divine Providence, to “live in the world;” but it was his duty so to have lived in it “as not of it;” and with the high sense which he uniformly entertained of religion, and the vast influence which he had justly acquired in society, his conduct and example might have been of the greatest service in persuading men to a holy, as well as a virtuous life,—to a cordial and complete self-dedication to God, as well as to a general decorum, and purity of conduct.

It is certain that, in reflecting upon his past life, he did not view it as having been truly Christian. He even prays in his dying hours, that God would “pardon his late conversion;” thus evidencing not merely the usual humility and contrition of every genuine

Christian, but, in addition to this, a secret consciousness that his heart had never before been entirely "right with God."

Had Johnson survived this period of his decisive "conversion," we might have expected to have seen throughout his conduct that he had indeed become "a new creature in Christ Jesus." His respect for religion, and his outward excellence of character, could not perhaps have admitted of much visible change for the better; but in heavenly mindedness, in love and zeal for the souls of men, in deadness to the world and to fame, in the choice of books and companions, and in the exhibition of those spiritual graces which belong peculiarly to the Christian character, we might, and must, have beheld a marked improvement. Instead of being merely the Seneca of the English nation, he might possibly have become its St. Paul; and he would doubtless in future have embodied his moral injunctions, not in the cold form of ethical philosophy, or even in the generalities of the Christian religion, but in an ardent love to God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ; in a union to the Redeemer, and a dependance upon that Holy Spirit who is the Enlightener and Sanctifier. That such a supposition is not visionary, may be proved even from the meagre accounts afforded by a spectator, who would of course be inclined rather to soften down than to give prominence to anything which might be construed into "fanaticism." For we learn from this witness, that in point of fact, there was already a marked alteration in Dr. Johnson's language upon religion; as, instead of spending his time upon barren generalities, "he talked often about the necessity of faith in Jesus." That of which Dr. Johnson spoke thus earnestly and often, must doubtless have appeared to him as of the utmost importance; and we have to lament—if indeed any dispensation of Providence may be lawfully lamented—that Johnson had not lived to check the Pelagianism and Pharisaism of his age, by proclaiming "often," and with all the weight of his authority, that "faith in the sacrifice of Jesus is necessary, beyond all good works whatever, for the salvation of mankind." The expression is not quite theologically correct, and may have suffered through the ignorance of the reporter. What Dr. Johnson doubtless meant, was, not to institute a comparison between the supposed opposite claims of works and faith; but to exclude "all good works whatever," as the meritorious cause of human redemption or salvation.

It will of course be allowed, that the constitutional melancholy of this great man might have had much influence in causing this religious depression; but, whatever may have been the proximate cause, the affliction itself may still be viewed as performing the office of parental correction, to reclaim his relapses, and to teach him the hatefulness and folly of sin. But, without speculating upon either the final or the efficient cause, the medium through which that cause operated was evidently an indistinctness in his views respecting the nature of the atonement of the Redeemer; an indistinctness common to Dr. Johnson with no small class of moralists and learned men. He believed, it is true, generally in the sacrifice of Christ; but he knew little of its efficiency and its freeness, and

he was unable to apply it by humble faith to the circumstances of his own case. He was probably little in the habit of contemplating the Son of God as "a great High Priest, who can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities," and who is ever graciously interceding on behalf of all who truly believe in him and serve him. The character of the Almighty, as a reconciled Father and friend, with whom he was to have daily "communion and fellowship," was less prominent in his thoughts than those of his attributes which render him "a consuming fire." He feared and respected religion rather than loved it; and, by building his structure for many years on a self-righteous foundation, rendered the whole fabric liable to be overthrown by the first attack of an accusing conscience.

In reply to any general inference to be derived from these remarks, it may still be urged, that Dr. Johnson's was a peculiar and exempt case; and that his painful feeling of sin, and his consequent dissatisfaction with his own righteousness, were rather the effect of his natural malady than of any peculiarly correct ideas upon religion. But, even admitting this, who can assert that either *his* understanding or *his* character has been superior to Dr. Johnson's; and that, therefore, *he* may be justly sustained in death by a support which this eminent man, from whatever cause, found unavailing. If the greatest moralist of his age and nation was obliged at length to seek repose in the same free mercy of God in Christ which pardoned the thief upon the cross, who that knows his own heart will henceforth venture to glory in himself? The conscience may indeed be seared; we may not feel as Johnson felt; we may be ignorant both of God and of ourselves; and thus, for want of knowing or believing our spiritual danger, we may leave the world with a false tranquillity, and enter the presence of our Creator "with a lie in our right hand." This, however, is our unhappiness, and ought not to be our boast; for if our minds were as religiously enlightened, and our hearts as correctly impressed, as Dr. Johnson's, we could obtain hope only where he obtained it,—by "faith in the sacrifice of Jesus."

The case, however, of Dr. Johnson is *not* an exempt case; for what has been the feeling of true Christians in every age, but one of a similar, though perhaps not always equally marked and conspicuous, kind?

## MISCELLANEOUS DEPARTMENT.

### PROTESTANTISM IN FRANCE.

#### *Letter of Peter Bayssiere.*

(Continued from p. 112.)

I ought to tell you, my dear children,—I ought to reveal to you the true condition of my soul. In my state of deplorable blindness and ignorance, sometimes I thought that God did not exist, that he was only a visionary being; and sometimes confounding him with the work of his hands, I attributed his divinity to all matter. "The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God." I could not deny that these words of king David had long been, and perhaps were still, applicable to me.

But recollecting that the natural corruption of my heart, and the bad books that I had read, were, in part, the cause of the sad condition in which I was, I cannot refrain from attributing it still more, to the *abuses*, the *superstitions* and *errors*, which disfigure Christianity in the Romish church, and which, by disgusting me, had led me to think that all religion was only a fabrication.

Such, then, in truth, was my religious state, and you may well think, my children, that I was not very tranquil; for it is impossible to be so when we do not rely on God, who is the source of the supreme good and true peace. I was diligent in my business; I frequented the society of my friends; but my heart, ever sighing for something which was wanting, was never content; my wandering and agitated spirit found no object which could fix and satisfy it. *Ennui* pursued me everywhere, and increased upon me. Oh! how unfortunate, and how much to be pitied are those, who are without God, without Christ, and without hope in the world.

It was at the height of my misery, that it pleased God to have pity upon me, and shed abroad light in my mind. One evening, after my labor was over, instead of returning to the club, I was alone on the promenade, and remained there till the night was far gone. It was a fine, clear moonlight. Never had the expanse of heaven appeared to me so magnificent; never had I felt more disposed to reflection. No, said I, after having long contemplated the splendid spectacle I had in view, no, *nature* is not *God*.<sup>\*</sup> God is distinct from nature. In everything I behold, order, beauty, and harmony are displayed. If the Maker, who has produced it, and whose power, knowledge, and wisdom are so strongly imprinted on everything, is invisible, I feel, nevertheless, that he exists; my reason and my heart assure me of it.

This conclusion, which I adopted sincerely, was the result of the reflections to which I gave myself up, on this beautiful evening. Some days after, the examination of a watch, its springs, the different wheels upon which it moves, again led me to the same conclusion, and confirmed me forever in the belief of a God, the Creator of all things. If this watch has not made itself, but necessarily supposes a watchmaker, who has prepared every part of it, and has fitted them all to produce this motion, how much more reasonable is it, said I, to suppose that the universe has a Maker, who is the Ruler of it?

I was no sooner persuaded in my heart of the existence of a God, than I trembled at the thoughts of his attributes, and of my relation to him. The feeling of my unworthiness and my sins deeply affected me. In recalling so many years, passed in forgetfulness of this great God, in indifference, or a culpable infidelity, I thought that certainly I must be in his eyes the most ungrateful and sinful of his creatures.

Soon I felt a desire to become better, and to prescribe to myself a plan of conduct not unworthy of one who felt, that the eyes of God were upon him. Then, after many efforts and attempts to recal the finest maxims of wisdom, and the best rules of virtue which had struck me in my readings, and which I was decided to adopt and put in practice; then, I say, I took the resolution of examining what moral precepts the New Testament contained, and whether it would afford me the rules which I desired, to direct my conduct.

This was the motive, which induced me to have recourse to my Testament the second time, and undertake a fourth reading.

I wish, my dear children, that I could here retrace all the impressions which the eternal word of God made upon my heart; for, at this time, I acknowledged it for what it really is, the revelation of sovereign wisdom, the faithful expression of the divine will, the letter of a tender and merciful Father, addressed to his ungrateful and rebellious children, inviting them to return and be happy with him. I wish I could retrace all the impressions which this divine word produced on my heart, and to omit none of the reflections which I made, the lively emotions I experienced, and the sentiments I derived from it, which I hope may endure forever.

I was like a man who, born blind, and having always been in profound darkness, should receive his sight in the midst of a splendid apartment enlightened by a magnificent lustre of chrysal, suspended from the ceiling, and a multitude of other lights around. I felt at least something analogous to what such a man

\* This was, for some time, my opinion.

would experience, if such an event could happen. How beautiful and resplendent did the light of the Gospel appear to me!

I sought morality; and there I found the most simple, clear, and perfect system of morality ever described. I sought rules of conduct; and found them, for every case which could be presented in life! As a son, brother, father, friend, subject, ruler,—as an artisan, a man, and a reasonable creature—all my duties, according to my various relations, were presented to me in a manner which I thought admirable. There was not one moral obligation, for which I did not find a precept; not one precept, which was not accompanied by its motive; and not one motive, which did not appear to me dictated by reason, or given from an authority against which I felt I could not object.

I remarked two kinds of precepts, which, although tending to the same object, that is, perfection, had a different effect upon me. The positive precepts gave me an idea of the high degree of sanctity to which a man, who had always followed them without any violation might have attained; and the negative precepts compelling me more particularly to reflect on myself, filled me more and more with a sense of my corruption, which they displayed to me, and convinced me, that those who had given such precepts must certainly have had a great knowledge of my heart, and of the human heart in general.

Who, then, are the men who wrote this book? said I. And after considering that they were only poor artisans, like myself, without education, and without learning, I demanded whence then did tax gatherers, fishermen, and tent makers derive so much penetration, science and wisdom? Ah! said I, here is a problem which cannot be resolved but by admitting as true, what they themselves assert, that the Spirit of God was given them, and directed their pen: and that all which they have written is divinely inspired.

Such, my children, was the conclusion to which I was led by the examination of the morality contained in the Gospel. It was thus that I acknowledged the divinity of the New Testament, and was in the way to become a Christian.

In effect, having once felt and acknowledged the inspiration of the Gospel, I was not slow to recognize, by means of reasoning, and soon by my own experience, the truth and divinity of the doctrines which form its basis. If God inspired the apostles to enable them to give to the world the purest and most perfect morality which could be conceived, is it to be supposed that he would have abandoned them to themselves in the rest of their writings, and have permitted error or imposture to be mingled and confounded with truth? No, from the same fountain cannot flow sweet water and bitter. The moral precepts of the Gospel being evidently divine, its doctrines must be equally so. This reasoning appeared to me irrefragable, and I received with entire confidence everything contained in the New Testament, as dictated by the Spirit of truth.

Then, Jesus Christ, his history, his divine character, the end of his coming into the world, his miracles, sufferings, and death, drew and fixed my attention. At the recital of his passion, which I had read without interest till then, my heart was almost broken, and rivers of tears flowed from my eyes. At length, I felt such an agreement between the wants of my soul, sinful, and deprived of peace and consolation, and the work which the Saviour had accomplished by dying on the cross, that I no longer doubted that the promises of the Gospel were addressed to me personally. I then believed that Christ was sacrificed for me, and for me individually, to expiate my sins and reconcile me to God. And from that moment, the remembrance of which will forever live in my mind, the truth was confirmed to my heart. From that moment, I have never ceased to enjoy an inward peace, of which I believe faith in Jesus our Saviour is the only source; peace, which the world can neither give nor take away, and which I felt was alone able to sustain and fortify man, in all the trials and sorrows of life, as I have several times experienced since my conversion to the Gospel.

Behold, sinner and prodigal son as I was, how our heavenly Father came near to me, and received me in the arms of his mercy. Behold, how he led me to the knowledge of his free and heavenly gift, which I acknowledge I owe only to his pure grace, being entirely unworthy in myself, and having done nothing to merit it. It is this God of goodness, who has done all for me. He commenced, carried on, and I hope will perfect, the work of my salvation to eternity. Without his intervention, that is, without the assistance of his Spirit, acting on the heart, there cannot be a true conversion. Not only do I believe him the author of the change I have experienced, but, with thankfulness, I attribute to him my being



led, as it were by the hand, into the reformed church, in which I have the happiness to be, in the manner I am going to relate to you.

Having, as I have already said, found peace and joy in the word of God, which I had received in my heart, I very soon felt the desire and necessity of knowing Christians according to the Gospel. I was very certain that there must be some, because the Saviour has promised that the powers of hell shall never prevail against his church. But not finding them in the Romish church, which offered only a Christianity, traditional, degenerate and corrupt, as much in doctrine as in worship, my difficulty was extreme, to discover Christians such as I desired.

For the first time in my life, I inquired if these might not be the Protestants. But at first I repelled this thought. The prejudices of my childhood prevented my indulging it. In places, which are inhabited only by Catholics, and where the religious principles and the worship of reformed Christians are but little known, the word *Protestant* is, with many, synonymous with heretic, excommunicated person, impious, and condemned. The people are generally imbued with these prejudices, which some men seek only too much to spread abroad and maintain. Being myself under their influence, I could not at first admit the thoughts that they were the true Christians that I sought.

Nevertheless, the thought soon returned to me; and recalling this declaration of St. Paul, "All that will live godly in Christ Jesus, shall suffer persecution," It may be, said I, that the Protestants are calumniated precisely because their religion is more conformed to the Gospel. Many other passages of Scripture came into my mind, and led me to think my supposition was well founded. I resolved to neglect nothing to remove my doubts with regard to it.

There being no Protestants in our city, nor in the neighborhood, whom I could examine or consult, I wrote to the only person whom I knew to belong to that communion. Though I had not the honor of knowing her, or of being known to her, I took the liberty of requesting her to inform me when her pastor would come to visit her, expressing the desire which I had of consulting him, on a very important subject. Either this person did not understand my letter, or from some other reason, she answered me in a manner very civil, but which did not satisfy me on the point which most interested me.

I waited patiently, for some time, and applied myself to reading and meditating upon the divine word, now become as food necessary to my soul. In all my prayers, I entreated the Lord that he would deign to make known to me the faithful Christians who composed his church, and to join me to their communion. The feeling of the signal mercies which I had already received, did not permit me to doubt that my divine benefactor would grant me also what I asked, if it was necessary, and in the most proper time. This confidence rendered me tranquil; but it did not prevent my desiring to know the religious character of the Protestants.

One day, this desire became stronger than ever, and degenerated into actual impatience. I thought I was unfortunate in being alone, unconnected, not having any one with whom I could converse on my dearest interests. I believe that I would have gone a hundred leagues to find any one who believed or thought as I did. It was in a moment of sadness and *ennui*, and when I was ready to finish my daily labor, and go home to supper, that the thought occurred to me of consulting my wife, and I had a presentiment that I should through her discover what I wanted to know. She is, you know, from Libos; and in this city and its environs I recollected I had heard that there were Protestants.

After we had taken our repast, and were seated by the fire, each at a corner of the hearth, I began to interrogate her, while she was spinning, and this is nearly word for word the conversation which passed between us.

Tell me, Annette, said I, have you ever heard, that there are a good many Protestants at Libos and in the environs?

Yes, Bayssiere, there are, said she. They are very numerous, but a good deal scattered throughout the country.

Do you know any of them personally? have you spoken to them? have you been at their houses?

Certainly; I know many families. I know Mr. so and so, (I suppress the names); I have worked and eaten at their houses, and have often seen them.

You can, then, tell me what sort of people they are, what is their character, and how they conduct.

Oh! yes. I can assure you they are the most honest people in the world, es-

timable men, who make themselves beloved and respected. I have never heard anything but good of those I know, and their conduct has always appeared to me irreproachable.

I continued to interrogate your mother on the manner in which the Protestants educated their children, and behaved towards their domestics, towards strangers, and the poor. I inquired if domestic peace reigned in their houses, and how the fathers and mothers, the brothers and sisters conducted towards each other. All her answers tended to convince me that the Protestants lived under the influence of the word of God; and at each trait which she mentioned, without suspecting the value which I attached to it, I said to myself, Well! evangelical morality!

When I had exhausted this subject, I interrogated her on another. How do the Protestants pass the Sundays and holidays? said I. Distant as they are from each other, and from their church, they cannot meet together to pray to God; do they live without worship?

No, certainly, they do not live without public worship. Distant as they are from each other, and from their minister, they indeed cannot assemble every Sunday; but they have a church in the country, where they meet together several times in the year. I believe it is even every month, and they pray at their own houses the other days.

Ah! have they a church at Libos?

Yes, a league from Libos, in a place called Lustrac, on the border of Lot.

I should be very curious, said I, to know how they conduct their worship, or what they do when they are in church.

I can tell you then, said your mother, for I have been present at one of their meetings.

Indeed, you have been present! tell me then what you know of it.

I will then first tell you, that their church is neither large, nor fine. It is without altar, without chapel, without images, without any ornament. It does not in anything resemble our churches. There are four walls decently whitewashed. At the end is a pulpit like that from which our priests deliver their sermons. Before the pulpit is a table, and around it an enclosure formed of benches, where they told me that the chief persons sit. The rest of the church is furnished with other benches, placed in order, on which the people seat themselves as they come in. I observed that the greater part, before sitting down, leaned upon the back of the bench before them, and appeared to be engaged in prayer.

And when they were assembled, what did they do? for the religious ceremonies of the Protestants are what I most desire to know.

Indeed, I did not perceive anything remarkable in their ceremonies; I do not even think they have any. Their worship was as simple, as their church appeared to me. When the congregation were assembled, one of the elders mounted the pulpit, and prayed with a loud voice, and in French. Then, having said that he was going to read the word of God, and requested them to hear him with attention, he read for some time from a great book, which they told me was the Holy Bible. He then took another book, and said he was going to read the commands of God. Then every body rose, and listened in profound silence. After he had finished reading, he descended from the pulpit, and the minister entered it.

Well, what did the minister do?

It is impossible for me to relate the whole. I should need a good memory to retain all he said. I remember this, that he began by inviting the assembly to confess their sins to God, that he made good prayers, and preached a sermon to which I listened with pleasure; but which I have forgotten. I remember, besides, that during the long time the minister spoke, there was no noise nor motion in the church, and that it seemed as if every body had the same feelings. This struck me.

In this description, though imperfect, of the reformed worship, I thought I, recognized the simplicity which characterized the worship of the first Christians; and when your mother had finished speaking, I said to myself, This is the religion of the Acts!

(To be concluded in our next)

THE  
SPIRIT OF THE PILGRIMS.

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COMMUNICATIONS.

THE RIGHTS AND DUTIES OF DIFFERENT DENOMINATIONS  
OF CHRISTIANS.

(Continued from p. 176.)

By Christian denominations I mean, those who admit the inspiration of the Bible, and its fundamental doctrines, and afford credible evidence of piety. Churches, composed of persons of this description, bearing different names, are extended, and are extending, through our land. Within the city, and in the country, they exist, in the same local limits; and are continually, by their activity, exerting a beneficial influence. These considerations render it important that the rights of each denomination should be understood, both by itself and by other denominations. For, as in a civil respect, the States constitute a nation, and yet each State possesses its own independent rights; in like manner, though the churches of our Lord Jesus Christ are one body, they are many members, possessing their own independent rights.

1. *Every Christian denomination has a perfect right to avail itself of its own resources, numbers, wealth and enterprise.*

All these are providential advantages, placed in the hands of the pious, by our merciful Creator, as constituting the talents which they are to occupy till he come. Those who have ten talents, in these respects, have nothing to boast of, possessing nothing but what they have received; and those who possess but five, or two, or one, have no cause for murmuring or envy. It is God who has made the distribution; and has he not a right to do what he will with his own? Shall our eye be evil, because he is good?

In some districts of the United States, the Congregationalists have had the ascendancy; and in others, the Presbyterians; and in others, the Baptists; while in one State, the Friends led the way; and in some places, the Methodists; and in others, the

Episcopalians. There are, in the different denominations, various degrees of talent, wealth, and zeal. Some have peculiar facilities for acquiring influence with one class of the community, and some, with another class. To all this variety of relative advantage, each denomination is entitled, upon principles of religious liberty, as really as men are entitled to their various civil rights. And, on the same principles, each denomination has a right to avail itself of its peculiar advantages, provided it does not encroach upon the rights of others. Especially is each denomination, in the exercise of its rights, at perfect liberty to state its views and arguments on all those points in which it differs from other denominations, and to illustrate and defend them, in conversation, and from the pulpit, and from the press. The exercise of this right is regarded, sometimes, as an indecorum, and as an attack upon other denominations. But if it be limited to direct, candid statement and argument, without asperity, or any invidious language, it is not an attack upon any denomination. It is giving a reason for our own faith, and contending for it earnestly, as we are required to do; and is one of the ways employed by Providence, to invigorate sanctified intellect, and elicit truth. No one has any cause to complain that the Episcopalian attempts to establish the superiority of bishops to presbyters; nor that the Presbyterian attempts to establish ministerial parity. The Baptist gives no just cause of offence in publishing his peculiar views on baptism and church order; nor the Congregationalist, in publishing in opposition to those views. All may conduct their discussions in such a manner as to make them an offence; but all may conduct them without any such provocation, in the regular exercise of their own rights of edification and self-defence. Much causeless offence is taken in such cases from not understanding each other's rights, or from an unwillingness that they should be enjoyed impartially by all. One limitation only is required in the exercise of these adventitious rights. They are to be confined to the use of intellectual and moral power, wholly exclusive of all legislative and political influence. If one denomination, availing itself of any adventitious influence, should attempt to augment its own power, and cripple the power of other sects, by legislation, this would be an injustice not to be endured; because, however Christians may seek their prosperity by legislation when they are all of one way, as the fathers of New England did, yet, when other denominations have arisen, and multiplied, no such legislative favoritism can be allowed. As all contribute according to their property, to support the civil government, they have a right to expect from it, exact and equal justice.

2. *Each denomination has a right to promote, directly and earnestly, its own prosperity.*

It has a right to train up children with a designed reference to

their continuance in the way of their fathers; and to provide and multiply such a ministry as it approves; and to make such charitable disposition of the time, talents and property, of its members, as they approve, and as is likely to give their denomination weight and influence in society.

All men are bound to promote earnestly the religion of Jesus Christ, in some form. But when, in the exercise of religious liberty, men are fully persuaded in the same mind and judgment, then they have a right to direct their combined energies to the promotion of religion in that particular way which is most pleasing and edifying to them. This is not selfishness. One denomination has no *claim* on another for aid, more than one farmer has claims on another for his time and money. They have separated from others, and united among themselves, from motives of choice and conscience; and they are at liberty to seek, directly and earnestly, the prosperity of their own denomination.

There is, I am aware, a feeling in many, that ministers, and others who exert themselves for the prosperity of their own sect, are narrow-minded and selfish. It may just as well be said that the farmer is narrow-minded and selfish, who exerts himself to bring his own farm into a productive state. Christians may exert themselves selfishly for their particular denomination; but they may also exert themselves, with equal earnestness, benevolently. The division of labor is the life of secular prosperity; and God, in his providence, avails himself of the same principle in permitting the existence of different denominations. There is but one limitation to the exercise of this right which, at the present, occurs to us. One denomination has no right to intermeddle with those, who, in any proper sense, may be regarded as belonging to another denomination. The laborer is worthy of his hire. We may not dispossess a man in civil society of the fruit of his labor for our own emolument. And, in religious associations, each has a perfect right to the fruit of its own labor; and, though every man has a natural right to withdraw from his denomination, no other denomination has a right to entice him to do it, in any other manner than by letting its light shine, in its own proper sphere.

It would be wrong for two churches of the same denomination to endeavor by stealth to supplant each other. It would create an insecurity which would destroy all confidence, and a collision of interests which would destroy all friendship; and, as men are constituted, it would produce provocation which would end in wrath, and strife, and evil speaking, inconsistent with Christian fellowship, and injurious to the general interests of Christ's kingdom. For the same reason, it is wrong for different denominations of Christians, to endeavor to supplant each other by stealth. The entire population in a Christian land, which is unconnected



with any denomination, may well attract the benevolent enterprise of all denominations; and in gathering these into the fold of Christ, each denomination may make full proof of its zeal, enterprise, numbers, piety or wealth. The world, also, is open before us; and in our judgment, happy, thrice happy, is that denomination who will be able to present the largest portion of mankind rescued from idolatry, and reconciled to God, by its benevolent exertions. And we cannot but indulge the hope, that the time is at hand, when the entire zeal of Christian denominations will be turned away from pitiful, selfish, irritating efforts to proselyte from each other; and will flow forth, in deep and copious streams of benevolence, to proselyte the world, from the worship of idols, to the worship of the living God.

It was upon this principle, of not interfering with others in the benevolent effort to build up the cause of Christ, that Paul kept himself aloof from the places where the other apostles had labored and planted churches; and that the prohibition was given to ministers and Christians, when all were of one denomination, not to be busybodies in other men's matters. Indeed, this is a rule, the violation of which, every man condemns, however much he may violate it towards others, when the violation of it is made to bear against his own society or denomination. Should a Congregational minister go into a peaceable and well ordered Baptist, or Methodist, or Episcopal society, and endeavor to plant the seeds of doubt, alienation, and schism, in the bosom of those happy communities, he would be considered, and justly, as violating the rules of the Gospel.

3. *It is a right of Christian denominations, being fully persuaded in their own minds, to be steadfast and immoveable in their own way.*

Because under every modification of Christian doctrine or form of Christian worship, men may be pious and accepted of God, it does not follow that all denominations embrace the truth equally; or that, in either way there is the same probability that men will be converted, or that they will be equally edified for heaven. It is our duty to choose our denomination, and then, fully persuaded in our own mind, to worship God in it, in sincerity and in truth. Some, supposing it to be a matter of little consequence, to what denomination they belong, can scarcely be said to belong to any. Today they are here, and tomorrow there. But life is too short for a man to live long undecided in what way he will worship God, and promote actively his visible kingdom on earth; and is too short, also, for a man to be changing often from one way of worship to another. For the unstable as water, are not those who excel, either in personal piety, or public usefulness. Besides, if a tree will produce just as good fruit, and just as much, in one vineyard as in another; it does not follow, that it ought, every

year, to be plucked up by the roots, and set out in another vineyard. Such emigrating trees would soon become trees without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots.

The result of our observation, in the course of a short life, is, that the men who are so catholic as to feel no preference for any particular denomination, but love all alike, praying and hearing, a little here, and a little there, and not much anywhere, are, in fact, men of no religious principle, and are only making merchandise of their religion, to answer the purposes of secular gain, or a low ambition. There is a fish in the ocean, which never continues in one stay, but floats up and down with the tide, and bites only as it happens to meet a hook which is baited. Now these tide-fish in a religious community, who are everywhere and nowhere, and bite only as the tide suits, and the hook is baited, are of little value to the cause of Christ, in any form. They seek their own selves, not Jesus Christ. The interests of religion are promoted by a precision of faith, and a decision of friendship and profession, in some form of public worship. This steadfastness of character, when it hinders the invasions of proselyting zeal, is sometimes denominated stubbornness, prejudice, and bigotry. But it is neither. It is a full persuasion of what is right, which every man owes to his own soul, and to his children, and to his God.

Such are the *Rights* of Christian denominations. The following are some of the relative duties which they owe to each other.

1. *They are called to the exercise of mutual benevolence, or good will.*

This is obligatory upon individuals unallied by the ties of civil association, and upon all the members of civil communities, and even upon enemies. It is that charity which is the bond of perfectness, i. e. the temper which constitutes perfect society. Its obligation results from our relations to each other as intelligent beings, and our capacities of enjoyment and usefulness; and exists, independent of personal character and individual desert. The glorious God, who is love, has set us the example. He feels benevolently toward his sinful family, and has given his Son to die for us all, and sends down his blessings upon the evil and the unthankful. In the exercise of such benevolence toward all men, even enemies, Jesus Christ has bound us by his precept and by his example. But surely, on becoming Christians, we do not shake off these obligations of universal benevolence. It is the very object of the Gospel to revive it in our hearts, and of sanctification to perfect it under every form which the Christian church assumes. That benevolent regard, then, which Christians owe to all men, and even to enemies, they do most certainly owe to each other. Under the influence of this general benevolence, each Christian denomination is bound to regard with pleasure the

regular prosperity and usefulness of other Christian denominations; and each is bound to render to the others, all assistance, when there is an opportunity, which is not inconsistent with its own lawful preservation and prosperity. Benevolence requires us to do good unto all men, and even unto enemies, as we have opportunity, but especially to those who are of the household of faith.

2. *Christian denominations are bound to regard each other with complacency.*

Those feelings which we are bound to cultivate toward individual Christians, whom we acknowledge as such, we are bound to cultivate towards churches which we allow to be churches of our Lord Jesus Christ. We may perceive in individual Christians, defects of character, which we cannot regard with complacency; but this is no reason why we should not regard with approbation whatever excellent traits of character we may perceive. And we may see in other denominations, what to us may seem defects in organization and in practice; but this is no reason why we should withhold from them the tribute of brotherly love for those things which are true, and excellent, and of good report. The disciples judged, that because a man, whom they found casting out devils, followed not them, therefore they were to regard him as an enemy; but Jesus told them; No, he is not our enemy. He may not cast out devils in a manner as salutary as that in which you do it; but, if he cast them out at all, he is our friend, and is to be regarded as such. Now no denomination regards another as promoting the cause of Christ, in all respects, in the best manner. All think that their way of casting out devils is the best. But Jesus has decided that, while we may innocently indulge this partiality in our own favor, we must love one another, with a pure heart, fervently. We need not feel complacency in each other's supposed defects; but we may, and we must rejoice, that the Gospel is preached, and that souls are saved, even though we should think the good done is accomplished in a way less perfect than our own. It would be a sad thing, if real Christians could not be willing that sinners should be converted to God, and fitted for heaven in any way but the very best way, i. e. in any way but their own.

All associations of men, affording credible evidence of piety, united for the maintenance of God's worship and ordinances, are churches of our Lord Jesus Christ, and ought, doubtless, to acknowledge each other as such. The general obligations of church fellowship are unequivocally revealed in the New Testament, and nothing, it is admitted, can possibly vacate this obligation when real Christians are associated, except some supposed defects in the forms of their associations. But it is a maxim perfectly obvious, that forms are important, *only as the means of attaining an end*; and where they have been employed with such a degree of exactness as secures the *end*, and all its ordinary bene-

fits, the end is not to be abandoned on account of any circumstantial variety in the forms by which it is obtained. If we were under the Jewish dispensation, the case would be different; for there, everything was local, and typical, and accommodated to the state of the world, and the exigencies of the church, at that time. Thus, to stem the tide of idolatry rolling in upon the world, a temple must be built. And there must be different orders in the priesthood—the high priest, the common or officiating priests, and the Levites, including one twelfth part of the nation, without inheritance, and living on tythes and offerings. To prevent intrusion into the priest's office, and confusion of the order, the mode of consecration was indispensable to the validity of the office. And, as one object of this worship of rites, was, in a semi-barbarous age, to hold men back from idolatry by the senses, and the power of habit; and another, to select as parts of God's worship, things which were an abomination in idol worship; and another, to strengthen the social ties, by a convocation of the nation at its capital and temple, three times a year; and a fourth, to exhibit the strictness of the law, by multiplying rites and ceremonies, which, being the occasion of frequent trespass, might teach the impossibility of being justified by the law, while the instituted sacrifices and atonements should direct them to the Messiah and his great expiation;—it follows, of course, that great stress must be laid on forms and exact obedience, and that a holy heart could be no substitute for ceremonial disobedience. For, by these things the church was then preserved, and the Gospel preached. But, when all these ends, which gave to forms merely such importance, are answered, and a new dispensation is introduced, whose distinguishing feature is spirituality, as that of the Jewish church was formality; are we at liberty to suppose, that the entire, unbroken rigor of the Jewish system, in respect to forms, is transferred to the institutions of the Gospel? Nay, that the abolished forms of the Jewish theocracy are all concentrated, with all their exclusive, indispensable exactness, on some two or three rites and ceremonies of Christian institutions? While that whole dispensation of forms has waxed old and vanished away, and all the local and providential ends have ceased for which it was once reared up, and the importance of exactness in forms created; are we to suppose that the formal spirit of this entire dispensation is reduced to its quintessence, and poured into two or three rites of the Christian church? insomuch, that though all the ends of church organization are answered, in the preaching of the Gospel, the maintenance of God's worship, the conversion of sinners, the edification of believers, all is still vacated by some undesigned mistake in the organization of the church, the investiture of its ministry, or the administration of its rites? Our belief is, that, under the Christian dispensation, no exact form of public

worship, or of church organization, or of clerical investiture, or of the administration of ordinances, or of church government, has been instituted, with such explicitness, and exactness, and obligation, as invalidates the institutions or ordinances, if performed in any other than in that exact manner. There are, doubtless, general rules and principles, sufficient for all the purposes of church organization, which are to extend to all countries, and all climes, and to exist under all forms of government. But it does not correspond with the analogy of divine wisdom, or with the analogy of the Gospel, as preeminently a spiritual dispensation, that forms of uniform, indispensable exactness, should be imposed on all people, when the variety of the circumstances in which they are to operate, renders them easy in some cases, and a yoke of bondage in others; or that our Maker should, without any assignable reason but his mere will, lay such a stress on rites, which are only the means of spiritual good, as to refuse to acknowledge the churches regularly constituted so far as spiritual qualifications are concerned, merely on the ground of some unintended, undiscovered, ceremonial defect. In our judgment, the hour has long since come which Jesus predicted to the woman of Samaria, when all men who associate to worship God in spirit and in truth, and who in fact do worship him stately in this manner, are, to all intents and purposes, churches of our Lord Jesus Christ, acknowledged as such by Jesus himself, and to be acknowledged as such by all churches of every name, who in like manner worship God.

These remarks are made with entire good will and brotherly love towards Christians of those denominations, who regard the ordination of our pastors, as vacating their authorised ministry, or the organization of our churches, by wrong administration of baptism, as vacating their existence and powers. We regard these things only as indications that the perfect day, the full light of the Gospel, has not come, which will come, and which, as we believe, is near; when the watchmen on the walls of Zion shall see eye to eye, and, at the table of the Lord, shall lift up the voice together, and sing praises to Him who hath raised them up, and caused them to sit together, in heavenly places in Christ.

But, while it is, in our judgment, a duty which churches, composed of persons affording credible evidence of piety, owe to each other, to maintain Christian fellowship in the ordinances of the New Testament; no one church has a right to require this of another, or to censure or condemn another church, which may not be able conscientiously to do what, to others, it may seem to be its duty to do. All Christians have a right to associate for the enjoyment of ordinances in that form, and on those conditions, which to them appear scriptural; and no one who cannot comply with these conditions has any cause to complain. If there were no other church



in the world, it would be different; but seeing we may have access to churches which can receive us, why should we insist that others should receive us who cannot do it conscientiously? Let Christian denominations study the Bible on this subject prayerfully, and cultivate Christian fellowship so far as they are able to agree, and wait patiently for the day, when one Lord, and one faith, and one baptism, will unite, in one blessed fellowship, the entire family of man.

3. *The churches of our Lord, of different denominations, are bound to unite their influence and exertions for the promotion of religion and morality, on all those great points in which they are happily united.*

There are many things which different denominations cannot accomplish alone, which may be reached by their united energies. There is an influence of religion upon society, which no one denomination can exert—which the opposition of denominations to each other may hinder, and their union easily produce. Now it is for the interest of all Christian denominations, that the institutions of Christianity be regarded with respect, and be practically observed; and the concurrent opinion and influence of all denominations would go far to create a *public opinion* which no man could repeal, or lightly disregard. And while this is possible, it is doubtless a duty which we owe to God, to endeavor to bring the judgment and conscience of the community into a subjection to the laws of Christ. Much might be done in this way to prevent profane swearing, lewdness, the violation of the Sabbath, and all those vices which war against the soul.

Even the government of the nation may be made to feel the restraining and purifying influence of Christian morality, and may be moved, to cooperate, in its proper sphere and manner, in strengthening the laws of Christ, and extending the empire of the Gospel. Why should governments respect their constituents, and consult their wishes on all subjects, but the subject of religion? God be praised that they are never to legislate for our consciences. But if governments often represent the vices of their constituents, and help to destroy those religious liberties which they are established to protect, can any good reason be assigned why they should not represent the virtues of their constituents, and lend their influence to favor, in their proper sphere and manner, those religious institutions which lie at the foundation of civil liberty? Rulers are generally disposed to treat with respect the known wishes of their constituents; and can the churches of our Lord, of different denominations, united in so many points of vital interest, forbear to combine their influence, and cause their wishes to be understood by their rulers, and not be guilty? Why should all the moral influence of our sanctified nature be excluded? No doubt, the Christian denominations of this land, are called, by the God of

heaven, to engage in a great work of pacification, of mutual benevolence, and public usefulness, of which, as yet, we have scarcely formed a conception.

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WHICH SOCIETY SHALL YOU JOIN, THE LIBERAL OR THE  
ORTHODOX?

*A Letter to a Friend.*

[The following Letter was addressed to one, who, amid a population divided into the fundamentally opposite religious sects, the Orthodox and the Liberal, had not determined to which of them he ought to give his influence. The letter now appears in print, that all, who are unsettled in their opinions on the comparative claims of the two sects, may be aided in forming a decision; and that every candid man, who has joined the ranks of either denomination, may be incited to a more thorough examination of the principles, and the influence, of the system which he has defended, and may diligently inquire whether he has not been opposing the cause of God, and the best interests of men.

As the opposers of free investigation have loudly complained of the practice of commending the piety, and of censuring the impiety, of any particular sect, the writer has been careful to make no application of his expressions of commendation or of censure. He has simply stated the criteria of truth, and added a few remarks for the purpose of assisting in making a just application. Such an application he invites both the Orthodox and the Liberal to make, to their own, and to the opposing, denomination. And he earnestly hopes, that every one who regards truth, and fears God; and, especially, that every one who is now in a state of "halting between" the "two opinions" so diametrically opposite, and subversive of each other, will consider the questions proposed as addressed to himself; and will, as far as he is able, answer them definitely and correctly; and that, then, he will attach himself to that religious society, whether the Universalist or Unitarian on the one side, or the Orthodox on the other, which he thinks the safer and the better.]

DEAR SIR, You well know that the controversy between those who style themselves *Orthodox*, or *Evangelical*, and those who style themselves *Liberal*, is becoming, every day, more prominent, and more important. Many who once stood on neutral ground; and even some, (more candid than the rest,) who once fought in the lines, and for the cause, of the enemies of truth; have now left their forbidden stations, and become the decided advocates

of what they profess to regard as the system of religion taught by Christ and his apostles. Your town, once so harmonious, is now divided in religious opinion. And, as an emblem of the division, two spires now point up to heaven in your delightful village; and two men, who style themselves ministers of Christ, preach to distinct congregations, doctrines opposite in themselves, and, as all allow, widely different in their tendency. You, I understand, Sir, are undecided to which of these congregations you ought, in duty to yourself, your family and relatives; and your God, to give the influence of your name, and example, and support. As the two denominations with which these congregations have connected themselves maintain systems of belief, differing so entirely from each other in themselves, and in their tendency, it will not, I presume, be disputed by the members of either denomination, or by yourself, that one maintains the true system, and the other a false system, of religion; one inculcates a system beneficial in its influence, and the other, a system injurious in its influence. That which inculcates the true and the beneficial system, you will choose to promote; and that which inculcates the false and injurious system, you will choose to oppose. You will then endeavor, first, to ascertain which is the true, and which the false, system; and, secondly, which is the beneficial, and which the injurious, system.

In order to ascertain which system is the true one, you will, diligently and impartially, compare the doctrines of each with the Scriptures. The peculiar doctrines of the Evangelical system, are,—that Christ is God; that man by nature has no supreme love to God; that all men are required to change from a state of entire sinfulness, to a state of holiness, exercising supreme love to God, and impartial love to men; that men are justified by faith only through the atonement of Christ; that the Holy Spirit is God, and is the author of all actual holiness in our fallen race; and that, unless men, in this life, are radically and essentially changed in the temper of their hearts, they will, in the future life, be punished endlessly. The Liberal system is maintained, with some modification, by two classes of nominal Christians, the Unitarians and the Universalists. You will perceive by the sequel, that both of these classes embrace essentially the same doctrines. They both resort to the same arguments in defending their opinions; are both opposed, diametrically, and, in substance, equally, to the system of the Orthodox; are both regarded by the Orthodox, as really, and, in the same manner, dangerous; in your town, and in many other places, the advocates of both are harmoniously united in one religious society, under one minister, whom they equally approve. They may, therefore, both be ranked under the same title,—a title, for which, both, with equal zeal, contend.

The peculiar doctrines of Universalism are,—that man by nature has in his heart some moral goodness; that he is not required to

change entirely his affections with regard to God, and other beings; and that all men, virtuous or vicious, will, in some way, be eventually saved. The peculiar doctrines of Unitarianism are,—that our Saviour is infinitely inferior to God, and did not, in any proper sense, make an atonement for the sins of men; that the Holy Spirit is not a divine Person; that man has by nature, some moral goodness in his heart; and that he is not required to change, entirely, his affections from selfishness to benevolence. On the subject of the duration of future punishment, the Unitarians have not so generally and unequivocally declared their opinion. Some expressly deny the doctrine of endless punishment. Others have in their pulpits, and published writings, expressed no opinion on the subject; nor is there any evidence that they believe the doctrine. As a denomination, no Unitarian, I presume, will censure me for saying, they disbelieve the doctrine of future endless punishment.

It is then, Sir, I suppose, obvious to you, that Unitarianism and Universalism, (though not, in all cases, alike explicit on the same points,) in their characteristic, essential points, so nearly agree, that they may, as to all practical purposes, and without impropriety, be denominated one system; and that this system, styled the Liberal system, is, in its characteristic, essential points, entirely different, and directly contrary to the system, denominated Orthodox. Which then, of these contrary systems, is the *true* one? To answer this question, you will not inquire first and solely of your own reason. You will remember, that God knows, better than man, whether we have naturally no true holiness, whether we must be born again, and whether any will go away into everlasting punishment. Go then, to the sacred Scriptures, and compare both of these systems with this unerring standard; and when you have ascertained which of them God has taught in his word, you will be prepared to decide, and to act vigorously for God and for his truth.

You will next proceed to examine the comparative influence of the two systems on the conduct of men. Here it is to be remembered, that, even on the supposition, that each system is, to a limited extent, beneficial, when considered separately from the other; still, if the Liberal be found more beneficial than the Orthodox, or the Orthodox more beneficial than the Liberal, when viewed in comparison with the opposite system, then, in either case, the latter must be pronounced injurious. For it robs mankind of a greater good, which, but for it, would, in the case supposed, have been conferred. Whether each system, viewed by itself, is to be regarded as, to some extent, beneficial, I shall not stop to inquire. For the sake of facilitating the investigation which I recommend, I propose that, instead of inquiring, simply, which is the useful, and which the hurtful system; you inquire, which is the more useful of the two, and which the more hurtful.

And here it is necessary that you constantly bear in mind the correct idea of a beneficial, and of an injurious system of theology. A beneficial system, you instantly say, is that, which produces good effects; and an injurious system is that which produces bad effects. But what are good effects, and what bad effects? Good effects are, humble and habitual prayer to God; delight in meditating on his character, in reading his word, and attending to his ordinances; activity, and self-denial for the promotion of his cause; exertions to benefit our fellow beings, by sending to the destitute the pure Gospel, by imparting religious instruction to those who need it, particularly to the young, and by relieving the temporal wants of the poor and distressed. These effects are the best effects that can be produced on society. Reason teaches, the Bible teaches, that there can be no effects better than these. The example of all good men teaches the same. No one ever performed these duties aright, without meeting the approbation of God; and no one who neglected the right performance of them, when the performance was possible, ever received the divine approbation. These are the duties, the disposition to perform which, constitutes supreme love to God, and good will to men. The opposite to these duties are bad effects. Neglect of prayer, and religious meditation; inattention to the Bible, and the ordinances of God; refusal to deny one's self for the cause of God, and to exert one's self for the good, both spiritual and temporal, of men; all these are pernicious effects, even of heathen mythology, and vastly more so, of professed Christian revelation.

I am aware, that there have been licentious, and, among all candid men, ill reputed writers, who have sophistically started doubts, whether the duties which have been enumerated, can be safely denominated good effects; and whether a system which produces them, can be called more beneficial than one which produces them not. That is not the beneficial system, say such writers, which secures the performance of these specific duties; but that system is the beneficial one which promotes, in the general, love to God, and good will to men; which induces men to live as our Saviour lived. But is not love to God the same feeling with a disposition to converse with God, and extend his cause? Is not love to men identically the same feeling with a disposition to promote their temporal and eternal good? And what was the life of our Saviour, but a life of prayer, of self-denial, of philanthropic exertion, and, emphatically, of missionary enterprise? The life of Christ is a complete exhibition of all the duties which I have mentioned: they are all expressions of supreme love to God, and good will to men. And no one would ever think of making a difference between these duties and love to God and man, but for the desire to hide the deformities of a character, by diverting the mind, from particular and definite objects of contemplation, to a vague and general conception.



I have said, you will choose to give your influence to that system which produces the better effects. This you will choose to do for two reasons.

1. You will prefer the society of the good, to that of the bad; of the better, to that of the worse. You will prefer it, because it will be the more pleasing to you. You will expect to derive more pleasure from the company of those, who think of God, and strive to promote the glory of God and the good of men, of those who are the friends of God and man; than from the company of those who prefer themselves to God, and their own interest, to his glory and the good of mankind.

You will also prefer the society of the pious to that of the impious, because it will be more useful to you. You well know the force of example; that it gives a fascinating appearance to what is vile, and wicked, and dangerous; that it fixes the character, sometimes for respectability, and sometimes for the opposite. You know, that the heart is better affected by a good, than by a bad example. And do you not think, that you shall prepare yourself for a happier old age, and death-bed, by associating with the serious and prayerful, than with those who cast off all serious thought of God? You will also regard the influence, of associating with the pious and virtuous, on your family. You would place a child of yours under the instruction of a tutor who is even too scrupulously temperate, rather than of one who is intemperate. Will you not, then, on the same principle, associate yourself and family with those who honor God more, rather than with those who honor God less? Shall you not part with your children, and family, at your own demise, or at their deaths, with a clearer conscience, if you reflect that you have surrounded them with men whom God loves, and who love and obey God, than if you reflect, that you have placed them in such situations that they have looked up to irreligious men as their patterns? Would you feel consoled and happy, to leave to your children, as they surround your bed in your last moments, such instructions as the following? 'My dear children, I have spent my life in acting for those who would not pray to God, nor strive to promote His cause, nor omit one single self-gratification for Him; who would not pray, nor labor for the spiritual and temporal interests of their fellow men. I have, by my influence and example, opposed those, who I believe have, with sincerity, performed these duties. And I am now going to meet my God. My dying counsel to you is, that you oppose, as I have done, the active friends of your Creator; and favor, as I have done, those of his *professed* friends, who refuse to act for him, who disobey his commands, and vilify his sincere and devoted servants.'

I will even put the case on another ground. I will suppose that you doubt (although no rational being can doubt) whether the acts

which I have specified be duties to God. Even if you doubt this, it will be *prudent* for you to perform them, if you regard your true interest, you will perform them; for the performance of them cannot be injurious, and it may be beneficial. Are you not on the safe side, when you perform that which *may* be useful, and cannot be hurtful? It is the safer way, reasons Bishop Butler, to conduct as if there were a future state, whether we *believe* in one or not; for there *may* be one, and our conduct will, in this event, be beneficial to us, while, in no event, can it be injurious. So it is *safer* to conduct as if the acts I have specified were duties, as such conduct may be beneficial, and cannot be injurious, to us; and, especially, as the opposite conduct may be injurious, but cannot be beneficial. If, then, it be the dictate of prudence for you, Sir, to perform these acts, is it not the dictate of prudence to connect yourself and family with those who perform them, and refuse to associate with a body of men, whose example will tend to lead you and your family to neglect them? If you wish to pursue a safe, a useful, a pleasing course, you will associate with those, who not only inculcate, but practise these duties; and, if you wish to glide along, in a dangerous, an unsatisfactory, an injurious course, you will unite with those, who neither inculcate nor practise these duties. Undoubtedly, you will prefer the former.

2. The second reason why you will prefer to give the sanction of your name to that system which produces on its adherents the better effects, is this; the more beneficial system is the *true* system. Either the Liberal or the Orthodox system, it is admitted, is the true system. That system which is from God, is true; that which is from man, is false. We know that God gave us His system to have a good influence upon us, to promote piety in our hearts, and make us obedient to him. This was the design of the Deity in giving us a revelation. Here then, are two systems; one of them (which, is yet to be determined,) is beneficial, the other is injurious; or, in milder language, one is more beneficial than the other. And one of them is from God, and the other, not. Is that from God which does not accomplish the designs of God, which is not beneficial; and is that from man which does accomplish the designs of God, which is beneficial, far more so than the other? Has man devised a system of truths, differing from that of Omniscience, and better adapted to promote the designs of Omniscience, than its own? Is man wiser than Wisdom? Is he more benevolent than Infinite Love? Will God bless a system directly contrary to the true one; and nullify the force of those doctrines which are true, and which He has taught? From falsehoods of men, will good effects flow; and from the eternal truths of heaven—truths given to us at vast expense, will no good effects, or but inferior good effects, proceed?

As either the Liberal or the Orthodox system is from God,

and as reason teaches that the system which, in the better manner, answers the design of God, is from Him; so the Bible teaches, that the system which is adapted the more effectually to promote piety, is divine; and that which is not adapted to promote piety, is not divine. The whole current of Scripture forces the conviction upon our minds, that the doctrines which God has revealed are "profitable," and "perfect, converting the soul;" that false systems are ruinous, "causing" men "to err by their lies, and by their lightness," and that those, who teach false systems, "shall not profit the people at all." It is as evident from Scripture, that a true system cannot, unless wickedly abused, produce evil effects, and a false system good effects, as that "a good tree cannot bring forth corrupt fruit, and a corrupt tree good fruit." And just so certain as that "every good and every perfect gift cometh down from the Father of lights," is it, that the beneficial system of religion is from Him, and the system not so beneficial, is not from Him. According to the Scriptures, that system which, in proportion as it prevails, is found to promote piety, is true; and that which is found to tolerate and encourage sin, is false. You will, of course, give your influence to that system which is true. Which system, then, produces the better effects? Under the ministrations of which are men found to be the more pious and virtuous? Look, my dear Sir, around you. Compare the spirit of Orthodoxy with the spirit of Unitarianism and Universalism, and decide which exerts the holier influence. Ascertain, whether to human view, God has as many devoted, humble friends, in an Evangelical as in a Unitarian college. Ascertain for yourself, whether the piety in a town which enjoys an Orthodox ministry only, exceeds the piety in a town which enjoys a Liberal ministry only. Look into your own town, and compare the religious feelings, which are exhibited by the members of the opposing societies. You find a broad line between them, in feeling and practice, as well as in speculation. I say not, whether the wolves in sheep's clothing are on the Unitarian and Universalist, or on the Orthodox side of the line. Search for yourself, my dear Sir, and go resolutely over to that side where holiness and piety prevail.

Suffer me now to name a few particulars, in respect to which it will be proper for you to institute a comparison between the two sects in your divided town.

1. And, first, I will mention RELIGIOUS MEDITATION AND GENERAL SERIOUSNESS OF DEPARTMENT.

While on earth, and liable, every moment, to be taken from it, while a great and good Being, above us, and around us, continually protects us from unseen dangers, it is unquestionably our duty, and a duty which no man who is conscious of the dignity of his nature can resist, to think much and often of our future prospects, and of our bountiful Preserver. The habitual practice of this duty uni-

formly produces a seriousness of demeanor, and a disposition to devote our time, not to indolence and jesting, but to useful actions. "Be soberminded" is a command which is written, on the pages of the Bible, and on the character of Christ, and of his apostles, and of every good man. As far then, Sir, as you are able to judge of internal feeling by outward action, who, do you decide, are the more disposed to serious thought, and religious meditation; and who the more indisposed to levity, and hilarity, and boisterous mirth, the Liberal, or the Orthodox? Who prefer religious meetings, or solitary retirement for religious thought, to the diversions of the bowling-alley, and card-table? Who the more vehemently oppose, and who wink at, scenes of theatrical amusement? Whose conversation has the more of a serious cast, and whose is the more tinged with a spirit of ridicule of the pious and devout? Is it natural for the Unitarians and Universalists to be grieved in spirit by hearing the Orthodox laugh and jest on solemn subjects—death, eternity, and human sins? Or is the reverse the case? Who feel the more at home, when in conversation on serious themes, and when rebuking the contemptuous spirit of the scoffer at religion? And who feel the more at home, and excel the more, in jesting, and bantering, and profane mirth? If the Liberal system makes men prefer serious to vain conversation, solemnity to hilarity, religious thought to the ridicule of sober religion; and if Orthodoxy, as its general characteristic, encourages frivolity and thoughtlessness, and fails to produce that delight in solemn worship, which Unitarianism and Universalism inspires; then is the Liberal system from God, and the Orthodox from man: or else man has devised a system, better adapted to promote the good of the world, and to prepare for death and eternity, than a perfect God has devised.

2. As God is the greatest and best being in the universe, and as we are under infinite obligations to him for creating and preserving us, we are bound to love him supremely; and, consequently, when occasion offers, to delight in denying ourselves for the promotion of his cause. Did our Saviour, during his mission on earth, sweat great drops of blood, and die for the cause of God; and shall not we suffer some trifling inconveniences, that we may extend our Saviour's name, and plant the mild system which he brought, on that soil which Mohammedanism and Paganism have whitened with bones, and in those hearts on which Popery presses its leaden hand? Fix it in your mind, Sir, that unless a man deny himself, and take up his cross, he cannot be a disciple of Christ; and that the Gospel system is designed to make disciples of Christ. And then ascertain, WHICH OF THE TWO OPPOSING SYSTEMS MAKES THE GREATER NUMBER OF SELF-DENYING DISCIPLES; and you will have conclusive evidence that this is God's system.

Under the ministration, then, of which of these systems, in your town, does the love of God and man rise so high, as to become a spirit of self-denial for the cause of religion? Both the Liberal

and the Orthodox *profess* to desire the prevalence of the Gospel throughout the earth. Both confess, that, if the Gospel thus prevails, it must be extended by the use of means—the sacrifice of property and of ease, in circulating the Scriptures, and preaching the Gospel, throughout the world. Who, then, in your town, appear to desire most earnestly the spread of the Gospel among the nations,—that the intemperate, the profane, the impure, the wicked in every form, and everywhere, may be changed, and humbled, and purified, and saved? Who are the more cheerful, and the more liberal contributors of their bounty to the holy work of evangelizing the world; of pulling down the carcass-foulted temples of heathen deities, and erecting, everywhere, the peace-giving banner of Christ? And who give the more generously for the more extensive spread of the Gospel in our own land? Who are the more inclined to consider it a privilege to pay the ministerial tax, in your town; and who are the more inclined to repine and complain, when the collector visits them? Calculate, as far as you are able, the income of your fellow citizens; ascertain which is the greater, that of the Orthodox or of the Liberal; and then ascertain which denomination contributes most, in proportion to its property and numbers, to religious uses.

I imagine that you have completed the investigation, and that I hear you say, The Orthodox are not so much disposed, as the Liberal, to retrench the expenses of their tables, of dining parties, of balls, dancing schools, and theatrical amusements, that they may deliver from the galling yoke of superstition, millions of wretched and perishing men. And what aggravates the guilt of the Orthodox is, they neglect these duties, when they can perform them without being ridiculed and taunted by the Liberal, as the Liberal, for their self-denying spirit, are ridiculed and taunted by the Orthodox. I only say, then, my dear Sir, if this representation is just, JOIN THE SOCIETY OF THE LIBERAL. Their conduct so much resembles that of the self-denying Saviour, that you cannot innocently oppose them. But think again;—Is the representation just?

3. Ascertain, Sir, as far as you are able, which society is the MORE PRAYERFUL.

No one will deny, that they, who are in the regular habit of humble prayer, secret and public, are more acceptable to God, than those who are negligent of the command, to “pray without ceasing;” and still more than they, who, when they dare, ridicule the performance, and evince their dislike of the duty.

If, then, you wish to determine which system was given by the prayer-commanding God, determine which has the more praying adherents. You can easily determine, by a person’s deportment and conversation, whether he be frequent in converse with God. Who demean themselves in such a manner as proves them to be often at the mercy seat; and who, in such a manner as proves



them more inclined to ridicule, than to unite in devotion. Are the majority of those, who attend morning and evening prayer in the family, Liberal, or Orthodox? Is prayer at the sick bed more frequently offered by the Liberal or Orthodox? If you, Sir, or one of your family, were on a dying bed, and eternity were in full view, and near, and every moment coming nearer; whom would you desire to visit you, and pray with you, before you, or your relative, went into the presence of God; a good and pious, or an impious and bad man; a man in the habit of prayer, or one who has always disobeyed God's command to pray; one who always speaks reverently of the duty, or one who sometimes delights in hearing, and even in encouraging, those who scoff at and ridicule all solemn supplication? Undoubtedly, you would prefer the humble, praying Christian. For whom, then, would you send; an Orthodox man, or a Universalist or Unitarian? From your knowledge of the characters of the opposing sects, whom could you calculate with the greatest safety, on finding in a prayerful frame of mind; the more free, at the moment invited, from all levity, the more ready to accept the offer, and to pray with fervor and submission? Who, do you judge, from his deportment, feels the more at home, and who the more out of his place, and in deviation from his usual course, when praying in public for more humility, and for his enemies? Would an Orthodox, or a Universalist or Unitarian, prayer-meeting be the greater novelty? Let a deist, or an atheist, or any open enemy of all religion, be supposed perfectly well acquainted with the religious character, and habits of the two societies in your town. Let him be told, on the evening of his hilarity, that there was a meeting of the professors of religion connected with one of the societies for prayer to God, that all unholy bickering, and dissipation, and vice might be checked, and true morality and genuine religion become prevalent in the town. Would he ask, with which society the members of this praying circle were connected? No; he would naturally, at first thought, select those persons who have maintained, in his view, the character of the prayerful. And who would these persons be? Would he say, 'It is not in consistency with the character of the Orthodox to assemble for this purpose; but it is just what I might expect from the Universalists and Unitarians'? If prevailed on to attend the meeting, would he be surprised, and astonished at the strange sight of the Orthodox church-members there; and would he report it as an unaccountable thing, that they should begin in this manner to imitate the Liberal? Or would he rather think it strange to find the Unitarians and Universalists thus engaged?

Dear Sir, I sincerely hope, that, for your own good, and that of your family, if you find the members of the church connected with the Liberal society, farther removed from anything like contempt of prayer, more humble, and fervent, and constant, and happy in devotion, than their opposers; and if you find, after candid exam-

ination, the Orthodox, to all appearance, prayerless, so much so that it would be considered a very singular and irregular movement, for them to assemble in private meeting for devotion, you will join the Liberal society. If just the reverse is true, I hope you will join the Orthodox society.

4. WHO ARE THE MORE ATTENTIVE TO THE PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS OF THE GOSPEL ?

We are commanded to keep the Sabbath holy; and the Sabbath will be kept holy by Christians, and by those who are not Christians it will not be kept holy. Those who are not correctly influenced by the Gospel, will have at least as strong an inclination to ride out for pleasure on this day, to visit and entertain their friends, to introduce secular conversation and reading, and various kinds of amusement, as to attend church, or read the Bible. Are Unitarians and Universalists, then, more disposed than the Orthodox, to indulge, on this day, in unnecessary recreation, to recite anecdotes, peruse fictitious and secular publications, visit their friends, and surround the festive board? Are the Orthodox more disposed than the Liberal, to devote the day to the service of God, and more careful to avoid its profanation? Examine, and compare their conduct.

Which denomination are the more attentive to the ministry of the word? As this is a divine institution, all those who love God and are attached to his worship, will be constant in their attendance on the ministry, will mourn and repine when deprived of it, and will desire a frequent dispensation of the truth. Who then, Sir, are the more constant at church, and who the more easily detained from the house of God? Who are the more discontented, when the ministry is denied them; and who, in consequence of their delight in worship, come most frequently to listen to the dispensation of the word of God? Who, more generally, on our days of public humiliation, substitute amusement for prayer? How is it with the institution of the Sacrament? I know, that, as all men are imperfect, there is, in all men, an incongruity between their deportment on ordinary occasions, and the proper deportment at the Lord's table. In *which church* is this incongruity the greater? Whose general conduct more nearly corresponds with that which you reasonably expect from those who partake of the holy Supper, and have thus ratified a covenant with Jehovah?

I might still farther dilate; but I beg of you, apply the preceding remarks, and answer the preceding questions, in relation to *all the duties* which Scripture enjoins. Decide in your own mind who, in your town, are the more engaged to promote the cause of *truth*, and who to promote the cause of *their own party*, and, for this unmanly and unchristian purpose, to exclude from all honors and offices, members of the opposite denomination; who the more disposed to encourage the pious, and reprove the impious; who the most solicitous to educate religiously their children, to instil into the minds and hearts of the young correct views of the divine char-

acter and of human duty? Inquire, whether the children of the Orthodox, or the Liberal, are the more generally inclined to ridicule sacred subjects, to profane the Sabbath, and neglect public worship; to frequent, instead of religious assemblies, balls and cotillion parties. Who will be most likely to die with the less compunction of conscience? Who most frequently renounce their past belief when they suppose themselves on their dying bed?

5. WHO ARE THE MORE FREE FROM IMMORALITY AND VICE?

You will, of course, prefer to be connected with a society of moral, rather than with one of immoral, men. Now, as God is wiser, and better than man, the system which He has given us, is, unquestionably, better adapted than any which man has devised, to check vice, and restrain the vicious. If, then, vice be discountenanced and prevented under the ministration of one, more than of the other system; if drunkards, and gamblers, and the immoral of every description, do oppose one system, and seek and find a quietus to their consciences in the other; is it not evident, that one system is better adapted than the other to check vice and restrain the vicious; and if so, is more probably true? You instantly say, Yes. I ask you, then, to look—I will not say into the two churches in your town; and ascertain, in which there is the more addictedness to slander, to improper conversation, and to immoral conduct. I will suppose, that both of the churches are equally free from these vices; that it would be considered as unusual, and strange, and unexpected, that a Liberal professor of religion should be disguised with liquor, or profaneness, or lewd conversation, as an Orthodox professor. Nor do I ask you which professors are, in general, the farther removed from any suspicion of improper demeanor. I suppose all to be equally blameless. But there are *some* immoral men in your town. Where do they choose to attend church? If they do not attend either meeting, which system are they the more inclined to favor? Some immoral men, I doubt not, may, by their intellectual vigor, discover and defend the true system; and some moral men may, from mental obtuseness, or prejudice, advocate the false system. But, as a general truth, the drunkard will not prefer right kind of preaching, and the sober man prefer wrong. As Christ was stoned, and the false prophets caressed, by the enemies of pure and undefiled religion; so the true system will be opposed, and the false one defended, by those who are addicted to vicious indulgences.

Do then the immoral in your town more generally and heartily advocate the Evangelical or the Liberal system? Imagine a scene. Suppose yourself, from some necessary cause, to have entered a bar-room, or gambling-hall, or some other place where the dissolute are convened. As you enter, you perceive that religion is the topic of their conversation. Which system is it, and which class of professing Christians, that is the object of their ridicule and their boisterous mirth? Perhaps this corrupt band of "evil speakers"

say nothing of the Orthodox system. Perhaps it is so cold and inefficient, and makes so little distinction among men, that they think they have no interest to oppose it. Or, perhaps they regard it as so much more soothing and encouraging to their vicious inclinations than the Liberal, that they commend it, and those who profess it, and those who preach it. And as the doctrines of the Liberal system disturb their consciences more, and are in their way as they slide down to ruin; they feel more hostile to it, and vent their rage against it, and against those who embrace it. Perhaps they vilify, and traduce the Liberal clergyman, and extol, and approve the Orthodox minister, in your town, and in neighboring towns; and heap slander after slander on those "bigoted zealots," and "superstitious fanatics," who pretend to love their Maker, and to desire the reformation of bad men; and who even dare to urge their fellow beings to repent of their sins, and submit to the Saviour who died for them. Perhaps a Liberal church-member, if he should overhear their conversation, would, in your opinion, return homeward, sorrowing and grieved, that men will thus stifle conscience, and utter their blasphemies. And perhaps an Orthodox professor would return homeward with feelings of triumph. Perhaps he would secretly rejoice (he dare not, *openly*,) that his system is approved, and the opposite disapproved, by what he may call the disinterested and unprejudiced; by men who pay no taxes to either society, and of course must be candid. And perhaps he would whisper to himself, that the Liberal professors of religion may pray for his church, may pray that the bad influence of his system may be overruled for good, yet, as they are quiet, and will not be so turbulent and furious against, as the dissolute are for, his favorite system, there is no danger of defeat or mortification. Dear Sir, is this scene a *natural scene*? Has it, what rhetoricians term, *verisimilitude*? Reverse the characters, and how does it appear? "Woe unto you, when all men" even the vile, "speak well of you; for so did their fathers to the false prophets."

I have now, Sir, stated the doctrines of the Orthodox, and of the Liberal systems, and invited you to examine their agreement or disagreement with the Scriptures. I have also invited you to examine the comparative adaptation of the two systems to enforce the acknowledged duties of the Gospel. As I have only stated some facts which all admit, and proposed some inquiries, which I hope you will answer with Christian candor and humility, and have not myself pronounced any decision, nor even expressed an opinion, no one who may read what I have written, will accuse me of denunciation or want of charity. And if both denominations be equally attentive to duty, and equally pious, no one can accuse me of designing to influence your decision in favor of either, and against the other. If, however, there be a disparity between the two

denominations; if one be more attentive to duty than the other; then, instead of thinking this letter equally friendly to the cause of both, one will think it unfriendly to its own cause, and designed to operate against it. This will be the denomination the more deficient in duty. And will it be the Evangelical? If you should read this letter before the most influential of the Orthodox in your town, and request them to circulate it, would they consider it hostile to their interest, and be unwilling to circulate it, and shrink from the investigation it proposes? If you should read it before the leading members of the Liberal society, and desire them to circulate it, would they encourage the investigation and the circulation, and be encouraged by it; or would they denounce the letter as a weapon of the Orthodox, which they were requested to wield to their own prostration? If it would be their impression that the letter was coined in an Orthodox mint, and that in duty to their party they must suppress it, or counteract its influence, what would give them this impression? Is not the reason obvious? Would it not be, that it is seen, and known, and felt, that the Liberal system is a dead and inoperative system; ill adapted to reform human character and encourage piety; that it is "unprofitable," and "brings not forth good fruit;" and that, therefore, it is not from heaven; while it is seen, and known, and felt, that there is in the Orthodox system, a spirit which produces the same effects as did the preaching of the apostles, influencing man to renounce his sins, and serve God; that it is profitable, and produces good fruit, and is, therefore, from God? Is not the party, then, whichever it may be, that denounces, and shrinks from the investigation, which this letter proposes, evidently advocating a system which is not from heaven?

Again, Sir, you do not know what my decision is, for I have not expressed it in this letter, nor in any other communication. What, Sir, as you read these pages, do you infer is my secret decision? If I had examined your town, and should now give my decision; in whose favor do you think it would be? To which denomination do you suppose I should give the preference? If you think that, in my estimation, the Unitarians and Universalists are the more prayerful, and self-denying, and pure; and the Orthodox the more haughty, and frivolous, and irreligious; the reason is, that, at first glance over the denominations, you see in the Liberal more piety than in the Orthodox, and presume that I see the same. If you decide that my opinion is in favor of the Evangelical, the reason is, that the superior piety of the Orthodox is (so far as you have discovered) too obvious to be mistaken; as the superior brightness of the sun is too apparent to be denied. And you have no reason to doubt, to which I give the preference, more than to doubt to which of the heavenly bodies I ascribe superior brilliancy. For one of the denominations has, in general, exhibited to you a spirit *so far* accordant with the spirit of the Gospel, as to compel you



to answer my questions in its favor; and one of the denominations has exhibited a spirit so discordant with the spirit of the Gospel, as to compel you to answer my questions against it. It will require considerable reasoning and sophistry to induce you to hesitate in deciding against it. Which denomination, then, is it which is deficient in duty, and inferior in piety?

Now, my dear Sir, permit me, in conclusion, to request of you, in view of your leaving on your death-bed the recollection to your children, that you have preferred the cause of the self-denying Christian, to that of the self-pleasing opposer; in view of your reflecting, when in eternity, that you have preferred the prayerful to the prayerless; those who revered, to those who neglected God's institutions; those who discountenanced, to those who countenanced the immoral and the profligate; in view of the self-satisfaction arising from all this; in view of the utility, present and future, to yourself and connexions, of associating with the friends, rather than with the enemies of God; in view of your solemn, and weighty, and eternal obligations to defend and support truth, and to resist the encroachments of error; in view of all this, I request of you, to give yourself and your influence immediately to the true system of religion, to the best system, to God's system. And, through you, I make the same request to every person who, like yourself, has been hesitating on the all important controversy between the friends and enemies of truth.

Your affectionate Friend,

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## REVIEWS.

LETTERS OF AN ENGLISH TRAVELLER, TO HIS FRIEND IN ENGLAND, ON THE REVIVALS OF RELIGION IN AMERICA. Boston, Bowles and Dearborn, 72, Washington Street. Press of Isaac R. Butts and Co. 1828. pp. 142. 18mo.

The utility of revivals of real religion, will be questioned by none whose opinions deserve the least regard. But when we inquire, what is *real* religion, and what is a *revival* of real religion, diverse and discordant answers will be given. So it has been in all ages. Men have not willingly, in any age, avowed themselves the enemies of God, and truth, and holiness; yet, as it regards the real character of God, and the results which may be expected to flow from an exhibition of his truth and holiness, opinions have been entertained, entirely at war with each other. In such a warfare of opinions and feelings, truth and holiness cannot, of course, be found on both sides. If, then, a diversity of opinions exists on any subject of great importance, and essentially connected with the eternal welfare of the community, the necessity of correct

sentiments becomes undeniable; for without these, how can we expect correct practice?

Such a subject is the one, which the author of the work under review, has selected for our consideration. However men may differ in opinion, as it regards the nature of religion, or of a revival of religion, but one opinion can exist relative to the importance of the subject. As eternity compared with time, and everlasting life compared with everlasting woe, so is this subject, in comparison with all others which can claim a careful and interested attention.

Such an attention it is likely to receive; for the events of God's providence are daily rendering it the imperious duty of every man, who wishes to retain even the name of a Christian, not to remain undecided on a subject of such consequence. Revivals are yearly increasing, not only in number, but also in power, and in various parts of our country. If they are indeed the work of God, who would wish to be found contending with his Maker? But if they are the result of priestly power and craft, and of overheated zeal, and indiscreet, and ungoverned, irrational passion, who would wish to ascribe them to the Father of lights, from whom cometh down nothing impure or imperfect?

Nor let it be forgotten, that, not only is the honor of God concerned in the decision of this general question, but the salvation, it may be, of untold millions is at stake. If revivals are absurd and pernicious, truly no danger arises from opposing their progress, and ascribing them to human folly, or even to a worse cause. But if they are indeed the work of the Holy Spirit, and essential to the progress of God's kingdom on earth, those who oppose them are in danger, not only of excluding themselves from a participation of the joys of heaven, but of involving with themselves, in one common ruin, all who are so unhappy as incautiously and thoughtlessly to surrender themselves to be enchained, as the passive slaves of their flattering, delusive, and ruinous errors. Besides these immediate results, we are to remember that the public sentiment of the nation generally, and of coming generations, must be affected by the present discussions of the great subject of revivals of religion.

A man might well tremble at the thought of poisoning the fountain head of a mighty stream, causing it to diffuse desolation and death in its course through a vast population. But what is this compared with the conduct of the man, who sends forth from the fountain head of influence, in the centre of a vast reading community, a stream of moral poison, producing a death, not only more dreadful, in kind and degree, but eternal in duration; not annihilation, but that death of the soul, which consists in endless sin, and that endless punishment, which it will deservedly receive from the God of truth and justice.

The bare possibility that such may be the consequences of the diffusion of false sentiments on the subject of revivals of religion,

may well cause the man to tremble, who attempts to discuss a theme of such infinite moment. Nor can any thinking man, much less a Christian, be indifferent to the tendency and results of a discussion of this subject.

Such is the task assumed by the writer of the work under consideration; a work issued in the literary, political, and religious metropolis of New England, recommended by the leaders of a party, who assume the name of rational and liberal Christians, and circulated and read extensively by an inquisitive population, highly excited by the prevailing attention to religion, which is so striking a characteristic of the present day. If beneficial in its tendency, and regarded with complacency by God, how great will be his reward. If pernicious, nothing but repentance can save the author from the severest punishment; and nothing probably will, in fact, save from ruin many, of the multitudes, who have read his work, and imbibed the sentiments and feelings which it exhibits. If such are the responsibilities of the author of this work, and if such is the interest, with which the community ought to regard his efforts, it is natural to inquire,

I. Who is the author?

II. What is his object?

III. What means does he use to attain this object?

IV. What has he accomplished?

V. What is the general character and tendency of the work?

If we shall be enabled to throw light on these points, our readers will find no difficulty in forming such a decision, as the nature of the case seems to demand.

I. In answer to the first inquiry, we remark, that it is necessary to consider two things; first, the real character of the author; and secondly, his assumed character. And since his name is not disclosed, we must rely chiefly on internal evidence.

We do not think that any attentive reader of this work, ever actually mistook it for the production of an English traveller; and, notwithstanding all the show of a pretended familiarity with the manners and religious peculiarities of old England, and of the Episcopal clergy of that country, and of surprise at the novelty of our American peculiarities, and the parade of notes in the margin, by the American editor, intended to elucidate more fully the language of his English friend, we cannot even suppose, that the author hoped, expected, or intended, to produce the impression that these Letters are the actual production of a foreigner.

If he did, we must say that the assumed character is managed in a very bungling way. He has made himself an Englishman in name, and in nothing else. No passing traveller could acquire such a thorough knowledge of the peculiarities of our religious character, and of minute facts, and secret springs of action, as would enable him to represent, or misrepresent them, as the case

may be, in the manner of this author. Nor do we suppose, that any considerate foreigner would have identified himself so completely with the interests of a party, as has the author of these Letters; so as to accommodate himself exactly to their wishes, prejudices, and hostilities,—so as to be hailed with acclamation, as a fellow laborer in the common cause. And even, if he had been willing to do this, still he would be betrayed by his use of language. The religious controversies and excitements of New England, have produced local and peculiar usages of language; especially those relating to revivals, and to the question between Unitarians and the Orthodox. No learning or native ability, could enable a foreigner at once to clothe his sentiments in the peculiar language of any one of the opposing parties in a strange land; much less to acquire a perfect familiarity with the idiomatic expressions of two. But the author of these Letters indicates a familiar acquaintance with the phraseology of both of the existing religious parties in this country. If his early education had been in New England, and had been Orthodox; if he had been familiar with the revivals of the Orthodox; and if he had studied in one of their seminaries; could he have caricatured their peculiar phraseology more skilfully than he does? And if he were actually a leader of the Unitarian party here; nay more, if he were one of our Unitarian clergy, could he have adopted more exactly than he has, all the peculiar usages of language, by which that party is so easily distinguished? Rejecting, therefore, the idea that the author intended to hide his real character, we conclude, that he intended merely to assume the character of an English traveller. This he had, no doubt, a right to do, if there was no intent to deceive. When Goldsmith wrote his 'Citizen of the World,' under the assumed character of a Chinese philosopher, he probably considered it merely as a pleasant way of exhibiting English peculiarities; and if our author chooses to assume a character, in order to exhibit our peculiarities, as they would strike a foreigner, we have no inclination to object. But we have a right to require, that he shall properly sustain the character, and not use it as a mask to cover his real purposes, or to give effect to the representations of a partisan.

What then is his assumed character? He presents himself to us, as a man of liberal education, trained up in the academic halls of Oxford, and a member of the Episcopal church. When caricaturing an Orthodox sermon, he says,

"The metaphysical part of this discourse, which was four fifths of it, was a piece of as chilling ratiocination, as *I ever heard from the mathematical chair at Oxford*. The preacher displayed his metaphysical apparatus," &c. p. 45.

Again: "I have just returned from attending two evening meetings—two in one evening! What will *our good Bishop* say?" p. 42.

Again: "I am in haste to finish with what *the good Bishop* calls, this 'transatlantic madness;'" [meaning the religion of revivals.] p. 106.

So, he speaks of "*our own holy church.*" p. 9.

We see, then, a part of his assumed character. In addition to this, he presents himself to us as a philosopher, a man of candor, liberality, and enlarged views, a gentleman of refined manners, and a man of eminent piety. After a caricature of revivals, in his first letter, he says:

"In truth, these revivals are very extraordinary things, and I shall think it worth while to *philosophize a little* about them." p. 10.

Again, after remarking, p. 11, "I never knew a people, over whom the clergy had such influence, among whom such a *towering spiritual hierarchy* was built up, as the *good and intelligent*, but after all, *very superstitious people* of New England;" and endeavoring to give an example of it, in a stale anecdote of a descendant of Rogers, and remarking, p. 12, "*the clergy still rule, though less ostentatiously* than in former days," he proceeds:

"A revival usually commences with the direct and systematic exertion of the pastor. And to begin with the beginning, the first inquiry would be, what begins it with him? And here it is, that I *shall philosophize a little.*" pp. 12, 13.

It is obvious, then, that our traveller is a philosopher. We hope not one of those, whom Berkely would call "*minute philosophers,*" though he seems to be so fond of philosophizing "*a little.*"

Again, after exposing what he deems the enormities of revivals, he remarks:

"I must tell you one thing more, before I lay down my pen, and that is, what you *may have already suspected*, that I do not look upon these things altogether as you would have expected me to have done. In short, *I must take* the credit of being somewhat *liberalized* by travel. I find good men everywhere. I begin to think there is a mixture of good with evil, and evil with good, in everything; not even excepting our own holy church." p. 8.

We see, then, another part of his assumed character. He is a man of candor, liberality, and enlarged views.

His character as a gentleman is advantageously displayed in the following extract. After his candid statements as it regards a spiritual hierarchy, and after charitably calling the *good and intelligent* people of New England *very superstitious*, he proceeds to remark:

"In *our church* there is nothing like it. *Our clergy*, you know, treat us a good deal as other *gentlemen of influence and respectability* would. The ministers of New England are—gentlemen, *some* of them; and *a good many are not*. But, at any rate, they are *almost all* of them rulers." p. 11.



Then follows his vapid anecdote respecting Rogers, and his minute philosophy as it regards the mode in which a revival begins in the mind of a clergyman, without whom such fanaticism could make no progress. Who now can for a moment doubt that our traveller is a gentleman, after such an exhibition of urbanity, charity, and exquisite regard for the reputation, feelings and influence of a large portion of the New England people and clergy? Who can deny him the credit, which he so modestly assumes, of being somewhat liberalized by travel. "*Somewhat liberalized!*" Language so feeble as this does not at all reach the merits of the case. We, the *good and intelligent* people of New England, though unfortunately *very superstitious*, will yet endeavor to prove ourselves *grateful*, for this compliment to our understandings, and to our clergy. We most cheerfully admit, that the ideas of this English traveller, of what is gentlemanlike, charitable, and kind, are of no common order. But we are not to suppose, that this small specimen is all of this sort which the work contains. We shall have occasion, as we proceed, to comment on other exhibitions of the same kind, no less illustrious and uncommon. We see, then, another part of the character assumed by the author of these Letters. He is an accomplished gentleman.

We shall now proceed to exhibit his character as a man of piety, as derived from his own statements. He severely censures the Orthodox in the following language :

"This overweening self-complacency is one of the worst traits in their religion. They hold themselves up to the people, as the only ministers who preach Christ, and their meetings as the only services which have the spirit of Christ in them." p. 114.

Again he says,

"If you were travelling through this country, you might hear on every side, people of the least possible title to any such confidence, persons of the most ordinary capacity and no knowledge,—who, so far from being fit to judge of high spiritual matters, had not got so far as to "cleanse the outside of the cup and the platter,"—persons who, far from being judges of religious *purity and decorum*, seemed not to have learned the *morality of washing their faces*—you might hear them proudly pronouncing judgment on the purest and best men in the country,—denouncing one, and cutting off another from all hope, and graciously permitting a third to stand till the harvest, admitting, with the most solemn and portentous shaking of the head, that he *might* be saved, though it would be 'so as by fire.' " pp. 115, 116.

Again, speaking of conversions :

"The notions of *conversion* which prevail here, and which are fostered by these excitements, particularly illustrate this tendency of them to place every thing in an unnatural and irrational light. The

idea here is, that men are converted and made Christians in one moment; that grace descends, not like the calm and refreshing dew, slowly developing the growth of nature, but like the lightning, sudden, irresistible, and *blasting every thing natural*. And that which they so much covet *does*, indeed, seem to blast all natural good sense." p. 73.

"And those who feel themselves to be ignorant of almost everything else, are encouraged to pronounce on the profoundest questions in the infinite subject of religion, and on the most delicate and complicated questions in the forbidden subject of their neighbor's heart!" p. 117.

"Although a man may be elated with spiritual pride in reference to the world at large, he may be, none the less, in subjection to a system, and to his minister. Extremes often meet here, as they do elsewhere. The proudest may be the most cowardly and abject. The most self-sufficient, may be the least independent. At any rate, I am certain that revivals, here, do more than anything else to fasten the yoke of religious timidity and subservience on the mass of the people. There never was a people in the world, who had less true religious freedom, less true freedom of thought and feeling, than a congregation over whom this brooding *incubus* of a revival has settled itself heavily down." p. 120.

These and other things he says of the Orthodox, and of the friends of revivals in general. Let us now hear him speak of himself, and of his own views of religion and morality:

"Religion, you and I believe, is a man's self, made holy, pure and excellent." p. 71.

Again: after speaking of the unfriendly bearing of revivals on a pure and elevated morality, he gives his ideas of such morality:

"But it is of a higher morality, that I was about to speak—of morality as touching all the relations of men to one another—the morality of kind thoughts, and forbearing words, and charitable judgments, and well governed passions—the morality that requires modesty in the young, sobriety and self-restraint in the ardent and zealous, gentleness among relatives, and peace among neighbors." p. 123.

Again, after a long series of misrepresentations as it regards the religion of revivals, he gives us the following remarks:

"How little of its true and full development, has the religion of our blessed Saviour yet received among his professed followers! Men seem not to be able to be earnest, without being extravagant, or rational, without being dull. They seem, in fact, scarcely to have conceived of it. Authors write on, and the people read on, as if they had no comprehension of the sublime and beautiful harmonies of Christian virtue,—as if they took it for granted, that to be at once solemn and cheerful, strict and liberal, simple and profound,

free in thought, and yet bound in conscience, were things totally incompatible. That union of opposite qualities, that mingling, in the mind, of all that is lofty with all that is humble, that severe self-control which springs from conscious and keen susceptibility, that powerful feeling which, from its very power, is calm, that tranquillity which is touched and rapt, with exquisite religious tenderness—it is all, alas! beyond the aim and imagination of most good men: it is yet to come." pp. 139, 140.

Certainly, the clergy and the people of New England are in duty bound to give all imaginable thanks to this English traveller, for communicating to them at once such a mass of novel ideas on the subject of religion. We are doubtless bound to endeavor henceforth to remember as new discoveries that religion is a *man's self*, made *holy, pure and excellent*; and that morality, as touching all the relations of men to one another, is the morality of *kind thoughts*, and *forbearing words*, and *charitable judgments*. We must endeavor to think much of that union of opposite qualities, that mingling in the mind of all that is lofty with *all that is humble*, that severe self-control which springs from conscious and keen susceptibility, that powerful feeling which from its very power is calm, that tranquillity which is touched and rapt with exquisite religious tenderness. We must endeavor to remember, that he has severely condemned *overweening self-complacency*, and *proudly pronouncing judgment* on the *purest and best men* in the country, and pronouncing ignorantly on the profoundest questions in the infinite subject of religion, and on the most *delicate* and complicated questions in the forbidden subject of their *neighbor's heart*.

But, alas! what shall we do. We have approved such a conversion as is apt to take place in a revival; but this, our author asserts, "seems to *blast all natural good sense*." We belong to congregations over whom "this brooding *incubus* of a revival has settled itself heavily down," and our author asserts that "there *never was a people in the world* who had less true religious freedom of thought and feeling than such a congregation." How then can we hope to rise to views, which, our author says, "are beyond the aim and imagination of *most good men*." We did think, that, in this wide world, men had somewhere learned "to be earnest without being extravagant, or rational without being dull." But we stand corrected; for our author informs us, that "they seem, in fact, scarcely to have conceived of it." We are, indeed, filled with shame when we think how long our "authors have written on, and our people read on, as if they had no comprehension of the sublime and beautiful harmonies of Christian virtue." But we are somewhat consoled at the reflection, that we are not entirely alone. It is melancholy indeed to think how little progress any one has made hitherto on "the profoundest questions in the infinite subject of religion;" for we

are told, by our author, that such religion "is all, alas! beyond the aim and imagination of most good men: it is yet to come." But we are cheered and consoled by the thought that better days are at hand. Notwithstanding all the folly and stupidity of the friends of revivals of religion, as they have been in the past ages of darkness, our traveller beholds in imagination a brighter day. Hear his language. After giving his own views of a religion beyond the aim and imagination of most good men, and yet to come, he proceeds:

"May it come quickly! It would, indeed, be the coming of Christ in the hearts of men! May it quickly, and may it fully come! This would, indeed, be a Revival of religion. Heaven forbid! that the *phrase* in its proper sense, should lose any of its interest to my mind. I have indeed many objections to these things; I have one to the very phrase, as it is here used. The very phrase, Revivals of religion, carries to my mind the idea of but petty concerns and doings, compared with that one sublime revolution, that great REVIVAL OF RELIGION, to which I am looking. This, to me, and so far as the world around me is concerned, is the noblest interest and the grandest hope of life—to see poor, misguided, wayward, wearied human nature, pursuing at last, its true end, and obtaining its true rest—to see these restless and impatient seekers after good, finding that which they seek—to see the poor contented, and the rich temperate, the lowly high-minded, and the lofty humble, and the learned wise, and the votaries of pleasure virtuous, and worldly men devout—to see the mists of error and the shadows of delusion, that have so long hung in dark clouds over the ways of religion, clearing up, and to behold happy multitudes thronging those ways of pleasantness and paths of peace. There is nothing in *this* world to compare with an object so noble, and a hope so glorious." pp. 140, 141.

When the "petty concerns and doings" of the evangelical world are swallowed up and eclipsed in the splendor of that "one sublime revolution, that great *revival of religion*," to which our English traveller is looking, we trust that his merits will be fully appreciated, and that he will receive his full and ample reward of praise. Such is the ignorance and illiberality of the present days of darkness, that we fear that our author will be obliged to wait until a generation far more enlightened than this shall arise, before a consummation so glorious will be fully realized.

Our inability however, to do all which may seem desirable, is no excuse for not attempting to do what we can. We would therefore suggest that efficient measures be immediately adopted to cure the Orthodox of that "overweening self-complacency" which, our author assures us, "is one of the worst traits of their religion," and to prevent them from any longer "holding themselves up to the people as the only ministers who preach Christ, and their meetings as the only services which have the spirit of Christ in them." As a reason for these proceedings we would also recommend that they be duly

informed that our author has condemned the practice, and said respecting them,

“How little of its true and full developement, has the religion of our blessed Saviour yet received among his professed followers! Men seem not to be able to be earnest, without being extravagant, or rational, without being dull. They seem, in fact, scarcely to have conceived of it. Authors write on, and the people read on, as if they had no comprehension of the sublime and beautiful harmonies of Christian virtue,—as if they took it for granted, that to be at once solemn and cheerful, strict and liberal, simple and profound, free in thought, and yet bound in conscience, were things totally incompatible;” (p. 139.)

and that, in view of these considerations, they be reminded how ridiculous such conduct as our traveller has so decidedly reprobated must appear. We would also suggest, that this traveller be detained in this country, long enough to deliver a course of lectures on that “union of opposite qualities” which he has so ably delineated; and that he be especially requested to enlarge upon that “mingling, in the mind, of all that is lofty with all that is *humble*.” We would also recommend that the Orthodox, especially such as are “persons who, so far from being judges of religious purity and decorum, seem not to have learnt the morality of washing their faces,” be requested to cease from “pronouncing judgment on the purest and best men in the country,” and that those who are “ignorant of almost everything else,” should no longer be “encouraged to pronounce on the profoundest questions in the infinite subject of religion, and on the most delicate and complicated questions in the forbidden subject of their neighbor’s heart!” And especially that all whose “natural good sense” has been “blasted” by the “notions of conversion which prevail here,” be requested to give place to our author, and to yield to him the exclusive right of “pronouncing on the profoundest questions in the infinite subject of religion, and on the most delicate and complicated questions in the forbidden subject of their neighbor’s heart!” and of illustrating that “higher morality” “touching all the relations of men to one another—the morality of kind thoughts, and forbearing words, and charitable judgments.” And that all his readers be requested diligently to “read and ponder” the following specimen :

“At any rate, I am certain that revivals, here, do more than anything else to fasten the yoke of religious timidity and subservience on the mass of the people. There never was a people in the world, who had less true religious freedom, less true freedom of thought and feeling, than a congregation over whom this brooding *incubus* of a revival has settled itself heavily down;” (p. 120.)

and to remember how many colleges, ministers, churches, and evangelical denominations, in our land, must fall under the full



weight of these "kind thoughts, and forbearing words, and charitable judgments." To think, also, of their application to past generations, and to the illustrious dead, especially to the pilgrim Fathers of New England.

Moreover, we would suggest that it should be enacted, that no Orthodox man shall presume to say what others have, or have not, "conceived of," or that his own views and feelings are "beyond the aim and imagination of most good men," because these are "most delicate and complicated questions in the forbidden subject of their neighbor's heart!" But that the English traveller be authorized and empowered to pronounce with authority on these and other similar points, and all matters and questions thereunto pertaining, not only concerning his "neighbor's heart," but concerning the "conceptions, aims and imaginations" of the hearts of all men, of all denominations, and in all countries.

And, finally, that all the advocates, aiders and abettors of Orthodox revivals of religion, be requested to desist entirely from their various absurd measures and proceedings, until such time shall have elapsed, as shall have enabled our English traveller fully to develop and explain his "conceptions, aims and imaginations," concerning that "one sublime revolution, that great *revival of religion*," to which he is looking.

Meanwhile, we would exhort every Orthodox man, in order to acquire just views of the best manner of correcting "overweening self-complacency," inwardly to ponder and digest the following inspired cautions. "Let another man praise thee, and not thine own mouth; a stranger, and not thine own lips." Prov. xxvii. 2. "For, not he that commendeth himself is approved, but whom the Lord commendeth." 2 Cor. x. 18. "Let no man deceive himself. If any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise. For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God: for it is written, He taketh the wise in their own craftiness. And again, The Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wise, that they are vain." 1 Cor. iii. 18—20.

We have thus exhibited, at some length, another part of the character assumed by the author of these Letters. He presents himself to us as a man of no common attainments, in the theory, and especially in the practice, of morality and religion.

Who now can doubt, that one so much distinguished, as a man educated at Oxford, a member of the Episcopal church, a philosopher, a gentleman, and a Christian, must have had some sufficient object, in writing such a series of Letters? This introduces the second general topic of inquiry.

II. What is his object?

Hear his own statement.

"You are curious to know something about the religion of this country; a religion without an establishment; a religion left to itself

—without a priesthood I had almost said ; for everybody preaches here who will ; nay, those who exhort and pray publicly among the laity, far outnumber those who *are considered* as regularly ordained. Well, in truth, if you have curiosity, prepare to have it satisfied ; for I shall violate the old rhetorical rule, and plainly tell you that I am going to be interesting.

“The most remarkable thing, about the people of this country, is their religion ; at least, in New England ; from whence, as my date tells you, I write. Sects and creeds, doctrines and disquisitions, preachers and people, sermons and societies, plans and projects, excitements and conversions, you may hear talked of wherever you go—in stage-coaches and steam-boats, shops and bar-rooms, nay, in ball-rooms and parties of pleasure, and in short, everywhere. But this religion is as remarkable in its character as it is in its colloquial exhibition ; and the most extraordinary thing in its character, undoubtedly, is the system of *revivals* of religion, as they are called. For these are brought into a system and plan, as much as the religion itself—a system of operations, as much as its theology is into a system of speculations.

“But I see that I must task myself to give you some general notion of these things in the outset, for you have no idea, not even a generic one, of what revivals of religion are.” pp. 1, 2.

Considering then, the assumed character of our English traveller, and his own statements, we are authorized to expect a candid, liberal, gentlemanly, philosophical, and Christian account of the religion of this country, and especially of revivals of religion. But a man is justly supposed to intend to do, what he actually attempts to accomplish. Taking this as a criterion of judgment, can any one hesitate to say, that these Letters were, in reality, intended as a direct attack upon Orthodox revivals of religion, as irrational and pernicious ; and an attempt to vindicate Unitarian views of religion, as rational and productive of the most desirable results ? In order that this may the more fully and clearly appear, we shall need to make a few preliminary remarks, as it regards the state of the two opposing parties on the great scale. We speak of two opposing parties, because, in reality, all who hold the fundamental doctrines of the Christian religion are, notwithstanding minor differences, one party ; and all who deny the fundamental doctrines, and adopt some modification of natural religion, or deism, are another party. All, then, who believe in the entire and universal depravity of the moral character of man, antecedently to a change of heart, and who agree in their views of the remedy provided by the wisdom and goodness of God, and of the mode in which it is to be applied, and of the effects resulting from it, compose one party ; and all who hold opinions on these points diametrically opposed to these, are the other party.

The remedy of human depravity lies in the atonement as the ground of pardon, and in those truths by which man is convinced

of sin, alarmed and brought to repent of sin, and trust in Christ. The mode in which the remedy is applied, is understood by a consideration of the character and attributes of the Holy Spirit, and the mode in which He applies the truth to the mind, in order to produce a radical and permanent change in its moral character. The effects resulting from this agency of the Holy Spirit, are witnessed, both in solitary cases of moral renovation, and when He operates simultaneously on the minds of any considerable portion of the community. Occurrences of the latter kind are generally called revivals of religion. It is easily seen from these remarks, that when correct views are entertained, of human depravity, of the need of pardon, of the atonement, of the Saviour who made it, of regeneration, and of the Holy Spirit who accomplishes it, of the rewards of the righteous, and of the punishment of the wicked, revivals of religion, when they occur, are a natural and philosophical result of the system.

On the other hand, all who deny the entire and universal depravity of the human heart, the need of an atonement in any proper sense, the divinity of Christ, the need of regeneration, the divinity and agency of the Holy Spirit, and the eternal punishment of all who die impenitent, form another party. And no cases of sudden conversion of individuals, and no simultaneous conversions, such as exist in revivals of religion, or of considerable numbers in any community, can be expected to result from their system. They deny either the existence, or the universality of the disease, they discard the remedy, and reject the Agent by whom it is applied; and it were absurd to expect any cases, either solitary or simultaneous, of sudden changes of moral character.

Hence the Evangelical system, as connected with the doctrine of the Trinity, produces revivals of religion, according to the regular laws of the human mind, and of moral government. And the system styled Liberal, as connected with a denial of the doctrine of the Trinity, cannot produce revivals of religion; for no moral power is applied, which can change the human mind from sin to holiness, from moral death to new and joyful life.

The progress of evangelical religion, of course, depends upon the operations of the Holy Spirit, in giving power to the truths of the Evangelical system. On the other hand, the progress of the opposing system depends upon the cessation of these influences, and the relinquishment of men to follow the desires of a depraved and deceitful heart, always prone to embrace ruinous errors.

A suspension of divine influences, caused by the sins of the people of God, about seventy years ago, produced in New England a cold and chilling indifference to vital religion. In the train of this followed the deadly system of Unitarianism, stealing in unawares, and winding its serpentine way among a portion of the churches of Massachusetts, until the fire on the altar of God

seemed almost extinct. Then the throne of iniquity framed mischief by a law; and even the existence of the churches has been denied, their rights trampled under foot, their property plundered, under the sacred names of religion, and law, and equal rights.

When the enemy had thus come in like a flood, and error seemed triumphant, then it pleased the Spirit of the Lord to lift up a standard; and since then, the cause of truth has been daily rising. But especially of late has the energy of the Holy Spirit been exerted in a most conspicuous manner. All the Evangelical churches of Boston have been visited with his influences, converts have been multiplied, new churches have been formed, and the things which remained and were ready to die, have been revived and strengthened. The same is true as it regards the vicinity of the city: and in addition to this, revivals are multiplying in New England, and in various other parts of the United States. But as true religion has prevailed, the friends of error have become more and more fearful of consequences, and indignant at the perception of their decreasing influence. Such is at present the state of the Unitarian and Universalist party. And now, from what quarter is help to come? Why truly, a spruce, polite, refined, candid, and eminently pious English traveller, happens to pass through the country just at this interesting moment, and stops to become an impartial spectator of this novel scene; and, to gratify his dear absent friend in old England, who had, it seems, "*no idea, not even a generic one, of a revival of religion,*" (p. 2.) he writes these cool and philosophical speculations, merely on general principles. And what is the result? Marvellous to narrate, it happens to be just what a Unitarian minister, once professedly Orthodox and a professed friend of revivals, would have written, had he intended to attack revivals of religion as irrational and pernicious, to abuse the New Lebanon Convention, to gratify the excited passions of the Unitarian party, and to sustain their sinking cause. Is this an accident? If so, it is no less marvellous than an accident which took place of old. "And Aaron said, Let not the anger of my Lord wax hot, thou knowest the people, that they are set on mischief. For they said unto me, Make us gods, which shall go before us. And I said unto them, Whosoever hath any gold, let them break it off. So they gave it me; then I cast it into the fire, and *there came out this calf,*"—accidentally no doubt; yet it happened to be just what the people wished. Our English traveller seems to have the same facility of producing, accidentally, just the very thing which the Unitarian party wish for, and before which they have shouted, with no little exultation and triumph. All which the traveller modestly seems to claim, they concede to him; nay more, they actually overwhelm him with thunders of admiration, and shouts of applause. Let us attend to the testimony of certain witnesses, of no little reputation and influence in their own party.

1. Rev. Mr. Ware of Boston. See Reply of a Unitarian Clergyman, &c. p. 18. 3d edition.

"Was ever scene acted upon earth more contrary to the spirit of Christ, than that of the New Lebanon Convention? And is it possible to believe, that all the true Christianity is with a sect which suffers that outrage upon religion and morality to pass by without censure?"

He then subjoins, in a note—

"The *best commentary* upon that Convention is to be found in the 'Letters on Revivals,' recently published. It *ought to be read and pondered.*"

Mr. Ware, of course, deems these Letters an able exposure of certain proceedings exhibiting in the highest degree an antichristian spirit, and a vindication of religion and morality from outrage, and a work which ought to be read and pondered. He must, of course, deem it an illustration of a Christian spirit, entirely opposite to that which he so severely censures, and highly favorable to the cause of religion and virtue. This surely is no common praise.

2. The Unitarian Advocate; edited by Rev. Edmund Q. Sewall. No. 4. April, 1828. pp. 202, 203.

"The Letters from our Englishman seem to us to come as near to a *calm, dispassionate, intelligent, and serious* judgment, *as is to be expected.* Their object is rather to describe than explain. But there is often a *very fine remark* upon occurrences related, by which light is thrown on the general subjects affected by them. In truth, we have here an account of revivals, to which one who seeks information as to what they are, and what are their results and tendencies, may be *safely directed.*

"We *feel confident,* from comparing his statements with what we have ourselves known respecting these 'awakenings,' that this author has *rightly characterized* them. He gives us many very interesting facts which shew a close and an *honest* observation. He is as careful to tell what is *favorable,* as what wears a *different aspect.* There is here no *indiscriminate censure.* The observer has separated things accidental, from the more essential and universal phenomena. His thoughts are *not thrown off in haste,* but have the weight of *mature reflections.* He writes seriously, yet in a cheerful and easy style. *Without a particle of bitterness,* he tells of evil conduct, and *blind errors;* and while *rigidly just,* is *temperate and conciliatory.* ABOVE ALL, there is *no rude sporting* with that which is *solemn in itself,* however *degraded by unfortunate alliances.* There is a *sincere reverence* for conscience, even the *deluded* conscience of the *bigot and enthusiast.* And we are not made to forget that after all, an attempt to revive religion in decayed souls, is a work for the good and the wise to foster, wherever they can consistently do it, by zealous efforts and fervent prayers."



Review, now, this accumulation of various, and diverse, and uncommon excellences; and we seem to find an entire absence of all evil, and the presence of (we had almost said) all possible good. Indeed, what more could be said of any human production? Certain we are, that such inspiration as Unitarians are wont to concede to the inspired writers, could not have made it better; and, taking some current views of inspiration advocated by distinguished Unitarians, not even so good. For this author seems to be *entirely unprejudiced, and free from errors*, which is more than can be said of the inspired writers, if it is true, as Priestley asserts, that "the Scriptures were written *without any particular inspiration*, by men who wrote according to the best of their knowledge, and who, *from circumstances*, could not be mistaken, with respect to the greater facts of which they were proper witnesses; but, *like other men subject to prejudice*, might be liable to adopt a *hasty and ill grounded opinion*, concerning things which did not fall within the compass of their own knowledge;" and if, also, according to the editors of the Improved Version, the Epistle to the Hebrews contains "some *far-fetched analogies*, and *inaccurate reasonings*."\* Not so with the author of these Letters. "His thoughts are not thrown off *in haste*, but have the *weight of mature reflections*. He has not a *particle of bitterness*. He is *rigidly just*. He separates things *accidental*, from the more *essential and universal phenomena*." Behold how these men praise one another.

3. The Christian Examiner; vol. v. No. 1. p. 88.

"We may speak of this work more at length hereafter; but we esteem it our duty, now that the charm of novelty is fresh about it, to do the little we can towards extending its circulation, by giving it *our cordial recommendation*. We are not altogether pleased with the machinery of fiction with which it is got up, nor the manner in which that machinery is managed. But, as a *calm, dispassionate, impartial* exposition of the evils of popular revivals, of the manner in which they are got up, their causes, and general character, we know of no work, since Chauncey's 'Things of a Bad and Dangerous Tendency,' that can compare with it. Besides, it is *beautifully*, as well as *faithfully* written, and the reader may be assured of a *high gratification for his taste*, as well as an accession to his fund of *knowledge of the human heart* and of the way of *improving his own*, when he takes it up for perusal. In the present *agitated state* of the community on the subject of religion, it is a most *seasonable gift* to the public."

What more will be said, when they "speak of this work more at length hereafter," we cannot presume to say. There is no just ground to fear, however, that their stock of praise is exhausted;

\* See Spirit of the Pilgrims, No. 3. p. 151, 152, for more specimens of the same kind.

for truly it would seem inexhaustible, having been so liberally dispensed, ever since it became a fashion with Unitarians to praise each other, with so little sensible diminution, that there is no serious ground of apprehension as it regards an ultimate failure. Enough, however, has been said already for a moderate man; and with this we must at present remain content. The opinion at least of the Christian Examiner is obvious.

4. The Christian Register; April 12, 1828. p. 58.

"It is *not often* that a work of this description proves so *interesting*, as the one before us; for it *rarely happens* that a work appears written with such *elegant simplicity* and *powerful diction*. A *more faithful delineation* of what is technically called 'revivals of religion,' I have never seen. A less *candid* work would undoubtedly have been less *popular*, and *deservedly* so. But here no *rational* man, who believes in the Christian religion, can *possibly* take umbrage at the general sentiment of this *excellent work*. I know not the author,—but I *must* say there is a *liberality* and *purity of sentiment* and *feeling*, which *pervades the whole*, calculated to elevate the mind of the reader toward *just conceptions of divine truth*, and *infuse into his soul* those *devout* and *holy affections*, which approximate, in a degree, toward the attributes and perfections of Deity."

Here, then, we pause. We have arrived at the highest point of the climax. Nothing more can be said. Nothing more need be said. We agree fully with the Rev. Mr. Ware, that *such* a work "ought to be read and pondered." We shall endeavor to do this duty according to the measure of our ability. But if it falls so little short of absolute inspiration, if it is calculated, by its sentiments and spirit, to infuse into the soul those devout and holy affections, which approximate, in a degree, towards the attributes and perfections of Deity, who can do it full justice? But, seriously, we cannot admire the wisdom of those who thus commit themselves as it regards their God. An examination of the spirit of this work may, perhaps, place them in an unlucky predicament.

At this point, let any candid man, let any gentleman, let any Christian, consider the result at which we have arrived, and the interests involved. Let him review what has been said of the importance of the general subject of revivals of religion, the connexion of a correct decision with the glory of God, and the eternal welfare of present and coming generations; let him weigh well the claims of this author, and the testimony of his coadjutors; and he will admit that the following statements are true.

1. The subject is one of the highest possible consequence.
2. The book professes to be a statement of facts, on this subject.
3. The author makes no small pretensions.
4. The leaders of the Unitarian party testify to the correctness of his statements.

5. They also approve, in the highest degree, the spirit manifested by the author, as preeminently excellent.

6. They also applaud his style as a writer, as uncommonly beautiful.

7. No censure of any consequence is passed on anything which the book contains. The Christian Examiner is not, indeed, altogether pleased with the machinery of fiction with which it is got up, nor the manner in which that machinery is managed. But this is the only thing which looks like an admission even of the smallest defect, and it touches neither his fidelity as a narrator of facts, nor the spirit of the work. Nothing else of the kind is found; and the approbation is unqualified and abundant.

Is not the Unitarian party then, fairly committed? Have they not embarked together in one ship? Have they not volunteered to fight under one leader? Let them then, once more, as the Rev. Mr. Ware directs, read and ponder this book; and then read what they have said, as vouching for the correctness of its statements, and the excellence of its spirit, and decide what course they mean to adopt. Certain it is that they have taken an open, and conspicuous, and decided stand, against the prevailing revivals of religion. But it is no less certain, that if this work or this counsel is of God, they cannot overthrow it. Let them, at least for a moment, pause, and, we deem it not improper to say, look to God in prayer, lest haply they be found even to fight against God.

But whilst we have hope as it regards the more careful and considerate, we cannot but fear that the leaders, and the most zealous partisans connected with them, are determined to maintain the ground they have taken, and from it wage desperate warfare. If so, we are glad that this work is out, and thus publicly authenticated by the leaders of the party, so as to be an authorized expression of Unitarian views on this subject.

We are happy to have a book containing so many statements, and written in a spirit so distinctly characterized, and on a subject of such fundamental importance, put into our hands for at least one good reason. The community ought to know what are Unitarian views of honesty, and candor, and kindness, and liberality; and also what is meant by an impartial statement of facts. On these points no farther doubts can be entertained, so far as this book speaks, for we are assured by the highest Unitarian authority, that these Letters seem to them to come as near to a *calm, dispassionate, intelligent, and serious judgment, as is to be expected*, and that we have here an account of revivals to which one who seeks information as to *what they are*, and what are their *results, and tendencies, may be safely directed*. They feel confident, *from comparing his statements with what they have themselves known* respecting these awakenings, that this author has *rightly characterized them*. He is *as careful*, they assert, to tell *what is favorable*, as what

wears a *different aspect*. There is here *no indiscriminate censure*. His thoughts are not *thrown off in haste*, but have the weight of *mature reflections*. He is *rigidly just*. He has given us a *calm, dispassionate, impartial* exposition of the evils of popular revivals. So much as to the narration of facts.

As it regards the spirit of the work, we are told that there is a "*liberality and purity* of sentiment and feeling which *pervades the whole*, calculated to elevate the mind of the reader towards *just conceptions* of divine truth, and infuse into his soul those *devout and holy* affections, which approximate in a degree, towards the *attributes and perfections* of Deity."

Does any one, then, desire to know Unitarian views, in all the important particulars specified in their unqualified commendations of this author, whose Letters they are engaged in circulating far and wide? This book *ought to be read and pondered*. Nor shall we deem our efforts misplaced, if we attempt in our subsequent remarks, to answer the remaining inquiries relative to this work, proposed near the beginning of this article. Surely it is desirable to know what are the means used by such a writer, to attain the object which he has in view; what he has accomplished; and what is the general character and tendency of the work.

We hope to be assisted by the Spirit of all truth and holiness, to make some additional remarks, which will enable our readers to form correct ideas on the subjects suggested by these interesting and important inquiries.

(To be continued.)

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SERMONS DELIVERED ON VARIOUS OCCASIONS. *By Lyman Beecher, D. D.* Boston: T. R. Marvin. pp. 367, 8vo.

We design that our department appropriated to Reviews, shall be of a various character. We shall sometimes take the title of a book, as a motto, or starting point, for our own meditations; in other instances, we may do little more than exhibit the views of the author whose work we introduce to our readers. An author, coming before the public for the first time, may need encouragement, or reproof, or both: his views, if a friend, may need modification; if an opponent, may deserve attention. Though we have not one doubt that the great principles, which we have already, in the first article of our first number, presented as our creed, are the fundamental truths of God's word, we are well aware that these truths may be viewed from different points, and with various degrees of light and shade. Much truth may be connected with some error, and dangerous error may be concealed, and rendered more dangerous, by its connexion with important truth.

Viewing the matter thus, we shall endeavor to hold even scales between friend and foe.

Our own first principles, and, of course, our partialities, are before the public. We wish not to conceal them. Still we do wish, and so far as we know our motives, intend, to act on the motto, *sum cuique*, render to every man, and every party we may add, his due. We shall in vain strive to be benevolent, while we are yet unjust. As we have already hinted, in our critical capacity, commendation must not be expected, because the work presented for our examination is from the pen of an instructor whom we have long revered. Every work should stand by its own merits, or fall by its worthlessness. For instance, in the forthcoming edition of President Edwards' Works, though his character and the character of his Works, are immoveably fixed, yet the hitherto unpublished pieces from his hand, which Mr. Dwight promises to present us, will be subjects for impartial criticism. The editor will not claim, nor expect, that these pieces shall not be subjected to as rigid an examination, as though they came from an unknown writer. To be sure, the fact that they are from the pen of President Edwards, is *prima facie* evidence that they deserve, and will secure, attention. With some, this fact will do more; it will predispose them to judge favorably. But with others, a different state of feeling in regard to his Works, (his personal character all must revere,) will create a prejudice against anything he can say. A proper mental attitude for fair examination is between these, neither approving nor condemning by anticipation, but reading with our own eyes, and judging with our own mind, whether the views he presents coincide with the declarations of Him who is "the way, the truth, and the life." We are so far independent in our theology, that we will ourselves, and we desire others to do the same, examine for ourselves, individually and personally, every tenet presented for belief, and every duty prescribed for practice.

It matters not who has taught, or who does teach, this doctrine, or its opposite. The great question with us is, what saith the Scripture? If the declarations of an author coincide with the declarations of Christ and of his apostles, though he be called a Mummer, a Huguenot, a Methodist, a Puritan or a fanatic; names, however opprobrious, will not deter us from embracing the truth. If the opinions of a writer are in opposition to the oracles of God, though we concede to him all the applause due to him as a chymist, or an astronomer, or a philologist, we must still yield our assent to that opinion which comes to us with an authoritative "Thus saith the Lord" stamped upon it.

Truth, and not its advocates; arguments, and not names; are what we desire. We may call ourselves Orthodox or Unitarian, Evangelical or Liberal, and, after all, rest our belief on prejudice,



and defend it because it is *ours*. As "Rational" or Unitarian Christianity, it is greatly to be feared, exists without renovation of heart, we are in great danger of letting this fact blind our eyes to another—that orthodoxy of belief is by no means synonymous with that rectitude of heart "without which no man shall see the Lord." Holiness, and not orthodoxy merely, is the prerequisite for heaven. Still, sound views, that cannot be condemned; exhibitions of truth, that cannot be gainsayed, supported by arguments that cannot be resisted; are now, as they ever have been, the appointed moral instruments, by which the Spirit of truth awakens sleeping conscience, startles dormant fear, banishes delusive, bewildering, destructive error, and renovates and sanctifies the soul.

Entertaining such sentiments in regard to the importance and the clear exhibition of truth, we are happy to offer to our readers the work before us. The volume is handsomely printed, with a fair type, and on good paper. The Sermons contained in it are scarcely the subjects of legitimate criticism, having been all printed previously, in pamphlet form, and the judgment of the public having been long since pronounced upon them. As we have no disposition to call in question the public decision, so we have no disposition merely to echo it. It is not because these Sermons are the sermons of Dr. Beecher that we wish them read, but because they present the views entertained by the Orthodox in New England on various and important points of doctrine and practice, in that light, connexion and proportion, which we deem Scriptural, and therefore true.

The Sermons are nine in number. We will give their titles, that those of our readers, who have not seen the volume, may judge of its contents. *The Government of God desirable. The Remedy for Duelling. A Reformation of Morals Practicable and Indispensable. The Building of Waste Places. The Bible a Code of Laws. The Design, Rights and Duties of Local Churches. The Faith once delivered to the Saints. Resources of the Adversary and Means of their Destruction. The Memory of our Fathers.* In a closely printed Appendix, containing fifty pages, is a Reply to the Review which appeared in the Christian Examiner, of the Sermon entitled 'The Faith once delivered to the Saints.' This Reply, we believe, remains as yet, not only unanswered, but *unnoticed*. If silence and assent were one, in all cases, we could understand this. To forget a refutation, however, is not to refute its argument. Those who have fears as to the effect of religious controversy, would not lose their time if they should carefully read this Sermon, the Review, and the Reply. If there be such a thing as annihilating an opponent, such annihilation seems to have been the lot of this reviewer. A similar fate attended Mr. Yates, in Glasgow, some years since. Mr. Yates is a clear-headed, intelligent advocate of Unitarianism. When he first went to Glasgow,

he had a large audience, embracing many intelligent individuals. His sermons were well received. Unitarianism thus attracting especial attention, Dr. Wardlaw, equally clear-headed and intelligent as his opponent, prepared his Discourses on the Principal Points of the Socinian Controversy. Multitudes flocked to hear them. The discussion was afterwards carried on through the press. The result was, that the congregation of Mr. Yates, convinced of the error of his doctrine, withdrew; and his support thus failing, he was obliged to leave the place. He was subsequently settled, we believe, at Birmingham. This was a discussion of argument, not of authority. Dr. Wardlaw, as a Dissenter and an Independent of the strictest sect, stood alone on Scriptural ground. The kirk of Scotland, and the Presbyterians generally, whether of the Secession or the Relief, have no ecclesiastical connexion with the Doctor. In this instance of theological discussion, no friend of truth can hesitate to admit, that great good was accomplished; Unitarianism having, as the result, been nearly extinct in Glasgow, till two years since, when an effort was made to revive the congregation; with what success we have not heard. We mention this, in connexion with this Reply, to satisfy well-meaning, but timorous friends, that theological discussion, if properly conducted, though it be denominational controversy, is often of incalculable benefit.

The opponents of evangelical religion wish nothing more, than that its advocates would promise, agreeably to the *rational* and *liberal* Geneva formula of subscription, not to preach upon the divinity of Christ, or the original and entire corruption of the human heart, or the gracious influences and purposes of the Father of our spirits; promise, in short, *not to oppose any of their sentiments*; and they most rationally expect, that their present opponents will soon be *as rational as they*, or at least make way for a generation who will become so.\* In this anticipation we agree with them. It is only by open, full, and fearless discussion, that the cause of truth has ever advanced, or ever will advance. Peter and Paul were not afraid nor ashamed to tell all they believed, and why they believed it. They did not wait till men were ready to receive, and willing to obey the truth. They anticipated "the march of mind," and revealed truths, beyond the unassisted reason of the Stagyrite to discover, beyond the conception of Plato to comprehend. While we tread in the footsteps of the apostles, we need not fear the result. Such are our views of religious discussion. Such is the practice of Dr. Beecher. The attempt to prove him an anticalvinist has recoiled, and we confidently expect it will never be repeated.

\* In the canton of Geneva in Switzerland, where the majority of the Company of Pastors is at present Unitarian, every member, and every candidate for ordination, is compelled, by that *liberal* body, to subscribe to a solemn engagement not to preach on the above named doctrines.

The Sermons collected in this volume, have been printed before at different times, beginning as far back as 1806, a period when some of those, who imagine and assert, that he does not understand, or misrepresents Calvinism, were probably conning the mysteries of Webster's spelling book. Four of these nine Sermons, were published before the Unitarian controversy was known in this country. The intelligent reader will be able to judge by these, how much confidence is to be placed in those random assertions, often made, that the modifications of modern Orthodoxy, are owing to *rational* Christianity. In this view, we might also recommend to those Unitarians who may peruse these pages, the theology of Dr. Dwight. This whole series of Discourses was probably written and delivered years before most of those, now occupying Unitarian pulpits, *began to think*. They will find in this system, in addition to its merits as a treatise on theology, the learning and taste of the scholar, the piety of the Christian, the good sense of the well bred gentleman, the enlarged views of a truly rational and philosophical mind, and the eloquence of a highly finished orator. His views of evangelical religion, drawn out in detail, will be found to coincide, in all essential particulars, with the epitome presented in the Worcester Sermon of Dr. Beecher.

We have one remark to make, which we trust our Unitarian readers will feel to be just. If they desire to know what Orthodoxy is, they should bear in mind that it is *what the Orthodox believe*, and not what *others say* they believe. In order to know what they really believe, their own writings must be consulted, or their preaching must be attended. We profess not to speak for *others*, and whenever we examine the opinions of those who may differ from us, we wish to express those opinions, as far as possible, in their own words. And we must claim the right, which we thus concede to others, of expressing *our own opinions in our own language*. This is but even-handed justice, and cannot be thought unreasonable. An opinion may be stated by an opponent, with so slight a diversity of expression or shade of coloring, as, after all, wholly to misrepresent it. This, men of the legal profession, and others accustomed to examine their thoughts and expressions, know full well. Every advantage which is taken of an opponent in this way, is not honorably and justly acquired. We are far from saying, that the Orthodox are not sometimes in fault here, as well as others. This fault is too general, and deserves to be held up to reprehension by all fair inquirers after truth. It is not always intentional. It is often unknown by the individual who commits it. But ignorance of law is no excuse for misconduct; so ignorance of the sentiments of another, when definitely expressed, is no excuse for misstatement. Those who assert, should know what they assert, especially when the means of knowledge are within their reach. The Orthodox are persuaded, that hitherto

their views have been distorted and discolored, by Unitarian representation. Entertaining this persuasion, we are resolved to speak for ourselves, through the Spirit of the Pilgrims. Through this organ, we can direct those, who are disposed to examine for themselves, and not rest on the authority of any man, or the representations of any party, to those authors and sources of information which the Orthodox generally approve. Of this character, we think, are the Sermons now before us.

Without attempting to decide as to the relative value of these Sermons, we would particularly recommend to Unitarians, the first, fifth, sixth, and seventh, with the Appendix, and the eighth and ninth. We would not, indeed, have any one receive his religious opinions on trust, from any human authority. We would say to the inquirer after truth, First of all, study your Bible; study it on your knees, praying the Father of lights to instruct and guide you. Ascertain, for yourself, what are the truths there revealed, what phenomena are exhibited, what facts are true. Then you can hear the religious lecturers, or philosophers, if you please so to call them, with profit. You may, for yourself, subject their respective theories to the test of fearless examination. Whether Orthodoxy or Unitarianism best accords with revealed truth, with recorded fact, with daily experience and general observation, it were idle for us to say, as our opinions are so well known. What we wish is, that others would not shrink from the examination, but pursue it fearlessly, yet humbly. "The meek will he guide in judgment; the meek will he teach his way." But this inquiry, so far as Orthodoxy is concerned, must be pursued under the direction of Orthodox guides. We claim the right of being heard in our own behalf.

The points in dispute between the Unitarians and the Orthodox in this country are many, some of greater, and others of less importance. On one of these points, which may be considered fundamental, we have already distinctly expressed our opinions, in the fourth number of our Magazine. We refer to *the province of reason in matters of religion*. We are well aware, that we are said by those whose system is the antipodes of ours, to reject or cast contempt upon reason, that high prerogative of the heaven-born soul, by which it looks abroad over this fair and beautiful creation, and up through nature's works to nature's God, enthroned in moral rectitude and glory ineffable and eternal. We are not about to repeat what we have already said upon this subject. Sure we are, that none are more desirous than ourselves to understand the real capabilities of reason, unenlightened by revelation, and the proper attitude which reason should assume, when approaching that Word, declared from on high, by Him who is the source and upholder of reason, and to whom we are soon, and each for himself, to render an account for its use, or its perversion. We notice this subject again, thus early, because it is of primary importance.

We have not, however, introduced it for extended discussion in this place, but merely that we may refer the reader to the exhibition of it, in the Sermons before us. See the fourth inference, of the fifth Sermon, p. 150, where Dr. B. has exhibited a condensed, and yet perspicuous view of the merits of this highly important question.

The subject of *creeds* may be considered of secondary importance. In Massachusetts, however, this is a matter of no slight interest; and, with the Evangelical party, of no slight importance. To rid themselves of all creeds, is, by not a few, "a consummation devoutly," or undevoutly, "wished." To retain them, and bring them, wherever they depart from Scriptural truth, into conformity to the word of God, is an object solicitously desired by those, who in their great views of life and death, of God and his government, of Christ and his kingdom, of time and eternity, of heaven and hell, coincide with the Reformed churches, in the symbols of their faith. We have not yet expressed our views of the necessity, propriety, or utility of creeds. We shall take this occasion to exhibit them in an extract from our author, which will serve as a fair specimen of his style of writing, and illustrate his ability to analyze and simplify whatever is presented for consideration.

"Notwithstanding the torrent of invective poured out against *creeds*; after the most deliberate attention to the subject, I have not been able to perceive any rational ground of objection against them. There are, in every science, elementary principles, without the knowledge of which it can never be understood. The same is true in theology; for the God who governs the natural world according to stated laws, administers the concerns of his moral government, by the operation of general principles. It is fashionable, I am aware, to decry system in theology: but why the Most High should be supposed to observe *order* in the government of the *natural world*, so as to lay the foundation for demonstration and system in philosophy; and at the same time, be supposed to govern his moral kingdom by laws obscurely revealed, including no general principles, connected by no dependencies, and excluding the possibility of system in theology, is an enigma for those to explain who choose to decry creeds, and to speak contemptuously of system in theology.

What is the precise ground of objection to creeds? Does the Bible contain no important, elementary principles? Are these incapable of being understood? Can they by no means be exhibited in a brief, connected form; or can their meaning be correctly expressed in no other language than the precise terms in which they are revealed; or do the Scriptures prohibit a concise exhibition of revealed truth? How then can the Scriptures be translated, or what right have we to preach the Gospel, or to publish sermons, or commentaries? Or how can Christians communicate to each other verbally, their various opinions concerning the meaning of revelation? It is not the object of creeds to supplant the Bible, but to ascer-



tain, for purposes of concentrated effort in the propagation of truth, how pastors and churches understand the Bible.

"In the nature of the case, I have been able to perceive no adequate cause for the virulent invective employed against creeds; but when I have compared the creeds of the Reformation with the Bible, and have perceived their general coincidence with the unperverted dictates of revelation, and their efficacy in uniting the churches and preserving the truth, I have not been surprised at the torrent of declamation which has been poured forth against them; though I have not ceased to feel astonishment at the misrepresentations of them, which men, of veracity in other respects, have felt themselves at liberty to make. An invading enemy is always prejudiced against fortified positions, and standing armies; and would much prefer an open country, and an undisciplined militia. And if the goodnatured people invaded, would consent to adopt the same prejudices, and to act upon the defensive, without concert or fortifications, they would much oblige the enemy; who, both before and after their subjugation, would doubtless eulogize them, as pre-eminent in liberality and the social virtues.

"Creeds and associated churches create a rugged warfare to the innovator, and reward him with slow gains, and stunted victories of doubtful continuance. Who ever knew a professor of religion of lax morals, who was not opposed to evangelical discipline; or one buffeted for his faults, without reformation, who did not cry persecution; or an attempt made to unite churches for the defence of the Gospel, which did not arouse the energies, and call forth the declamation of those who avow their opposition to the doctrines of the Reformation. Not a movement can be made on this subject, but instantly the pope is at the door; the dungeons of the inquisition are under our feet, and the chains, the rack, and the stake, and the fire are prepared. It is strange indeed, that the friends of truth should fear those associations of churches, which the enemies of truth regard, above all things, with aversion and dread. Strange that the prevalence of the same creed, and the same principles of association, by means of which the power of the pope was broken, and half his dominions wrested from him; should be regarded with terror, as the sure means of establishing in this land his iron-hearted despotism. I cannot read such declamation, without deep and continual sorrow of heart, that the friends of truth should be deceived and alarmed by it: while the enemy, laughing at our credulity, moves on in firm phalanx, to divide and conquer. 'Oh that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people.'" pp. 206—209.

We only add that, through this whole volume, there is the same luminous perception and exposition of truth as is here apparent. Not only doctrinal truths are advanced, but difficulties of a theological and practical nature, difficulties too of every day occurrence, are fully met and obviated. No young clergyman, or theological student, should be without these Sermons. It was Locke, we believe, who recommended the study of Chillingworth to those who desired to reason. Those, who wish to clarify their percep-

tions, and give them strong utterance, who wish to think, and to make others think, would do well to become familiar with these Sermons.

#### NOTICES OF RECENT PUBLICATIONS.

1. *A Review of Rev. Mr. Whitman's Discourse, preached before the Second Religious Society in Waltham.* Boston: T. R. Marvin, 1828. pp. 48.

We agree with others, who have expressed an opinion on the subject, in thinking that the Discourse of Mr. Whitman deserved the notice which is taken of it in this Review. The grossness of his language, the bitterness of his spirit, the fallacy of his reasonings, and above all, his manner of quoting and treating the Holy Scriptures, ought to be exposed. Those who acknowledge Christ as a divine person, and ascribe to him divine honors, are expressly denounced as "denying the Lord Jesus," and consequently as exposed to be denied by him before his Father which is in heaven. And the only excuse which Mr. W. can frame for his antichristian neighbors is, that possibly they do it *ignorantly*.

But, of this excuse, Trinitarians cannot in conscience avail themselves. For, of whatever else they may be ignorant, they ascribe divine honors to the Saviour with their eyes open. They do it, after diligent attention to the subject, and with the full consent of their understandings. Hence, in the judgment of Mr. Whitman, and from the commendation bestowed on his Sermon, we have a right to add, *in the judgment of Unitarians generally*, Trinitarians are chargeable with "*denying the Lord Jesus.*" "*Here then we hold;*" and holding here, we make the following requests, which no Unitarian, who regards so much as the appearance of consistency, can deny us. We request that it may not longer be said, whenever a purpose can be answered by saying it, that there is little or no difference between the two great classes which at present divide the religious community. Will Unitarians say that there is little or no difference between themselves and those who *deny the Lord Jesus*? We request them henceforth to desist from their professions of respect and veneration for the religious character of the Puritans and Pilgrims. Will they pretend to venerate the religious character of those, who were guilty of *denying the Lord Jesus*? We request them, farther, to cease from their complaints about the iniquity and cruelty of what they are pleased to call "the exclusive system." What fellowship do they wish to have with those who *deny the Lord Jesus*? Does Mr. W., or do his admirers, really wish to exchange pulpits with one, who persists in denying the Lord that bought him? It rather becomes them to pity us, as antichristian idolators, and to pray and labor for our conversion, than to be complaining because they cannot have ministerial and Christian fellowship with us.

In his attempts to shew, that those who "worship Jesus as God, disobey all apostolic instruction," Mr. W. literally *dismembers* passages of Scripture, leaving out the one part, which ascribes worship to the Son, just as the part he quotes ascribes it to the Father. "Grace be with you from *God the Father*"—here he stops in the

middle of the verse, the remainder of which is, "and from the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father." 2 John 3. An instance of proof such as this, has had no parallel, we presume, since the days of the red man, who could prove from the Bible, that his neighbors ought to furnish him with the means of intoxication, as often as he desired it;—"If sinners entice thee, consent thou."

The Review before us follows Mr. W. with a strong and steady hand, and ferrets him out of all his lurking places. It is made clearly to appear, that his argument to disprove the divinity of Christ—that which he turns over and over, and brings forward and urges again and again; is, throughout, a sheer sophism. "Christ is a man; therefore he cannot be God. He is the Son, the anointed, the sent of God; therefore he cannot be a divine person." Yet Mr. W. knows that Trinitarians believe in the *humanity* of Christ, as sincerely as himself, and that this doctrine is as essential to their system, as it is to his own.

This Review is written in an excellent spirit, is full of truth, and will well repay the most attentive perusal. The following is from the concluding paragraphs.

"What I have written, I have not written in the spirit of controversy. Notwithstanding the provocations contained in the Sermon, I have endeavored to avoid all disrespectful language and reproachful epithets. And though he has accused the great majority of the Christian church, in this and other lands, of denying Christ, and though it appears to me that the difference between the two systems is heaven-wide; yet, I will not pronounce the judgments of God. To his own Master he stands or falls. He is my fellow mortal, and we are to meet each other at another day, at the bar of Him whose character is in question. It will then be decided, whether I am guilty of too highly exalting Him, or he, of robbing Him of his glory.

"To all, into whose hands this pamphlet may fall, the writer would say,—you are called, by every consideration of duty and personal interest, to examine impartially, and prayerfully, the Holy Scriptures. All your interests as immortal beings are involved in the question relative to the character, and worship, of the Saviour. The present excitement will soon be over, the passions of the day will soon subside, and our final destiny will soon be fixed by reference to the sacred volume which is now, *plain to him that understandeth, and right to them that find knowledge.* With deep and solemn impressions, remember the inspired passage, "*Unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner, and a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient.*"

"Consider the question in debate, as too solemn and momentous in its bearings upon your own soul, to be hastily decided by private attachments or antipathies, by party spirit or prejudice; and with a mind open to receive whatever eternal wisdom shall communicate, repair to the infallible word of God, and *Beware, lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ. For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.*" pp. 45, 46.

2. *More than One Hundred Scriptural and Incontrovertible Arguments for believing in the Supreme Divinity of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.* Boston: Crocker & Brewster, 1828. pp. 28.

The writer of this Tract begins with noticing some of the more common objections to the divinity of Christ; such as, "I cannot comprehend God, as existing in three persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit;"—"to represent God as existing in three persons, is to represent him as a being wholly unlike any other being;"—the Scriptures represent Christ as a man; and "it is impossible that he should be both God and man." Having disposed of these objections in few words, he proceeds to adduce no less than a *hundred and twelve* "Scriptural and incontrovertible arguments for believing in the supreme divinity of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ,"—embracing, in great variety and extent, the testimony of the inspired writers on this most interesting subject. To this, he adds the testimony of some of the earlier Christian Fathers, as Ignatius, Polycarp, Justin Martyr, Theophilus, of Antioch, Irenæus, &c.; and sums up the whole in the following words:

"We have now seen that all those texts which speak of Christ as in a subordinate condition have not the least weight in disproving his essential Deity, being all easily and naturally explained by the fact, that though he thought it not robbery to be equal with God, he took on him the form of a servant, and became obedient unto death for the redemption of sinful men. We have seen of Jesus, that his *name* is GOD; JEHOVAH; JEHOVAH OF HOSTS; the LORD GOD; the LORD OF GLORY; the LORD OF ALL. He is THE TRUE GOD; the MIGHTY GOD; LORD OF LORDS; and GOD over all; the FIRST and the LAST; the self-existent I AM.—We have seen that all the attributes and incommunicable perfections of JEHOVAH belong to Christ. He is ETERNAL; IMMUTABLE; OMNIPRESENT; OMNISCIENT; OMNIPOTENT. We have seen that the *works* which can be done by none but JEHOVAH himself, are done by Christ. He created all worlds, and upholdeth all things by the *word* of his power; governs the whole universe, and is the light of heaven. By his omnipotent voice he will raise the dead at the last day, and decide the eternal destinies of all flesh. Although the company before his awful tribunal will be as innumerable as the sand upon the sea shore; yet will he perfectly recollect all their actions, words, and thoughts, from the birth of creation to the end of time: impossible for any creature, but easy for Christ. He is also to *his* church what none but God can be: he is the source of all grace and eternal salvation to his people; and we are to *act towards Christ* exactly in the same manner as we are to act towards God the Father,—to be baptized in his name; to believe in him; to pray unto him; and to serve and worship him, even as we serve and worship the Father; and not thus to honor the Son, is the same, and equally sinful, as not to honor the Father.—These are some of the things which irresistibly prove the GODHEAD of the SAVIOUR. What stronger proof can the power of language convey? What stronger proofs than these have we of the existence and perfections of the Father?" pp. 27, 28.

We find it difficult to speak of this little work in terms of sufficient commendation. The design of it is happy, and it is happily executed. The arguments, though not all original, are well ar-

ranged, and they are, what they claim to be, "Scriptural and incontrovertible." They constitute a body of evidence in favor of the supreme divinity of Christ which never can be refuted or removed. The Unitarian may as well think of tearing the sun from the heavens, as of removing from the Bible the evidence on this subject. For if one passage is stricken out, there are others; and if these are mutilated or explained away, there are many more. And when passages seem for the moment to be explained away, they are not. They stand in the faithful record just as they did before; and the next time the unbeliever opens his Bible, they stare him in the face, and flash back abused truth upon his smothered conscience. Those who have waged war with the plain declarations of Scripture, have engaged in a hard and hopeless controversy. Better relinquish the Bible altogether, or be willing to abide by its decisions.

But to return to the Tract; we earnestly hope, and we believe, that it will have an extensive circulation. Why may not the American Tract Societies adopt it, and scatter it far and wide. We wish copies of it to be multiplied by thousands and tens of thousands, till it has reached every village, and hamlet, and borne its testimony in every dwelling throughout our country.

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## MISCELLANEOUS DEPARTMENT.

### PROTESTANTISM IN FRANCE.

#### *Letter of Peter Bayssiere.*

(Concluded from p. 220.)

But, added I, without letting her perceive my extreme satisfaction at her recital, is this all you know of the Protestant worship? have you never seen them commune?

I have seen them commune, also, returned my wife; it was the same day, for that is the only time I was ever at their church. It was the day of Pentecost, a great holiday for them as for us.

Tell me, pray, how did they commune?

This is the manner, said she. I have mentioned a table before the pulpit; well, this table serves them for an altar. It was covered with a very white cloth. There was in the middle, a plate of bread and two cups of wine. When the minister had done preaching, he took a book, and read from it very fine things on the communion, the sufferings and death of Christ. He then spoke of the duties of communicants; and every body rising, he made a prayer. He then descended from the pulpit, and placed himself, standing, near the table. He took a small piece of bread, which he ate, after pronouncing aloud some words which I have forgotten. When he had eaten the bread, he took the two cups in his hands, and again pronouncing some words which I did not hear, he drank a little of the wine.

And, after the minister, did the others commune in the same manner?

Yes, exactly in the same manner! The minister had no sooner finished, than the principal persons approached the table, two and two, and received each a small piece of bread which they ate, and drank a little wine from the cup which he presented them. The rest of the assembly, the women after the men, did the same; and when all had communed, the minister again mounted the pulpit, and made a new exhortation; and having made the last prayer, he dismissed the people, recommending the care of the poor.

*The Lord's Supper!* said I to myself; *the Lord's Supper!* The conformity which I perceived between the Protestants and the Christians of the primitive church gave me unusual joy. I desired, with new ardor, to know the ground of their doctrine, not doubting that I should then myself become a Protestant.



With respect to this, my dear children, I arrived at an entire certainty before a long time. The 10th of last February, two writings entirely new to me, fell into my hands. One, written by a Catholic priest, attacked the Reformation. The other, in defence of the Protestant religion, was in answer to the first, written by a minister. These were the first lines of religious controversy I had ever read in my life. I devoured these two little works. That of the priest, written on the occasion of a respectable family having just embraced Protestantism, offered nothing solid, or to which I could not answer in the words of Jesus Christ and his apostles. This had therefore no effect upon me.

But the second, entitled a Letter to Melanie, at length presented to me what I had so ardently desired and sought, an exposition of the belief of the Protestants, at least on some essential points. It informed me that the Gospel was their only rule of faith, worship, and conduct; that they admitted all which the Holy Scriptures teach, but rejected all they did not teach, and especially what they prohibit, as the invocation of saints, the worship of images, relics, and of the holy Virgin. It informed me, that they adored God alone, through Jesus Christ his Son; that they expected salvation from his mercy, revealed in his sacrifice on the cross; that they recognize no other mediator, advocate or intercessor with God, than Him who is given for that purpose, and who alone is able to say to sinners, "Come to me, and I will give you rest." It informed me, that they believed no more than I, in purgatory, papacy, or the real presence, &c. It informed me, in short, that the Protestants wish to receive, and profess, no other than primitive Christianity.

It would be impossible to describe to you my joy at finding my own sentiments expressed by a minister of evangelical religion. I perceived by this, and by what your mother told me, that the Protestants, so unjustly accused and so falsely described by ignorance or wickedness, were true Christians according to the word of God, to whom the promises of the Gospel are addressed. I then received them as my true brothers in Christ, and I had desire but to be admitted to their communion.

I foresaw, my dear children, that in making an open profession of my religious principles, and declaring publicly for Protestantism, I should inflame against myself many violent passions, and expose myself to ten thousand inconveniences. But truth was dearer to me than life itself, and conscience spoke louder than the fear of the world. I resolved, without hesitation, to confess my Saviour before men, whatever might be the consequences; and wrote immediately to the pastor of Nerac, author of the letter I had been reading, to request the assistance of his learning and charitable counsels. Having corresponded eleven months with this respectable minister of the Lord; having been to visit him, that I might the better open my heart to him, and profit by his teachings; having several times been present at the different acts and ceremonies of the reformed church; having, with the greatest care, compared its doctrines with the only rule of all truth, the word of God; and being more and more convinced that they were perfectly conformed to it;—I thought I ought no longer to delay. I requested, and obtained permission to be received a member of the Protestant communion.

The 23d of the present month, I returned to Nerac; and there, on Christmas day, in the presence of the assembled church, I ratified and confirmed my baptismal vow, receiving the sacred symbols of the body and blood of my Saviour, in the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, and promised to remain faithful unto death. I trust that he will deign to aid me to keep my promise, and display his strength in my weakness.

Thus, my dear children, I have become a member of the Christian reformed church. I have exhibited to you the true means, and the only motives, which have led me into his sanctuary: concerning which I appeal to the *Faithful Witness*, in whose presence these lines have been written.

It has been said, and some still wish to have it believed, that I have sold my conscience, and that the wealth of the Protestants has seduced me! God knows that this is a calumny, and all who are acquainted with me are not ignorant of it. It is not to justify myself that I here speak of it; but to declare a truth worthy of being fully believed. Gold and silver are no more employed to recruit the ranks of the evangelical church, than artifice, fraud, false miracles and compulsion. All other means than instruction, reasoning and persuasion, are rejected. This church was formed, it has subsisted notwithstanding the blows heaped upon it, and it will subsist forever, notwithstanding all the rage of hell, by the simple preaching of the Gospel, which alone rules and nourishes it.

May the Lord deign, while I pray for the salvation of all men, and particularly for the conversion and prosperity of all my enemies, to give you grace, my children, to be added to the church, that you may be saved. Happy, if being your father according to nature, I may become your father in the faith! Happy, if at last, in the great day when we shall appear before God to hear the decree of our final destiny, I may present myself with you without fear, and say, Here am I, Lord, and the children whom thou hast given me.

P. BAYSSIERE.

At Montaignut, December 31, 1826.

REMARKS ON THE PRECEDING LETTER.

Every intelligent and serious reader of the letter which forms an interesting part of the present and three previous numbers of our work, must be struck with the similarity of religious experience, among truly converted persons, in exceedingly different circumstances. This similarity does not respect the order of exercises, or emotions, nor the intenseness or constancy of feeling; but it relates to the *general characteristics* of the new moral state, into which real converts are brought. On looking minutely at the spiritual condition of individuals, who have derived their religious hopes from the Scriptures, read with seriousness and self-application, or from the plain preaching of the Gospel, it will be found, that genuine Christianity is everywhere the same. Whether the new convert be learned or ignorant, polished or rude, rich or poor; whether he derived his religious impressions from Calvin or Luther, Owen or Baxter, Edwards or Whitefield, Chalmers or Malan; or whether, without any human teacher, he took up the Bible, in his vernacular tongue, and studied it with an anxious desire to understand the plan of redemption, to be delivered from sin, and to obtain the favor of God,—when he comes to express his views and feelings plainly, without embarrassment from early associations, his account of his spiritual experience, his hopes and fears, his dangers and enemies, his joys and consolations, will agree, in all substantial points, with the experience of the faithful in every age. If this subject were candidly considered by those, who deny the existence of experimental religion, or of regeneration, they would find facts, which would be utterly at variance with every other system but the orthodox system. They would find the peasant at the foot of the Alps, the artisan in a populous city, the farmer, the merchant, the lawyer,—men of every class and condition, from the stupendous intellect of Bacon, to the child who had felt that he is a sinner, and that God is gracious, agreeing in a certain something, which they unite in calling *experimental religion*, or the *religion of the heart*. That this state of things arises from a reality, and not from a false theory, superstitiously communicated from teacher to pupil, from the pastor to his flock, or from one convert to another, is manifest from the fact, that, in numberless instances, this perfect agreement exists without any such communication. It is manifest, also, from another fact, of a most interesting character, which is commended to the special attention of Unitarians, and which is no other than this: that those who enjoy experimental religion, though their knowledge, mental cultivation, and manner of life, are diversified in a thousand forms, can understand each other, on spiritual subjects, immediately. They can all speak the language of Zion. Yet thousands of men, who have great discernment on other subjects, and who have heard orthodox preaching all their lives, cannot understand this language at all. Now and then, one of this description becomes a converted man; and he can instantly feel the force of motives, which had never before had influence with him; and can perfectly understand at once, what had previously been unintelligible.

A second remark which we make upon the letter of Bayssiere, is, that in writing it for the benefit of his children, and publishing it for the benefit of the world, he acted in the most natural manner, and in the manner to which genuine benevolence would be most likely to prompt him. There are some, who think it very strange, that a man, who professes to have been brought from darkness to light, should think it worth while to communicate his change, or the reasons of it. But nothing can be more natural, or more proper. Every such man feels a great solicitude for the welfare of others;—for the extension of divine truth;—for the awakening of careless sinners;—for the dispelling of every delusion;—for the confirmation and consolation of the pious;—for the final triumph of Christ over every enemy. Feeling thus, he is constrained to take any likely measures for the promotion of these great objects; and nothing, which he can do, seems more suitable, than to give his own deliberate and decided testimony.

In the third place, it is an obvious remark, that a conversion to the true Gospel from any superstitious church, or any form of nominal Christianity, gives great offence to the adherents of error. So it was in the days of our Saviour; so it was in Germany, at the period of the Reformation;—and in England, at several distinct periods in the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries. So it is in Germany, Switzerland, and our own country, at the present moment. A most striking example may now be seen in Syria also, under the preaching of the truth by the American missionaries. It is owing to this offence of the cross, that so many calumnies are often put in motion respecting any new convert, whose example, it is feared, may prove contagious; or whose testimony is calculated to produce a powerful effect. But it is very easy to perceive the reason of all this. The friends of truth perceive it. The calumniators perceive it. The Scriptures lead us to expect it, and fully explain its cause. Let every man, who is disposed to circulate injurious reports concerning those who may have relinquished his own way of thinking for what they deem a stricter or a purer faith, examine well into the nature of the disposition which he cherishes. It may be, that he will make some important discoveries, in regard to the character of his motives, and the nature of the cause which he is opposing.

The views here taken of this subject do much towards explaining the reason of the opprobrium, which has always been cast upon the church of God by the world at large. The formidable array of the enemies of truth has, in all ages, included not only the openly wicked and abandoned, but a large proportion of the cultivated intellect, the philosophy, the science, the literature, the wit, the eloquence, to be found in the world. Many individuals, who have entertained a most thorough antipathy against the idea of spiritual conversion, and have cherished the most contemptuous feelings towards the professors of godliness, have been possessed of great intelligence and have discharged many offices of life, in public and private, with great urbanity and integrity. To persons of this class, the preaching of the Gospel has appeared to be foolishness. When speaking of experimental religion they have invariably misrepresented it; and that has arisen from two causes. 1. They knew nothing about it, and could understand nothing about it. 2. They were under the influence of a certain instinctive hatred of religion without being conscious of it. Hence it comes to pass, that some of the worst libels upon the church of God have been written by men of gentlemanly manners and habits, of fair reputation in the eye of the world, of keen and cultivated minds, of liberal education and endowments, professed preachers of the Gospel, decorated with the title of doctors in divinity.

THE  
SPIRIT OF THE PILGRIMS.

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COMMUNICATIONS.

HINTS ON THE RELATIVE IMPORTANCE OF THE UNITED STATES  
TO THE REST OF THE WORLD, IN A MORAL  
AND RELIGIOUS VIEW.

I AM aware that modesty forbids the praise of one's self. And an overweening partiality to one's own country, which leads a person to be ever obtruding its supposed superiorities, and disparaging the merits of other nations, must be disgusting to a foreigner, as well as irksome to any man of sense. But I know not that such improprieties should discourage a temperate discussion of the subject of this paper. As citizens of the United States, candor and the honor of our country require, that we should endeavor to take an impartial view of foreign nations, in the consideration of such a topic; though it might be expected, that our views of our own institutions and habits will be of a character, which it is possible may subject us to the charge of partiality. And this, doubtless, will be esteemed a venial offence, if not an amiable attribute, by all true patriots, whether devoted to this or any other country.

Under the head of *moral*, I shall consider myself as having a right to notice the political and civil character of our country, as all such institutions, on the grand scale, exercise an important moral influence. And these I desire to notice, only as I conceive they have a bearing on the moral renovation of the world. Nor would I occupy this ground simply as a political prognosticator. I confess myself to have more faith in the intimations of divine prophecy, than of human. Nor can I persuade myself, that the first settlement of this country by the Pilgrims, in connexion with the political and moral empire which they founded, is so unimportant an event, as not to have some traces on the pages of prophecy.

But, be this as it may, it must be acknowledged, that the settlement of this country was a prominent and grand event of divine providence, in the history of this world. The things which have

already grown out of it, prove it to have been such. There is a peculiarity, a purity, a simplicity, and I may add, a *perfection*, in our political, civil, literary, and religious establishments, which, taken as a whole, have no type in the history of nations. It were impossible, that they should be reduced to a form, more strictly *popular*. And that popular institutions are to be a universal model for the millennial world, I cannot, for a moment, entertain a doubt.

That divine providence should have secured sufficient virtue in the people, for the maintenance of such institutions, by having planted such a race of men upon this soil, may, I think, well be marked, as one of the high designs of God, for the renovation of the world. That God should have made Europe, with her wealth and power, contribute to protect these infant colonies, till they were able to defend themselves; that he should have guided, with such a steady and unerring hand, the events which led to the revolution; that he should have controlled that struggle, in such a manner as to consummate, so speedily and so gloriously, the independence of the States; that he should have raised up instruments to lead on that struggle, and qualified men to invent and mature our national and State governments, so wise and perfect as they are, and to establish them upon such a basis; that he should so soon have given us such consequence and influence among the nations of the earth; that he should have given such a triumphant experiment of these popular institutions for half a century, with every reasonable prospect of unlimited duration and extension; and that he should, in the meantime, have blessed this whole nation with such unexampled prosperity, in the increase of population and of wealth, in the success of science and the useful arts, and in the prevalence of religion;—all these considerations corroborate the same impression of the high and especial designs of God in the establishment of this nation.

Next to the United States, among civilized nations, for moral virtue and civil liberty, stands Great Britain. And it is possible, that the relics of her feudal institutions, her aristocracy, and her monarchy, may yet be melted down without a radical convulsion. But Europe, as a whole, evidently presents a spectacle of portentous aspect. She contains within her bosom the elements of one mighty moral earthquake. Nothing but the mutual alliance of her States, at the present moment, can prevent their fearful explosion. And her intimate connexions with papacy, that scourge of the earth, and abominable thing in the eyes of heaven, and which heaven will not long endure, have interwoven the destinies of the one with those of the other. And not unlikely, yea, with a probability amounting to moral certainty, when the time shall arrive to blot out from under heaven this "great Babylon, this mother of harlots and abominations of the earth," the ministers of God's vengeance, decreed for such purpose, will be those very institutions,



which have been the instruments of her own power. And along with her overthrow, will crumble to ruin those very engines, by which she has been elevated to her guilty preeminence. And, if there be any light in prophecy, this tumult of the nations will create one mighty vortex, whose centre shall be the heart of Europe, drawing into its whirlpool everything in the civilized world, which now throws its iron hand over human intellect and the holier aspirations of the human heart.

Let me not be suspected of prophesying. I have only indulged in a glance or two, thrown up by some flashes of the burning record of apocalyptic vision. And though this should prove an illusion, it needs no more than the ken of common observation, to predict, that a mighty convulsion awaits the destinies of Europe. And for my single self, I will trust, confiding in the high and benevolent designs of that providence which is preceding this grand event by the universal diffusion of the divine Scriptures, that this change will reduce to a sober temperament, political and civil institutions, so far as their existence may be necessary, and prepare the way for the moral renovation of the world.

If such a change may be contemplated, I know of no nation on earth so likely to endure the shock, and stand up prominent, a lustrous example to the world, as the United States of America. Such an anticipated convulsion in the eastern hemisphere, can hardly extend over the surface, or move under the body, of the mighty deep, to agitate very seriously this western world. Though it will doubtless be felt, so far as political and moral corruption shall have obtained a footing here. But although the unhallowed leaven of human policy, originating in the practice of other nations may have influenced the *administrations* of our State and national governments, it may still be challenged, what of civil, or religious freedom, that is desirable on earth, is not guaranteed by the fundamental laws of this land? And where on earth, on the supposition of such a convulsion, can be found another so fit a pattern of the forms of human policy, as here? Where will the emancipated nations look for models for their new institutions, where will they look for an example by which to form their own character, but to this free and happy country?

And besides the happy adaptation of the forms of our government to a better and more virtuous condition of the world, there are special indications of the high designs of God respecting us, for the prospective melioration of the human family, in the copious effusion of the divine Spirit, producing frequent and extensive revivals of religion, which are constantly multiplying over the face of our country. The spirit of these revivals is becoming more and more the spirit of Christian enterprise. It looks abroad, with burning desire, on the whole family of man. Many noble spirits are nurturing in this cradle of God's providence and grace, for a

high destiny—to go forth to any part of the world, with Christ in their hearts, and the Bible in their hands. Many have already gone—many are now going—treading upon the heels of each other. There is no equal of this in any other Christian nation. No, not even a likeness, except in Great Britain. And even there, the likeness is but faint and feeble. There is indeed a spirit in the bosom of that empire, which has already blessed the world, and I hope, will save the nation, though, from the very nature and structure of its government, it can be saved only by purgation.

I did not sit down to write as a politician, but as a Christian. I did not take for my criteria the diplomacy of nations, but the pages of revelation, as interpreted by the moral history and state of the world. And it has been my object to show, that the United States of America are destined, in the providence of God, to take a prominent and leading part in the moral renovation of the world. The statesman, and the worldly wise, may perhaps smile. I shall be well satisfied, if the Christian, waiting and praying for the redemption of the world, is favorably impressed.

At a future time, providence permitting, I shall offer some hints on the relative importance of New England to the rest of the Union, in a moral and religious view. ANTIPAS.

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IS A REFUSAL TO HOLD COMMUNION AND MINISTERIAL INTER-COURSE WITH UNITARIANS, AN INNOVATION?

To the Editor of the Spirit of the Pilgrims.—Sir,

An inquirer, whose communication appeared in a recent number of the Boston Recorder, requests information as to **THE MATTER OF FACT**, *whether Evangelical ministers or Christians have ever acknowledged Unitarians as Christians, or held ministerial or Christian communion with them as such?* This is an important question, deserving a most careful examination. A benevolent man will never unnecessarily give pain or offence to any human being, much less to one who presents himself under the name and garb of a professor of Christianity. But when the only choice left him is between pleasing men, and sacrificing his duty to God, his decision cannot be long doubtful.

It would seem strange, anterior to all inquiry, that any, especially that any professor of Orthodoxy, should, for a moment, hesitate as to what *must have been* the matter of fact in reference to the point in question. I suppose all will be ready to grant that a *Christian* is one who believes and embraces *Christianity*. But what is *Christianity*? It is, in the view of every Orthodox Christian,

a religion which provides salvation for depraved and guilty sinners; and which, for this purpose, sets before them pardon and acceptance with God, through the atonement and righteousness of a divine Mediator, and sanctification by the power of the divine Spirit. In fewer words, it is a religion which offers to men a title to heaven, and a preparation for heaven, through the atoning blood and sanctifying grace of an almighty Surety. Whether this be a proper definition of Christianity or not, every one will grant that this is, substantially, what the Orthodox *suppose* it to be. This, in their view, forms the very *essence* of Christianity; the very life and glory of the system; which, being taken away, it is destroyed, it is no longer the same religion, but "another gospel." Of course, he who does not receive the doctrine that man is a guilty and depraved creature, and the doctrine of the divinity and atonement of the Son of God, and of the divinity and the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit, does not receive the Gospel of Christ, that is, does not receive Christianity, and is, consequently, no Christian. That there *are* doctrines of the Gospel, which a man may reject, and yet be a Christian, there can be no doubt. To suppose all doctrines fundamental, and equally important, would be in the highest degree unreasonable. But that he who rejects those parts of Christianity which form its *essence*, cannot be a Christian, in any scriptural sense of the word, or, indeed, in any rational sense of it, is just as evident as that a man cannot be entitled to the name of a *scholar*, who does not know a letter in any alphabet.

The following quotation from the pious and able Dr. Wardlaw, when speaking of the radical dissonance between Orthodoxy and Unitarianism, must satisfy, one would think, every intelligent and impartial mind of its correctness.

"It is very obvious, that two systems, of which the sentiments, on subjects such as these, are in direct opposition, cannot, with any propriety, be confounded together under one common name. That both should be Christianity, is impossible; else Christianity is a term, which distinguishes nothing. Viewing the matter abstractly, and without affirming, for the present, what is truth, and what is error, this I think I may with confidence affirm, that to call schemes so opposite in all their great leading articles by a common appellation; is more absurd, than it would be to confound together those two irreconcilable theories in astronomy, of which the one places the earth, and the other the sun, in the centre of the planetary system. They are, in truth, *essentially different religions*. For if opposite views as to the *Object of worship*, the *ground of hope for eternity*, the *rule of faith and duty*, and the *principles and motives of true obedience*; if these do not constitute different religions, we may, without much difficulty, discover some principles of union and identity among all religions whatever; we may realize the doctrine of Pope's 'universal prayer,' and extend

the right hand of fellowship to the worshippers at the mosque, and to the votaries of Brama."

Accordingly, we find the inspired writers speaking in perfect harmony with these representations. Scarcely anything could be more pointed than the language of the apostle Paul, in reference to this matter. *I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ, unto another gospel; which is not another, but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the Gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed.* Galatians i. 6—10. The apostle John, in his second Epistle, speaks in these decisive terms. *He that abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed; for he that biddeth him God speed, is partaker of his evil deeds.* The apostle Peter employs language no less decisive and solemn. *But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction.* 2 Peter ii. 1.

Now, it cannot be doubted that the inspired writers are, in all these passages, speaking of those who rejected the true doctrine concerning our Saviour's person and work; it cannot be doubted by any Orthodox man, that the language employed includes those who denied the divinity and atoning sacrifice of the Son of God. If so, and if they pronounce such persons to be *heretics*, nay, advocates of "damnable heresy;" if they represent them as teachers of "another gospel;" as "accursed;" and as not to be ecclesiastically countenanced or received: I say, if these "holy men of old who were taught by the Holy Ghost," pronounced thus concerning those who were radically erroneous as to the divine character and mediatorial work of the Son of God; if, as the Orthodox conscientiously believe, they pronounced thus concerning those who denied the divinity and atoning sacrifice of Christ; is it possible, for those who believe this, and who make the word of God their rule, to hesitate a moment whether they ought, by any ecclesiastical act, to countenance *Arians* or *Socinians*; to recognize them as Christians; to hold communion with them; to acknowledge the official advocates of such doctrines as "ambassadors of Christ;" to invite them into their pulpits; or, in any way, to sanction their ministrations?

But, what was the matter of fact? It was, as is most evident from ecclesiastical history, that all the early Christians considered the word of God as forbidding them to hold communion with heretics of the description just referred to; and that they did invariably withhold communion from those who were convicted of such heresies. This was so uniformly the case, that a single exception is not now recollected.

*Cerinthus*, toward the close of the very first century, denied the divinity of Christ, believing that Jesus was a mere man, born of Joseph and Mary; that a superangelic being, or influence, was united to this man at his baptism; that this superangelic being, however, was not so united to him as to form one person, and abandoned him before his crucifixion; and that it was the mere man who suffered on the cross. And how was this man regarded by the Orthodox? Irenæus expressly declares that the evangelist "John designed by his Gospel to remove the error which was sown among men by *Cerinthus*." Jerome also attests the same fact, and unequivocally calls his opinion a *heresy*. And Irenæus relates, that the apostle John, while he resided at Ephesus, once going to bathe, and perceiving that *Cerinthus* was in the bath, came out hastily, saying, "Let us flee, lest the bath should fall, while *Cerinthus*, an enemy of the truth, is within."

The *Cerinthians* were soon succeeded by the *Ebionites*, who took their name from *Ebion*, and taught substantially the same opinions. Irenæus, Justin Martyr, Clemens Alexandrinus, Tertullian and Origen, again and again, speak of these people as *heretics*, and several of the number decisively represent them as "separated from believers," and as "out of the way of salvation."

In the second century arose *Marcion*, who denied the plenary divinity of Christ, and taught that he had not a real, but only an apparent, human body. This man is stigmatized as a *heretic* by Irenæus, in terms of very strong reprobation; by Justin Martyr, who represents his error as a *destructive heresy*; by Tertullian, who condemns him as a *gross heretic*, and speaks of him as having *departed from the faith and the church of Christ*; and finally, by Polycarp, who not only denounced him as a heretic, but when *Marcion*, mortified at Polycarp's treatment of him, said, "Polycarp, acknowledge us;" the good man replied, "I do acknowledge thee as the *firstborn of Satan*." This anecdote is related by Irenæus, who was nearly contemporary with both the individuals concerned.

About the close of the second century, *Theodotus* appeared at Rome, and publicly taught that Jesus Christ was a mere man. Concerning this errorist, Caius, a presbyter of Rome, whose account is preserved in Eusebius, speaks in terms of the most unreserved condemnation. He speaks of him as "the chief and



parent of a *God-denying apostacy*;" represents his doctrine as "blasphemous;" and informs us that, for maintaining and propagating it, he was *excommunicated from the church*.

Contemporary with Theodotus, was *Artemon*, who seems to have adopted very much the same opinions. He also was opposed by several distinguished writers, whose works have come down to our times; was formally condemned as a heretic; and *excluded from the communion of the Christian church*.

In the third century arose *Noetus*, and soon afterwards *Sabellius*, who rejected all distinction of persons in the Godhead; alleging that the Trinity was nominal only, and not personal. This doctrine, the pious of that day considered as striking at the foundation of the system of redemption, and therefore condemned it as a fatal heresy. *Noetus* was formally excommunicated from the church, and his doctrine pronounced heretical by two successive councils; and a few years afterward, *Sabellius* and his error received a similar treatment. The same opinion, in substance, having been adopted, about the same time, by *Beryllus*, of Bozrah, he was *excluded from the body of the Orthodox*. After remaining for some time under this discipline, he was restored to the communion of the church, and his party became extinct.

In the same century, *Paul of Samosata*, broached his error, which was substantially the same with that of modern Socinians. He taught that Christ was a mere man. After repeated councils, and much equivocation and concealment on his part, the opinion just mentioned was fixed upon him; on which he was *unanimously condemned as a heretic, and deposed from the ministry*.

The case of *Arius*, in the fourth century, is so well known, that any detailed account of it is unnecessary. As soon as it was understood that he adopted the error concerning the person of Christ, which has for fifteen centuries been designated by his name, the church became alarmed and agitated; the Council of Nice was assembled in 325; and *Arius* and his adherents, were not only condemned as heretics, by an almost unanimous vote, but were also *deposed from the ministry, and excommunicated from the church*.

Here we have, let it not be forgotten, the solemn judgment and decree, not of a few insulated individuals, not even of a small provincial council; but of a GENERAL COUNCIL, that is, of the WHOLE CHURCH, assembled by its representatives. Of this body we have the formal decision that those who denied the supreme divinity of the Son of God, were *unworthy of a place in the church of Christ, and of the name of Christian*.

The same judgment was uniformly passed in the early church, not only against all who rejected the divinity and atonement of Christ; but also against those who departed from the Orthodox

faith with regard to the divinity and personality of the Holy Spirit. When *Macedonius* fell into error on this point, he was *condemned as a heretic, and deposed from the ministry*, by a council at Constantinople, which met A. D. 360; and again received the same sentence in a general council, convened in 381. Here again, we see, not merely a single congregation, but the *whole Christian church*, by its representatives, deciding that a departure from the Orthodox faith in reference to this point, is a fundamental error, properly inferring *exclusion from the Christian name and communion*.

This list might be greatly extended, were it not for the fear of being tedious. The followers of *Carpocrates*, *Basilides*, *Hermogenes*, and *Montanus*, in the second century; and of *Photinus*, *Appolinaris*, and many more, in the third and fourth centuries, were all unsound with respect to the person of Christ; and were all condemned by the church as corrupters of the faith, and excluded from the community of Christians. Indeed, a single instance is not recollected in all antiquity, in which any individual, or body of individuals, who were known to deny the trinity of persons in the Godhead, the true and proper divinity of Christ, or the personality and divinity of the Holy Spirit, were regarded as Christians, or were suffered to remain in the communion of the Orthodox church. This was not only the *habit* of the church of Christ, but so *invariably* her habit, that, it is confidently believed, an exception to it cannot be found; or, if found at all, it is in circumstances which render it altogether an extraordinary case. Yet, truly, even such a case is not remembered. Nor should we be likely to find such an exception, when *Athanasius*, one of the Nicene Fathers, and probably as extensively informed respecting the history and state of the church as any man in his day, speaking of the divinity of Christ, and the trinity of persons in the Godhead, could express himself in the following decisive terms: "This was the doctrine and the faith of the CHURCH UNIVERSAL, FROM THE BEGINNING; which our Lord himself delivered; which the Apostles preached; and which the Fathers preserved. FOR IN THIS IS THE CHURCH FOUNDED, and he who falls from it CAN NEITHER BE A CHRISTIAN, NOR DESERVE THE NAME OF A CHRISTIAN."

It is not thought necessary, Mr. Editor, to encumber your pages with references to chapter and page of the original writers for each of the facts which have been stated. The truth is, for well informed persons conversant with the works from which these statements are derived, such references are unnecessary; the facts are well known, by all such persons, to be precisely as I have stated. And with regard to those who are not accustomed to consult such books, formal quotations from them would be useless. But I am

not afraid that any person, who is qualified to speak on such a subject, will contradict any one of the foregoing statements.

With respect to the period comprehended between the council of Nice and the Reformation, no one denies, not even Unitarians themselves, that the whole current of belief, and of ecclesiastical decision, was strongly against what is now styled Unitarian doctrine, and that none who publicly avowed it, were allowed to remain in communion with the Catholic or Orthodox church. An instance of such allowance, it is believed, cannot be produced.

That the great body of the Reformers—in fact, every one of them, without exception, who is regarded as sound and pious by the Orthodox of the present day—took precisely the same ground with regard to Socinians and Arians, i. e. the Unitarians of their day, which was taken by the anti-Nicene Fathers, that is, condemned and excommunicated them, and denied them the name of Christian, modern Unitarians themselves acknowledge, and make matter of heavy complaint. We shall, probably, never hear the last notes of their outcries against Calvin for the affair of Servetus, or of their murmurs against others, the contemporaries and successors of Calvin, for their “unchristian intolerance and bigotry.”

It forms no part of my present purpose, to attempt a defence of Calvin in that affair. No one, I think, can fully justify what he did; though much, very much, may be said in mitigation of his fault, committed at a time when the great subject of religious liberty was understood by no one; and when it is quite evident, from the conduct of Socinus himself, and his friend Blandrata, to poor Davidies, that Unitarians, in their treatment of one another, understood the subject quite as little as their neighbors.\* But the treatment experienced by Servetus, and by some other conspicuous Unitarians, in the sixteenth century, as well as in the seventeenth, plainly establishes the point for which I contend, viz. that, at that interesting period of reviving light and zeal among the followers of Christ, Arians and Socinians were in fact regarded, as in all preceding ages they had been regarded, as unworthy of the Christian name, or of a place in the Christian church.

With regard to more modern times, testimony to the same amount may be produced, in the greatest abundance. I shall content myself with that of a single witness. I refer to the Rev. Dr. Witherspoon, who is well known, both in this country and in

\* Of the many readers of the Spirit of the Pilgrims, perhaps a few may need to be informed what is referred to here. Faustus Socinus, although he believed that Christ was a mere man, yet zealously maintained that he ought to be worshipped. Francis Davidies, a native of Hungary, and a distinguished clergyman among the Unitarians, considered this as an inconsistency, and concurring with Socinus in holding the mere humanity of the Saviour, he contended that religious worship ought not to be paid him. In taking this course, all modern Unitarians regard him as having acted correctly. Davidies, however, was cruelly persecuted by Socinus, and his friend Blandrata, for entertaining and publishing this opinion; and, at their instance, was thrown into prison, where he died, in the year 1579.

Europe, as one of the most learned, judicious, soberminded divines of the eighteenth century. And as he was never, so far as I know, brought into any particular conflict with Unitarians, as such, we have no reason to believe that he was ever the subject of any morbid excitement in reference to them. This distinguished writer, in a sermon on the atonement of Christ, says, "It is lamentable to think that there should be any that call themselves Christians, and yet refuse to acknowledge this truth, which is woven, if I may so speak, through the whole contexture both of the Law and the Gospel. It brings to my mind the story of an ancient artist, who, being employed to build a magnificent and elegant temple, had the ingenuity to inscribe upon it his own name, and so to incorporate it both with the ornaments and body of the structure, that it was impossible to efface the name, without, at the same time, destroying the fabric. In the same manner, Christ dying for sin is engraved in such characters through the whole revealed will of God, that IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO TAKE IT AWAY, WITHOUT DESTROYING THE WHOLE SYSTEM." Again, in his discourse on the scriptural meaning of the word "charity," speaking of the irreconcilable opposition between the creed of the Orthodox and that of Socinians, he says, "I do freely acknowledge that I NEVER DID ESTEEM THE SOCINIANS TO BE CHRISTIANS." And in his treatise on justification, dedicated to the Rev. Mr. Hervey, he expresses the same judgment very decisively, in another connexion. "As to Socinians and Pelagians," says he, "who are the greatest opposers of the truths above defended, I NEVER DID ESTEEM THEM TO BE CHRISTIANS AT ALL."

Nay, Mr. Editor, language quite as decisive in reference to this subject has been held by Unitarians themselves. It is on record that Dr. Priestley, a few years before his death, in free conversation with an Orthodox American clergyman, still living, expressed himself in the following frank and pointed terms: "I do not wonder that you Calvinists entertain and express a strongly unfavorable opinion of us Unitarians. The truth is, there neither can, nor ought to be, any compromise between us. If *you* are right, WE ARE NOT CHRISTIANS AT ALL; and if *we* are right, YOU ARE GROSS IDOLATERS." No less to my purpose is the decision of Mr. Belsham, next to Dr. Priestley perhaps the most conspicuous name in the list of English Unitarians. Having occasion, in a work published a few years ago, to speak of the unduly soft and indulgent terms in which an ecclesiastical council in Connecticut had referred to the opinions and ministrations of a Unitarian clergyman of that State whom they had dismissed, and having expressed an opinion that their extreme tenderness was little short of ridiculous, he proceeds thus: "Is the venerable council serious in stating differences so glaring and so substantial as these, as nothing more than 'a peculiar phraseology,' and a 'circumstantial difference of

sentiment? No, no; opinions such as these can no more harmonize with each other THAN LIGHT AND DARKNESS, THAN CHRIST AND BELIAL. They who hold doctrines so diametrically opposite, CANNOT BE FELLOW-WORSHIPPERS IN THE SAME TEMPLE. IT WAS EXPEDIENT THAT THEY SHOULD SEPARATE.”\* In the opinion of Mr. Belsham then, Calvinism and Unitarianism can no more unite in the same ecclesiastical worship and communion, than “light and darkness, Christ and Belial.” Did ever an Orthodox writer speak in stronger terms, or assume a more decisive principle, in relation to this matter?

‘But such,’ it is said, ‘have not been the opinions and practice of the Unitarians and the Orthodox in New England. Unitarians have uniformly acknowledged the Orthodox to be Christians, and been willing to maintain ministerial intercourse and Christian fellowship with them. And among all the Congregational ministers and churches, such intercourse and fellowship were maintained, till within a few years.’

Unitarians have indeed generally,—because generally they have thought the interest of their party would be best promoted in this way,—professed to regard the Orthodox as Christians. At times, however,—when they thought the interests of their party would be promoted by another course,—they have held a different language. I remember several years ago to have seen a pamphlet, said to have been written by a distinguished Unitarian, entitled, if I rightly recollect, ‘A Letter to a friend, on joining the new Episcopal [St. Paul’s] church,’ in which it was contended that no Unitarian could consistently attend Episcopal worship, because the Orthodox Episcopalian and the Unitarian WORSHIP DIFFERENT GODS. And lately there has been published a sermon, which has received the unqualified approbation of all the journals of the Unitarian party, in which it is maintained, that those who believe in the divinity of Christ DENY THE LORD JESUS; which is but saying they are not Christians.

Unitarians have also been very willing to exchange with Orthodox ministers, when the latter would keep out of view, in the discourses delivered in Unitarian pulpits, their distinctive opinions. But where has been the instance in which an Orthodox minister has plainly and conscientiously preached Orthodox doctrines in a Unitarian pulpit, and found a continuance of the desire previously manifested of maintaining with him ministerial fellowship?

Among the Congregational ministers and churches generally, in New England, ministerial intercourse and Christian fellowship were maintained, till within about fifteen years. But none of the ministers and churches were then *known* to be Unitarian. As soon as it was made manifest that several ministers and churches were

\* See Belsham’s “Memoirs of the Life of the Rev. Theophilus Lindsey.”



Unitarian, ecclesiastical fellowship was, as far as possible, withheld by the decidedly Orthodox. And the line of severation has been more and more extended and distinctly drawn, as the Unitarianism of ministers and churches has been brought to light. Is not this fact the very thing of which Unitarians complain? It is not because certain Congregational ministers have adopted different principles of procedure from their predecessors, that they now withhold their fellowship from certain other Congregational ministers, but because they *hold and act upon the same principles*; which principles require the withholding of fellowship and ministerial intercourse from those who deny the fundamental truths of evangelical religion; and those truths are denied by Unitarians.

Let me now, Mr. Editor, appeal to every enlightened and candid reader, whether the stand which the Orthodox in the United States have taken with respect to Unitarians, in refusing to exchange pulpits with them, to hold ministerial or ecclesiastical communion with them, or to acknowledge them as Christians—can be considered as an *innovation*? Is not their duty to do so an unavoidable inference from the directions given by the inspired writers on this subject? Is not the practice in strict conformity with the principles and habits of the Orthodox in all ages? Can the friends of truth do otherwise, without shamefully deserting “the footsteps of the flock” of Christ? As to higgling about the laws of “politeness,” of “urbanity,” or of “Christian civility,” it is idle. The question is not, whether certain respectable individuals are polished gentlemen, amiable companions, accomplished scholars, or eloquent preachers? They may be all these; and we may, very properly, respect and love them, and take pleasure in their company; and yet they may have no just claim whatever to be regarded as true ambassadors or followers of Christ, or as teachers of his genuine Gospel. The question is, **DO THEY, OR DO THEY NOT, REJECT THE ESSENCE OF CHRISTIANITY?** If they do, they surely **CANNOT BE ACKNOWLEDGED AS CHRISTIANS.** Do they, or do they not, take away from the Gospel those doctrines which are just as indispensable and vital to the hopes of the soul, as the presence of the sun is to the coherence and order of the solar system? If they do, to parley or temporize with them, is treason to our Redeemer.

The truth is, the situation of the Orthodox, surrounded by Unitarians, at the present day, is, in no small degree, analogous to that of the primitive Christians surrounded with pagans. The different classes of pagans had been long accustomed to acknowledge each other; and if the primitive Christians had been willing to reciprocate this habit, they might have escaped persecution. If they had gone to the pagan feasts, participated in their sacrifices, admitted them to the Lord's table, and recognized them as brother religionists, all had been well in the estimation of their idolatrous neigh-

bors. But this the Christians were not permitted to do. They steadfastly proclaimed that all the forms of idolatry were abominable in the sight of God; that all who rejected the religion of Christ were in the way to perdition; that all men must turn from their dumb idols and carnal ordinances, and believe in Christ, or perish eternally. The pagans considered this honest zeal, on the part of Christians, as indicating a malignant spirit. That which ought to have been approved as the purest benevolence, was reviled as the bitterest and most merciless bigotry. The Christians were immediately persecuted with unrelenting fury; they were hunted like beasts of prey; their blood flowed in every direction; and that they were not wholly exterminated, was not owing to the charity or forbearance of those whom they sought to save.

In like manner, Orthodox Christians now believe, that all men are depraved, condemned and perishing; that there is no other name given under heaven, among men, whereby we must be saved, but the name Christ Jesus; and all that do not, from the heart, receive and rest upon the Saviour as the Lord their righteousness and strength, must die in their sins and perish everlastingly. These truths they constantly proclaim, and beseech men to flee from the wrath to come, and lay hold on eternal life. For this they are branded with the severest epithets, and treated as if they were the most malignant of men. If the Orthodox verily believe these things to be so, would they not be chargeable with cruelty, were they not to warn men of their real situation? And would they not be chargeable with worse than cruelty, were they to take by the hand, acknowledge as brethren in Christ, and introduce into their pulpits, the enemies of the Saviour, who would pervert the Gospel, and be likely to destroy the souls of those who heard and believed them? It might, indeed, give mutual pain thus to stand aloof from amiable and respectable acquaintances. But is it possible for a conscientious man, in such a case, to confer with flesh and blood? Is it possible for an honest man, who believes there is such a thing as truth, who loves the souls of men, and who regards the authority of God, to hesitate a moment about the proper answer? For my part, I have no hesitation in saying, that were the Orthodox, with their creed and views, to treat Unitarians, as if they believed them to be Christians, and in a safe state, they would indeed be guilty of the most atrocious cruelty that one moral agent could well manifest toward another.

PACIFICUS.

## REVIEWS.

LECTURES ON INFANT BAPTISM, by Leonard Woods, D. D. Abbot Professor of Christian Theology in the Theological Seminary, Andover. Andover, Mark Newman, 1828. pp. 174.

The writers of the New Testament concern themselves very little with matters of external religion; and, while they inculcate spiritual duties with such earnestness and precision as to secure every honest man from all danger of mistake, they leave Christianity to assume such an outward form, in many particulars, as may best suit the genius and circumstances of the different people by whom it is received. The only ritual observances which they enjoin, are the sacraments of *Baptism* and the *Lord's Supper*; and with regard to the *mode* of celebrating even these, they have left us no very definite instructions. The comparative importance which they attached to the mode of observing these rites, may be estimated by comparing their slight notices respecting it, with the minute and labored details of the Mosaic ritual.

Succeeding teachers have not always, in this respect, followed the steps of their inspired guides. The forms of religion have often, in their minds, risen in importance almost to an equality with its spiritual duties. Many have looked in the Scriptures for the same circumstantial exactness in the description of the rite of *Baptism*, as in the enumeration of the essential qualities of the Christian character, and have seemed to suppose it as necessary to copy minutely the ritual observances of the apostles, as to receive their doctrines and imitate their virtues.

Accordingly, it has been the lot of the doctrine of baptism, as of most doctrines pertaining to external religion, to be magnified far beyond its real importance, and to be discussed with a heat and acrimony which have blinded and embittered the minds of those engaged in the controversy respecting it. Where there are few data, there is little scope for argument; and, in such cases, zealous disputants find it more to their purpose to expose the weakness and ridicule the pretensions of their opponents, than to give a fair view of the merits of their own cause.

The author of the Lectures now before us has endeavored, we think successfully, to avoid the errors into which most who have preceded him in the discussion of this subject, have fallen. He has rejected those weapons, so often employed, which have proved mere foils that might bruise and irritate, but could not subdue. He has wisely chosen not to mingle in such unpromising conflict, but has taken a safer position, and selected more efficient weapons.

His first care has been to ascertain how much the Scriptures reveal on this subject, and not to determine how much they ought

to have revealed. He freely concedes that the case must be made out by *circumstantial evidence*; and by this frank confession he has, at once, cleared the subject of numberless difficulties, in which it has been involved by those who were unwilling to acknowledge so much, lest it should throw suspicion on their cause. Knowing precisely on what ground he stands, and having no wish to press the argument beyond the bounds of fair criticism, he has no temptation to undue excitement, and is perfectly willing to allow his opponents all they can justly claim; and the book everywhere gives evidence of that calm and collected state of mind, which is always produced by clear views and correct feelings.

It is not our intention to give an analysis of these Lectures; for to obtain anything like an adequate notion of the real value of the argument, the book itself must be *studied*. It is one of those few works, which, as Lord Bacon says, "are to be chewed and digested; that is, to be read wholly, and with diligence and attention."

The remarks on the *manner of treating the subject*, and on the *kind and degree of evidence necessary*, pp. 9—22, are rich in instruction, and highly honorable to the understanding and feelings of the author. Misapprehension on these two points, has been the most fruitful source of irritation and perplexity to those who have engaged in this controversy; but they are here elucidated with such clearness of thought and pertinency of illustration, that we felt, on reading the first Lecture, as though the chief obstacles to a decision of the question had already been removed.

The argument itself is in every respect a *rational argument*, and such as is always agreeable to an enlightened and thoughtful mind. We can hardly conceive how a man, whose intellectual powers have been trained to close and accurate thought, can examine it candidly, without being satisfied that the same reasons which convince us that the Lord's day is designed to take the place of the Jewish sabbath, and the Lord's Supper, of the Jewish passover, ought also to convince us that baptism is designed to take the place of circumcision.

The third, fourth and fifth Lectures, deserve particular attention as a specimen of the highest and best kind of historical criticism. They, who are accustomed to reason soberly from the facts of history, will feel the force of the reasoning contained in these Lectures, and will find them a model worthy of imitation.

The extended criticism on Matt. xix. 13, 14, pp. 58—74, is, we think, sound and judicious; and it is no small additional proof of the correctness of the interpretation the author has given to these passages, that each of the three Evangelists who relate this occurrence, make use of the simple genitive, *τοιούτων*, without the preposition *ἐκ*. As to the objection, that Christ immediately subjoins a lesson of humility, (Mark x. 15,) was there not, as

Dr. Woods suggests, peculiar need of inculcating this virtue on the disciples at that time? For what but a feeling of pride could induce them to rebuke those who brought little children to their Master?

The criticism on I Cor. vii. 14, pp. 80—93, is equally satisfactory. The reasoning on this text, particularly pp. 83, 84, appears to us entirely original; and it is certainly, clear and strikingly conclusive. We would also recommend to the careful consideration of those who reject Infant Baptism, the reasoning on pp. 103, 104; and the discussion on the word *covenant*, pp. 121—129.

With regard to the *relation of baptized children to the church*, pp. 145—148, we regret that Dr. Woods did not extend his remarks farther. This subject is very imperfectly understood, and needs elucidation. From hints scattered here and there among the early ecclesiastical writers, and even from the very nature of the case, as Dr. Woods has stated it, there seems some reason for concluding, that Christian children, after baptism, were originally regarded as members of the Christian church, in the same sense as Jewish children, after circumcision, were regarded as members of the Jewish church. The churches of our country have, in general, grossly neglected baptized children, and it is time that they were awake to their duty on this important subject.

The eighth Lecture, on the *mode of baptism*, is made, as the author informs us, as brief as possible. It is indeed not so important to ascertain the *exact mode*, as the *proper subjects* of baptism; and it was the comparatively slight importance of this part of the subject, which induced Dr. Woods to pass it over more hastily. It would have been gratifying, however, to find a more extended discussion of this point; for though the premises are strongly and clearly stated, yet the studied brevity with which the arguments are developed, may have a tendency to prevent their full effect on minds unaccustomed to close thinking.

We could wish also, that the references to authorities had been more numerous in the latter part of the sixth Lecture. We know the book was designed for common use; but references need be no hindrance to common readers, and to students they are indispensable.

The style of these Lectures, like that of all Dr. Woods' publications, is remarkable for its perspicuity, correctness and simplicity.

It is not to be expected that these Lectures will appear equally convincing to all who read them. To some they may appear, to want *strength*, because they have no *bitterness*. To feel their full force requires something of that candor and clearness of conception which dictated them. Old prejudices are not easily eradicated; and the remarks on the eleventh page of this work are enough to show, that these prejudices may be innocent, and owe their origin to feelings which we ought to respect. But these Lectures must,



at least, convince our Baptist brethren that we have some reason on our side, and that there is some among us capable of stating our reasons kindly and strongly.

We wish there might be more controversy of this kind before the public; for it throws light on the subjects it treats of, and tends to lead candid and intelligent men to agreement on points where they now conscientiously differ. Intemperate zeal, even in a good cause, defeats its own object; for it so distorts all arguments, as nearly to annihilate their influence on the impartial, and so irritates opponents, as to close their minds forever against conviction. For what confidence can they place in men who seem to despise and hate them on account of their errors? Who would trust a physician that begins his prescriptions by falling into a passion with his patients, and abusing them because they are sick?

Intemperate zeal, besides being injudicious, shows a bad state of moral feeling. Supposing the errors of our opponents to be fatal, is it not misfortune enough for them to wander in darkness while in this world, and be consigned to eternal woe in the world to come? Must we hate those who are in this sad condition, and do what we can to abridge their brief comforts, and debar them from all hope of recovery, by exciting their prejudices against the truth, and casting odium on their name?

There are times indeed, when *severity* is necessary to silence insolent and unreasonable opposers, and to make the indifferent feel the importance of truth. All the irrepressible and sarcastic vehemence of Luther seemed requisite for the conflict with such opponents as he had to contend with, and for the task of arousing the world from the dead sleep of the dark ages. But with all our reverence for the character of Luther, we should be inclined, in ordinary cases, to say with Melancthon, *a contentioso theologo, bone Deus, libera nos.*

But this acrimony is even absurd, when manifested in controversy respecting errors which are confessedly unessential. Why should we be so much excited about that which God does not see fit to mark with disapprobation? Why should those, who believe that the interests of eternity depend entirely on the state of the heart, be so blinded by their zeal for a *religious rite*, as, for the sake of it, not only to neglect, but even to destroy, *religious feeling*. The church is too poor in piety to squander it in this manner. There is wickedness enough in the world to afford ample employment for all the pious feeling that can, by any means, be brought to bear against it. And yet, even in times of religious revival, when every feeling of every pious heart ought to be engrossed in the one great object of saving the souls of men, misguided zeal has often withdrawn the attention from the spiritual duties of religion, and fixed it on this unimportant, and comparatively useless controversy respecting Baptism. The relenting sinner is stopped in

the midst of his inquiries ; anxiety for his salvation is lost ; his feelings are irritated ; he returns to his indifference, despising a religion which he considers the source of such vexatious contention. Why should the soul be ruined through zeal for a particular mode of baptizing the body ?

Yet such is human nature ; continually withdrawing from what is real, and fixing on what is circumstantial, in religion. So it was even in the days of the apostles ; and the constant and fierce contentions respecting *forms* among the new converts to Christianity, gave their teachers incessant trouble and perplexity. They remonstrated, they attempted to fasten the mind on spiritual things, they urged the importance of conformity to God in heart and life ; but all in vain ; for their disciples would dispute on subjects of no real importance. Paul, to avoid contention with the Jews, circumcised Timothy ; he rejoiced that he had baptized so few at Corinth, as, otherwise, he might have been drawn in as a party to the disputes which were reigning there ; and he indignantly rebukes the Galatians for their attachment to *the weak and beggarly elements of the world*.

Would men be so zealous in their contentions respecting ritual observances, if they had adequate conceptions of God, or vivid impressions of eternity ? Can God, that spiritual, eternal, almighty Being, the Creator and Ruler of the universe, look on the mode of applying an external rite as a matter of so much moment ? What is the form of baptism in this world, to the eternity of heaven or hell, towards which we are hastening, in the world to come ?

Under the ancient dispensation, it was necessary that religion should be made, in a high degree, an object of sense ; that one people should be singled out for its preservation, and by a multiplicity of peculiar customs, be separated from the dangerous society of pagans. Under such circumstances, God viewed rites as of great importance, and accordingly he gave such minute directions concerning them that mistake was impossible. Had he viewed them as of the same importance under the new dispensation, he would have pursued the same course.

But when the fulness of time had come for the manifestation of the Son of God, it was no longer necessary that one people should be kept separate from all the rest of the world, in order to prevent the total obliteration of the knowledge of the true God, and that religion should address itself so much to the senses of men. Christianity was designed to be a spiritual and a universal religion. Hence, under the new dispensation, rites and ceremonies are comparatively unimportant. The people of God are no longer in bondage under the elements of the world ; they have been called unto liberty, and should not be entangled again with the yoke of bondage.

Slight differences with regard to the forms of religion, which the inspired teachers of Christianity did not deem of sufficient importance to merit particular notice, have too often given rise to the fiercest controversies; and these have frequently been conducted with a spirit unworthy of Christians, and unworthy of rational men. How many volumes of such controversy have been deservedly consigned to oblivion! We hope the same fate awaits what works still remain of the same spirit. They are the passionate freaks of the childhood of the church. She has now grown old enough to behave better.

TRACTS PUBLISHED BY THE AMERICAN UNITARIAN ASSOCIATION.

(Continued from p. 191.)

The fourteenth in this series of Tracts is on the very important and interesting subject of "experimental religion." After remarking that Unitarians are commonly represented as "no friends to experimental religion," the writer proceeds to shew in what sense this is true, and in what sense it is not true. Unitarians, he says, do not agree with those who "talk and write about experimental religion, as if it were a mysterious, unintelligible process or possession, the badge to be worn by those few only, who are the special favorites of heaven. What such understand by experimental religion, seems to be a certain tangible object which is to be seized or acquired altogether, or else nothing is gained. It is the result of a peculiar call of God, comes from influences entirely supernatural, and is in fact a sort of miraculous power, which enables them, and them only, to step at once out of darkness into light, to leave what is termed the world, and join what is termed the company of the saints. Hence they sometimes speak of *getting* religion, and *losing* religion, as they would speak of getting or losing property, as if it were an outward possession, and not a temper of mind and heart; as if it were a certain point, at which, when they arrive, they are to stop and congratulate themselves on the possession, and not a principle of increase and improvement in piety and holiness; as if it were a kind of charter for heaven, put into their hands they know not how nor whence, and insuring to them, by one stirring process, the benefits of salvation." pp. 3, 4. The persons here spoken of, with whom Unitarians do not agree, are farther represented as "talking in vague and high wrought strains about conversion;" as "pointing out a specific time, when a certain swell of feeling, they scarcely know what or whence, passed over their minds;" as "thinking themselves a great deal better than all the rest of the world, and saying, in the spirit of the Pharisee, of old, 'God I thank thee that I am not as other men are;'" and as

"denying the name and character of Christians to those around them, whose lives and conduct are, at least, as near the Christian standard as their own." p. 13. They "speak of their fellow Christians as children of darkness and of wrath; pity the whole world besides themselves; regard and talk of the enclosures, within which their sects have fenced themselves, as a kind of privileged Goshen; and thank God, with a very strange sort of gratitude, that he has made them so much wiser and holier than other human beings." They "make boastful comparisons of themselves with others, and point the finger of reproach at such of their fellow men as do not see with their eyes on religious subjects." They "think that experimental religion is showy and noisy, that it seeks public exhibitions, that it is not satisfied till it has been registered before the world, and that it loves to blow a trumpet, or hang out a flag." p. 18.

With views such as these of experimental religion, the writer of the Tract assures us, Unitarians do not agree. And who, we ask, in the name of reason, does agree with them? What sect, or "sects," to use his own word, is this writer describing? Where do they live? What are their books? We wish to examine them for ourselves, that if their views have been fairly stated, we may unite with our worthy friend, the tract-maker, in holding them up to merited rebuke and scorn.

But, to be serious, for the subject is of a most serious nature; we have quoted the sentences above given, for the purpose of shewing our readers how *some* Unitarians can suffer themselves to talk and write on experimental religion; how flippantly they can retail the vulgar, commonplace slanders respecting it; how they caricature and abuse evangelical Christians; how clearly they manifest, either the bitterness of their spirit, or their total ignorance of the subject; and how they thus verify the declaration of the apostle, "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."

The author next proceeds to give us his own views of experimental religion, and observes, "We understand by it, that thorough, vital religion, which is planted in the heart, and sanctifies the thoughts, the purposes, and the life, and which stands opposed to mere speculation, or mere profession, to idle clamors, or boastful words." p. 5. Very well; this is just what *we* understand by experimental religion. It is a religion which is felt; a religion which is experienced and exemplified in all its sanctifying and saving power.

"The *elements* which enter into the composition of experimental religion," the author observes, are these: first, to "receive the truths of religion as realities;" second, to have "a sense of *personal interest* in the subject;" and third, to make it "a govern-

ing principle of *life and conduct.*" We have no objection to all this, especially if we may be allowed to explain the terms. To regard the truths of religion as realities; to receive them as personally applicable to us; and to make them the rule of our faith, our feelings, our conversation and conduct, is, doubtless, to be experimentally and practically religious. But here an inquiry presents itself, which is seen at once to be fundamental, and on which we shall inevitably split: *What are the truths of religion?* It has been a favorite maxim of the Unitarian school, "No matter what a man believes, or disbelieves, if his life is good." But if the first principles or "elements" of experimental religion be such as have been mentioned; if we must regard the *truths* of religion as realities which are strictly and personally applicable to us, and by which we must regulate our feelings and conduct; then it is of vital consequence what we believe. It is *essential* to the value and efficacy of religion, that correct ideas be entertained of the *truths of the Gospel.* Here is a person, who regards certain propositions of a religious nature as realities—realities in which he is deeply and solemnly interested, and by which he endeavors to form his character; but it happens, that every one of these propositions is untrue. Is this person a subject of true experimental religion? The heathen believes his gods are angry, and that nothing will appease their wrath but the blood of his child. - All this is, in his apprehension, a reality—a reality which comes home with dreadful interest to his feelings, and agreeably to which he dares not refuse to act. He rises and immolates his child. But is this bloody transaction justifiable? Is this man a subject of experimental religion?

The design of these comparisons is to show, that, according to the first principles or "elements" of experimental religion, as exhibited in the Tract, and to which, with proper explanations, we do not object, the inquiry obviously is essential, *What are the truths of religion?* To experience a false system of religion, is one thing; and to experience the true religion, is another. To believe in the reality of Unitarian doctrine, to apply it, and practise it, is one thing; and to believe and obey the truth as it is in Jesus, may be quite another. Let a person believe fully that there is a holy and sovereign God, such as the Scriptures represent—that he has issued a just and strict law, denouncing death upon every transgressor—that our race not only have transgressed, but, while in a state of nature, do continually transgress, and, consequently, are under sentence of eternal death—that the divine Word, who "in the beginning was with God, and was God," in the fulness of time "was made flesh," became a man, and, suffered and died to make expiation for sin,—that, through him, pardon and salvation are promised to all those who repent and believe, but that a most aggravated destruction is denounced against those who



refuse these offers of mercy ;—let a person fully and firmly believe these truths, receive them as strictly applicable to himself, and regulate his feelings and conduct by them, and we hesitate not to say, that he has experienced religion. Let him feel and live, from day to day, as though there is a holy and sovereign God, to whose law he is subject, and to whose tribunal he is bound—let him regard himself habitually as a justly condemned transgressor, whose only hope of forgiveness and salvation is in the blood and merits of the Saviour—let him deeply repent of all his sins, embrace the Lord Jesus Christ as his deliverer and portion, and become that new and holy creature, which the Gospel requires, “walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless,”—let him believe, apply, and obey the truths of religion in this sense ; and, though his character will be totally different from that which is formed under the full influence of Unitarian doctrines, still we must believe him an experienced Christian. He has passed through no “mysterious unintelligible process,” and has felt no unaccountable “swell of feeling, he scarcely knows what or whence, pass over his mind.” He does not “think himself a great deal better than all the rest of the world, or say, in the spirit of the Pharisee of old, ‘God, I thank thee that I am not as other men are.’” He does not “make boastful comparisons of himself with others,” or “seek public exhibitions,” or “blow a trumpet,” or “hang out a flag.” Neither does he, like many pretenders to religion, *speak great swelling words of vanity* ; or *have men’s persons in admiration because of advantage* ; or *speak evil of the things which he understands not*. Still he has experienced the power of divine grace on his heart, and is the happy subject of vital experimental godliness. His religion differs from that of the Unitarian, chiefly because the *doctrines*, on which it is based, and out of which it grows, are different. He believes, applies, and obeys one system of doctrines, and the Unitarian another ; and characters are formed under these influences, which differ, we had almost said heaven-wide. Of such vital importance is it, on the score of practical experimental religion, that people be thoroughly and properly instructed, and be made fully acquainted with the truth as it is in Jesus.

The writer of this Tract, through the whole of it, and more particularly towards the close, inveighs strongly against the idea of instantaneous conversion. “Some people talk of experiencing religion at a *particular time*, as if it were to be done but once, or all at once. This is certainly a very strange notion. We must experience religion, not once merely, or at a certain time, but every day, and at all times.” p. 15. Does this writer really think it implied in the doctrine of instantaneous conversion, that when religion is experienced, it is experienced once for all, so that no farther exercise of it, or progress in it, is needful ? His language here, and

in several other places, implies that he so considers it. But if he does, we can only say, that his ignorance is such as to disqualify him utterly for writing on the subject; and if he does not, he is an intentional deceiver. We believe as strongly as he can, that religion should be exercised daily, habitually. "It should be interwoven with our whole moral and spiritual frame." And not only must we exercise it, we must make *progress* in it. We must "grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." We must be "faithful unto death," if we would "inherit a crown of life." And all this is perfectly consistent, in itself, and in the mind of every experienced Christian, with the doctrine of instantaneous conversion. For what is this doctrine? That there is a time, an instant, when the child of God is spiritually born. In other words, there is a time, an instant, when vital religion commences its existence in the soul. But this does not imply that the whole work of sanctification is at this instant accomplished. It implies just the contrary. The new convert is at first a babe, and he must live and grow. He must press onward, and mount upward, from strength to strength, and from attainment to attainment, till he arrives at the stature of a perfect man in Christ.

We may ask the publishers and the patrons of this Tract, how, with all their opposition to evangelical doctrine, they can consistently rid even their own system of the doctrine of instantaneous conversion. You admit there are some now in the world, who are not experienced Christians. They are not to be regarded as truly religious. They are in the broad road, call this what you may. Suppose one of this number at length experiences religion. Must there not be a *time* when this change is accomplished? Grant, if you please, that much preparation of mind and heart is necessary; still, must there not be an *instant* when religion is first embraced, and when its power begins to be felt? Must there not be an instant when the broad road is left, and the narrow one entered, and when the person in question *first* possesses the character, and becomes entitled to the name, of an experimental Christian? Certainly you must admit this, unless you will suppose that there are individuals now, and continually, in different places, who are neither religious nor irreligious, neither in the broad nor in the narrow way—a mongrel class of beings, who are neither the one thing nor the other. And if you really believe there is a class of beings of this description, then will you please to inform us, as soon as shall be convenient, in what chapters and verses of the Holy Scriptures their character is particularly described? And will you inform us farther, should it be the lot of such to die in their present condition, to what state you think they will be consigned, in the future world?

We are next to consider the Tract entitled "*The Doctrine of Pronouns applied to Christ's testimony of himself.* By Noah Worcester, D. D."

"Pronouns," says Dr. W. "are words used as substitutes for the names of persons or things, to avoid a too frequent repetition of the same word or sound. A personal pronoun is a substitute for the name or title of a person; and it implies all that the name or title would imply, if used in the same place. A human person in the present state is supposed to possess two distinct natures, a body and a soul, which are so united and identified as to be but one person. The pronouns *I*, *my*, *myself*, include the *whole person*. Suppose then, that John should say, '*I* cannot think, *I* cannot choose, *I* have no sense of right or wrong.' Peter asks him what he means by such strange declarations. John replies, '*I* spoke only of my *body*, my inferior nature.' What would be thought of John's veracity, or the propriety of his explanation?"

"Trinitarians adopt the hypothesis, that Christ is God and man in one person. Here then we have two distinct minds to one body, supposed to be united and identified in the one person, Jesus Christ. But when Christ or any other person says, '*I* can, or *I* cannot, do this or that,' the pronoun *I* embraces all the powers of the person. How unfortunate then is the method which Trinitarians have adopted, in explaining the language of Christ! He said, '*I* can do nothing of myself,' '*My* Father is greater than *I*.' When such language is urged as proof that Christ was not the independent God, Trinitarians venture to say that in such declarations Christ spoke only of his *human nature*. As *man*, he was dependent; yet as *God*, he was independent." pp. 5—8.

We have here given the argument of Dr. W. in his own words. Compressed to a syllogism, it will stand thus:

"The pronouns *I*, *my*, *myself*, include the *whole person*." Christ uses these pronouns in setting forth his inferiority and dependence. Therefore, he is inferior to the Father, and dependent on him, in his *whole person*; and consequently the Trinitarian hypothesis cannot be sustained.

This argument would be conclusive against us, if the major proposition were the truth. But we are satisfied that it is not; and we are astonished, that a mind, as acute and candid as that of Dr. W., should be imposed upon by such a sophism. "The pronouns *I*, *my*, *myself*, include the *whole person*." Let us inquire and see whether this is uniformly, or *commonly*, the case. The following examples are cited by Dr. W., except that he puts them in the negative form: '*I* think, *I* choose, *I* have a sense of right and wrong.' Does *I* here include the whole person, soul and body, or merely the soul? Could any one, in using these expressions, be understood to mean that his material *body* thought, and chose, and felt a sense of right and wrong? Or would not the application of

the pronoun be limited by the connexion, so as to prevent the possibility of misapprehension?

Take another class of examples. 'I walked a mile this morning; I had coffee for breakfast, and meat for dinner, and tea at supper.' Does *I* here include the whole person, soul and body, intellectual and animal; or is it confined exclusively to the latter? A person using these expressions could not be understood to mean that his immortal part walked a mile in the morning; or that his soul had been nourished through the day, by such substances as coffee, meat, and tea. Nor would he think it necessary to add, by way of explanation, that he spoke only in respect to his corporeal and animal nature.

Take still another class of examples; for they can be multiplied to almost any extent. 'I rejoice at your success. I am sorry for your misfortune. I hope and believe you will yet be blessed.' Here again *I* does not include the whole person, soul and body; as joy, sorrow, hope and belief, are manifestly affections of the mind.

Dr. W. admits there is one exception to his remark, that the pronoun *I* includes the whole person. But, instead of one, there are thousands. Indeed his remark is contradicted by the general use of the personal pronouns. *They seldom include the whole person, but refer to the material and animal, or the intellectual and moral part of our constitution, just as the nature of the subject requires.*

Persons often use these pronouns in application to themselves, as acting in a particular character or office. An agent goes to New York to purchase goods, and writes to his employer, 'I have been here a fortnight, and have done nothing.' That is, I have accomplished nothing as your agent. An ambassador at a foreign court writes to his sovereign, 'Yesterday I signed a treaty of peace.' That is, in his official capacity he performed the act mentioned. In these, and similar cases, persons use the pronoun, not in their natural, but in their *official* capacity; and the phraseology needs no qualification in order to be perfectly understood.

We admit that Christ uses the personal pronouns, in setting forth his inferiority and dependence. He does say, "I can do nothing of myself." "My father is greater than I." But these pronouns do not necessarily include his whole person. They may, in perfect conformity with the authorized use of language, be limited to a part of it, by the nature of the sentiment conveyed. Nor is there any reason why this limitation should be formally expressed, any more than when a person says, 'I drank coffee for breakfast,' he should be careful to add, that he referred not to his intellectual, but his animal nature.

Christ uses the personal pronouns in setting forth his *divinity*. "I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last." "I am he who

searcheth the reins and hearts." But here the pronouns do not include his whole person; they refer only to his divine nature. Nor do the passages need qualifying to render them perspicuous, except as they are qualified by the sentiments they express. No one can regard such declarations as applicable to a human being.

Dr. W. has several pages on "John's care to prevent misapprehensions;" and he infers from this, that if the apostle had understood our Saviour's expressions of inferiority and dependence as applying only to his human nature, he certainly would have said so in some part of his Gospel. But we discover no reason for this supposition. John had said expressly in the beginning of his Gospel, that "the Word," or Christ, "was God, the Creator of all things;" and that this divine "Word *was made flesh*," or became a man. He had a right, therefore, to conclude, that when expressions occurred importing either the inferiority and dependence of Christ, or his divinity, the reader would refer them to that part of his person, to which they were limited by the sense. We see no reason why either John, or the Spirit which guided him, should have been more explicit on this subject.

Dr. W. represents "the Trinitarian explanation" as being inconsistent with itself. "If Jesus Christ was personally the independent God, his declarations of dependence on the Father," it is said, "*cannot be true*, in the sense contended for by Trinitarians. For their hypothesis is, not that the human nature was united to the Father, but to a second person, as independent as the Father. Now who cannot see that personal self-sufficiency precludes the possibility of personal dependence? If Christ was personally self-sufficient, how could his human nature need aid from another person? Yet Christ did assert his personal dependence on the Father." p. 13. Dr. W. ought to have remembered that "the Trinitarian explanation" not only makes three persons or distinctions in the Godhead, but these three to be *one God*. The divine three are so intimately, though mysteriously united, as to constitute, in an important sense, but *one*. "Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me?" "As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father." "He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father." "I and my Father are *one*." The three persons or distinctions in the Godhead are not to be wholly separated, even in thought. Their union is most intimate, and their dependence mutual. Hence, in perfect consistency with "the Trinitarian explanation," Christ might speak of himself, in respect to either nature, or both, as in some sense dependent on the Father.

We doubt, however, whether his expressions often import this. They more frequently express his *subordination* to the Father in point of *office*. In accomplishing the great work of redemption, the Father is, *by covenant*, the *head*. He sends the Son, and



gives him his commission; so that, in executing this commission, the Son may be said to speak his Father's words, and to do his Father's works. And when his life on earth was drawing to a close, with literal truth and propriety he might address his Father, and say, "I have now finished the work which *thou gavest me to do.*"

Dr. W. considers "two important texts;" the first of which, that on which his remarks are principally founded, is the following: "The Father himself loveth you, because ye have loved me, and have believed that I came out from God." The only reason here assigned, why the Father loved the disciples, was, that they had loved Christ, and had believed that he came out from God. Consequently, as we are left to infer, the Father loves all those who love Christ, and who believe that he came out from God. Hence, he loves Unitarians; and hence all Christians ought to love them, and receive them to fellowship.

If this argument proves anything, it proves a great deal too much. If we must embrace all those as brethren, who profess to love Christ, and to believe that he came out from God; then the arms of our fellowship must be very widely extended. We must embrace as brethren, not only Unitarians and Universalists, and all the various sects in our own country, but the persecuting Catholics, the Neologists of Germany, and all the nominal corrupt churches of the East. And more than this, we must receive to fellowship all the Mohammedans: for the Mohammedans profess a great respect for Christ, regarding him as inferior only to their own prophet. They believe he was a teacher sent from God.

It was a good reason why the Father should love the disciples, that they loved Christ, and believed that he came out from God. But how did they love him? How did they regard him? With what views and feelings did they embrace and follow him? Shew us the man now, who loves Christ as they did, who regards him as they did, and who believes that he came forth from God in the same sense they did, and we will cheerfully embrace him as our brother. Yes, we will hail him, expecting assuredly to find him a most devoted and efficient helper.

The charges of "equivocation and mental reservation," which Dr. W. supposes our system fixes upon the Saviour, with the remarks in his "Conclusion," "Appendix," and "Afterthought,"—all fall together to the ground, with his "doctrine of the pronouns." If the pronouns *I, my, myself, &c.*, as we commonly use them, uniformly and necessarily included the whole person, and were never applied to either part of it, as occasion might require, and the sense determine; then his reasoning would be sound and conclusive. But we have seen that this is not the case—not by any means. These pronouns rarely include the whole person, but are applied promiscuously to either part of it, the application being determined

entirely by the sense. His reasoning proceeds, therefore, on a false principle, and is entirely destitute of force. It proves nothing, unless it be the weakness of the cause which it was intended to support.

The professed design of Dr. W. in publishing this Tract, was, to "produce more caution, more candor, more forbearance and *brotherly love*, among *brethren* of different sects;" or, in plainer terms, it was to induce Trinitarians to embrace the Unitarians as brethren, and admit them to their Christian fellowship and confidence. But this design, however we may respect the motive which originated it, we do not think the Tract very likely to accomplish. Indeed, the two religious parties remaining what they are at present, we do not think Christian fellowship between them practicable, or even desirable. We rather subscribe to the sentiment of Mr. Belsham, the leading English Unitarian of the present day. "Those who hold doctrines so diametrically opposite cannot be fellow worshippers in the same temple. It is expedient that they should separate." We hope to treat Unitarians, as we would all men, with candor, and to cultivate towards them a spirit of Christian meekness and forbearance; but, while they deny the divinity and atonement of Christ, oppose and ridicule revivals of religion, and reject nearly all that seems to us important in the Gospel—to receive them to fellowship, and embrace them as brethren; is out of the question—it *cannot be*. We rejoice in the liberty which they possess, in common with ourselves, of retaining and cherishing their own views of religion, responsible only to the Judge of all. We would do nothing to infringe this liberty, or to disturb them in the exercise of any of their rights. But, so long as they adhere to their present views, of God, and the Saviour, and the truths of religion, we cannot walk with them as Christian brethren; and we see not how they can desire to walk with us. We ascribe divine honors to Christ. We have learned to sing that song, which we know is sung in heaven, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain." "Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth on the throne, and to the *Lamb*, forever." We cordially invite all to come and sing it with us. Unite with us, in adoring and praising the Lamb, as he is praised in heaven; and we will unite with you in every good work, to advance the glory, and hasten the triumphs, of his holy kingdom.

(To be continued.)

LETTERS OF AN ENGLISH TRAVELLER, TO HIS FRIEND IN  
ENGLAND, ON THE REVIVALS OF RELIGION IN AMERICA.  
*Boston: Bowles and Dearborn.* 1828. pp. 142, 18mo.

(Continued from p. 266.)

We have already spoken of the importance of the subject of revivals, of the responsibilities assumed by any one who attempts to discuss it, of the character and pretensions of the author of the work now under review, of his professed, and also of his real object. We have exhibited the opinions of the leaders of the Unitarian party, as it regards the fidelity of the author as a narrator of facts, and the general spirit which characterizes the work. We have seen that this work is important, not on account of its size, or its author, but because it has been adopted, sanctioned, and recommended in the most exalted terms, by the highest Unitarian authority. In examining this work, we are examining an approved exhibition of Unitarian reasoning, philosophy, morality, and religion. We will not, however, hold every one who is called a Unitarian responsible for all the sentiments contained in this work, or for the spirit which it indicates. We have no doubt, that the leaders, and those zealous partizans who are determined to go all lengths with them, are fully satisfied with the recommendations given of this work in their periodical publications. But we are assured that all persons of cool and collected minds, and who are accustomed to think for themselves, will not scruple to give this author a fair examination; and, although they are Unitarians, will not feel themselves obliged to think just as their leaders think, or to praise, merely because they applaud.

We proceed to our third topic of inquiry.

III. What are the means used by this author, to attain his object?

His object, as we have seen, is to attack revivals of evangelical religion. How then, does he proceed in accomplishing this purpose?

1. He assumes, without proof, the truth of a position on which the decision of the whole subject depends.

2. On the strength of this assumption, he proceeds to ridicule the Orthodox, who differ from him, and to expose them as weak, or irrational, or superstitious, for acting according to their own principles.

3. He colors, or distorts, or misrepresents their sentiments, so as to prejudice an unguarded mind against them.

4. He attempts to array the bad passions of the human heart against the personal character of the Orthodox, and to make them appear deficient in certain excellences which some Unitarians are inclined to arrogate as the peculiar glory of their own system.

5. He attacks, directly or indirectly, those institutions which are of fundamental consequence in extending the influence of vital religion, and which greatly impede the progress of Unitarianism.

When a general is arranging his troops, it is interesting to look at the philosophy of his arrangements; and it may not be amiss, before we proceed to illustrate the manner in which our author has executed his plan, to "philosophize a little" as it regards the principles of the case.

It is obvious then, that the author saves himself a great amount of labor and trouble, by *begging the question at the outset*. He thus, by a bold stroke, anticipates the enemy, and takes possession of the whole field of battle at once, and without any fighting or danger. "Not even a gun is heard, or a funeral note." Having done this, what could be more natural, or in character, than to follow up the victory to the utmost, by attempting to carry out his own principles, so easily established, to their full extent, and to ridicule all who differ from him, merely for being consistent with their own principles; and, (lest this should not suffice to remove entirely any impressions which the objects of his attack may have made, by fair reasoning, in favor of their own sentiments,) to expose their belief, their persons, and their most important institutions to contempt, by misrepresentation, and insinuation, and innuendo?

Who could stand before such an array of moral power? Who could resist an attack carried on upon principles so truly liberal, philosophical, charitable, gentlemanly, kind, moral, and religious? Are we, then, to wonder that our author should select a plan, which enables him so fully to display all his forces in battle array, and to bear down upon the enemy in such tremendous style? Who can wonder that there should be shouting among the leaders of the Unitarian cause, on the accession to their ranks of a champion so qualified to strike terror into the enemy, and to rally and lead to battle their faint-hearted, and panic-struck followers?

But, lest we lose ourselves in wonder at the wisdom of the mere outline of the arrangement of our author's forces, let us now examine and illustrate more particularly how he has executed in detail, each part of his plan.

1. Let us attend to the manner in which our author begs the fundamental question on which the whole subject of revivals rests.

The question is, Are all mankind, antecedently to a change of heart, entirely depraved, and in danger of endless ruin? If they are, then Orthodox views disclose a remedy such as men need; if they are not, then Orthodoxy is absurd, and Unitarian views are better adapted to the condition of man.

Let us look attentively at this point. If men are entirely depraved, and in danger of endless punishment for their sins, then they need a salvation of this kind—a radical change of moral cha-

acter, and pardon for their sins. This change will be a change, not from perfect sin to perfect holiness, but from entire depravity or partial holiness at first, which will at death become perfect holiness. This is a salvation from the power of sin. In addition to this, they need pardon for past sins; for if there were no pardon for the past, it would be vain to attempt to repent, and no effort would in fact be made. Now the Orthodox do believe that all men are free agents, and are entirely depraved in their moral character; and that the Holy Spirit produces a change of heart by the truth; and that the Son of God has rendered pardon consistent with the general good, by his atoning death. And they believe that the Bible teaches that the Agents, by whom this salvation is accomplished, are divine, and, together with the Father, are united, in the Trinity, as one God. Now, if man is entirely depraved, this system meets and supplies his wants. And, moreover, if man is changed from entire depravity to any degree of true holiness, the change must be instantaneous. From the very nature of free agency, sin is voluntary, and so is holiness. And there must be a particular time when the first holy emotion or volition takes place. It is of no consequence whether the person, at the time, notices and recognizes it as such; this is not always the case. But, admitting entire depravity, it is absurd to speak of regeneration as a gradual change. Sanctification may be, and always is, gradual. Now, if a sudden conversion is rational in one case, it is in many, and if the Holy Spirit can regenerate one, he can also regenerate many; and he can do it at different times, or in a short time. And, if it is a fact that the prevailing spirit of this world is adverse to true religion, there is a reason why the Holy Spirit should operate on many at once. It is necessary, in order to form a public sentiment against the power of those who ridicule, or disbelieve, or oppose experimental religion, and to remove in some degree the fear of man, and to encourage those who desire to become partakers in the blessings which result from true religion. Hence revivals, on Orthodox principles, are rational, philosophical, and necessary.

Not so on Unitarian principles. If men are not entirely depraved, to speak of a sudden change is irrational. All that can be expected is gradual improvement. And the agency of the Holy Spirit in producing regeneration and revivals of religion is unnecessary; and all the measures which are rational in the Orthodox, become irrational. Hence the plain truth is, that Orthodoxy and Unitarianism differ so fundamentally in principle, that there can be no agreement in practice. That which is rational and philosophical in practice, on Orthodox principles, is irrational and absurd on Unitarian principles; and that which would be rational and philosophical on Unitarian principles, if they were true, is irrational and absurd on Orthodox principles.



Now the author of these Letters may choose his own system; and if he is a Unitarian, he may, if he pleases, think the Orthodox irrational in their principles, and ridiculous in their practice. But he will please to remember, that his opinions are not arguments. And if he attacks Orthodoxy, or Orthodox revivals, he must not begin with assuming his own infallibility. The only rational way of attacking revivals, is to attack the principles whence they originate. Hence the author is bound to prove, by Scripture and an appeal to facts, that men are not entirely depraved. Then he can easily sweep away regeneration, and atonement, as needless; and deny the divinity of Christ, and of the Holy Spirit, and revivals, which are the result of this system.

Has the author anywhere done this, or even attempted to do it, by fair reasoning? Nowhere. Through the whole book, he takes it as a conceded point, that Unitarians are right of course, and the Orthodox wrong; and goes on to caricature and ridicule Orthodox revivals, as if nothing further could be said, after he has solemnly assured us, that he thinks them irrational and pernicious.

Suppose, now, that some philosopher should assume, that the earth is a vast plane, and not a sphere, and then proceed to ridicule all who attempt to sail around it, or who calculate latitude and longitude as if it were a sphere? What would our philosopher say to him? Would he not tell him, that a true philosopher should never begin an argument by begging the very point in question? Would he not say, 'Disprove our principles, and prove your own, before you ridicule our practice?' And thou that teachest another, teachest thou not thyself?

We wish it, then, to be remembered, that this whole book derives all its power, merely from an assumption of infallibility in our author and his party. This is, we know, a grave and weighty charge to bring against those who declaim so fluently against the assumption of popish infallibility, and against a dogmatizing spirit. Nevertheless, we have weighed well the assertion, and stand pledged to prove it, against all controversy, that the author of this book, and all his admirers, have in practice publicly exhibited themselves as a sect of philosophers, whose fundamental maxim of philosophizing on the subject of revivals is this,—first, to beg the question in debate, and then ridicule all who differ from them, adhere to their own principles, and reduce them to practice. We ask, fearlessly, can any one deny that this is the fact? Do not Unitarians differ fundamentally from the Orthodox on the following points, viz. entire depravity, regeneration, atonement, the supreme divinity of Christ, and of the Holy Spirit, and the future endless punishment of all who die unregenerate? Have we not proved that, if the Orthodox are correct on these points, revivals are rational and philosophical, and that conversion must be an instantaneous change, although sanctification is gradual? And have

we not shown that, on the supposition of the truth of the doctrines of the Orthodox, there are philosophical reasons for the sudden and simultaneous awakening, conviction and conversion of numbers of the community—that it is designed to suspend the power of adverse causes, and facilitate the progress of the truth? And have we not shown that these things are irrational and absurd, on Unitarian principles? But the author has not shown the falsehood of Orthodox principles; yet he ridicules their practices, and stigmatizes them as irrational, when they are, most manifestly, merely a rational and philosophical result of their system. Did not our author know this? Did he not say,

“But this religion is as remarkable in its character as it is in its colloquial exhibition; and the most extraordinary thing in its character, undoubtedly, is the system of *revivals* of religion as they are called. For these are brought into a system and plan, as much as the religion itself—a system of operations, as much as its theology is into a system of speculations.” p. 2.

This witness is true. And out of his own mouth will we condemn such a writer. He knew, or he ought to have known, that the “system of speculations” of which he speaks, when reduced to practice, produces, rationally and philosophically, that very “system of operations” which he condemns. Why then did he neglect to expose the falsehood of the system of speculations, and ridicule the Orthodox merely for being consistent with their own principles? Did he know, that whenever his party have fairly made attempts to reason, they have uniformly been defeated; and did he think, that it was easier to address the bad passions of men, than to attempt, what no one ever yet has been able to do, to shake the rock on which the church is founded, and against which the gates of hell shall not prevail? We do not here complain of his bad theology, but of his bad philosophy, and of his illiberal conduct. We do not at present affirm or deny the truth of either of the two opposite systems. But we do affirm,—and who can deny it?—that it is absurd and unphilosophical uncandid and unchristian, in a member of a small denomination, of recent origin, to ridicule the great majority of all the clergy and people of New England, for adhering to the system of their pilgrim fathers, and reducing it to practice, without adducing one fair argument against it. The writings, the institutions, the lives of our fathers, rebuke such men. Their very spirits frown on them. With unhallowed hands they are laying waste their churches, and breaking the mainspring which moved the whole noble system of machinery which they organized. They cannot, and dare not, meet with fair arguments, those who defend the principles of the Pilgrims. Yet they can talk of charity, and philosophy, and liberality, and denounce Evangelical men as bigots, and then assume their own infallibility as a first principle, and beg the question as it regards every fundamental point in debate, and

then ridicule all who will not tamely acquiesce in their decisions. The leaders do this, and their partisans are blindly and tamely led on, and seem to think that they are the people, and wisdom shall die with them. Truly, in our author's own words, "This is priestly power indeed, with a witness."

Does any one say, the author of these Letters has, by fair reasoning, shown the absurdity of the Orthodox system? We ask, where? Point out the page, the passage, the argument, and state it in syllogistic form, or any other form which can satisfy a logical reasoner. We have read the book attentively and repeatedly,—we have, as directed by the Rev. Mr. Ware, "read and pondered" it; but we find none. All that looks like it will not bear a moment's examination. Before the sun of truth, it vanishes, like the morning cloud, and like the early dew. Let us look at a few specimens. At pp. 14, 15, he gives a caricature of Orthodoxy, in stating the causes of revivals; and then proceeds to demolish, at one bold stroke, the whole system.

"It is thus, that, receiving the figurative representations of Scripture as literal, and forgetting those qualifications of its language which the reasonable interpreter must make,—he conjures up his fearful system of faith—fearful enough indeed, if it were really and universally believed, not only to plunge the world into an unheard of excitement, but to drive the whole world to absolute madness." p. 16.

Now for the argument. He *asserts*, first, that the Orthodox receive the figurative representations of Scripture as literal; secondly, that they forget those qualifications of its language which a reasonable interpreter must make; thirdly, that they *conjure* up their fearful system of faith; fourthly, that this system is fearful enough, if it was really and universally believed, not only to plunge the world into an unheard of excitement, but to drive the world to absolute madness. Not even Polyphemus, without an eye, burning with rage, and hurling huge rocks to terrify the sailors, and sink the ship, of Ulysses, was more valiant. It is done. We are prostrated at once.—But, having waited till we have recovered, in some degree, from the violence of the shock, we are happy to find that we have received no serious and permanent injury. The volley was indeed tremendous, but, most fortunately for us, it was a volley of mere assertions. Encouraged by this discovery, we are emboldened to arise from the dust, and to face this potent enemy. Nay more, we shall even venture to attack him in our turn, and that with his own weapons. We then assert, that the Orthodox do *not* receive the figurative representations of the Scripture as literal; they do *not* forget those qualifications of its language which a reasonable interpreter must make; nor do they conjure up a fearful system of any kind. Their system is rational and scriptural, and breathes peace on earth, and good will to men. Moreover, the

Unitarian system is irrational, and absurd, and unscriptural, and will destroy for eternity every man who fully believes it. In fact, if it were really and universally believed, it would, not only prevent all excitement on the subject of religion, but destroy all real religion on earth, and consign the whole human race to endless sin, misery and despair. It is needless to prove our assertions, though we could do it without the least difficulty. Our object is not now to prove or disprove any system, but merely to encounter our philosopher with his own weapons. Let him attempt to prove his assertions, and then he may call upon us to prove ours, and we will endeavor to do it, by scriptural and philosophical arguments.

Let us consider another specimen of his reasoning. He insinuates, pp. 77, 78, that the idea of a sudden conversion is a modern notion,—just as all who inveigh against revivals, whether Unitarians, infidels, or atheists, talk of the operations of the Holy Spirit as new light; and endeavors to prove that such men as Baxter, Doddridge, and Calvin, did not teach it. Then, after scoffing about this “new light,” and “modern improvements in spiritual machinery,” he endeavors to ridicule Matthias Flacius of Illyria, by introducing a quotation from Lardner. Then he pounces upon these “modern lights of the new world,” and rends them asunder as a lion rends his defenceless victim, and celebrates his victory in strains of triumph.

“I confess, I have wished some of these modern lights of the new world, would know something about languages, too, as well as the ancients, or else, that they would tell what they do know. I have heard these preachers again and again, address the people in this manner. ‘My brethren, examine and judge for yourselves. Ponder the language which is used to describe the conversion of a sinner. He is ‘new created,’ he is ‘born again.’ Is not this strong language? Must it not, I ask you, mean a great deal? Is there not a given moment, when a human being is born? Must not the change, therefore, which is indicated by this language, be instantaneous? And must it not be immense? They seem never to have read so standard a theological writer as Lightfoot, who tells us that this language among the Jews, from whom it was derived, was always used to describe a proselyte; that a Gentile who embraced the Jewish religion, was always called, ‘one born again,’ ‘a new born child,’ so highly did they conceive of this distinction. And the Romans, too, of a contemporaneous period, as he tells us, used to say of a man freed from servitude, and introduced to the privileges of citizenship, that he was ‘born again.’—If these teachers of the people would explain the matter thus, they would find themselves stript of their strong argument. Proselytism *was* a sudden event. Any change of a religious ritual or system, so far as it is publicly exhibited, must be sudden. So, doubtless, was this part of the Christian conversion. But the other part, the moral, the spiritual change, which, no question, was likewise required, instead of being sudden,

was, and is, and forever must be, the *slowest of all processes*. The Roman slave could be freed on a given day—but so cannot the slave of sin." pp. 79—81.

Now for the argument. First, he *confesses* that he wishes that these modern lights of the new world would know something about languages, too, as well as the ancients; or else, that they would tell what they do know. Secondly, he tells us how he has heard these preachers address the people again and again. Thirdly, he asserts that they seem never to have read so standard a writer as Lightfoot. Fourthly, he gives us an opinion upon the point in question, derived, as he would have us believe, from Lightfoot. Fifthly, he asserts that if these teachers would explain the matter thus, they would find themselves stripped of their strong argument. Sixthly, he informs us that proselytism was a sudden event, and that any change of a religious system, so far as it is publicly exhibited, must be sudden, and asserts that *this part* of the *Christian conversion* was so. Lastly, he asserts that *the other part*, the moral, the spiritual change, which, no question, was likewise required, instead of being sudden, *was, and is, and forever must be*, the slowest of all processes; and thus begs the very point in debate.

Let us look at the point in question. Man is a free agent, and has a moral character, besides his intellect and social affections. Is this moral character originally, and before changed by the Holy Spirit, entirely depraved, or is it not? If it is, then, as we have already proved, conversion must be a sudden event, but sanctification gradual. Now, has our author touched this point? Not at all. He has attempted to tell what others think, and have said; but is the authority of names all his argument? He has asserted, that if we would explain the matter, as he does, according to his views of the opinion of Lightfoot, we should find ourselves stripped of our strong argument. No doubt; and if he and his party would explain the matter in our way, they would find themselves stripped of their strong argument. And still farther, if assertions are proof, then our author's final assertion has settled the matter forever. And, moreover, if it is charitable to insinuate that the advocates of revivals know nothing about languages, and modest to arrogate all such knowledge to his own party, then our author is peculiarly distinguished by charity and modesty, those stars of the first magnitude in the circle of Unitarian graces. Also, if the chief object of ministers of Christ in speaking and writing, is not to reason, but "to tell what they do know," then no one can complain that our author has not, in a laudable degree, kept this object in view.

But, as our author seems exceedingly to regret that he cannot find out what the Orthodox "do know," we will endeavor to state a few things on this point which we "do know." It is indeed a new charge against the Orthodox, that they will not "tell what they do



know." Are not they the persons who are so positive and dogmatizing, and who will "tell what they do know," even if it breaks up parishes, and turns the world upside down? But, not to notice a matter so trifling, we proceed to gratify our author, by stating what we do know, at least, on certain important points.

We know, then, that to be shackled by names and opinions, is adverse to free and fair inquiry: and even if Unitarians choose to wear the servile yoke, we choose to think and reason for ourselves, with no authority to bind our consciences but that of God, and no guide in whom we implicitly trust, but the Holy Spirit.

We know, also, that the solution proposed by the author, and taken, as he says, from Lightfoot, is entirely unsatisfactory, and that it cannot for a moment be sustained, either by Scripture or philosophy.

We know, either that our author himself has never read Lightfoot, or that he did not understand him, or that he has wilfully and inexcusably misrepresented him; for, as we shall show hereafter, all that Lightfoot says on John iii. 3, is directly against our author's theory, and favors, by a direct and fair inference, the doctrine of instantaneous conversion.

We know, also, that the idea of a sudden conversion is not a modern idea, it is taught fully and explicitly in both the Old and New Testaments. We know, that it has been in all ages a direct inference from the system of real Christians, for this is in all ages the same.

We know, moreover, that there were revivals of religion in the days of the apostles, and that there have been at different times ever since, and that the fundamental principles of a revival have been at all times the same.

And finally, we know, that if revivals are now better understood and more systematically conducted than formerly, it is because the church has learned wisdom from the successive attacks of her enemies, and because, as the glory of the latter days draws near, the Spirit of God is guiding the church into all truth, and preparing the way for a full and triumphant display of his power to sanctify and save the children of men.

Another thing we may safely suggest for our author's consideration, though we cannot say that we "do know" it, because we cannot decide as to all "delicate and complicated questions" as it regards our neighbor's intellect, any more than as it regards his "heart."— Yet though we do not know, we are inclined to suspect, that in all our colleges and theological seminaries, and among all our clergymen who have been liberally educated, there are at least a few friends of revivals, who, as well as our traveller, have read so standard a theological writer as Lightfoot; not that we would by any means imply, that they are so well skilled in languages and

antiquity, as to authorize them to boast of it in public, or to insinuate that they exceed all others in science.

We have now attended to our author's show of argument, (for of the reality there is none,) at least, so far as the subject of conversion is concerned, which is at the basis of all correct views of a revival of religion. Other assertions indeed occur, that revivals, and that sudden conversions are irrational; but they are all mere assertions. Those who are willing to be influenced by names and assertions, those who are too timid to think for themselves, those who are willing and desirous to believe that Orthodoxy is of course irrational and pernicious, those who wish to gratify their excited passions, regardless of sound argument, and cool and candid inquiry, may call such a show of reasoning logical and philosophical;—to all such, this book, we cannot doubt, will be, in the words of the *Christian Examiner*, a "seasonable gift in the present agitated state of the community, on the subject of religion."

(To be continued.)

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#### NOTICES OF RECENT PUBLICATIONS.

1. *The Effects of Education upon a Country Village. An Address delivered before the Brighton School Fund Corporation, March 30, 1828*, by G. W. BLAGDEN, Pastor of the Evangelical Congregational Society, Brighton, Mass. pp. 25.

A few years since, a Society was formed in Brighton to raise and manage a fund for "the establishment and improvement of a Classical School," in that village. The Address before us was delivered in behalf of this Society. The subject was judiciously selected, and, the Christian and the patriot do not need to be told, is of the highest importance. Mr. Blagden has discussed it in an able and interesting manner. His style is perspicuous, chaste and animated; his illustrations are happily chosen; and the sentiment, throughout the Address, correct.

"It is a law of providence," the author remarks in his introduction, "as well as of the Bible, that the first step towards wielding an influence over others, is, to take care of ourselves; and the best and surest way of causing future and distant circumstances to turn to our advantage, is, to avail ourselves of all that may be most favorable in those which already exist. In both cases, however, man is prone to forget this; and it is not until after repeated warnings, pressed upon his mind both by nature and by revelation, that he is disposed to retire within the chambers of his own bosom, and to use all that may be most favorable in the circumstances of his present situation, in order to become extensively and permanently useful, either to others, or to himself. Whenever he is persuaded to do this, his prospects begin to change;—he becomes more humbled indeed in his own eyes, but far more exalted in the eyes of others.

His influence, though slow and silent in its advancement, gradually and certainly increases; until he begins to wonder at the moral power he is wielding, and is surprised to find himself a living illustration of the truth, that 'he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.' So it is, he adds, with collective bodies of men. "The future influence and prosperity of a city depends, mainly, upon the manner in which its internal regulations are conducted; upon the moral character of its municipal officers; upon the activity, information, and religious practice of its inhabitants." "The same remarks may be applied to towns;" and "the same remarks may be applied to a country village." "The government under which it exists," and "the circumstances, natural and artificial, by which it is surrounded, doubtless have great influence, and should not be neglected in order to arrive at a satisfactory result" in forming "an opinion concerning the future scenes of prosperity or of adversity awaiting such a village." "But these are minor considerations, compared with the moral and intellectual character of its inhabitants. It is here we are to look for the great, ultimate causes, which are to operate on its future destiny; because it is here that we discover the manner in which all external circumstances will probably affect it. If the internal concerns of such a village be well regulated,—if its leading men are men of moral and intellectual worth,—if its inhabitants are governed by correct principles of conduct; there is little or no danger. Circumstances, however discouraging, will generally bend before the progress of moral and intellectual power. But if the case be otherwise,—if the leading men and the inhabitants generally, be degraded in character and attainments, the place will never rise;—it will rapidly decline. No advantages without, however great, can check the certain progress of decay within.

"In view of such sentiments as these," Mr. B. justly remarks, "it cannot be otherwise than a subject of high satisfaction to any benevolent man, to behold a village endeavoring to regulate its internal concerns in such a way as to spread the advantages of education amid all classes of its inhabitants; for this comprehends all that internal improvement, of the necessity of which" he had "just been speaking."

By education, Mr. B. is careful to say, he "would be distinctly understood to mean, NOT MERELY THE CULTIVATION OF THE INTELLECT, BUT ALSO THE IMPROVEMENT OF THE HEART." The effects of "spreading the advantages" of such an education "amid all classes of the inhabitants" of a country village, are illustrated in the following particulars. Such an education "teaches the inhabitants of a village to *avail themselves of their present natural advantages.*" It "*renders them domestic.*" It "*cultivates a correct taste in their pleasures.*" It "*regulates their conversation.*" It "*creates in the village a just standard of moral character.*" It "*insures the accession of those who will be willing to labor for its benefit.*" It "*imparts just views of responsibility concerning the influence that is exerted over the young and rising generation.*" It "*preserves men from bigotry.*" It "*tends to purify the government under*

which the village exists." Each of these heads, as treated by Mr. Blagden, is rich in instruction. We have room only for a few extracts, which are fair specimens of the Address.

In the illustration of the effect of education in imparting "just views of responsibility concerning the influence that is exerted over the young and rising generation," the following remarks occur, which we could earnestly wish might be deeply and indelibly impressed upon the mind of every one who is a parent, or a guardian, or an instructor of children, or who, from any circumstances, exerts an influence over the minds of the young." "Man is the child of imitation. We copy the example of others, from the cradle to the tomb; and the sway which the opinion of those around us exerts over our minds, in every step of our progress through this life, is vast and astonishing to one who has ever attended to its influence, either over others, or over himself. This love of the praise, and consequent fear of the censure of our fellow men, deters us probably from the perpetration of many a crime, and the practice of many a virtue. This influence, vast as it is, even over the character of manhood, is peculiarly great in its power, and lasting in its effects, over the habits and character of children.

"A child, like a plant, grows up, and expands, and flourishes, and blossoms, and bears fruit, accordingly as it shall be guided, and nourished, and pruned, and guarded, by those to whose care it is submitted. Its little eye is ever open to behold, and its ear quick to hear, and its heart ready to receive the impressions, which every act and word of those who are around, cannot fail to make, in all that they perform or say in its observing presence. I venture to assert, that there is not one in this assembly, who, if he will reflect but a little upon his past existence, cannot recur to habits which may have cost him many a tear, and which originated in some casual circumstance of childhood. Some thoughtless act, sanctioned by the praise and example of a parent, or guardian, or instructor, may lay the foundation of future happiness or misery, in the mind of the child who is beholding him: and when that parent, or guardian, or instructor, shall have ceased to exist, there may be immortal minds still on the earth, for whose actions he shall be at least partly accountable, because they proceeded from principles which were instilled by his example, and perhaps nourished by his care." pp. 15, 16.

"Now the inhabitants of a well educated village do, in some good degree, feel this to be the fact. And, in a proportionable degree, they will be disposed to act as if they believed it." "The leading men of such a village, as they decide from time to time upon the means of promoting the public weal, will have an eye, also, upon the public morals. And though a certain plan which may be laid before them, might possibly open a larger revenue of wealth to the parents of the place in which they live, they will not fail to ask the question, How will it probably affect the morals of our children? Will it present to them no vicious examples? Will it salute their ears with no pernicious words? Will it impress upon their minds no destroying sentiments? These will be motives which will naturally sway their conduct, and control all their decisions.

“So also in domestic life, the parent of a family, in a village like this, will have an eye to the example which he sets before his children. He may, for instance, feel, as he lifts the cup of spirit to his lips, that *he* indeed has moral courage sufficient to resist the temptation of taking too deep a draught;—that *his* reason will never be drowned in the flood of intemperance: but when he beholds his children looking at him, as he sips the welcome draught;—when he reflects also, that, ere long, they too may justly claim the privilege of following the example he is now setting them,—a privilege which he never can justly withhold, after he has constantly enjoyed it in their presence;—when he reflects on these things, he will stop, as he raises the bowl to his lips;—he will remember that he is a father;—he will think of the temptations to which his babes will be necessarily exposed, in this world, without adding to them those which originate in his own example;—he will desist from the gratification of his desire;—he will sacrifice his own passions, however strong, upon the altar of his children’s safety. In like manner, when he speaks before his little ones, of those whose characters they should be taught to reverence; such, for instance, as the character of their daily instructors,—although *he* may discover faults in those characters,—even though *he* may esteem them to be unworthy of much confidence,—even though *he* may be disposed to remove them from stations of such influence, as they now occupy;—yet, when he reflects upon the powerful and salutary influence which they exert, even with all their comparative demerit, he will not be disposed to lessen the degree of that influence over his children, by speaking before them in such a manner as shall lead them, not only to disrespect their characters, but, it may be, the character of all future persons who shall sustain towards them the same responsible relations.

“The child that is taught by the language of its parent to despise a professing Christian, will, probably, never get over the impression thus made on its childhood, during the lapse of its future existence, in youth, in manhood, and in age. And the child who has been accustomed from infancy, to hear the name of the Lord its God taken continually in vain, will probably never feel a due reverence for the Almighty, in after life; if it does not itself become the victim of that example, which it has so long and so often witnessed.” pp. 17, 18.

In illustrating the position that such a village as he describes, “tends to purify the government under which it exists,” Mr. B., in the spirit of an enlightened patriot and Christian, calls upon his hearers to remember, now, and forever, (Oh that the call might be heard and obeyed by every descendant of the Pilgrims, by every citizen of this free and happy country!) “Let it be remembered, now, and forever, that this government and these privileges originated in the religion and education of our pilgrim fathers. *They* laid the foundation upon which we stand; *they* bequeathed to us the privileges we enjoy;—*they* devised and carried into effect that government, under the shadow of which we are so happy to feel that we are freemen. Would you still stand upon this foundation?



Would you still enjoy these privileges? Would you still live and flourish under such a government? Remember, that the same causes, in the same circumstances, always produce the same effects. Our fathers taught their children the rudiments of a pious and liberal education;—our fathers founded schools in their villages;—our fathers kept the sabbaths, and revered the sanctuary, of their God;—our fathers acted upon the high, and holy, and true principle,—a principle proved, and written in letters of human blood on every page in the long history of man, that ‘righteousness exalteth a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people.’ Our fathers, in a word, took fast hold of instruction; they let her not go; they kept her; and she was their life. Would you follow their example?—Do as your fathers did. ‘Stand ye in the ways and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein.’ Would you purify a poisoned reservoir of water? what so easy as to cast your antidote into the fountain which supplies it! In like manner, if you would purify the head of your government, spread far and wide the influence of education among your villages. Let every parent feel, that in rearing his family, he is preparing a part of the machinery which keeps the wheels of government in motion. Let every *teacher* feel, that in forming the first bent of his pupil’s mind, he is preparing the mind of a *freeman*, to act and to reason for his country’s welfare, or for his country’s destruction. Let these things be done, and our government shall be as perpetual as the globe which we inhabit; and increase in moral and in natural resources, just in proportion to the advancement of the human intellect, when in the best possible circumstances to act with freedom.”—pp. 22, 23.

Having thus, most appropriately, assumed the station, “not merely of an inhabitant and a well wisher,” of the village in which he was speaking, and in which he resides, but “of a Christian patriot, looking over the vast expanse of” his “beloved country;—enjoying, as she does, all the fruition of past achievement, and smiling, as she is, in all the brightness of future anticipation,” he makes the following just and animated appeal. “I now call upon you, my friends, to contemplate with me, this glorious spectacle. Look at what our common country now is,—look at what she once was,—look at what she may be. We have already seen the cause which nourished her childhood, which now invigorates her youth, which must give solidity and strength to her maturity. This cause is to be found in the influence of a moral and religious education;—an education confined, not merely to the few who govern,—blessing, not solely the wealthy and powerful,—entering, not only her populous cities, but spreading its benign and ever operating influence, over the great mass of the community; regulating the minds of the high and low, of the rich and poor; taking up its abode in towns and villages; leaving not one member of the body politic, however insignificant, to be withered by the palsy of moral and intellectual ignorance. Thus, keeping up the warm pulsation of life throughout the mighty system; and presenting to the world, at this moment, the spectacle of a strong and prosperous people, who are unshackled, without being generally licentious; and powerful, without being overbearing.

“Christian patriot! Would you preserve this noble spectacle, to be transmitted, unimpaired and unaltered, from generation to generation?—Remember, I repeat it, remember, that the same causes, in the same circumstances, always produce the same effects. Instead of looking away from yourself, vainly wishing to regulate circumstances which you cannot reach;—retire to the beloved retreat of your native village, and your domestic home. There form, by a religious example, the character of your neighbors, as far as your influence shall extend;—there, bring up your children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord;—there frown upon intemperance, and encourage industry, and reasonable and healthy abstinence;—there keep the Sabbath, and reverence the sanctuary of the God of your pilgrim fathers;—there establish with your substance the institutions of science, morals and religion;—there, permit me to say, as the organ of the body I have this evening the happiness to represent,—there, *give*, with a liberal hand, and with an expanded soul, something of that little with which Providence may have blessed you, to ensure to your posterity the blessings of education. Having done this,—then live and die under the consoling conviction, that though ‘listening senates’ never ‘hung upon your tongue,’—though the fire of genius never flashed in your eye,—though the garland of literary fame never adorned your brow;—still, you have not lived in vain;—you have contributed to the stability of your country;—you have added brilliancy to her glory, as surely as a drop adds to the magnificence of the ocean, or a beam to the effulgence of the god of day!” pp. 23—25.

We cheerfully add our commendation, and our earnest recommendation, of the Address, to those of the several journals in which it has been already noticed. We will not even dissent from the expression, in one of them, of the opinion that “it should be immediately stereotyped and circulated in every town and village in New England.”

2. “*The Unitarian Advocate*. Edited by Rev. Edmund Q. Sewall.”

This periodical was commenced in Boston at the beginning of the present year. Its object and manner are perhaps sufficiently indicated by its title, and by the name of its editor. It is devoted, almost exclusively, to the inculcation and defence of Unitarian—we might say Humanitarian—theology. The number for April has a notice of the first number of the *Spirit of the Pilgrims*, particularly of our Introductory article, on which we deem it suitable to offer a few remarks.

Mr. S. complains first of all, that the Orthodox represent themselves as the followers of the Pilgrims, “the proper and legitimate representatives of their pilgrim fathers.” But what ground is there for complaint on this subject? What is it to be a follower of the Pilgrims? It is doubtless to *imitate* them. It is to adopt essentially their system of faith, and the ecclesiastical order which they established. And to depart from this system of faith and order, and introduce a religion which they abhorred, is to forfeit the honorable

distinction of being their followers. Who, then, are the followers of the Pilgrims, and who are not? Who are laboring to defend and promote essentially those views of religion, in the faith of which they lived and died; and who have utterly discarded these views, and are laboring to banish them from the earth? Who are clinging to those churches which the Pilgrims established at the peril of their lives, and with the price of their blood; and who are endeavoring to destroy the independent existence of these churches, and break down the distinction between them and the world? In a word, who are the legitimate followers of the Pilgrims? Let the religious world decide.

Mr. S. supposes, "that the Pilgrims came to this fair land, not that they might be Calvinists, but that they might be freemen. They sought an asylum for their consciences, and not for their creeds." But why this frivolous, ridiculous distinction? Could they have found an asylum in the old world for their creeds, would they not also for their consciences? For, what did their consciences require on the score of religion, but that they might enjoy, unmolested, their own faith and forms of worship, or, in other words, their own creeds?

Says Mr. S. again, "The spirit of *civil and religious liberty* was the spirit which inspired our fathers." Unitarians can talk fluently on this subject, *just as present convenience dictates*. At one time, "the Pilgrims were the devoted friends and patrons of liberty. The spirit of civil and religious liberty is the very spirit which inspired them." But at another time, when the faith of these devoted Pilgrims is to be discredited, and the churches which they established are to be broken down, the tone is suddenly and totally changed. "Our ancestors were only half converted to free principles. They had no just ideas of civil and religious liberty. As soon as they were quietly settled in this country, they adopted principles as despotic as those of the church of Rome."\*

In our Introductory article, we observed respecting the *Panoplist*, "It rendered incalculable service to the cause of truth, by compelling Unitarians to leave the *concealment* by which they had so long been gaining influence, and in which lay the far greater proportion of their strength." Mr. S. complains that this charge of *concealment* is again urged, and persists in denying it. "The charge," says he, "is utterly false. There was no such concealment." But, with marvellous consistency, in less than half a page, he admits the fact! For he says that Unitarian ministers, at the period in question, "*did not preach on controverted topics.*" They preached what Unitarians now preach, save only that they *touch not disputed doctrines.*" What is this but a full admission of the charge of concealment? Unitarian ministers at the period referred to, did not publicly make their people acquainted with their sentiments. They did not believe in the divinity of Christ, they did not believe in entire moral depravity, in regeneration, in the atonement, in justification by faith, in the perseverance of saints, in future eternal punishment; but

\* See a Pamphlet entitled "The Recent Attempt to defeat the Constitutional Provisions in favor of Religious Freedom &c. by a Layman," a work recommended by the editor of the Unitarian Advocate as deserving an "extensive circulation."

their sentiments on these most important subjects, as Mr. S. allows, they thought it prudent in their preaching to conceal. "They did not preach on controverted topics."

Still it is insisted, "there was *no concealment*." We must be permitted to refresh the memory of Mr. S., by quoting some of the evidence on which this charge of concealment almost thirteen years ago, was made; premising that our witnesses are all of them zealous Unitarians. The Rev. Dr. Freeman of Boston, in a letter to Mr. Lindsey, written, as it would seem, in 1796 or 1797, says, "I am acquainted with a number of ministers, who avow and publicly teach the Unitarian doctrine. There are others *more cautious*, who content themselves with leading their hearers, by a course of rational but prudent sermons, gradually and *insensibly* to embrace it." William Wells, Esq. of Boston, in a letter to Mr. Belsham, dated March 21, 1812, says, "With regard to the progress of Unitarianism, I have little to say. Its tenets have spread very extensively in New England, but I believe that there is only one church *professedly Unitarian*." "*Most of our Boston clergy* and respectable laymen are Unitarian." "At the same time, the controversy is *seldom or never introduced into the pulpit*." In commenting on another letter from this country, Mr. Belsham attempts an apology for the concealment practised by the Unitarian clergy of Boston, in the following words, "Can it be reasonably expected of a body of clergy, nursed in the lap of ease and affluence, and placed in a station of such high secular consideration and comfort as that of the ministers of Boston, that they should come forward, and *by an open profession of unpopular truth*, voluntarily risk the loss of all their temporal dignity and comfort, and incur the contempt and enmity of many, who are now their warmest admirers and friends?" "Who will venture to say of himself, that his virtue would be equal to the trial?"\*

If the evidence here adduced in support of the charge in question—a charge which Mr. S., though he virtually admits the truth of it, still declares to be "utterly false," shall be thought insufficient, we have much more evidence in reserve. Says the lamented Dr. Worcester, in his first letter to Dr. Channing, "*Hundreds and hundreds of times have I heard it* [the fact of concealment] *uttered* from various quarters, and with various expressions of approbation and disapprobation; and *never* in any debate or conversation, as I recollect, *have I heard the truth of it denied, or called in question*." He farther mentions a sermon, which he heard at an ordination in Boston, a few months previous to his writing, "in which the preacher, [a Unitarian] very distinctly, and with considerable amplification, held forth that, though in some places it might be well, and 'contribute to the faith and virtue of the people,' for a minister *openly and plainly to declare his sentiments*, yet in other places *it would not be prudent or proper*." p. 17. "I can remember the time," said a writer in the *Christian Examiner* for March and April 1826, whose authority no Unitarian will dispute, "I can remember the time,

\* For the preceding authorities, see the *History of American Unitarianism*, published in 1815.

and I am not old, when, though Boston was full of Unitarian sentiment and feeling, there was no open profession of it. *A dead silence was maintained in the pulpit on doctrinal subjects, a silence, which was not disturbed by the press.*" And yet Mr. S. says, "There was no concealment"!!

The editor next complains, that *we charge Unitarians with misrepresenting our sentiments.* And he replies, "Having, for some years, habitually consulted every Orthodox publication which was thrown in our way, we confess we see no difference between what *they say*, and what Unitarians have said, *is Orthodoxy.* The very creed inserted in this 'Spirit of the Pilgrims,' expresses precisely what we find represented in works on the opposite side."—It may not be known to all our readers, that this same Mr. S. once published a sermon on *depravity*, in which he represents the believers in that doctrine as holding and teaching, that God "has sent us into life with our souls in such a state, that we are *utterly incapable* of the very purpose for which alone we have souls;" p. 21;—that he "has made us with a nature which is *incapable* of goodness, and then inflicts endless torments on us for not being good;" p. 28;—that "having given us a nature entirely corrupt, *incapable* of good, and prone to all evil, God placed us in this world with a command to do what he knows we *cannot* do, and then condemns us to eternal wo for doing that which he knows we *cannot help* doing;" p. 27;—that God has "sent us, helpless and abandoned, into a waste howling wilderness, with *no capacity* to do good, and condemned us to woes eternal for doing evil;" p. 42;—that "*we sinned* sixty centuries before we began to live," and "*are guilty* of that which, but for history, we never should have known;" p. 22;—that "we came into life with a fixed character, and are, at the first, decidedly, entirely, and for aught we can do, incurably wicked;"—that "we deserve hell as soon as we are born, and *can never deserve more*;"—that "our doom is decided at the outset, and *cannot be the consequence of a trial which it precedes*;" p. 29;—that "we *can lose nothing*" in our state of trial, "since all was lost at the beginning; and *can gain nothing*, since all we do prior to regeneration is done in vain;"—that "we are *not made worse by neglect of moral means*, for it is impossible to be more than totally depraved; and are *not improved by the use of them*, for that would detract from the sovereignty of divine grace, to which, as the sole unaided cause, all change for the better is attributed;" p. 30;—that "*the judgment is already completed*, when we begin the race of life, and *cannot be reversed by all we may perform.*" p. 34.

In language such as this, Mr. S., in his sermon, represents the doctrine of *depravity*, as held by the Orthodox. Yet he assures us after having "habitually consulted, for some years, every Orthodox publication which was thrown in his way," that there is "*no difference* between what the Orthodox say, and what Unitarians have said, *is Orthodoxy.*" Where then, we must be allowed very seriously to ask the gentleman,—where have the Orthodox of New England, with whom you are conversant, and whose publications for some of the last years you have read, represented the doctrine of depravity as you have represented it in your sermon? *Where?* Point us to the



volume and page. You say, "the very creed inserted in this 'Spirit of the Pilgrims' expresses precisely what we find represented in works on the opposite side." In what article of our creed, then, is the doctrine of depravity represented as you have represented it? Be pleased to make good your allegation by quoting our very words, to which you refer. When you have done this, we shall cheerfully acquit you of the charge of misrepresentation in respect to this particular subject. And when you have done this, you will stand acquitted before the public of another and a more serious charge, that of denying the fact of misrepresentation, when, as we say, it exists; and when the existence of it is palpable and open to the view of all.

Mr. S. observes further, in the name and on the behalf of Unitarians generally, "We have, one and all, been ready and happy to acknowledge Calvinists as *Christians*, on the ground of a Christian character merely. While *they would*, we were in the habit of interchanging ministerial labors." Mr. S. had forgotten, perhaps, when he wrote this, that a long and labored Unitarian sermon has of late been published, and received with approbation by the whole fraternity, the object of which is, to prove that Calvinists are guilty of *denying the Lord Jesus*. What sort of Christians, we ask, are those, who persist in "denying the Lord that bought them"? And what sort of Christians, we ask further, are those who, "while *they would*, were in the habit of interchanging ministerial labors" with these deniers of their Lord?

Mr. S. charges the Spirit of the Pilgrims with "openly asserting of Unitarians that they do, as far as they dare, deny the divine authority of the sacred Scriptures." We might require him to name the page in the Spirit of the Pilgrims, where this assertion, in so many words, is made. But waiving this, we may be permitted to press a few inquiries, the proper answers to which will go not a little way towards justifying the assertion, if it were made. We ask then, whether what is called "an Improved Version of the New Testament" has not been extolled by Unitarians in this country as "a version *far more faithful, more correct, and more intelligible*, than that in common use;"\* and whether this version does not reject whole chapters of the New Testament, against the authority of all the manuscripts and versions extant? We ask, whether "Le Clerc on Inspiration" has not been published and highly praised by American Unitarians,—a work which expressly denies the inspiration of no inconsiderable part of the sacred volume? We ask, whether Mr. Yates, whose authority we have never heard disputed, does not represent "the plenary inspiration of the Scriptures as one of those questions, upon which Unitarians are divided in opinion?"† We ask, whether a writer in the Christian Examiner for Jan. and Feb. 1826 does not represent "the sacred documents of our faith as prepared for *temporary use*, and filled with subjects of local interests or *popular accommodation*;"—whether he does not represent "the scheme of preparation which led the way to Christianity" (meaning the Old Testament) "as for the most part but dimly discerned, and *unsatis-*

\* See General Repository, vol. iv.

† Vindication of Unitarianism, p. 19.

factory, even in what is plainly to be perceived; mixed with the *doubtfulness of old traditions*, and with systems of *superannated errors*;"—and whether he does not characterise the instructions of Jesus, as a "cautious and *half-veiled teaching*"? We ask, whether the Christian Register, for Nov. 4, 1826, does not contain an article expressly questioning, if not ridiculing, the plenary inspiration of the Scriptures; whether a writer in the same paper for Aug. 12, 1826, in commenting upon Col. i. 16, 17, does not affirm, that "*no resemblance of words is alone adequate to support the opinion*, that what is here said of Christ is precisely that which is affirmed of Jehovah in the Old Testament;" or, which is the same, that *words cannot express the sentiment* that Christ is what the apostle declares him to be, the universal Creator? Should these inquiries fail to satisfy Mr. S. as to the estimation in which Unitarians hold the inspired writings, we shall be happy to press some further questions, the next time we have the honor of communicating with him on this most interesting subject.

We have not noticed all the topics adverted to in the article before us; but enough probably to satisfy our readers as to its character, and the general character of the work which contains it.

Mr. S. laments, in conclusion, that "a hostile spirit should be so unweariedly fostered in this community." And, he asks, "What would the Orthodox have? Must we give up our faith?" If we may be allowed to speak in the name of our brethren, we have no hesitation in replying. We wish you to see, and abandon, those *errors*, the influence of which, we must seriously believe, is hazardous, if not fatal, to the soul. You are mistaken if you think we are angry with you, and you do us great injustice in branding our efforts to promote and defend our own views of religion, and consequently to refute yours, with the name of persecution. Most gladly would we take you by the hand, and go with you to the foot of the cross, and with you rest our hopes of heaven there. Most gladly would we unite with you in labors and sacrifices to promote the cause of Him, who was the "Child born," and the "Son given;" upon whose shoulder the government is laid; and whose "name is Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of peace." But, in your attempts to spread a system of religion, which we are confident degrades this divine Saviour, and detracts infinitely from the honors due to his name, we can never unite. We can never cease to exert the faculties and the influence, with which the God of grace has been pleased to bless us, on the opposite side. We do not impeach your sincerity altogether; we do not doubt that you think you are in the right way: but this does not prove you either correct or safe; For "*there is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.*"

\* The Christian Register, in 1826, was published by the American Unitarian Association.

## SELECTION.

THE following article was read as a public exercise at the anniversary of the Theological Institution at Andover, in 1827, by one of the Senior Class of that year; and was first published in the *Christian Spectator* for May, of the present year.

JOHN CALVIN, the celebrated reformer, was born at Noyon, a city of France, on the 10th July, 1509. At an early age, he gave indications of distinguished intellectual endowments; and, through all the stages of his education, made very rapid progress in the acquisition of knowledge. As he exhibited in his whole deportment an uncommon degree of piety and moral virtue, he was early devoted by his parents to the service of the Catholic church. But his almost intuitive apprehension of the corruptions and errors of that church, soon led him to renounce the tonsure for the study of the civil law. Light was now beginning to dawn upon the world, after a night of centuries. In Germany, the intrepid Luther had commenced his attack upon the prescriptive and exorbitant claims of the papal power. In Switzerland, France, and England, a few undaunted souls had arisen and resolutely espoused the cause of religious truth and freedom. At this important crisis in the most valuable interests of men, the enlightened and efficient mind of Calvin did not sleep. At the age of twenty-three, having become firmly established in those views of religion now embodied in his Institutes, he renounced the profession of the law, and devoted himself exclusively to the interests of the Protestant cause. Calvin was peculiarly qualified to act at the time and in the scenes he did. Luther had gone before. Possessed of a harsh and impetuous temperament—a reckless energy of soul, he convulsed, agitated, roused the sleeping elements of society—stirred up the public mind to active and independent investigation. Hence, when Calvin came upon the stage, the whole mass of intellect about him was in a state of bold inquiry, of perilous agitation. An impulse had been given to society: it required the hand of a master to regulate the motion. The storm had been raised: some presiding energy was needed to control its rage, or it would have spread over the dearest interests of men entire and unlimited desolation. Calvin was the man for this delicate and difficult task. God raised him up for the work. He was calm, intellectual, collected. He had outstripped the world in the discovery and development of truth. As an expositor of the Scriptures, he was sober, spiritual, penetrating. As a theologian, he stands in the very foremost rank of those of any age or country. His Institutes, composed in his youth, amidst a pressure of duties and the rage and turbulence of the times, invincible against every species of assault, give him indisputably this pre-eminence. As a civilian, even though the law was a subject of subordinate attention, he had few equals among his contemporaries. In short, he exhibited, in strong and decided development, all those moral and intellectual qualities which marked him out for one who was competent to guide the opinions, and control the commotions, of

inquiring and agitated nations. Through the most trying and arduous period of the Reformation, he exhibited, invariably, a wisdom in counsel, a prudence of zeal, and at the same time, a decision and intrepidity of character, which were truly astonishing. Nothing could for a moment deter him from a faithful discharge of his duty; nothing detrude him from the path of rectitude. When the very foundations of the world seemed to be shaking, he stood erect and firm, the pillar of the truth. He took his stand between two of the most powerful kingdoms of the age, resisted and assailed alternately the whole force of the papal domination—maintained the cause of truth and of God against the intriguing Charles on the one hand, and the courtly and bigotted Francis on the other. The pen was his most effectual weapon; and this was beyond the restriction or refutation of his royal antagonists. Indeed, on the arena of theological controversy, he was absolutely unconquerable by any power or combination of powers, which his numerous opponents could bring against him. He not only refuted and repressed the various errors which sprang up so abundantly in consequence of the commotion of the times, and which threatened to defeat all the efforts which were making for the moral illumination of the world; but the publication of the Institutes contributed, to a wonderful degree, to give unity of religious belief to the friends of the Reformation, and, of course, to marshal the strength, and combine and give success to the efforts, of all contenders for the faith once delivered to the saints.

But time will not allow me to give anything like a detail of the excellencies of this illustrious reformer's character, or of the invaluable services which he has rendered to society. He was a great and good man. To the full import of the phrase, he may be styled a benefactor of the world. Most intensely and effectually too, did he labor for the highest temporal and especially for the eternal interests of his fellow men. He evidently brought to the great enterprise of the age a larger amount of moral and intellectual power than did any other of the reformers. Even the cautious Scaliger pronounces him the most exalted character that has appeared since the days of the apostles, and at the age of twenty-two the most learned man in Europe. And the immediate influence of his invincible mind is still deeply felt through the masterly productions of his pen, and will continue to be felt in the advancement of the pure interests of the church, until the complete triumph of her principles.

But notwithstanding the noble virtues of Calvin's character, and the imperishable benefits which he has conferred upon the world, perhaps there never has been the man whose name has been the object of so frequent and so gross slanderous imputations as his. Catholic and Protestant, infidel and believer, have often most cordially united in their endeavors to obscure the reputation of this illustrious man. Indeed, Calvin and Calvinism are sounds at which many stand aghast with a species of consternation, as expressions which import something unutterably barbarous and horrible. And it often happens that those who are the warmest in their hatred of him, and most plentiful in their reproaches, have never read a single line of his writings, and know scarcely a fact of his life. Now

why it is that Calvin has been singled out from the rest of the reformers, as a mark for the poisoned shaft of obloquy, is very strange, not to say altogether unaccountable. He was plainly in advance of his cotemporaries in all those moral and intellectual qualities which conspire to form a lovely and dignified character. True, he had some of the harsh features, the irritable and impetuous temperament, and inflexible spirit, of the times. Well for the world that he had. How could he have done the work assigned him, without some of these severe ingredients in his constitution? Where everything around combined to crush him down, or thrust him from his course, how could he have stood erect and undaunted for the truth, without something unbending and invincible in his principles and feelings?

Calvin deserves the thanks, and not the curses, of posterity. He was ardently esteemed by all the good of his own time; and he has since been, is now, and will continue to be, esteemed, so long as high moral excellence and the stern majesty of virtue shall, to any extent, be objects of human approbation. G. S.

## MISCELLANEOUS DEPARTMENT.

### THE REFORMATION IN ITALY.

It is not, we believe, generally known, that the Reformation of Luther and Calvin extended into Italy, and even into the States of the Church. The following extracts will therefore communicate, to some of our readers, information not before possessed, and will, we think, be interesting to all. They are from a Review, in the seventy third number of the London Quarterly Review; of a *History of the Progress and Suppression of the Reformation in Italy, in the sixteenth century; including a Sketch of the History of the Reformation in the Grisons*, by Thomas McCrie, D. D.; 8vo. Edinburgh, 1827.

From the time when Christianity was first planted, there has ever been in existence a body of men, obscure, perhaps, as the seven thousand in Israel, to whom the name of the true church more especially belonged; and who, amidst the corruptions, the discouragements, and the dangers, of a world with which they had but little in common, and which was not worthy of them, pursued their pure course in privacy. It is not easy, indeed, to get with accuracy at the state of religious opinion, where it differed from the church of Rome, before the Reformation. Then it was that the strings of the tongue were thoroughly loosed, and many sentiments, which, though in being, had been nearly without witness, first found a free utterance. It would be contrary to all experience, to believe that such a revolution in the world as Luther effected, could have been wrought by one private individual, without the aid of powerful predisposing causes. It is not usual with men, who are more than half a century in advance of their generation, to make any great and permanent change in its character. Luther happened to be the first to put the world into the waters, after the angel had sufficiently troubled them. But some hundred years before the reformer was born; (perhaps, in one instance, from the earliest ages of Christianity,) there had been communities of men to be found, in the south of France, in England; in the valleys of the Alps, in Calabria, in Bohemia, perhaps in Spain itself, who held doctrines essentially the same as those afterwards established at the Reformation, and by means of whom the leaven could not fail to be propagated in some degree throughout Europe.



Wickliffe has been usually allowed to have been the forerunner of Huss, and Huss of Luther; but even Wickliffe seems to have been but the avowed representative of a very large portion of his countrymen, and the organ by which they spoke sentiments hitherto suppressed, through dread of consequences. He neither believed in the supremacy of the pope, nor in transubstantiation, nor in the right of the clergy to monopolize the Scriptures; yet, so far were his doctrines from being offensive to the people, that when he was brought before the bishops at Lambeth, they clamored for his release; so far were his tenets from being unpopular, that persons holding them travelled from county to county, preaching them, not only in churches and churchyards, but in markets and fairs, 'to the great emblemishing (as it was said) of the Christian faith.' Knyghton, a contemporary historian, does not scruple to say, 'that you could not meet two people in the way, but one of them was a disciple of Wickliffe;' and Wickliffe himself asserts, that the third part of the clergy thought with him on the Lord's Supper, and would 'defende that doctrine on paine of theyr lyfe.' Nor will this be matter of surprise, when it is recollected that some centuries before Wickliffe's translation of the New Testament, Saxon versions, of portions of the Gospels at least, had been made, 'for the edification,' as it is expressly said, 'of the simple, who know only this speech.' Spirits congenial to Wickliffe were already in Bohemia, where the effect of his writings was acknowledged by the severity with which they were suppressed. The Albigenses had been denounced by canons, preached at by St. Bernard, and tortured by St. Dominic, so early as the twelfth century. About the same period Peter Waldo lifted up his voice at Lyons, with a success that called forth the anathema of the pope; and the valleys of the Alps were peopled, from an age the most remote, with a race of hardy mountaineers, whose seclusion had preserved their faith from corruption, and whose Protestant tenets are the subject of authentic record to this day. It is the testimony of an enemy, (Raynerius,) and therefore above suspicion, that they did not believe in modern miracles, rejected extreme unction and offerings for the dead, denied the doctrines of transubstantiation, purgatory, and the invocation of saints, and, to sum up all, regarded the church of Rome as the woman of the Revelations. It is true, that he mixes up these accusations of heresy with heavy charges against their morals; but this has ever been the artifice, both of pagans and of Catholics, to crush a rising sect. In the present instance, nothing is wanted to expose the futility of such charges, but to compare them with those of others no less hostile, (as the learned Usher has done,) when it will be found that 'their testimony agreeth not together.' On the other hand, the more friendly voice of La Nobla Leyeon, a Waldensian document written about the year 1160, and the authority of which has never been questioned, enforces the law of the ten commandments, that against idols not excepted; the duty of searching the Scriptures; as also of praying to the Trinity, though without a word in favor of the invocation of saints or the Virgin; and represents confession and absolution as unavailing, the power of forgiving sins, though claimed by the priest, belonging to God alone. With the history of this heroic band of brothers the public has, of late, been made familiar.\* But whilst the sufferings and the constancy of the original stock of the Vaudois have claimed and received sympathy of every man who has a heart, the fate of a colony, which it sent forth to seek its fortunes in the south of Italy, has been unworthily\* overlooked.

'In the year 1370,' writes the learned and able author now before us, 'the Vaudois, who resided in the valleys of Pragela, finding themselves straitened in their territories, sent some of their number into Italy, to look out for a convenient settlement. Having discovered in Calabria a district uncultivated and thinly peopled, the deputies bargained with the proprietors of the soil, in consequence of which a number of their brethren emigrated thither. Within a short time, the place assumed a new appearance: villages rose in every direction; the hills resounded with the bleating of flocks; and the valleys were covered with corn and vines. The prosperity of the new settlers excited the envy of the neighboring villagers, who were irritated at the distance which they preserved, and at their refusal to join with them in their revels and dissipation. The priests, finding that they received nothing from them but their tithes, which they paid regularly, according to the stipulation entered into with the proprietors; and perceiving that they practised none of the ceremonies usual at the interring of their dead, that they had no images in their chapels, did not

\* By the Church Histories of Milner and Jones.—Ep.

go in pilgrimage to consecrated places, and had their children educated by foreign teachers, whom they held in great honor, began to raise the cry of heresy against the simple and inoffensive strangers. But the landlords, gratified to see their grounds so highly improved, and to receive large rents for what had formerly yielded them nothing, interposed in behalf of their tenants; and the priests, finding the value of their tithes yearly increase, resolved, prudently, to keep silence. The colony received accessions to its numbers by the arrival of their brethren, who fled from the persecutions raised against them in Piedmont and France; it continued to flourish when the Reformation dawned on Italy; and, after subsisting for nearly two centuries, it was basely and barbarously exterminated.

Thus do we find, that, at either extremity of Italy itself, to say nothing of other heretical countries, which were in constant communication with Italy, bodies of men were living depositories of the true faith, more or less complete, during a period which, as the Roman Catholic church would persuade us, exhibited universal concurrence in her doctrines, and submission to her decrees.

Meanwhile, in spite of the jealousy with which the clergy endeavored to keep exclusive possession of the Scriptures, several translations into the Italian, ill done indeed, but still indicating the latent spirit, whose workings we are examining, made their appearance in the fourteenth century, if not earlier; while that of Malermi, a monk of Cameldovi, was printed at Venice in 1471, and is said to have gone through no less than nine editions in the ensuing thirty years. Indeed the establishment and continuance of the inquisition, a contrivance, expressly for the extinction of freedom of opinion in matters of faith, is, of itself, a most distinct acknowledgement, on the part of the Roman Catholic church, how early there existed a formidable opposition to her dogmas; and, accordingly, when that opposition developed itself more fully after the preaching of Luther, those sanguinary tribunals were proportionally multiplied, as the legitimate and approved extinguishers of heresy.

Luther must, under any circumstances, have made a noise in the world; but had the church been wise enough to reform her practice in time, it is probable that her mere errors in faith, gross as we now think them, and as he very soon learned to think them himself, would not have provoked his scrutiny; that his zeal, like that of many other good men before him, would have found a vent in establishing a new order; and that St. Martin by this time might have figured in the Roman Catholic calendar, by the side of St. Benedict, or St. Francis. The necessity of a reform, indeed, had been admitted, and the council of Pisa had been recently called for the express purpose of examining into ecclesiastical abuses. But the examination was not undertaken and pursued in an honest and good heart; otherwise it is possible the church of Rome might have continued unscathed for some years longer, at least till a better knowledge of the Scriptures should have exposed, as it always must, its unsoundness and error. The council of Pisa was rendered abortive by the intrigues of the pope; and, instead of strengthening the church, only served to supply Luther with an additional argument, that by its own confession, it was full of abuse. The critical opportunity of self-correction was thus lost, and at last the sound of a Reformation indeed, wherein the pleasure of the pontiff was no longer to be consulted, reached the Vatican.

Now was the power of the press, for the first time, made known. Heretical pamphlets, catechisms, ballads, and caricatures, broke loose in a body. Now were to be seen, on tavern walls, foxes preaching in full canonicals, with the neck of a goose peeping out of a pocket; wolves in sheep's clothing confessing and granting absolution; monkeys, in the habit of Franciscans, sitting beside a sick man's bed; with one hand on a crucifix and the other in his fob. It was a war without quarter. A medicine which, if well-timed, may cure, given out of season, may kill. The queasy stomach of the Roman Catholic church had kicked at a council which might have done it good; but now cries out in a panic for another which has disagreed with it. The council of Trent was probably the last of its kind, extorted by a belief that the times admitted of no less remedy. The instructions which it sent forth to the parochial clergy in the form of a catechism (*Catechismus ad Parochos*) give ample token of the alarm which the church of Rome now felt. The most feverish anxiety for the dignity and authority of the priest may be perceived throughout, and texts are distorted for his praise and glory with a most ludicrous ingenuity. The silver shrines are in danger, and there is evidently no small stir among the

craftsmen. As it is a document which is allowed by Mr. Butler himself\* still to speak the sense of this church, we will give our readers a few of its practical applications of Scripture. The gospels for the day are to be made profitable to the edification of the people, as follows:—'You shall find an ass' colt tied, loose it.' &c. Here the priest may remark, that the right of granting *absolution* may thus be collected to have been conferred upon the clergy, the successors of the apostles. The same doctrine is to be derived from the words '*Loose him and let him go*;' which our Lord uttered when Lazarus came forth bound with grave clothes. That the words were addressed to the disciples in particular, does not appear indeed from the Evangelist; but the catechism says they were, knowing it probably from tradition. 'Send her away, for she crieth after us,' furnishes an argument that intercession is made for us by the saints. 'Jesus was casting out a devil, and it was *dumb*?' who does not here discover the doctrine of 'confession'? The devil prevents the sinner from confessing to the priest, and can only be ejected when the tongue is set free. 'Whence shall we buy bread, that these may eat?' The bread *alone*, therefore, had the property of quenching *thirst*, as well as appeasing hunger; hence the propriety of communion in one kind only for the laity. 'And He went into a ship that was *Peter's*.' Here our Lord signifies that Peter was to be the head of the church; or, as old Latimer has it in one of his sermons, he says in effect, 'Peter, I do mean this by sitting in thy boat, that thou shalt go to Rome and be Bishop there, five and twenty years after mine ascension, and all thy successors shall be rulers of the universal church after thee.' 'And there came down a certain priest that way.' This is a text which requires some delicacy in the handling, seeing that the priest does not figure to any advantage in the history. The man that fell among thieves, however, is human nature; sin inflicted the wounds; our Lord is the Samaritan; and when he gives two pence to the *host*, he teaches that the care of the church is to be committed to a single individual! According to the interpretation of the same catechism, the fifth commandment, 'Honor thy father and thy mother' &c., implies, amongst other things, that children are bound to provide their parents with confessors before they die, to bury them with handsome obsequies, and to establish annual masses for their souls; and, lest the congregation should be at a loss to know why there are seven sacraments, neither more nor less, it instructs their pastor to explain, that natural religion points to this number; that man, as a *social* being, has need of seven things: 1. to be born; 2. to grow up; 3. to be sustained; 4. to be recovered from sickness; 5. to be recruited in strength; 6. to be subject to government; 7. to propagate his kind:—that therefore, as a *spiritual* being, he has also need of the seven antitypes, namely, 1. Baptism; 2. Confirmation; 3. the Eucharist; 4. Penance; 5. Extreme unction; 6. Orders; 7. Marriage. Finally, as if further to exalt the dignity of his office, the priest is to communicate to his flock many of the more secret councils of heaven which are hidden from the vulgar; that at the resurrection, for instance, our bodies will be disfigured by no deformity; that they will be neither too fat nor too lean; that the wounds of the martyrs will then emit rays of light, exceeding in brightness gold and precious stones. He is to exhort them to confess not only the sin, but the circumstances which attend it, and by which it might be aggravated; as, for instance, in the case of murder, whether it was committed upon a layman or an *ecclesiastic*. Moreover, he is to teach that Christ and the priest are the same, the latter when he consecrates the elements, saying, This is *my* body; not, This is the body of Christ; that no common reverence is due to a man who can produce and present the body and blood of our Lord, and who hath power on earth 'to forgive sins'; a faculty, it is added, passing human reason to comprehend, and the like to which cannot be found in the world beside.

Whatever weight, however, such arguments ought to have had, the Italians do not appear to have thought them conclusive. The writings of Luther and Melancthon, of Zuingle and Bucer, continued to be circulated covertly throughout Italy; and in translations, and under fictitious titles, some of them made their way even into the Vatican. Dr. M'Crie gives evidence the most satisfactory, that in almost every principal city the cause of the Reformation had numerous friends. Ferrara was full of them; even foreign Protestants resorted to it as an asylum. Marot, the not inelegant translator of the Psalms into French, fled thither from persecution; and Calvin himself sojourned there for several months, receiving distinguished attention from the dutchess, and confirming

\* A recent apologist for the Roman Catholic Church.—ED.

her in the sentiments of the reformers, which she had already embraced. Of Modena, its own bishop complains, in a letter to Cardinal Contarene, that, by common report, 'the whole city was turned Lutheran.' Florence was less corrupted; yet Brucioi, whose version of the New Testament, and indeed all his works, 'published or to be published,' were formally interdicted at the council of Trent, was a Florentine; and so was Carnesecca, the martyr. The people of Bologna expressed their earnest desire that the emperor should interfere to procure for them liberty of conscience in matters of religion, or, if this could not be granted, that they might at least 'be allowed to purchase Bibles without incurring the charge of heresy; and to quote Christ and St. Paul, without being branded as Lutherans.' Venice was at that time a powerful, independent, and zealous republic, with a printing-press the most efficient in the world, and with opportunities, from her commerce both by sea and land, of making its productions known throughout Christendom. Letters were as a branch of trade at Venice. To its merchants were consigned the books of the German and Swiss reformers, and over Italy and elsewhere, there issued from this ark, as it rode amidst the waters, the dove of peace. Here the evangelical doctrine had made such progress between the years 1530 and 1542, that its friends, who had hitherto met in private for mutual instruction and religious exercises, held deliberations on the propriety of organizing themselves into regular congregations, and assembling in public. Several members of the senate were favorable to it, and hopes were entertained, at one time, that the authority of that body would be interposed in its behalf.

Melancthon addressed a letter to them upon the subject, and though numbers in that city were found, as we shall presently see, faithful to the death, the government would not declare in favor of the Reformation at that critical moment, or perhaps a new impulse might have been thereby given to her fortunes, now passing the meridian; and instead of the melancholy wreck of former greatness which she exhibits at this day, she might have continued a queen for ever. The new opinions were not confined to the capital; Vicenza, Treviso, and other places in the Venetian territory, partook of them.

'If it be God's will,' write the brethren of those parts to Luther; 'that we obtain a truce, what accessions will be made to the kingdom of Christ, in faith and charity! How many preachers will appear to announce Christ faithfully to the people! How many prophets, who now lurk in corners, exanimated with undue fears, will come forth to expound the Scriptures.'

The Milanese, as early as the year 1524, had caught the infection. The vicinity of the Vaudois contributed to spread it in this part of Italy, and the disorders of a district which had long been the seat of war left no leisure for extirpating it. Nor was it in the north of Italy only that this spirit had gone forth. The German soldiers, who, after the sack of Rome, in 1527, for some time garrisoned the city of Naples, are supposed to have carried with them the Lutheran doctrines, which, indeed, were not new in Calabria. Valdez, a layman of remarkable prudence and talent, watered this hopeful plant; and Ochino and Peter Martyr, names well known in the annals of our own church, gave it further increase. For here it was, that the theologian who afterwards occupied the divinity-chair at Oxford, first studied the Scriptures; and here it was that the preacher who was pronounced by Charles V. a man 'to make the stones weep,' first lifted up the reformer's voice. Even Sicily felt the influence of a Luther.

Benedetti, surnamed Locarno, from the place of his birth, a minister of great sanctity, having gained the favor of the viceroy, preached the truth, under his patronage, to crowded audiences, in Palermo, and other parts of that island. The seeds of his doctrine afterwards sprung up, and gave ample employment to the inquisitors. For many years, persons charged with the Lutheran heresy were produced in the public and private *autos da fe* celebrated in Sicily.

We have run some risk of being thought tedious in our details, though we have not nearly gone the round of Italy with Dr. M'Crie, who has prosecuted this part of his subject with great diligence. Less, however, would not have sufficed to show, at all adequately, how effectually the state of public opinion of which we have already spoken, had prepared the way for a reformation in Italy; and how remarkable a progress the great cause had actually made there. Well might the church of Rome believe that a movement so universal was not to be put down by a *Catechismus ad Parochos* alone; and that the effect of such logic must be accelerated by exile, imprisonment, and the flames.

THE  
**SPIRIT OF THE PILGRIMS.**

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**COMMUNICATIONS.**

HINTS ON THE RELATIVE IMPORTANCE OF NEW ENGLAND TO  
THE REST OF THE UNITED STATES, IN A MORAL  
AND RELIGIOUS VIEW.

WHILE the tide of population and enterprise in the United States, is setting on to the west, with increasing rapidity, prostrating before it the forests of the wilderness, laying under contribution to human weal the creeks and majestic rivers, the inland seas, the rich soil, the smaller and the wide stretching prairies, the undulating regions, the hills and mountains, which diversify so tastefully the continent of North America; while the agriculture, the commerce, the villages and towns, and general internal improvements of the great valley of the Mississippi, are beginning to rival those of the Atlantic States; while the perpetual erection of new members of the Union, with the prospect of passing the Rocky mountains to the shores of the Pacific, is reducing almost to a point, that original and important section of the United States, distinguished by the name of New England, the cradle and nursery of intellect and virtue, from the first settlement of this country, teeming with everything most valuable for the production of manly character and enterprise, a region consecrated by the first planting of the foot, and by the prayers, of the Pilgrims, whose very hills, and mountains, and climate, and salubrious zephyrs, bespeak it the abode and sanctuary of health of body and of mind;—with such a roll of the brief annals of the United States in our hand, the children of New England, partial to her soil, to her character, and to her institutions, anxiously inquire, what is to become of her influence, in the rapidly advancing career and augmenting power of this nation? It will be the object of this paper, to answer this question.

Federal influence, or the relative and combined influence, which is secured by the union of the States under the national compact, has already thrown its mantle over the regions and communities

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far to the west and south, so that its skirts only hang upon us. The same may be said of political influence,—that influence which this nation exercises in relation to others. In these departments, our superior relative importance has passed away. We feel it in the decisions of the national councils every year. It will henceforth be impossible for New England to secure any local object, depending on national patronage, that shall interfere with the interests of other and more powerful sections of the country. Her superior federal and political importance in the Union has passed away. The only claim to precedence, which she now can set up, her only prospect of a superior and pervading influence, in this country, are found in the world of *mind*.

Knowledge is power. Add to this, moral worth, such as the Christian religion is calculated to create, manly character, and a spirit of enterprise;—and with these advantages, cherished and wielded in all their possible extent, New England may well be content, under the loss of superior federal and political consequence in the Union. She is destined, if not unfaithful to herself, and to her God, to exercise a higher, and a nobler influence, over the nation, and through the world;—an influence which shall itself control, wisely and beneficently, those very agencies, federal and national, which seemed to have escaped from her grasp; and to a very considerable extent, such is already the fact.

It is an indisputable truth,—no one, who has opportunity to make himself acquainted with the merits of this question, can fail to see it, to whatever part of the Union he may belong,—that, from the beginning, New England has taken and maintained superior ground, in learning, morals, and religion—in all those departments of education, which are most eminently calculated to exalt, purify, and invigorate human character.

In the statement of facts, such as belong to this subject, I do not think it worth while to stand in fear of that sectional jealousy, which may exist, or which may be supposed to exist, and which, perhaps, may rise in remonstrance against the advancement of such positions. Nor would I fear the accusation of a want of modesty and of good grace, or the impeachment of too much self-complacency, or of a hardihood of character, which might be better tempered by a little more intercourse with people out of the bounds of New England. I speak upon this subject as a citizen of the United States,—of the world.\* And I have a class of facts under my hand, which I think adequate to corroborate the positions I assume. Jealousy, if it exists, is of little consequence. It must die away, or consume itself. And it is no matter how much emulation may be provoked, by such discussions, to go and do likewise, or, if possible, to excel. Genuine talent, in such a

\* The writer of this article, though a native of New England, has spent nearly all his life, since he left the schools, in other parts of the Union.

community as that of the United States, will make its own way, and ultimately find its place, even against all local prejudice, and sectional jealousies.

I say, then, in the first place, that the literary institutions, and modes of education, in New England, have been, and still are, in general, greatly in advance of those in other parts of the Union. There is a wider, deeper, and more uniform patronage of education here. There is a more general and equal diffusion of knowledge. There is a much greater proportion of that exalted character, which the best education is calculated to produce. And the entire community of New England constantly bears the impress of such a superior state of things. It is true, indeed, that there are many flourishing literary institutions in other parts of the country, and the modes of education are rapidly advancing. But they cannot, if the sons of the Pilgrims are true to themselves and their ancestors, overtake those of New England. It is here they come for models. And it is morally impossible, that they should make themselves equal, so long as New England supports her proportionate ratio of advancement.

The state of morals and religion in New England, is greatly in advance of most other parts of the country. Morality depends upon religion. And it is the peculiar and eminent character of New England for religion, descending from the pilgrim fathers, which has given to her that pre-eminent character for morality, which is universally conceded to her, and to which she is, as yet, so justly entitled.

On the score of religion, there is, indeed, a subtraction to be made from the honor of New England, for the occasion of which we greatly grieve. We blush, and are deeply humbled, that the metropolis of this section of our country, and along with it the oldest, best endowed, and *otherwise* the most respectable literary institution in our land, should have suffered, under the visitation of God, such a deep and fearful degeneracy, in point of religion, from the integrity and faith of our fathers. But we are yet happy in the conviction, that this apostacy is becoming more and more circumscribed in its influence; that the eyes of the people are beginning to be opened to these ominous encroachments, and themselves humbled before God. There is, at this moment, manifestly a check, if not a retrograde movement, of this guilty dereliction of religious principle. If there cannot be a reformation in this particular, if these religious principles cannot be arrested, but must be permitted to go on, then farewell forever to the superior and commanding influence of New England. She must not only retire from her superior political importance, but sink down under the deep disgrace and self-destroying curse of an abandonment of those high principles, which inscribed their characters on the rock of Plymouth, and which have so long given pre-eminence and illus-

trious character to the favored descendants of the Pilgrims. But we trust in God we have no occasion to take up this burden of prophecy, nor to weep this lamentation over the blighted prospects of New England's glory. This insidious foe, which has made its way by stratagem into our camp, while the sentinels slept, is discovered—is even now bending and falling backward before the onset of a determined phalanx, guided with truth, and with the conscious possession of rights secured by God, and purchased at the highest sacrifice by those who first planted them on this soil.

Much as we deplore this degeneracy, and are abased on account of it, we are happy in being able to say, that it has not materially affected the general character of New England. The impress of that original influence, which fled from the persecutions of papacy and nonconformity, across the ocean, was too deep and too abiding to be effaced by the transient and restricted operation of such a cause. The unadulterated religion of the Pilgrims has proved a leaven of persevering constancy, pervading with purifying efficacy the great mass of this community. God has remembered his covenant, has blessed the children of his people, has poured out his Spirit upon them, and supported an almost uninterrupted succession of revivals of religion in one place and in another, till these effusions of the divine Spirit have become frequent, and copious, and widely extended.

It is this *peculiar* character of God's gracious dispensations, vouchsafed in what are commonly called *revivals of religion*,—a character scarcely known in the meantime in other parts of Christendom,—it is *this*, I say, which has supported the moral virtue of New England, against the natural tendencies to deteriorate, and given it such prominence over other parts of our country, and of the world. These revivals have followed the children of New England to the west, exhibiting the same features, and exerting the same purifying influence. The most hopeful character of our country, in whatever part of the Union, (I call that character hopeful which is nearest to God, and most truly Christian,) a very great portion of this character, I am myself persuaded, may be found to have some intimate connexion with an influence, which has gone forth from this cradle and nursery of piety, and of high Christian virtue. Most generally there is some visible trace of such an origin. The great city and State of New York have been not a little moulded by the hand of New England, in all their most desirable attributes of character. New England population has rolled on, and swelled out, and covered the entire section of the United States above the Ohio river, so that it may fairly be said, that New England character, within those limits, has become predominant. As travellers, or as residents, the enterprising sons of New England have pervaded the Union, and we may rest assured, have not failed to exercise their influence.

Most of the great national charitable institutions, such as the Tract Society, the Education Society, the Home Missionary Society, &c. &c., received their original impulse, from New England. And *one other*, which is rapidly acquiring patronage through the nations, among those denominations of Christians which can unite in promoting its object,—and one too, which is already stretching out its arms of influence to the ends of the earth, limited by no longitude or latitude that embraces the habitations of men—the American Board of Foreign Missions, was born, and grew up to manhood, in New England. I need not say, that the conception and scope of this institution are vast, and that “its field is” literally “the world.” It embraces nothing else, and nothing less, in its design, than the conversion of the world.

The cause of temperance, or an entire abstinence from the use of ardent spirits, has already embodied public opinion to a very large extent, and accomplished a vast deal towards its object, within this district, and is growing in its influence every day, while other parts of the country are yet hardly touched. When the people of New England are told, that there are three hundred thousand drunkards in the United States, thirty thousand of whom die annually and prematurely, and that twenty six millions of dollars are annually expended to purchase this mighty ruin, temporal and eternal, not only of the individual victims marked in these numbers, but of the still greater numbers, that are connected with them in life, bringing a devastation over families, and over the morals of the country, which defies imagination to estimate,—when, I say, the people of New England are duly certified of these astounding facts—enough to bring tears from the marble, and a groan of sympathy from the whole inanimate creation, they will not be, they have not been slow to feel the spirit-stirring virtue of their ancestry, and to form a sanctified alliance to break the spell of this physical and moral incubus, which rests, with such an oppressive, overwhelming hand, on the bosom, on the very soul, as well of their own community, as of the United States.

There is another evil in this country, big with fearful destiny, for the alleviation and removal of which, I am persuaded, the spirit and the men of New England must take lead, however that large portion of the Union, whose morbid sensibility is most tenderly touched by such interference, so called, may cry, *avaunt*. It is admitted that the Republic of the United States, *as such*, is not responsible for the introduction of slavery into its bosom. But heaven, and the rights of man, will hold us responsible for its removal. Nor will heaven, or the rights of man be satisfied with a long deferred and tardy enterprise, to remove from the heart and face of our country this hydra, of a thousand fold more horrible aspect, and however many of its heads may be stricken off, yet containing in itself a thousand—ten thousand times more of self-generating

powers, than the fabled original. Its amazing inconsistency with the genius of our government and institutions, is too glaring to permit a long protracted coexistence of the two. They who can tolerate the one, will not long, under that transforming temperament which God has given to man, be fit for the other. It is the spirit, and I may add, the men of New England, with a few prominent exceptions, who have urged the institution of that redeeming process, which is now operating, with extended arms, over the mighty mass, and with a vital influence, through the very heart of this immense body of human guilt. The two grand agents of this holy enterprise at the present moment, the one standing alone on the plains of Liberia, the other managing the correspondence, and circulating information at home, are both of them young men of New England.

I profess, I have not pursued this train of thought in the way of boasting, nor would I be guilty of it, to the disparagement of other sections of the Union. Were it within the scope of our present design, I could trace the same virtues, extensively and deeply impressed, and prominently exhibited, throughout the States. I have only wished to show, that there is a *peculiarity* in the character of New England, and that this peculiarity is highly honorable, and greatly hopeful of good to the nation, and to the world; that it has already made its impression on the nation, and is exerting and extending its influence to the ends of the earth. I have wished to show, that the enterprising spirit of New England has thrown its influence largely into the channel of moral and religious reformation, and that it has not only conceived some high and grand designs for the promotion of these objects, but that it has actually reduced those designs into organized systems of operation, which are even now marching on with augmented energies to the consummation of some of the grandest hopes, that could possibly gratify and cheer the purest benevolence of man, or of angel.

If it is true, as I have attempted to show in a former paper, that the United States hold a rank of high importance to the rest of the world, in a moral and religious view, and are destined to exert a renovating influence over the nations of the earth, we think it equally demonstrable, that New England is destined to exert a like moral and religious sway over that grand community of which she is a member, and through this nation, over the world. And we think it well, that she should know in what her importance consists, not for the purpose of self-complacency or boasting, but that she may bend her energies more directly, more systematically, and more efficiently, to these objects. That high character of mental energy and sublime enterprise, which the people of New England have inherited from their fathers, especially, when it has become inspirited with the soul, and invested with the robes of the



religion of Jesus, must not be hid under a bushel, nor buried in a napkin. It should have scope, when God calls it to action. Nor will Christians of other regions look invidiously on that lofty bearing of soul, which casts its eye abroad upon the grander features of moral desolation, rising prominent from the ruins of the fall, and sets itself to the accomplishment of that divine prophecy, which foretels the moral regeneration of a nation in a day. We live in an age of *religious action*, an age which we trust and hope will hereafter be marked as a grand epoch, opening on the world an era of light and life, to be identified with that period which has so long been the burden of prophetic song, and the hope of those who desire the redemption of the world. If such be the decree of heaven, the spirit that has gone forth, animating and uniting the hosts of God's elect, cannot, shall not be arrested by the little bickerings of sectional jealousy, nor by the more extended warrings of national controversy. He, wherever born and nurtured, that expects most, and attempts most, shall be blessed in his way, and bid God-speed. And all those, who can join in the anthem, "Glory to God, on earth, peace and good will towards men," shall rejoice in each other's success, in laboring for the good of men, and the honor of God.

ANTIPAS.

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SPEECHES OF THE HON. JUDGE STORY, BEFORE THE AMERICAN UNITARIAN ASSOCIATION.

It may not be known to the community in general, that the Hon. Joseph Story, one of the Judges of the Supreme Court of the United States, has for several years distinguished himself, beyond any other gentleman of his standing, as a *religious partisan*. At the first anniversary of the American Unitarian Association, he addressed the meeting, with much earnestness, and at great length—more than half an hour,—urging "the peculiar reasons which should induce Unitarians to associate, with a view to defend and advance their cause," and expatiating "on the advantages which might be anticipated from the existence of the American Unitarian Association." At the second anniversary of the same Association, he addressed the meeting again, and with increased warmth. That which at this time excited his feelings, and called forth his invective, was the audaciousness of an ecclesiastical council at Groton which had presumed to call in question the correctness of certain decisions of the Supreme Court of Massachusetts—decisions, by which the churches in this State had been stripped of their dearest natural rights, and prostrated at the foot of civil power.

At the third anniversary of the same body, which occurred only a few weeks since, the Hon. Judge again took the field, and spoke longer, and with more apparent heat, than ever. He was especially displeased with sundry pious and benevolent individuals in Boston, who, from a regard to the spiritual wants of themselves and others, had generously contributed for the building of churches; and who, knowing the ease and the frequency with which ecclesiastical property has been perverted in Massachusetts, and, in the present posture of affairs, may be perverted, had taken such precaution as they could, by means of what have been denominated deeds of trust, that the avails of their bounty should be appropriated according to their wishes; or, in other words, that these churches should never fall into the hands of the Unitarians. This, in the estimation of the Honorable Judge, was a great offence, an encroachment upon the civil liberties of the country not at all to be tolerated.

Our first objection to the conduct of Judge Story, in the instances to which we have adverted, is, that it is altogether *unbecoming*, in his situation. We certainly do not object that he, or any other of our public characters, should be religious, ardently religious; and, if he can answer it to his conscience and his God, we do not complain that he is a Unitarian. He has the same liberty, in this respect, as any other citizen. But we do object that he should year after year present himself before the public as a heated sectary, a religious partisan, and allow himself in denouncing individuals, as intelligent and as benevolent as any among us, for doing that which they not only have a perfect right, but have felt in conscience constrained, to perform.

We object, farther, to the conduct of Judge Story, that it is in a sense *unfair*. He is a public character—elevated to a high and responsible public station, and supported at the *public expense*. This does not, as we have said, impair his freedom of thought and opinion on the subject of religion; but it should render him cautious how he exerts his *official* influence, for the advancement of one religious sect, and to the detriment of others. He, and his party, may rest assured, that the eyes of their fellow citizens are wide open to this subject. They know what efforts have been made, and are now making, to fill all important public offices with men of a particular religious stamp. And if men of this stamp, when raised to office, will descend to exert that influence which the public confidence has given them, to run down those who differ from them in religion, and promote their own private sectarian views, then that subordination of one religious sect to another, which our excellent Constitution expressly condemns, will in effect be realized; and then will the friends of religious freedom and equity no longer be justified in repressing their remonstrances and complaints.

We object to the conduct of Judge Story, in the instances before us, that it is a wanton trifling with the *public confidence*. He ought to be sensible that he is no more exalted above a suitable regard for *public opinion*, than the meanest citizen. Indeed, it is of vastly greater importance to him than it can be to the private citizen, that he inspire and retain, so far as possible with a good conscience, the approbation and the confidence of all. But can he suppose for a moment, that his speeches before the American Unitarian Association have been of a character to excite this universal confidence? Or does he not know that these same speeches, if spread, with all their circumstances, before the American people, would fill many breasts with resentment, and more, probably, with grief or disgust?

We have still another objection to the conduct of Judge Story. Is he sure that questions, growing out of the religious controversies of the times, may never come before him for *legal adjudication*,—that he may never be called to sit on the bench of justice, and pronounce a solemn decision respecting them? And should this ever be the case, with what face or conscience could he present himself before the public on such an occasion? Here is a cause submitted to his determination; and not only the parties, but the community and the world, are entitled to expect that he will hold the scale of justice with an even hand. But he has previously decided it; and decided it, not in a court of justice, but in the heated declamation of a popular assembly! He is known to the public as a religious partisan; his feelings and private opinions are all enlisted on one side; and who can have the least possible respect for any decision which, in such circumstances, he may be led to pronounce?

We need not here go into a full consideration of the objections of Judge Story to the deeds of trust. They are, in general, the same which had been previously urged by "a Layman," and which have been so ably refuted, we might say, have been annihilated, in a recent Review of the Layman's pamphlet. There is, however, one objection, on which he seemed to lay special stress, and which involves a principle of general application, on which it may be expedient to offer a few remarks. The objection is, to the instituting of funds, or the bestowing of money, for the perpetual support of *any particular system of religion*. Posterity, it is said, ought to have no shackles of this sort imposed upon them. They should be left perfectly free on the subject of religion, to form those opinions, and pursue that course, which they may judge wisest and best.

We think this plausible objection susceptible of complete refutation, on general principles; and we may find it necessary, in some future number, to give it a full and thorough discussion. At present, it will be sufficient to observe, that all denominations

of Christians who have established funds, or contributed money in religious charity at all, have done it on the principle which the objection condemns. All who have devoted or bequeathed their property for the support of religion in any shape, have done it with a view to promote that religion, which they honestly believe and prefer. None ever gave money, or ever ought to give it, for the support of principles which they sincerely believe are subversive of the Gospel. The venerable Hollis, for instance, when he founded his Divinity professorship in Harvard college, did not intend it for the support of a Unitarian, or a Universalist, but of one who should be, in his sense of the words, "sound and orthodox."

Even Unitarians themselves, whatever may be their professions, *act*, in relation to this subject, on the same principles as other men. The fund which they have been endeavoring to institute for the support of a missionary in Calcutta, is raised for the purpose of "establishing there a *perpetual Unitarian* mission;" yes, I quote their own words, "a *PERPETUAL Unitarian* mission!" The fund attempted to be raised during the last winter, for the benefit of the Unitarian society in Brooklyn, Conn. was "pledged for the support of Unitarian preaching in Brooklyn FOREVER!" And, though we are told that the Boston Association of Unitarian ministers, from a regard, as it appears, to self-consistency, objected to this pledge, we are not told that the pledge was withdrawn, or indeed that it was expected it would be. The money, as we have understood, was subscribed, upon condition of such perpetual appropriation, and cannot by the subscribers be recalled. Whether the American Unitarian Association has a permanent fund, we are not informed. If it has not such a fund at present, we presume it will have. And we must be allowed to ask, How can it have a fund, which shall not be limited to the support of Unitarianism? Will not the very name of the institution (which name, by the way, is thoroughly sectarian) be itself a limitation of it?

Unitarians, we know, are more in the habit of *getting* funds than of instituting them. But, in the little they have done in the way of instituting funds for religious purposes, they have acted, for aught we see, on the same principles as other men. They prefer their own sentiments to those of others, and they bestow their money with a view to spread and to perpetuate them. And the means by which they contrive to *hold* the funds of churches and of public institutions, which have fallen into their hands, evince the same disposition. If these are not holden by means of trust deeds, some of them are holden in other ways, which are presumed to be no less secure. Unitarians would like, no doubt, to have the funds and the churches of other denominations left open and unprotected, for their seizure; but the funds which they institute, or which fall within their grasp, they will be sure to keep as safely as possible.

Towards the Hon. Judge Story, we certainly have no feelings of personal hostility or disrespect. So far from this, we have been accustomed to regard him, for many years, as an accomplished scholar, and an able magistrate. But in the part he has taken at the anniversaries of the American Unitarian Association, he certainly has let himself down, very far, in the estimation of all wise and impartial men. He has descended from the dignity of a Judge of the United States, to the rank of a mere party zealot and declaimer.

He must think as he pleases of the remarks here made, and must choose his own course for the time to come. But if he will present himself before the public at future meetings of the American Unitarian Association, as he has done in years past, he must expect to stand on a level with other declaimers, and be open, as they are, to public scrutiny and remark. And if those whose cause he espouses, have a right to applaud him for this conduct, as they have done so abundantly, those whom he opposes and denounces, have a right to censure and object. And he must not think it strange, or hard, if they bring their objections before that public, to whose bar he is as strictly amenable, as those in the humbler walks of life.

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THE RIGHTS AND DUTIES OF DIFFERENT DENOMINATIONS OF  
CHRISTIANS.

(Continued from p. 234.)

It is taken for granted, generally, that the existence of different denominations of Christians is a calamity; and that great evils *have* attended the existence of the church in separate, and I may say, in hostile communions, is certain, as we have already shewn. But that evil *only* has been the consequence of these divisions and sins of the church, in rival and opposing communities, is by no means true; and that in their most imperfect and culpable condition they have been a kind of necessary evil, permitted, in the providence of God, for the prevention of greater evils, is highly probable. The evils produced in the natural world by waves and winds, are multitudinous and great; but they are only the partial evil which results from the operation of general laws which are essential to the purity of the atmosphere and the ocean, and to the preservation of the health and life of the world. That all the providential ends of heaven, in permitting diversities of opinions, and different denominations of Christians, with their attendant evils, can be discerned by our short-sighted vision, is not to be believed. But some of these ends are so obvious, as not easily to be overlooked or misunderstood.



1. The Bible has by these means been preserved uncorrupt.

The collision between Jews and Christians in the primitive age, and when that ceased, between Christians and the early heretics, and when these passed away, between one sect of Christians and another, has rendered it impossible for any one at any time materially to alter the sacred text. Christians were not allowed to do it by the enemies of the cross; and heretics were forbidden to do it by the vigilance of Christians; and rival sects were soon allowed to arise to guard the sacred volume. In this manner the wrath of man has been made to praise God. The enmity of man against God, and his hatred of the truth, and all the sinister passions of man have in this manner been made to stand as sentinels around the sacred volume, and guard it from corruption; and though these have been evils, how much greater had the evil been, of the corruption of that holy book!

2. The correctness of the translation of the Bible into all languages is made singularly manifest by the existence of different denominations of Christians.

Had they all remained of one harmonious communion, the question might be urged with great plausibility, How do we know that these Christians have not accommodated their Bible to their wishes? But when we find all denominations appealing to the same original record, and all of them encountering texts in the translation which it would be for their interest to alter, and save a multitude of words; and when we find these texts, for or against particular doctrines, stand substantially the same in all versions of the Bible, in every language and in every age, it is manifest that there has been no sectarian tampering with the translation, and that it declares truly, in every tongue, the wonderful works of God. It is no small advantage that the Bible, now about to become universal, should go out to the world with such evidence that it still speaks on all subjects as the Holy Ghost gave utterance to those who were inspired at first to indite the word of life.

3. These divisions of Christians, sinful as they may have been, and, in themselves considered, to be deplored, may be the providential means by which it has pleased a holy God to prevent, at any time, the total extinction of the truth.

When there was but one denomination in the Jewish church, the Law of the Lord was for a time lost, and the true religion almost supplanted by superstition and idolatry. And when the papal hierarchy arose, and by fire, and bribery, and fraud, deceived and coerced the Christian world within the limits of one communion, and exhausted all the powers of civil and ecclesiastical despotism to create and perpetuate unity of faith: then, had it not been for the few confessors who lifted up their dissenting voice, at different times, and for the sects of the Waldenses and Albigenses, and for the strong notes of remonstrance raised at length by Luther and the

heroes of the Reformation, the moral sun had endured a perpetual eclipse, and all the nations had worshipped idols, or wandered after the beast.—Religion is a treasure too important to be entrusted to a single vessel, whose shipwreck might bury it in the deep; and therefore God may have permitted different denominations to launch each its own frail bark on the tumultuous ocean, freighted with the heavenly treasure.

4. The existence of different denominations has secured to the church a wider range of practical knowledge, and a greater amount of salutary usage, than could have been expected from one great, prosperous, unmolested denomination.

If we are correct in the opinion, that God has not tied his people down to any exact pattern in respect to forms, but has wisely given to them some latitude for the exercise of human discretion, adapted to times and circumstances; then it is not to be expected that any one denomination has hit upon the way which is in all respects absolutely the best, and which is absolutely perfect, more than that one class of husbandmen have hit upon the best mode of agricultural management, to the exclusion of all possibility of improvement from the wisdom and experience of another class. Indeed, if we consider the diversities of human intellect, and knowledge, and taste, and habit, and condition in society, it may be questioned whether any one mode of worship or manner of administering the laws of Christ can be exclusively and universally the best, any more than some one mode of husbandry can be the best, in all countries, and climes, and soils.—No one denomination is perfect in its own way, though probably every denomination has some peculiar excellencies which others have not; and many of these may be peculiarities which belong to the system, and can no more be blended in any one system, than all the advantages of the frigid and temperate and torrid zones can be concentrated on some single spot of earth.

In some respects, the Moravians excel all other denominations; but in acquiring these advantages they are obliged to forego others of great magnitude, which are possessed by some other denominations.

The Methodists embody a great amount of practical wisdom in their system of itineracy. It grew up gradually, under the eye of a wise man, who lived to a great age to revise, and enlarge, and amend it; and is made as perfect, perhaps, as the nature of that system can be made. But while it embraces advantages, and answers ends which other systems do not, it is obliged, in order to secure these peculiarities, to forego, in a measure, advantages which other systems do enjoy.—And in like manner, the Friends have some points in their worship and discipline pre-eminently good; while, probably, they lack some things of great importance, possessed by others.

The Congregationalists also, and the Presbyterians, and the Episcopalians, and the Baptists, have each their excellencies and defects, which cannot easily, if at all, be separated from their respective systems. But though all the excellencies of each denomination cannot be compiled into one system, at all, more than motion and rest can be united, or extemporary freedom with set forms; yet there is room for correction and revision in every denomination, and a fund of practical wisdom among the different sects, for each sect to avail itself of, in the improvement of its own system. Hitherto, prejudice and self-sufficiency have prevented the intercommunion of experience and practical improvements; and it has been a sufficient reason for not adopting a salutary practice, that it was the peculiarity of some other denomination. But when this foolish and criminal selfishness shall sink and disappear, as the tide of holy love rises in the hearts of Christians, each denomination will be as ready to avail itself of the discoveries of others, as philosophers now are to avail themselves of each other's discoveries in philosophy and mechanism. And when this time shall come,—and I trust it is near at hand,—then the end which God saw from the beginning, may begin to disclose itself. Then we may perceive that all his people, in all their different wanderings, have been employed by heaven to explore different fields, and to bring in, each, their treasures of experimental knowledge, to assist in building, in the most perfect practical manner, the universal temple in which all nations shall worship God; and happy is that denomination which, in the light of that trying day, does not, in some respects, suffer loss; and thrice happy that community of Christians which shall bring in, as the result of its researches, the greatest amount of gold, and silver, and precious stones, and the least amount of wood, and hay, and stubble.

5. Another obvious design of Providence in permitting the division and alienation of Christians has been, to prevent inactivity and sloth, and to provide an effectual stimulus to fidelity and enterprise.

Notwithstanding the powerful action which we witness on every side, man is by nature slothful, and needs to be pushed into action by a stimulus as constant and powerful as the *vis inertiae* to be overcome. That entire course of miscellaneous industry which blesses the world, moves on under the impulse of a constant and stern necessity; few being able to hold, without it, their relative station, and none, without it, to rise to those higher places of ambition, or wealth, or pleasure, which they covet. But place the ministers of Christ in such circumstances of ease and safety as shall supersede the necessity of constant vigilance and constant faithfulness in their high calling; and, however the stern piety of a single generation might grapple with the temptations to indolence, and escape absolute defeat, the second, or at most the third, would settle down

contented in a condition of inglorious indolence. The protection, and wealth, and power, and honor, awarded to the clergy in the papal church, produced in the mass, ignorance, imbecility, and a moral putrefaction, which will ultimately bring her to the dust. The vast revenues of the English church, lavished on her clergy, though they have produced, occasionally, able champions, are gradually weakening her defence, and increasing the relative power of seceding communions. No plan was ever more at war with philosophy or religion, than that which would make men learned, by giving them leisure, without the stimulus of necessity; or good men and good ministers, active and faithful, by removing far from them all care and all personal responsibility. No Christian communion can long flourish, whose clergy are chosen and supported by the government, or by patrons, and who are wholly irresponsible to the people whom they serve. Ministers of Jesus should be elected by their people, and should receive a competent, but not an affluent support. But, as all people will endure, and all ministers and churches, without excitement, will indulge, negligencies and deficiencies injurious to the cause; it seems to be necessary that there should be applied, providentially, some powerful stimulus to good works, if not to love. And this stimulus our heavenly Father finds in the sinful selfishness, and ambitions, and aggressions of Christians of various denominations. He could still this rising and dashing of wave against wave,—but in the present low state of holiness it might produce a dead calm, in which every living thing in the sea would perish. What would become of the population of great cities if no motive but prospective benevolence excited one great, safe, powerful denomination to build churches, and multiply the means of grace? In England the churches of the Establishment will not accommodate half the population.—Goaded as she has been by Dissenters, almost to desperation, what then had been the condition of the population of England if all the places of worship built by Dissenters had never been, and all the excitement of the established church to build churches, applied by Dissenters, had been withheld? In all the cities of our own country, after all that religion and ambition have done in the various denominations, nearly a quarter of the population could not be accommodated with places of worship, if they should be disposed to attend. What had been their condition, then, had no enterprise been put in requisition but the unstimulated, unambitious, indolent enterprise of one denomination? Who would provide teachers equal to the rapid increase of our population, if all our twelve millions were of any one denomination? The efforts of all denominations, stimulated by each other's provocation to good works, lag and fall far behind the tremendous exigency of our land. Oh what if there had been but one organized body, to explore, and see, and feel, and lift up the voice,

and put forth a helping hand! Surely, with all that has been done by the rivalry of all, we are still in a condition so appalling, that if any denomination will send out a single additional laborer to cast out devils in a manner ever so feeble and imperfect, we may all bid him God-speed; we may all rejoice in his success as a glorious achievement, compared with the demoniacal possession which would have remained in every place where he sets his foot, and exerts the power of Christ.

We may observe, also, that in every religious society there will be a given number of active, influential men. There might be more, were there anything to do; but the exigencies of each society not requiring a greater number, these will take the lead in active enterprise. But suppose the society to consist of two thousand persons, able to support two ministers: if you divide it, you double the number of active and influential men devoted to the cause of Christ; and under this double moral influence, a much greater proportion of this two thousand will attend worship in two places of public worship than in one, and double the amount of pastoral labor will be performed, and probably nearly double the number of souls will be saved. This subdivision has its limits, within which it is salutary, and beyond which it is pernicious. When it has descended until the parts are unable to sustain the responsibility of supporting the Gospel, then each denomination operates as a sentinel to exclude the stated worship of God in any form, and to perpetuate ignorance, and bad passions, and irreligion, and immorality. But the distribution of the population of the land to a certain extent into separate communions, answers, undoubtedly, the good effect of the division of labor in the arts, and of a spirit of vigilance and energetic rivalry on any subject.

6. The temporary alienation of different denominations may have been intended, by heaven, to prepare the way for the unparalleled efficacy which will attend their evangelical concurrence in the great operations which are to terminate in the subjugation of the world to Christ.

When all denominations of Christians unite for the attainment of one great object, their concurrence baffles opposition, and surmounts obstacles, and achieves wonders; and the efficacy of this voluntary concurrence is greater than the energies of one homogeneous body can be made to be. Bible societies rise under the patronage of all denominations with a moral sublimity and power greater than if all the Christians of the world had always been of one heart and one way. The consideration that Christians of all denominations are united to spread the Bible, without note or comment, pays a noble homage to that holy book, secures a salutary vigilance and a holy emulation, while it renders opposition hopeless, and makes it even an excitement to increased energy of action. Nor is it a small item, in the list of providential good brought



out of evil, that the multiplication of religious denominations under our free representative government, excludes forever the domination of one sect over others, by a religious establishment—the greatest calamity with which the church of God has ever been afflicted.

The idea that any one denomination of Christians is so exclusively perfect as to demand the exclusive patronage of government, or that any one denomination is the exact pattern to which all others are at last to be conformed, is ridiculous. Perfect uniformity in modes and rights is no more to be expected than it is to be desired. That charity which is the bond of perfectness will doubtless increase, and the holy attractions of love will cause all who love our Lord Jesus, to see eye to eye on the subject of doctrine and Christian experience, and to love one another with a pure heart fervently, and to mind each his own, and each the things of others, with mutual complacency and good will. Thus united in Christian doctrine, in Christian experience, and in Christian enterprise, Ephraim will not vex Judah, nor Judah vex Ephraim, but the twelve tribes, if there shall be so many, will, to all essential purposes, become one tribe; while, on those points on which they can differ without harm, their distinctive traits may remain to afford new efficacy to their purified emulation.

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THOUGHTS ON REVIVALS OF RELIGION.

(Continued from p. 149.)

The ministry of Christ was at times exceedingly popular. The fame of his miracles, the purity of his doctrine, and the simple majesty of his preaching, attracted multitudes, and produced great effects. At other times, his preaching was exceedingly unpopular, and many who had been his disciples, “went back, and walked no more with him.” This fact may serve as an answer to the objection, brought by some, against revivals of religion—that there are many who experience only a temporary excitement, and fall back to a state of hardened stupidity. This was precisely the effect of the Gospel, as preached by Jesus Christ himself. But was his ministry conducted improperly? Were the excitements under his preaching vain, because all who were excited for a time, did not abide?

The proper improvement to be made of evanescent religious impressions, is that which our Saviour made: to hold up the high claims of religion, to explain its pure and inflexible requirements, and to forewarn those who attend to the subject, of its duties, its temptations and difficulties. He concealed nothing from his followers, of all which they must forego, or do, or suffer. He told the multitudes who followed him, plainly, “If any man come

to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple. And whosoever doth not bear his cross and come after me, cannot be my disciple." Luke xiv. 26, 27.

These sentiments are not at variance with the natural affections, or the performance of civil or social duties; but explain the high and decisive course which a Christian must take, when he is called to decide between his allegiance to men, or to God. In a world of alienation from God, it is not to be expected that habits of business, or arrangements for amusement or pleasure, will always be coincident with the letter, much less with the spirit of the Gospel. The Christian will often be obliged to dissent, or conform, to his hurt, and the injury of the cause of Christ. The difference between selfishness and supreme love to God, between setting the affections on things below and things above, is so great, that such diverse causes cannot produce uniformly the same practical results. What the passage therefore, just quoted, inculcates, is, that whenever any discrepancy arises between the maxims of the world and the precepts of Christ, the laws of Christ must, at all events, be obeyed; that our allegiance to him is above our obligation to gratify father, or mother, or friend; above all regard for reputation, property, or even life itself; and that no man can be a Christian, who does not give to the laws of Christ a practical supremacy, when the competition lies between them and the fashion of the world. We are to resist evil, though tempted by parental authority or persuasion, or allured by all the blandishments of the nearest and dearest earthly affection. We are to recoil from such tempters, as if we had met a serpent in the way; hating them only as tempters to sin. There is one subject, the subject of religion, in which we may, and must, act for ourselves. The child, when arrived at years of understanding, the husband, the wife, the brother, the sister, and friend—each for himself, must adopt his own religious opinions, and choose his own worship, and judge in all things for himself, what Christ requires of him, and what he forbids. Nothing short of this is liberty of conscience. Nothing short of this is entire and absolute subjection to Christ.

This exposition refutes the charge of moroseness, and precision, and austerity, so constantly urged against conscientious Christians who cannot go all lengths with the gay and fashionable. The fact is, that the practical course which Jesus Christ has prescribed for his disciples, and which his religion actually produces, is different from that which emanates from the spirit of the world. No man can be a Christian, and be so entirely conformed to the spirit of the fashionable and pleasure-loving world, as to practise no self-denial, give no offence, and be in no respect singular.

Our Saviour has forewarned us that it was no part of his design, and that it will not be the effect of his coming, to produce, on all

points, a practical coalition between his disciples and the world. "Suppose ye that I am come to give peace on earth? I tell you, nay; but rather division: for from henceforth there shall be five in one house, divided, three against two, and two against three. The father shall be divided against the son, and the son against the father; the mother against the daughter, and the daughter against the mother; the mother-in-law against her daughter-in-law, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law." The objection, that evangelical preaching and revivals of religion produce division in families and societies, lies equally against the preaching and the Gospel of Christ. It is precisely the effect which he predicted his truth would produce, when received gladly by some members of a family or community, and rejected and hated by others.

Of such results the Gospel is not the cause, but the innocent occasion. It is the sinfulness of men which makes them oppose the Gospel; and its purity and sanctions which call out the bitter expression of it. It is not the pious members of the family who become petulant, and kindle strife. They become more quiet, and meek, and patient, and lowly,—while the fire of opposition rises, and burns furiously around them. Were the entire family converted, there would be great peace, as the event, in such cases, evinces. And whenever a large proportion of any community comes under the saving power of the Gospel, old disputes are laid aside, and there is a great calm. Should a few become converts to honesty among swindlers, there would soon be division; but it would be, not the honest, but the dishonest, who caused the strife. But let them all cease to do evil, and learn to do well, and peace would be restored.

Now in all cases of collision between the disciples of Christ and the world, it is indispensable to Christian character, that the laws of Christ shall prevail.

But what are the laws of Christ? This is the debatable ground; and there are few professing Christians who are, in their own estimation, either disobedient or lax. Definite and prominent immoralities they avoid. But between the kingdom of Christ and the world, there lies, they seem to think, a kind of middle ground, a neutral territory, over which the Saviour extends no very manifold inspection, where inclination may safely legislate, and watchfulness, and prayer, and self-denial, be safely dispensed with. And it is here that not a few professors seem solicitous to live, and move, and have their being, fearful chiefly of being "fighteous overmuch,"—and conversant chiefly with cases of conscience, which have for their object the relaxation of the strait and spiritual requirements of the Gospel, in favor of a life of pleasure, and fearless conformity to the world.

It is over this middle ground that I propose to extend the definite legislation of Christ,—hitherto a territory of doubts, only against the claims of duty; and of confidence, only in favor of self-indulgence.

To bring these nominal subjects of Christ under the precepts of the Gospel, it must be remembered that they consist not in specific injunctions and prohibitions for every possible sin and duty, (which might fill the world with books,) but in general principles of easy application, demanding only a moderate share of understanding, in alliance with a holy heart.

Is it demanded, then, how a young Christian, beset by temptation, amid variant opinions and diversities of practice, shall be able, in all cases, to decide how far he may safely go, and where he must stop? I answer,

Let him be willing to know his duty, and to do it. Without this, he will not examine thoroughly, nor judge impartially, nor obey with promptitude his convictions. The biassed judge no man would willingly trust: but every man is a biassed judge in his own case, when he expounds the laws of Christ under the influence of a powerful reluctance to do his will.

1. Those amusements and courses of conduct should be avoided which the great body of the most devout Christians of all denominations have regarded as dangerous or sinful.

Too much strictness is not the besetting sin of even the best; and when we perceive professors of the most undoubted piety and purity of life, who read for instruction, daily, the word of God, and daily pray for the guidance of his Spirit, unseduced by evil habit, or sinister purpose, and wholly without intercourse or concert, concurring in the same opinion of the moral tendency of particular courses of conduct,—it is impossible to believe that they are safe or innocent. We must surrender our confidence in the dictates of common sense, in the indications of conscience, and in the promises of God to answer prayer, and guide the meek in judgment, before we can suppose that the public sentiment of the more pious and intelligent community of Christians is incorrect and without cause. Those professors who choose to take a greater latitude may call them “weak brethren” if they please, and felicitate themselves on their emancipation from such “narrow-minded opinions and needless scrupulosity.” But death, the great equalizer of human extremes, never brings regret to the bedside and bosom of the most conscientious and careful that may have been too strict; and seldom fails to harrow up the souls of those, with fear and remorse, who have practised the least self-denial, and lived most conformed to the world.

2. Those amusements and courses of conduct should be regarded as inexpedient and sinful, whose manifest effect is to damp the ardor, and impair the habitual vigor of piety, by diverting the

thoughts and turning the affections from the subject, through the influence of other thoughts, interests, and associations.

While the truth of this position will not be denied, the tendency of certain favorite amusements to damp devotion, and alienate the mind from religious associations, will be denied; and there may not be wanting some who will insist that they can, and do maintain, in a ball-room or a theatre, as devout and spiritual a frame as they do in their closets or their church; and we have no doubt of the entire truth of these declarations; their only defect, as facts in evidence, being, that in all such cases, the tone of piety, if it has a being, is too low to admit of any perceptible decline; as in cases of suspended respiration, the body may pass through various temperatures of atmosphere, without any perceptible effect upon the pulsation. Take a Christian, whose spiritual pulsation is such as can be perceived by himself or others, and place him in the chilling atmosphere, which he will be compelled alone to breathe, through all the rounds of fashionable amusement, and, accustomed to a more elastic medium, he will soon perceive the pulse of life to be sinking, and soon be compelled to gasp for breath.

The ordinary daily avocations of life, though they may occasion, for the time, a diversion of thought and feeling, yet, if undertaken from a sense of duty, and preceded and followed by seasons of devout reading, meditation and prayer, do not materially subdue the tone of pious feeling, or impede our growth in grace. But where uncalled by duty, and prompted only by curiosity, or the love of pleasure, we venture out, we never return without loss, only in those cases where piety is so low and languid that any perceptible loss is impossible.

3. Those amusements which are the chosen and especial recreation of irreligious, vicious, and eminently worldly men, are unsuitable for the Christian. The society in which he must place himself in such amusements, is one in which a Christian ought never to be found, until he strikes from his prayer, "Lead us not into temptation;" or obliterates from the Bible, as an interpolation, the declaration that "the companion of fools shall be destroyed." Beside, how can two walk together, except they be agreed.

In civil concerns, and in the sciences, and the fine arts, men may be associated who are exceedingly diverse in the state of their affections. But in moments of relaxation from the severities of labor, and in those amusements and recreations, in the choice of which the heart dictates, how is it possible that the atheist, the infidel, the libertine, and the Christian, shall find themselves drawn instinctively by their hearts, to the same places, to participate in the same, as their most favorite amusements?

4. Those courses of conduct should never be ventured upon, which we have decided to be dangerous and sinful, when the mind



has been the most entirely under the influence of an active conscience, or the pleasures of a holy heart. The judgment which is formed in those seasons of deep anxiety which precede divine illumination, or those of joy and peace which follow, should never be reversed, by the casuistry of a heart emancipated from these vivid impressions of truth, and embued in proportion with the spirit of the world. The mind, in the first instance, was most anxious to know the truth, and all its powers were awake, and in unperverted exercise, to ascertain it. The conscience was tender, and the will pliant, while the influence of the Holy Spirit was in a peculiar manner bestowed. Is it probable, that an opinion thus formed, will err greatly from the truth; or that a decision on the same subject, formed afterwards, in a state of relative stupidity, and under the high pressure of a perverted inclination, will come nearer to it? If Christians would practise upon the casuistry of their most penitent hours, or most spiritual and happy seasons of communion with God, they would avoid the very appearance of evil, and adorn in *all* things, and eminently, the doctrine of God their Saviour.

5. Those things which conscience decides against immediately, and acquiesces in only as the result of the reasonings of inclination, are to be suspected and avoided. The right way is a high way, and offers itself at once to the observation of the traveller, without the need of excuses and reasonings, to reconcile his conscience to walk in it. A man's judgment in matters of intellect or expediency, may be improved by revision, and the last decision be the best; but he who tampers with his conscience, in a case where the heart reasons, is sure to make the worse appear the better reason, and to substitute, at last, inclination for duty.

6. Those amusements to which we are inclined from education and habit, or to which we are attracted by social ties or interest, should be scrutinized with a jealous eye, and a heart of unfaltering honesty. The influence of parental example, and of early education and habit, is much more powerful than safe. It is not of course always wrong, but is never so infallibly right as to be implicitly relied on. The conduct and opinions of ministers is sometimes appealed to as the opinion and conduct of great and good men. But if all which some called ministers of Christ approve and practice, were correct, the way to heaven could not well be denominated strait or narrow. It is in this, as well as in respect to articles of faith, that the Christian should call no man master.

7. Those amusements are unsafe and sinful, concerning the lawfulness of which we stand in doubt. This an apostle has decided. The question was referred to him, whether it were lawful for a Christian to eat meat which had been offered in sacrifice to an idol. He decides that an idol is nothing, and that the meat thus offered is not defiled, and might be eaten, provided it could be done without offence, and the person was, in his

own mind, fully persuaded of the lawfulness of the act. But if he doubt, he is condemned if he eat; for whatsoever is not of faith is sin. It is not enough that we do not certainly know a thing to be wrong, to authorize the doing of it. In cases of simple indulgence, we are bound to be fully persuaded that the thing is lawful and right. No man might lawfully, as a matter of curiosity, venture into a cave abounding with serpents and vipers, merely because he did not certainly know that he should be bitten or stung to death. If he doubts, as to the safety of going in, and no duty demands the exposure, he is condemned if he venture. But the soul is more important than animal life, and the sting of sin is more dreadful than the poison of asps. This single maxim, of never entering upon courses with a wavering conscience concerning their rectitude, would sweep from the church a host of cases of doubtful disputation; few would do wrong who should strictly observe it. It is acting without full persuasion, and against doubts and fears, that creates almost all the lax Christian conduct in the world.

8. Those amusements which are regarded by the world as inconsistent with the proprieties of a Christian profession, cannot be indulged without sine; because, of course, they give offence; and, being unnecessary, it is evil to that man who eateth with offence.

Those who are not themselves pious, understand, theoretically, the nature and practical results of religion; and generally they are far from being too strict in respect to the liberties which Christians may take; and commonly their opinion is in close accordance with that of the most spiritual and devout. The world may allure us, and affect to think strange that we go not with them; but if we comply, they know that we have done wrong, and despise us for our flexibility. Always they feel as if they had gained a victory, when the scruples of a professor are overcome, and he is prevailed on to conform. A note of exultation is raised, a thrill of joy is felt, when the Christian is beheld coming down from his holy eminence, and entering the circle of pleasurable sin.

I am aware that some youthful Christians have covered their undue love of pleasure under the pretext of doing good to the world, by mingling with them in their innocent amusements. They would conciliate and win over the world to religion by letting them see how far from superstition a Christian can be; and how little self-denial Christianity demands. But in all such experiments, the conversions take place on the wrong side; the adventurous Christian is converted to the world, but the concessions are never reciprocated. They are willing that a professor should show them how lax and worldly a Christian can be, but their complaisance never moves them to show in return, how strict and religious the people of the world can be: they are willing we should attend their balls, but the young adventurer will not in return be able to bring them to his prayer-meeting; nor will he long attend it himself, he

will lose so much his spirituality. His Christian friends will first be pained, then expostulate, and at last be abandoned for more cheerful associates; and all he will gain will be, merely that the world, instead of ridiculing him as a fanatic, will despise him as a hypocrite. The only way to bring the world over to Christ, is, not to approximate so near to them as to justify the inference that there is no difference between saint and sinner, but to maintain a ground of such elevation and purity, as shall make the difference between him that feareth God and him that feareth him not, great and alarming.

The preceding remarks have been written with an especial reference to guiding the judgment of young Christians, in respect to their early practical course. Happily, our churches, in these times of refreshing, are filling up with persons whose youthful inexperience demands, for their guidance, the result of pastoral observation. Many, for want of a definite knowledge of duty, are perplexed, and brought into great temptation, and carried away, to their own hurt, and the wounding of the cause; and, too often, those to whom they look for advice, are either not correct in their views, or, when they are so, are not able to meet the sophistry of the world, and the reasonings of a deceitful heart. Less has been said, doubtless, on this subject than the importance of it demands; but enough, it is hoped, has been advanced, to afford to young Christians who are willing to be directed, some safe, practical rules of discrimination, between what is right and wrong, safe and dangerous, in their early practical course. Particularly, if we mistake not, is the question settled, on which too many youthful, and some parental minds, have wavered, viz. whether it is lawful for professors of religion to attend the theatre, and balls, and card-parties, for innocent recreation; and all those 'feasts of reason, and flows of soul,' coupled with late hours and the 'spirit-stirring bowl.' And if I mistake not, older Christians, and even ministers, may find something in the criteria of this paper, which may help them out of those innumerable cases of conscience which seem to be coming upon them as an armed man, in respect to the manner in which the Sabbath ought to be sanctified, viz. what are works of necessity and mercy; and how far a minister may ride or walk on the Sabbath, in exchange of pulpits.

An entire willingness to practise self-denial and to do right, will be a great enlightener of the eyes on this subject. All the Christians whom I have known, who are ever environed with difficulties, are Christians of low piety, and strong worldly dispositions; who of course are always making refined distinctions and exceptions to general rules; in favor of courses which accommodate inclination, and supersede self-denial. Eminent Christians are seldom, if ever, found flouncing amid bogs and quicksands,

and groping amid a land of twilight and fog, and abounding with undefinable and undiscoverable duties.

Our fathers, for a hundred and fifty years, found no difficulty in deciding how the Sabbath should be sanctified; and it is believed, verily, if there be first a willing mind, and a readiness to give weight to the opinions of the wisest and the best whose light has shone in other ages, and still shines, that no practicable difficulties will be found in so sanctifying the Sabbath, as that our light may so shine before men, that others, seeing our good works, may glorify our Father which is in heaven.

If we associate, in our moments of relaxation, with the wise and good, and shun those amusements which the spirit of the world has dictated for its own gratification, which we disapproved and shunned when most deeply solicitous for our souls, or most joyful and grateful in the recent hope of pardon: if we obey the first dictates of conscience, without equivocation and consultation with the reasonings of the heart: if we call no man master but Christ, and trust implicitly to no example but his: avoid all cases of doubtful propriety, and practise only what we are fully persuaded is right: and shun those approximations to the world, for which the world itself, while it pleads for them as innocent, despises us, and urges on its thoughtless course with a more fearless incredulity in respect to vital religion;—if we do these things, we shall escape probably both the beginning and the consummation of evil, and commence and hold on a course, which shall shine more and more, to the perfect day.

If any further guidance should be needed, I would say, Maintain habitually, a devout and spiritual frame of mind. It is always in a low and languid state of piety, that the understanding loses its discriminating power, and conscience its predominating influence. Associate, in seasons of relaxation, more particularly with Christians: for he who prays with Christians, and plays with the world, will soon love the one and hate the other, and cleave to the one and despise the other. The early symptoms of declension in young converts, appears, usually, in their gradual change of companions and recreations. Search the Scriptures daily for direction. In respect to all that is practical, it is a singularly plain book, which he that runneth may read, and cannot read habitually without increasing definite practical knowledge. Besides which, it will so embue the mind, form the taste, and regulate the affections, as to render the pleasures of sin vapid and powerless of temptation, while Wisdom's ways will become pleasant, and all her paths peace.

Thy Word is everlasting truth,  
How pure is every page.  
That holy book shall guide our youth,  
And well support our age.

## REVIEWS.

1. A PRACTICAL IMPROVEMENT OF THE DIVINE COUNSEL AND CONDUCT, attempted, in a Sermon occasioned by the decease of William Cowper, Esq. Preached at Olney, May 18, 1800, by Samuel Greathead. Second edition. Newport-Pagnel, 1801. pp. 56.
2. THE LIFE AND POSTHUMOUS WRITINGS OF WILLIAM COWPER, Esq. By William Hayley. New York, J. & T. Swords, 1803. 2 vols. 8vo. pp. 232, 250.
3. MEMOIR OF THE EARLY LIFE OF WILLIAM COWPER, Esq. written by Himself, &c. Philadelphia, Edward Earle, 1816. 12mo. pp. 173.
4. PRIVATE CORRESPONDENCE OF WILLIAM COWPER, Esq. with several of his most intimate friends, &c. Boston, Wells & Lilly, 1824. 12mo. pp. 312.
5. REVIEW OF "COWPER'S PRIVATE CORRESPONDENCE," in the *Christian Examiner*; vol. i. p. 254.

The last four of these publications we have placed at the head of this article, for the sake of more convenient reference, while noticing the first; and we introduce the first to our readers at this late hour, because we are assured that nothing, which throws any light upon the lovely character and peculiar religious experience of Cowper, can be uninteresting to the friends of piety and genius; and because, although extensively circulated in his native country, it has never been given to the American public, through our own press.

The Sermon is founded on the well chosen text, Isa. lv. 8, 9. It was preached, as the advertisement informs us, in the Independent meeting-house at Olney, to a numerous congregation of different religious denominations; and *afterward written* and published at their urgent request.

The author is thus noticed by Hayley in his elegant biography of the poet.\* "In returning from one of our rambles around the pleasant village of Weston, we were met by Mr. Greathead, an accomplished minister of the Gospel, who resides at Newport-Pagnel, and whom Cowper described to me in terms of cordial esteem." The Discourse itself evinces his claim to the character here given of him, and "having been honored with the intimate friendship"† of the deceased, he was peculiarly qualified to assist the afflicted inhabitants of Olney, in deriving from the word of God the instruction and comfort which they needed, under so dark and painful a dispensation. Dark and painful they must have felt it to be; for, though their "neighbor and friend" had for some

\* Life of Cowper, vol. 2. p. 25.

† Sermon, p. 2.



time ceased to reside among them, his excellent character, and many offices of Christian kindness, were still held in grateful and tearful remembrance. He had been the intimate associate and valuable coadjutor of their former pastor, the Rev. John Newton. "For nearly twelve years," says that venerable servant of Christ, "we were seldom separated for seven hours at a time, when we were awake, and at home. The first six, I passed in daily admiring, and aiming to imitate him: during the second six, I walked pensively with him in the valley of the shadow of death. He loved the poor, he often visited them in their cottages, conversed with them in the most condescending manner, sympathized with them, counselled and comforted them in their distresses; and those who were seriously disposed were often cheered and animated by his prayers."\* Such also is the language of Mr. G. Referring to a sentence from Mr. N.'s preface to Cowper's Poems, of similar import to that which we have just given from the Memoirs of the poet, he says,

"Those of you, who for thirty years past, have lived in the fear of God, can testify the truth of the remark last quoted. Often have I heard described, the amiable condescension with which our late excellent neighbor listened to your religious converse, the sympathy with which he soothed your distresses, and the wisdom with which he accorded to you his seasonable advice. At your stated meetings for prayer, (would there were such in every parish!) you have heard him, with benefit and delight, pour forth his heart before God in earnest intercession, with a devotion equally simple, sublime, and fervent; adapted to the unusual combination of elevated genius, exquisite sensibility, and profound piety, that distinguished his mind. His walk with God in private, was consistent with the solemnity and fervor of his social engagements. Like the prophet Daniel, and the royal Psalmist, he 'kneeled three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God,' in retirement, beside the regular practice of domestic worship. Relieved, by a familiar and experiential knowledge of the Gospel, from all terror and anxiety, his mind was stayed upon God; and for several ensuing years, it was kept in perfect peace. The corrupt dispositions, which have so strong a hold upon the human heart, appeared to be in him peculiarly suppressed; and when in any degree felt, they were lamented and resisted by him. His hymns, mostly written during this part of his life, describe both the general tenor of his thoughts, and their occasional wanderings, with a force of expression dictated by the liveness of his feelings. While his attainments in the love of God were thus eminent, you, my friends, can testify the exemplary love that he practised toward his neighbor. To a conduct void of offence toward any individual, and marked with peculiar kindness to them who feared God, was added a beneficence fully proportioned to his ability, and exercised with great modesty and discretion." pp. 19, 20.

\* Life, vol. i. p. 129.

That such a man—and such, by the united testimony of all who knew him, he unquestionably was,—should, after a few years of cheerful piety and eminent usefulness, be suddenly and permanently denied the comforts of that religion, which he yet so beautifully exemplified, and, after “languishing, for almost half the term of mortal existence, in hopeless dejection, and often in insupportable terrors,” “die, and make no sign,” to ease the almost bursting hearts of his kind and anxious attendants, is a mystery, for the complete elucidation of which we must wait until we “know even as also we are known.”

“How shall we,” says Mr. G. “in such an instance, vindicate the ways of God to man? Shall I conduct you into the labyrinth, without a clue to guide you through it? Or shall facts, the most interesting facts, be suppressed, lest they should be abused? By no means. Falsehood alone needs shun the light. Wisdom is justified of all her children. The Lord’s dealings with our deceased friend, however uncommon, could not be unjust to him; and they cannot be unprofitable to us, if we humbly and seriously contemplate them. No more would I scruple to declare the whole conduct of God, than his whole counsel, so far as I can learn it. But who can find out the Almighty to perfection? Our text forbids the expectation. May we feel, and may we profit by the truth it holds forth! With this view, I purpose, first, to suggest some remarks upon the infinite difference between God’s thoughts and ways, and those of man; then, to apply these observations to the Lord’s dealings with our deceased friend; and close with such practical instructions, as we may, and apparently ought to deduce from this subject.” p. 4.

Such is the outline of the Discourse before us. We shall not here detain our readers with the pertinent and well expressed thoughts presented under the first head; nor with the pious and judicious counsel given under the last. The second is most interesting to us at the present time, as it contains the religious history of the poet; a subject which has by some been inexcusably misrepresented, and probably by many more, through their influence, sadly misunderstood. As, therefore, the Discourse is not in the hands of our readers generally, we will present some extracts from this part of it, which, when compared with Cowper’s memoirs of himself, (two editions of which have been given to the American public,) and other testimonies hereafter to be adduced, will afford, we think, conclusive evidence that *the distressing mental malady to which he was subject, is in no degree ascribable to the influence of his religious sentiments.* To this source numbers have labored to trace it, but they have labored in vain.

“From childhood,” says Mr. G. “during which our late friend lost a much loved parent, his spirits were always very tender, and often greatly dejected. His natural diffidence and depression of mind were augmented to a very distressing degree, by the turbu-

lence of his elder comrades, at the most celebrated public school in the kingdom. And when, at mature age, he was appointed to a lucrative and honorable station in the law, he shrunk, with the greatest terror, from the appearance which it required him to make before the upper House of Parliament. Several affecting circumstances concurred to increase the agony of his mind, while revolving the consequences of relinquishing the post to which he had been nominated; and his life had nearly fallen a sacrifice to the obstacles which he had to surmount." pp. 12, 13.

The closing words of this paragraph, very tenderly allude to what was emphatically "the hour of the power of darkness" in Cowper's life. Considering the time and circumstances in which the Sermon was delivered, such delicacy was to be expected. But the poet, in his auto-biography, has given us the naked truth. Describing the perturbation and agony of mind, produced by the prospect of his examination, which effectually defeated all his attempts to prepare for it, he says,

"To this dilemma I was reduced, either to keep possession of the office to the last extremity, and by so doing, expose myself to a public rejection for insufficiency; or else to fling it up at once, and by this means run the hazard of ruining my benefactor's right of appointment, by bringing his discretion into question. In this situation, such a fit of passion has sometimes seized me, when alone in my chambers, that I have cried out aloud, and cursed the hour of my birth; lifting up my eyes to heaven, at the same time, not as a suppliant, but in the hellish spirit of rancorous reproach and blasphemy against my Maker." *Memoir*, p. 49.

He now tried the effect of medicine; then, for "a few nights" had recourse to a form of prayer; but soon, with his prayer-book, "laid aside all thoughts of God and hopes of a remedy." He next took refuge, for a season, in the gloomy expectation that his constitutional melancholy, aggravated by such severe mental conflict, would deepen into *madness*, so as seasonably to excuse his appearance in the House of Lords. But even this refuge failed him. The day of trial drew near, and still he was not a maniac, though too evidently, "*madness was in his heart.*" And

"Now came the grand temptation; the point to which Satan had all the while been driving me; the dark and hellish purpose of self-murder. I grew more sullen and reserved, fled from all society, even from my most intimate friends, and shut myself up in my chambers. Being reconciled to the apprehension of madness, I began to be reconciled to the apprehension of death. Though formerly, in my happiest hours, I had never been able to glance a single thought that way, without shuddering at the idea of dissolution, I now wished for it, and found myself but little shocked at the idea of procuring it myself. Perhaps, thought I, there is no God; or if there be, the Scriptures may be false; if so, then God has nowhere

forbidden suicide. I considered life as my property, and therefore at my own disposal. Men of great name, I observed, had destroyed themselves; and the world still retained the profoundest respect for their memories. But above all, I was persuaded to believe, that, if the act were ever so unlawful, and even supposing Christianity to be true, my misery in hell itself would be more supportable. *Memoir*, pp. 51—53.

The poet then goes on to relate his preparations and attempts to perpetrate the horrid deed, which, but for the preventing care of his yet unknown Saviour, would have "put out his lamp forever in obscure darkness." In the course of this sad narration, he exclaims,

"Behold, into what extremities a *good sort of man* may fall! Such was I, in the estimation of those who knew me best; a decent outside is all a goodnatured world requires. Thus equipped, though all within be rank atheism, rottenness of heart, and rebellion against the blessed God, we are said to be good enough; and if *we* are damned, alas! who shall be saved? Reverse this charitable reflection, and say, if a *good sort of man* be saved, who then shall perish? and it comes much nearer the truth. But this is a hard saying, and the world cannot bear it." *Memoir*, p. 65.

But let us return to Mr. G.'s account.

"His office was at length resigned; and with it his flattering prospects vanished, and his connexions with the world became dissolved. A striking instance of the instability of earthly hopes, and the insufficiency of human accomplishments to promote even temporal comfort. At this distressing crisis, appears to have commenced Mr. Cowper's serious attention to the ways of God. His manners were in general decent and amiable; and the course of pleasure, in which he indulged himself, being customary with persons in similar circumstances; he remained, till that period, insensible of his state as a sinner in the sight of God. Reflecting upon that awful eternity, into which he had nearly been plunged, he became, *for the first time*, convinced of the evil of sin, as a transgression of the law of God; and he was terrified by the apprehension that his offences were unpardonable. While in this state, he was visited by the late Rev. Martin Madan, his first cousin. By explaining from the Scriptures the doctrine of original sin, Mr. Madan convinced him that all mankind were on the same level with himself before God. The atonement and righteousness of Christ, being set forth to him, Mr. Cowper discovered therein the remedy which his case required. A conviction of the necessity of faith in Christ, in order to experience the blessings of this salvation, excited his earnest desire for the attainment; but although his mind derived present ease from these important truths, he was yet unaware of his own utter inability to believe. The calm which a defective application of the Gospel had produced, was so transient, that, on the following day, his mind again became agitated by despair. The

terror of eternal judgment overpowered and wholly disordered his faculties; and he remained seven months in a continual expectation of being instantly plunged into final misery. During that time, he was placed under the care of Dr. Cotton, a pious and humane physician, at St. Alban's. When the force of Mr. Cowper's despair became weakened to such a degree, as to allow of conversation with the doctor, he derived relief and pleasure from that intercourse, and joined in the daily worship of the family with increasing satisfaction. At length, his distress was effectually removed, by reading in the sacred Scriptures, that 'God hath set forth Jesus Christ to be a propitiation, through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God.' Rom. iii. 25. While meditating upon this passage, he obtained a clear view of the Gospel, which was attended with unspeakable joy. His subsequent days" [that is, until that fearful malady, which the consolation of religion had so wonderfully resisted, was permitted to renew its strength] "were chiefly occupied with praise and prayer; and his heart overflowed with love to his crucified Redeemer." pp. 13—15.

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"The consolation, which, after having endured the severest distress, he at that time derived from a life of faith in the Son of God, who loved him, and gave himself for him, he thus describes in an affecting allegory :

'I was a stricken deer, that left the herd  
 Long since; with many an arrow deep infixt  
 My panting side was charged, when I withdrew  
 To seek a tranquil death in distant shades.  
 There was I found by one who had himself  
 Been hurt by th' archers. In his side he bore,  
 And in his hands and feet, the cruel scars.  
 With gentle force soliciting the darts,  
 He drew them forth, and heal'd, and bade me live.'

*Task, Book 3.*

"This testimony to the truth and solidity of that peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, which is the privilege of them who are justified by faith, he published, long after he had lost all enjoyment of the blessing. But who would not have hoped to see his path, like that of the sun, 'shine more and more, unto the perfect day'? Firmly persuaded that mental happiness, which far exceeds in value every outward comfort, descends from the Father of our spirits, we cannot observe this inestimable blessing utterly withdrawn from such a character as that just described, without calling to mind the language of the text; 'My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord.'

"Our departed friend conceived some presentiment of this sad reverse, as it drew near; and during a solitary walk in the fields, he composed a hymn, which is so appropriate to our subject, and so expressive of that faith and hope which he retained as long as he possessed himself, that although it is very familiarly known to you, I cannot forbear to introduce it in this place." pp. 20, 21.



The hymn here mentioned is the fifteenth of the Olney Hymns, third book, and the sixty eighth of Worcester's Selection;

"God moves in a mysterious way," &c.

Having this history of its origin from a bosom friend of the author, our readers will doubtless turn to it with new interest, and "speak to themselves" in its sublime and beautiful language, in hours of darkness and conflict, with increased comfort and benefit. Having recited it, our author proceeds with his narrative:

"Armed with the like faith, let us venture to contemplate the dreary path that our deceased neighbor trod so long a time. Many have visited its gloomy entrance, and some have been a tedious while bewildered in it; but none, within my knowledge, has traced, as he did, its whole extent. The steps by which he descended to it, were sudden, and awfully precipitous. The bright, yet serene lustre, which had usually "marked the road that led him to the Lamb," was succeeded by impenetrable darkness. After the clearest views of the love of God, and that expansion of heart which he had enjoyed in His ways, his mind became obscured, confused, and dismayed. He concluded, as too many others have done under so sensible a change, and as the Psalmist in his infirmity was tempted to do, that "the Lord had cast him off; that he would be favorable no more; that his mercy was clean gone forever!" That vivid imagination, which often attained the utmost limits of the sphere of reason, did but too easily transgress them; and his spirits, no longer sustained upon the wings of faith and hope, sunk with their weight of natural depression, into the horrible abyss of absolute despair. In this state his mind became immoveably fixed. He cherished an unalterable persuasion that the Lord, after having renewed him in holiness, had doomed him to everlasting perdition. *The doctrines in which he had been established, directly opposed such a conclusion;* and he remained still equally convinced of their *general truth;* but he supposed himself to be the only person, that ever believed with the heart unto righteousness, and was notwithstanding excluded from salvation. In this state of mind, with a deplorable consistency, he ceased not only from attendance upon public and domestic worship, but likewise from every attempt at private prayer; apprehending that for him to implore mercy, would be opposing the determinate counsel of God. Permission seemed to be given, as in the case of Job, to the adversary of Christ and of his people, to harrass the soul of our afflicted friend, in a manner and measure, that cannot be conceived by any person who has not felt it." pp. 22—24.

Such, with some slight variations, as to the constancy and intensity of his mental sufferings, were the last thirty years of this most interesting and amiable man. "So much," says the English high churchman, "for Methodism!" "So much for Orthodoxy!" responds the "rational Christian" on this side the water; "a mournful example of the pernicious effects of false religion upon

minds of peculiar susceptibility."\* But how, we ask, in the name of candor and common sense, does this appear? Not from the foregoing narrative; for Cowper's religious faith, whether true or "false," directly *opposed*, and, so far as it had room to operate, effectually *counteracted* those gloomy impressions to which he was subject; nor could he maintain that "deplorable consistency," with which he denied himself all the privileges and consolations of the Gospel, without regarding his own supposed experience as a *solitary exception* to those doctrines of grace, of which, in application to all others, he was still a firm believer. Nor does the testimony of his accomplished biographer, Hayley, give any material support to such a charge against the religion of Cowper, though Hayley was by no means partial to such a life of "admirable sanctity" as he acknowledges Cowper's to have been. In one place he says,

"A disappointment of the heart, arising from the cruelty of fortune, threw a cloud on his juvenile spirit. Thwarted in love, the native fire of his temperament turned impetuously into the kindred channel of devotion. The smothered flames of desire, uniting with the vapors of constitutional melancholy, and the fervency of religious zeal, produced altogether that irregularity of corporeal sensation, and of mental health, which gave such extraordinary vicissitudes of splendor and of darkness to his mortal career, and made Cowper, at times, an idol of the purest admiration, and, at times, an object of the sincerest pity." *Life*, vol. ii. p. 125.

This account of the poet's religious experience is very nearly what we might expect from one who could commence it with such a friendly nod at paganism—"the cruelty of fortune," "the kindred channel of devotion!" This is speaking "half in the speech of Ashdod" with a witness. Surely the "flames" and "vapors" which mingle and contend, with such Vesuvian sublimity, in this sentence, could never be the elements of that lovely character, which Hayley has elsewhere, with so much truth, delineated. Let us hear him again, and he will talk more rationally.

"In October 1798, the pressure of his melancholy seemed to be mitigated in some little degree, for he exerted himself so far as to write, without solicitation, to Lady Hesketh; and I insert passages of this letter, because, gloomy as it is, it describes, in a most interesting manner, the sudden attack of his malady, and tends to confirm an opinion, that his mental disorder arose from a scorbutic habit, which, when his perspiration was obstructed, occasioned an unsearchable obstruction in the finer parts of his frame." *Life*, vol. ii. p. 119.

Again :

"He (the bishop of Landaff) endeavored evangelically to cheer and invigorate the mind of Cowper; but the depression of that disordered mind was *the effect of bodily disorder* so obstinate, that it received not the slightest relief from *what, in a season of corporeal*

\* Review of Cowper's Private Correspondence in the Christian Examiner.

health, would have afforded the most animated gratification to this interesting invalid."

Once more :

"Few ministers of the Gospel have searched the Scriptures more diligently than Cowper, and, in his days of health, with a happier effect." *Life*, vol. ii. p. 127.

Nor did Cowper himself, at those favored seasons when he was capable of judging on the subject, attribute his dejection wholly, or indeed principally, to a religious cause. He understood, and in his lucid intervals, acknowledged the "mental infirmity" which at other times so obscured his perception, and prevented his enjoyment of the "light of life." To Lady Hesketh he says,

"As to that gloominess of mind, which I have had these twenty years, it cleaves to me even here, (at Mr. Hayley's, Eartham,) and could I be translated to paradise, unless I left my body behind me, would cleave to me there also. It is my companion for life, and nothing will ever divorce us." *Life*, vol. ii. p. 46.

In a letter to Mr. Hayley, of an earlier date, he thus alludes to the same propensity :

"But you must permit me, nevertheless, to be melancholy now and then ; or if you will not, I must be so without your permission ; for that sable thread is so intermixed with the very thread of my existence, as to be inseparable from it, at least while I exist in the body." *Life*, vol. ii. pp. 30, 31.

Indeed, even while suffering under his disease, he was not altogether insensible of its nature and origin. In a letter to Mr. Newton, he says,

"The style of dispensation peculiar to myself has hitherto been that of sudden, violent, unlooked for change. The rough and the smooth of such a lot, taken together, should perhaps have taught me never to despair ; but through an unhappy propensity in my nature to forebode the worst, they have, on the contrary, operated as an admonition to me never to hope." *Priv. Cor.* pp. 233, 234.

In another letter to the same, he says,

"I have heard of bodily aches and ails, that have been particularly troublesome when the season returned in which the hurt that occasioned them was received. The mind, I believe, (with my own, however, I am sure it is so,) is liable to similar periodical affection. The year will go round, and January will approach. I shall tremble again, and I know it ; but in the mean time, I will be as comfortable as I can." *Priv. Cor.* p. 258.

Again :

"The only consolation left me on this subject, is, that the voice of the Almighty can, in one moment, cure me of this mental infirmity. That He can, I know by experience ; and there are

reasons for which I ought to believe that He will." *Priv. Cor.* p. 269.

Thus it appears, that to attribute Cowper's depression to the influence of his religious belief, is to dispute the testimony of the sufferer himself, (taken at those moments when he was in any measure a competent witness,) the prevailing opinion of his most intimate friends, and the evidence of unquestionable facts. Cowper's severest and most dangerous paroxysm of mental distress, was *prior* to his having received *any religious impression* whatever; the doctrines which he subsequently embraced, so far from aggravating his fearful malady, were as wine and oil to his wounded spirit, and procured to him the *first* and the *greatest relief* which he ever experienced; and the reason why the same truths ceased to afford the same "joy and peace," in after time, was, not that the "balm of Gilead" had lost its efficacy, but that the bewildered patient too successfully resisted its application. On this point the reviewer in the *Christian Examiner*, even after holding up Cowper to his readers as "a mournful example of the pernicious effects of false religion," makes something like a concession; though, it must be owned he does it with rather a bad grace; and seems resolved to make himself amends, for his lenity to the suffering poet, by letting the lash of reproof fall over his shoulders upon those Calvinists of sterner stuff, who are mad enough to find comfort and support in those very doctrines to which his anguish of spirit is so studiously ascribed.

"We do not mean," says the reviewer, "to charge upon his views of religion, the whole of that gloomy despair, of which the passage we have just extracted is a specimen. He would doubtless have been subject to occasional depression of spirits, and intervals of melancholy, whatever might have been his notion of his religious state. *This tendency was part of his physical constitution, and the insanity under which he suffered for a time, was produced by causes which had no connexion with religion.*"

This is very well; it looks like reason, and candor, and kindness. But it is only the gilding of a bitter pill. Orthodoxy must not come off so. He proceeds:

"But if he had not had what have been so falsely called *evangelical views* of religion, we think he would probably have attributed those intervals of depression to their true cause, and would have been saved those agonies of despair, which could not but be the consequence of imagining that they were the indications and the beginning of the eternal misery he was doomed to suffer."....."We do not doubt that it was owing to, or rather that it *was* an aberration of mind; but we contend that its gloom was infinitely deepened by his imagining that a state either of depression or excitement was to be regarded as an evidence of God's favor or anger; and by his belief that he might expect, and might perceive the immediate ope-

ration of the divine Spirit upon his own mind. If this be insanity,—and we are not disposed to deny it,—it is a form of it, which is found in many who are not possessed of Cowper's sensibility; in many who, with a presumption quite as insane as his despair, believe that nothing can “shut the gates of mercy” to them; in many who, in accordance with the opinion of those who assume exclusively the appellation of Orthodox or Evangelical Christians, believe that their corrupt natures have been regenerated and born again of the Holy Ghost, that they cannot fall away, and, in short, that their period of probation is terminated, and they are sure of admittance into the kingdom of heaven.”

If our views of evangelical truth were such as the closing sentence of this quotation represents them, we might indeed be deservedly consigned to the safe keeping of a cell, or a strait jacket. But we would advise the Examiner to *re-examine* the doctrines of regeneration and perseverance, before he indulges himself in any farther remarks upon those who hold them; lest he should seem too nearly to resemble those “vain janglers” mentioned by St. Paul, “understanding neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm.”

That Cowper did not believe the doctrine of universal restoration we freely own; but if he had held it as a general truth, he might yet (as he did in fact, in reference to the doctrine of the perseverance of the saints) have supposed himself a solitary exception to it, and so have neutralised what the reviewer considers its consoling influence, and still lived in dread of “eternal misery.” Whether he was *insane* in believing “that he might expect, and might perceive the immediate operation of the divine Spirit upon his own mind,” is a question on which we must appeal to those who have scripturally settled the *previous* one, “whether there be any Holy Ghost.” “The world cannot receive” that heavenly “Comforter,” “because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him.” But there are those who know him; “for he dwelleth with them, and is in them.” And they only are qualified to reason satisfactorily about His “operations.”

We think it is undoubtedly true, that Cowper was too much under the influence of sensation. He was unreasonably discouraged and alarmed by the interruption of his religious enjoyments; or, to use a more familiar expression, depended too much on his *frames*. He might truly say, however, “this is mine infirmity.”

It was rather a calamity than a fault, for it was the result of peculiar bodily temperament. Yet his sufferings from it may not be the less instructive and admonitory to others on this account. We shall, therefore, introduce in this place, some remarks from the third division of the Sermon, in which Mr. Greathead has given a very judicious caution to those experimental Christians, who estimate their attainments in religion by the measure of their



present comfort, and who may be said to walk by *feeling*, rather than by faith.

“Another lesson, of the utmost possible importance, is to be deduced from this interesting subject: TO ADHERE TO THE REVEALED WORD OF GOD, as your ground of hope and rule of conduct. This is the standard by which alone we have to try our sentiments, our feelings, and our actions; but alas, how defective is the use we make of this invaluable gift!—Remember, that in whatever manner you decline from the revealed will of God as your support and guide through life, and whatever you may substitute in its stead, it must in its degree be detrimental to your spiritual welfare. The snare of which I apprehend you are chiefly in danger, is the same which the experience of our deceased friend most solemnly warns us against; that of adopting your *religious feelings* as your ground of hope and rule of conduct. While he possessed his entire faculties, he carefully guarded against this temptation, to which his constitution might peculiarly have exposed him; but, in a greater or smaller measure, it is common to pious people, and I doubt not it has been severely felt by some of you. They who are liable to have their minds most sensibly affected with religious impressions, should the more carefully guard against substituting them in the place of God’s word. Our lamented friend had long and eminently enjoyed the love of Christ shed abroad in his heart. His spiritual triumph and rejoicing had been unusually great. His distress and terror, that succeeded these enjoyments, were proportionably aggravated. So deplorable an alteration in himself, led him, during a suspension of his reason, to suppose that an equal change had taken place in the mind of God; and that, after having admitted him to a foretaste of heaven, he had doomed him to endless misery. Alas! how had he forgotten the delightful theme of his brighter hours.

‘There is a fountain fill’d with blood  
Drawn from Emmanuel’s veins;  
And sinners, plung’d beneath that flood,  
Lose all their guilty stains.

Dear dying Lamb, thy precious blood  
Shall never lose its power;  
Till all the ransom’d church of God  
Be sav’d, to sin no more.’

“Ought we to conclude, when we lose our comforts, that Christ has therefore lost his power to save? Was it for *these*, that we were accepted of God? If not, why must we be rejected when they are removed?”

“When you can derive neither comfort nor hope from your present feelings, and when all past enjoyment only enhances your present distress, recollect that the promises of God in Christ can suffer no change; that his power and grace are susceptible of no decay; that to be deterred by your changeable feelings from seeking and trusting in Christ, is to place them in the room of his revealed word; and that it was time for the Lord to withdraw your religious comfort, when you were resting on *that*, instead of his infallible promise.

'You would but ill have enjoyed' says a sensible foreign writer, 'that which you know not how to part with.' " p. 52.

One parting word from the Sermon, to another class of persons, and we have done. It is to those, (for such there are,) who too evidently would like Cowper better, had he not been so sound in his faith, and so ardent in his piety; and who comfort themselves in their ignorance of experimental religion, because "the poet of Christianity, the monitor of the world," was so much "a man of sorrows."

"The lesson afforded by his life, like those contained in his publications, have their foundation in scriptural truth, unbiassed reason, and indisputable fact. These authorities cannot be invalidated by the partial derangement of his mind. Beware not to make this a plea for inattention to things which concern your own eternal welfare; lest hereafter you should have to exclaim, 'We fools accounted his life madness, and his end to be without honor; but how is he numbered among the children of God, and his lot among the saints!' I fear I am addressing some whose case is precisely the reverse of Mr. Cowper's. He had reason to rejoice in hope, though he was deaf to the voice of consolation. Are there none of you who have cause to tremble, as Felix did, at the prospect of eternal judgment, who yet have hitherto been deaf to alarm and admonition? You can transact your business, enjoy your comforts and amusements, nay, indulge in sinful practices and pursuits; as if there was neither heaven nor hell; or as if the word of God had not declared that, except you repent and be converted, you must perish forever. Far better was it for our deceased neighbor, through so great tribulation to enter into glory, than for you, with stupidity and hardness of heart, to hasten every moment toward everlasting perdition. Why should you be more at ease than he was? or why so much as he? If the mere thought of damnation was such a terror to his mind, what should the actual approach of it be to yours? As yet, the longsuffering of God has been wonderfully extended to you. May you improve it to your salvation; lest there be indeed nothing left for you, but a fearful looking for of judgment, and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries of God!" pp. 44, 45.

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LETTERS OF AN ENGLISH TRAVELLER, TO HIS FRIEND IN ENGLAND, ON THE REVIVALS OF RELIGION IN AMERICA. Boston, Bowles & Dearborn. 1828. pp. 142, 18mo.

(Continued from p. 319.)

1. We have seen that, in his attack on revivals of religion, our author first assumes, without proof, the truth of a position, on which the decision of the whole subject depends.

2. On the strength of this assumption, he proceeds to ridicule the Orthodox, who differ from him, and to expose them, as irra-

tional or superstitious, merely for acting according to their own principles.

That he has done this will be evident from the following considerations. The general facts which occur during a revival of religion, are obvious to all. No one can deny that there are periods of unusual attention to religion; that Orthodox ministers are very active; that they excite their churches, and appoint frequent meetings, and preach earnestly, and warn sinners of their guilt and danger, and exhort them to repent and exercise faith in Christ. Nor can it be denied, that many, who were once thoughtless, are awakened, and convinced that they are great sinners, and in imminent danger of ruin; that they are alarmed and distressed, and that deeply; that they profess to find relief by confession of sin, and sorrow for it, and faith in Christ; that in many, this change is sensibly instantaneous, and that in all it is believed to be really so. Nor can it be denied, that society is divided into various classes, according to their moral character and condition; and that the unconverted, and the careless, and the anxious, and the converts, and church members, are called by names which are descriptive of the real state of their moral character, so far as men can fairly judge. Nor can it be denied, that there are visitations of churches, by pastors and lay delegates; and also visitations of families, by pastors and members of the church. Nor can it be denied, that meetings of inquiry are held, where those who are anxious can assemble to converse with their pastors, and also with other experienced Christians. It is also equally true, that the events of God's providence, especially cases of sickness and death, are often employed as means of instructing the living, and exciting them to prepare for death. It is also true that evangelists are employed, whose duty it is to arouse the attention of the churches, and to assist settled pastors in promoting revivals; and there can be no doubt that they have been very successful. But, what inhabitant of New England, who has ever heard or seen much of the religious world, does not know these facts? Did our author really suppose that they were unknown, until he had discovered and disclosed them? What Orthodox religious paper has not disclosed facts of this kind, for weeks, months, and years past? Why, then, cannot their own accounts be received? If the Orthodox have revivals, and have a plan and a system which they understand, why not rest satisfied with their own description? The reason is obvious; it was not so much a mere narration of facts, which our author wanted, as an opportunity to narrate these facts in his own way, and for his own purposes. Now the general facts being the same, there are two ways of narrating them. One ascribes them to God as the chief agent, operating by the truth, through human instrumentality. This mode the Orthodox adopt. There is another mode, which ascribes them to mere

human device, operating by passion and sympathy upon the minds of the weak, superstitious, thoughtless, irrational, and enthusiastic part of the community. This our author adopts. It is of course necessary, on this supposition, to assert, that so regular and extensive a system of operations is got up by leading men, especially the Orthodox clergy, and next to these, by the Orthodox churches. Now if a man narrates on the first supposition, his manner will be serious, and he will state the facts, and assign their cause according to his own views, and ridicule nothing, although he admits defects. If a man narrates according to the last supposition, he will state facts and causes according to his own views, and endeavor to expose the leaders and most active agents in such transactions to contempt. His manner of narrating will constantly betray the contempt or hatred which he feels for such proceedings. He may narrate the same general facts, but will color them according to the state of his own mind. So Gibbon has narrated many undeniable facts, as it regards the origin and progress of Christianity; but he has so interwoven his own views and feelings, that his narration is one of the most bitter attacks which was ever made upon Christianity. Our author has selected the same mode of narration. He has narrated some facts indeed, but his whole narration is colored with Unitarian unbelief, and prejudices, and bitterness. Just as Gibbon sought to explain, on natural principles, all the facts attending the origin of Christianity, so as to avoid the necessity of ascribing them to God, so does our author attempt to explain all facts relating to revivals, on human principles, so as to be enabled to deny the immediate agency of the Holy Spirit in producing them. And in addition to this, oblique hints, side thrusts, insinuation, and ridicule are employed to fill up the general outline of the picture. He says :

“To say nothing of the general effects of these excitements, I cannot help suspecting from what I have seen of them, that there is fanaticism always, and necessarily, at the bottom of them; that they are based upon false ideas, and upon this in particular, the root of all fanaticism, that they are the *special* work of God, the fruit of his supernatural interposition. Let these things be looked upon as the natural results of human feeling, let the idea of any thing extraordinary and preternatural be taken away, and I suspect that three quarters of that which supports them in the public mind would be taken away also. ‘It is the work of God,’ is the declaration that carries awe and contagious fear over the minds of the body of the people. This represses inquiry, silences doubt, spreads anxiety and apprehension among the timid, and emboldens the confidence of the forward and presumptuous.” pp. 30, 31.

Now it cannot be denied that ‘It is the work of God,’ is the declaration which most deeply affects the minds of the Orthodox; for they are sincerely convinced that revivals are the *special* work

of God, the fruit of his supernatural interposition. And take away this idea, and there is no doubt that not only three quarters of that which supports them in the public mind will be taken away, but the whole. But the question returns, how does it appear that revivals are not God's work? Is the assertion of our author good evidence?

On p. 6, he ascribes conversion to various causes. He speaks of working upon the imagination and feelings, and of overwrought passion, and of a bare physical emotion which is mistaken for a real spiritual change of views and sentiments. This may be a correct account of all the change which takes place in a false conversion of one who afterwards turns out to be an apostate; but how does it appear that there is no such thing as real conversion? Is our author's opinion good evidence? A man can indeed describe his own feelings, but how can he pronounce on "the forbidden subject of his neighbor's heart?"

On pp. 13, 14, he tells us how an Orthodox minister works himself up, so as to get into the spirit of a revival. He implies, that his views of religion are irrational, and not heartfelt, and that he is "restless and conscience-stricken," and that his "notion of religion is extravagant," and "that he is thinking of some unreasonable and unattainable state of feeling, as constituting religion." He speaks of his excitement of feeling as "effervescence," "a paroxysm," "a fever." Now, all this may be true of a false convert, who was once professedly an Orthodox minister, and who endeavored to feel as they say they do, and could not, and was, in his own words, "restless and conscience-stricken." There were such in the days of the apostle John, concerning whom he says, "They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us." But how does our author know that there are no ministers who have really been converted, and who feel as they profess to feel? Has he the power of searching all hearts? Or does he say, that it is irrational to suppose such a thing possible? If the latter, and what else can he say, then we have another specimen of his skill in begging the question. He has often asserted, but where has he proved, that conversion is irrational?

He speaks of revivals as observing the bounds of clerical influence:

"So true is this, that I have sometimes observed in a city, where the congregations of course are completely intermixed in residence, society, and relationships, yet the revivals will most exactly observe the bounds of clerical influence. Mr. A. 'has a great revival,'—for this is the very language they use,—'in his congregation,' and Mr. B.'s congregation—who dislikes these things—is not touched. This is priestly power, indeed, with a witness." pp. 10, 11.



Now if men are converted by the truth, and Orthodox ministers preach the truth, and the Holy Spirit makes it effectual, this is just what we should expect; the effect does not extend beyond the influence of the cause. How can error produce a revival of religion? But by ascribing these facts to the influence of the minister alone, the author of course implies, that he is the author of the revival, and not God, which is merely begging the question as before.

On pp. 115, 116, he censures the lowest classes of society, in very indecorous language, for "proudly pronouncing judgment on the purest and best men in the country," and says,

"It is because these misguided people are taught to rely on supernatural impulses, because they are puffed up with the notion of special grace being imparted to them, and giving them a superiority over the natural understanding of other men, that they thus speak of those, to whom, in any other relation, they would not lift their eyes, but with respect and deference. People of humble capacity and acquisitions are not disposed, but as they are influenced by others, to depart so far from the modesty that most truly becomes them. They are not often found deciding so contemptuously on the merits of a distinguished lawyer, or an eminent physician. But when it comes to religion, they are told that the case is altogether different."

In plain English this would mean, that our author is offended because experimental Christians, even if they are not rich and learned, can easily perceive, in the enemies of revivals, in the higher classes of society, an entire absence of vital religion, even in those who are wise, and mighty, and noble, in their own eyes. It is not, indeed, to be wondered at, that the proud should be offended by the assertion, that those whom they deem inferior to themselves in rank and learning, are qualified to pronounce as it regards the evidences of experimental religion. Nor is it strange, that they should call them misguided people; and endeavor to frown upon them, by pronouncing them incompetent to judge upon such subjects; and by calling such conduct immodest and presumptuous. Still, however, all such remarks are merely begging the question. It may be true, after all, that not many wise, and mighty, and noble, are converted, and that the poor whom they despise, are really converted; and a thousand assertions to the contrary will not avail to disprove the reality of their conversion. And if conversion is a reality, it does not require profound learning to discover an unconverted man. Philosophically speaking, it depends upon sympathy of heart; and the most learned man, nay, even the most learned minister, can be distinguished by any experimental Christian, if he manifests in his prayers, and other religious services, a cold heart, and little or no love to Christ, and little or no zeal. It does not require much learning to feel the difference between cold and heat, between ice and fire. Hence, real converts of every rank

of life, always find an entire want of unction and spirituality in the preaching of unconverted ministers, and leave them for a church where there is real feeling in prayer and preaching. And this, in the Orthodox system, is rational, and philosophical, however unpleasant the implication may be, as it regards those whom they leave. More examples might be given, but they are needless. It is enough to remark, in general, that a correct analysis of this author, will at once show, that his censures, and ridicule, as a general fact, imply a begging of the question, that there is no such thing as a real conversion, produced by the immediate agency of the Holy Spirit; and are powerless, if the reality of such a conversion is admitted. We think, then, that we have clearly shown, as we proposed, that the author ridicules the Orthodox who differ from him, and exposes them, as irrational or superstitious, merely for acting according to their own principles.

3. He colors, or distorts, or misrepresents their sentiments, so as to prejudice an unguarded mind against them.

Speaking of the causes of a revival, and the minister who promotes them, he says,

“We must add to this, that the doctrines he embraces, partaking of the same extravagance that characterizes his general views of religion, lead him to the same results. He believes that all men are naturally and utterly depraved and wicked, and deserving of unspeakable and endless misery,—that the character which they bring from their very birth, which they derive from their creation, dooms them to eternal and infinite sufferings.” pp. 14, 15.

Again :

“‘There is a change,’ says he,—for he is not thinking in this exigency, of the long course and habit of virtue and devotion,—‘there is a *change*,’ he says, ‘which will save them. They cannot produce it themselves, but it must be wrought in them by the special grace of God. In one moment, the power of God could make all these reprobate creatures the heirs of heaven. They are all unconscious of the horrible catastrophe that awaits them, and, of themselves, unable to escape it; they are as dry bones, as dead men in the valley of vision, and they are soon to awake to everlasting burnings!’” pp. 15, 16.

Now we know that Unitarians deny the doctrine of the endless punishment of all who die impenitent, of the entire depravity of man, and of the need of conversion; and that the Orthodox believe them. But they do not believe them as here represented. And the actual effect of this representation, the effect which no doubt it was intended to produce, is to exhibit the Orthodox as holding to doctrines shocking alike to reason and humanity. Our author asserts, that the Orthodox believe, that the character which men derive from their *creation* dooms them to eternal and infinite sufferings; that there is a change which will save them, but that

they cannot produce it themselves. He then descants at large upon their horrid views of eternal torments, and speaks of living happy multitudes, as unconscious of the horrible catastrophe which awaits them, and utterly unable to save themselves. Is there here no coloring, no distortion, no misrepresentation? Do the Orthodox believe thus, and teach thus? Do they teach that God creates men wicked, and then damns them for not being good, when they cannot become good; and that they are all unconscious of their danger, and cannot escape it? Let it now be distinctly noticed, that what seems to be a small misrepresentation, because it can be expressed in a few words, relates to a question which lies at the foundation of the whole system of Orthodoxy. We have seen, that with Orthodox views of human depravity, all the rest of the system is rational and necessary; but if this essential doctrine can be assailed and misrepresented, it clouds the whole system at once. If a man throws his child into the fire needlessly, and then takes him out to show his skill and kindness in curing his burns, such kindness is outrageous cruelty; it is merely inflicting an evil, for the sake of removing it. In like manner, if any can be made to believe that the Orthodox teach that God creates men wicked, merely for the sake of showing mercy in saving some, and displaying justice in damning others, all the system of the Gospel will seem to be a mere insult on human misery. And the enemies of Orthodoxy know, that if an impression can be made that the Orthodox thus believe and teach, every feeling of humanity will revolt from their system, and that it will seem cruel, and bloody, and gloomy. Now, how much easier it is to circulate misrepresentations of the Orthodox, than fairly to answer their system when correctly stated. How much easier to charge them with teaching the damnation of infants, and the created wickedness of human nature, and the damnation of men for not doing what they cannot do, than to meet them fairly in the field of argument. Indeed, from the frequency with which Unitarians take this course, it might be inferred that it was their dernier resort, and that when this fails, their cause is ruined; and such we believe to be the fact. We shall not here attempt to explain our sentiments. It is needless. All honest men can find them fully explained in our writings, and dishonest men would not cease to misrepresent us, even if we were to explain; for it is not knowledge which they lack, but common honesty. Suffice it to say, we do not teach that God is the author of sin, in such a sense as to cast the blame on God, and make the Gospel a mere farce, and the punishment of the wicked an act of brutal cruelty in God. We indeed teach that men are entirely depraved; but we insist upon it, that they are, in a sense, the authors of their own depravity. We indeed teach that all who will not repent and believe on Christ will be forever lost; and yet we insist that they might

have been saved, if it had not been for their own unwillingness. And we also insist upon it, that when God causes some to be willing, and leaves others to do as they please, he acts wisely and benevolently, and with reference to the general good, and not as a capricious and partial being. Other cases of misrepresentation, no less gross and unjustifiable, might be stated, but this must suffice.

Under the head of misrepresentations, we may notice our author's remarks on Lightfoot, Calvin, Doddridge, and Baxter. He has misrepresented them all, for the sake of using their authority against revivals, and the idea of instantaneous conversion. If they were alive, we might leave them to plead their own cause; but being dead, we wish to vindicate their fair fame from the dishonor of being seen united as allies with the Unitarians of this country in opposing revivals, an alliance which they, when living, would have rejected with horror. Speaking of instantaneous conversion, he says,

“The fathers of *our* church, certainly know nothing about it. And according to my recollection of the Dissenters, of Baxter, Doddridge, &c., they are not responsible for it. And as to Calvin, he says expressly, speaking of repentance, or regeneration, which he states to have, in his use of the words, the same meaning—‘regeneration,’ he says, ‘is not accomplished in a single moment, or day, or year; but by continual, and sometimes even tardy advances, the Lord destroys the carnal corruptions of his chosen, purifies them from all pollution, and consecrates them as temples to himself; renewing all their senses to real purity, that they may employ their whole life in the exercise of repentance, and know, that this warfare will be terminated only by death.’ If, in the abundance of your candor, you should question the fairness of this, and observe that Calvin seems to be speaking of the whole process of sanctification, I can only reply, that he *says* he is speaking of regeneration or repentance. And he adds, that ‘God assigns to believers the race of repentance to run, during their whole life.’ All this, is a way of speaking about regeneration of which, I assure you, you would not hear much, among the metaphysical doctors, to whom of late I have been listening.” pp. 76, 77.

His censure of all the clergy, who advocate revivals, for not having read Lightfoot, we have already considered. Hence it is interesting to inquire, what did Lightfoot, and Doddridge, Calvin, and Baxter teach? The remarks of Lightfoot on John iii. 3. are arranged under three heads. He teaches,

1. That the main purpose of the discourse of Jesus is to explain what is necessary in order to enter the kingdom of God; and that from it we may deduce the doctrine of the new birth.
2. That Christ was exposing the erroneous idea of the Jews, that they could enter the kingdom of God, merely because born

Jews; "they must claim it," he says, "by a heavenly, not by an earthly birth."

3. He then refutes an error of the Jews as it regards regeneration. He remarks, "The Jews acknowledged, in order to proselytism, *some kind* of regeneration, or new birth, as absolutely necessary; but then *this* was very *slightly* and *easily* obtained." He illustrates the Jewish idea by quotations, and says, "Christ teacheth *another kind* of new birth, for those that partake of the kingdom of the Messiah, beyond what they have, either as Israelites, or proselytes, viz. that they should be *born from above*, or by a *celestial generation*, which *only* makes them capable of the kingdom of heaven." vol. ii. pp. 532, 533. London, 1684.

Doddridge says in his Lectures on Pneumatology, Ethics, and Divinity, 4th edition, London, 1799, vol. ii. p. 259, "The question, whether the work of regeneration and conversion be accomplished in an instant, is nearly akin to the former. It must be acknowledged, that there is *some one moment*, in which there is the first preponderancy of religious impressions and resolutions in the soul." The only sense in which he admits that it is proper to speak of conversion or regeneration as gradual, is when the words are used with some latitude of expression, and include all that the Spirit does to bring a man to real religion. But using the words in the proper and accurate sense, Doddridge does most plainly teach that conversion is instantaneous.\*

As it regards Calvin, we know that he taught entire depravity, and of course instantaneous conversion is a fair inference from his system; but we rest not here. We assert, that he has clearly taught it, notwithstanding the passage quoted by our author. He clearly teaches that *conversion*, *regeneration*, and *repentance*, when used in their largest sense, mean the whole work of the Holy Spirit, in restoring sinful man to perfect holiness. And in this sense he uses the words repentance or regeneration in the passage quoted by our author; as no one can deny, who will read the whole of sec. 9. chap. 3. b. 3, from which it is taken. Calvin surely may be permitted to define his own use of language. It is needless to adduce passages in proof. He must be either a careless, or a dishonest, or an ignorant reader of Calvin, who does not see that such is the fact. But in b. 3. chap. 3. sec. 1, he gives the substance of the Gospel, as being repentance and remission of sins, and asserts, that we obtain both by faith, and adds, "Now it ought not to be doubted, that repentance not only immediately follows faith, but it is produced by it." But, according to his own account, the beginning of faith is instantaneous; for he speaks of it as commencing "as soon as the *smallest particle* of divine grace is infused into our mind." At this moment, he asserts, "we *begin* to contemplate the divine countenance as now placid, serene, and

\*The reader will find much to this effect in Doddridge's ten Sermons on Regeneration.



propitious to us; it is indeed a very distant prospect, but so clear that *we know* that we are *not deceived*." He then proceeds to describe the subsequent progress of sanctification. More proof might easily be adduced, if necessary; but it will be deferred until we see Calvin again called on to oppose, when dead, the progress of that system, in defence of which he spent his life, and to be an ally of those, who never cease, when occasion offers, to blacken his illustrious memory. Then he may be permitted to speak again.

As to Baxter, it is the opinion of some of his readers at least, that his theology was more like that of the New England divines, who advocate revivals, than that of any other transatlantic theologian; and with all due deference to the English Traveller, who would, we suppose, be considered a diligent reader of his works, we must be permitted to say, that no advocate of revivals can exceed him in urging upon sinners the necessity of an immediate and instantaneous change of heart. Consider the following specimens from his *Christian Directory*: London, 1673.

He first explains the guilt and misery of unconverted persons, and then says,

"If you die unconverted, you are past all hope." "You never heard a sermon with assurance that you should hear another: you never drew one breath with assurance that you should draw another. A thousand accidents and diseases are ready to stop your breath and end your time, when God will have it so. And if you die this night, in an unregenerate state, there is no more time, or help, or hope. And is this a case then for a wise man to continue in, *a day*, that can do anything to his own recovery? Should you delay *another day or hour* before you fall down at the feet of Christ, and cry for mercy, and return to God, and resolve upon a better course?"

In his *Call to the Unconverted* he gives practical directions as it regards conversion:

"You must understand what it is to be converted: it is to have a new heart, or disposition, and a new conversion. *Quest. 1.* For what must you turn? *Ans.* For these ends following, which you may attain. 1. You shall *immediately* be made living members of Christ, and have an interest in him, and be renewed after the image of God."

As it regards immediate conversion, he again thus speaks, "Be not one day of one mind, and the next of another, but *be at a point* with all the world, and resolutely give up yourselves, and all you have, to God." He then proceeds to urge the point exactly after the manner of the New England divines whom our author ridicules. He urges them to do it now, whilst "reading or hearing" his words, "before" they "sleep another night," "before" they "stir from the place" where they are.

In view of these things it is plain, that Lightfoot asserts that Christ opposed the Jewish idea of regeneration, and taught the doctrine as we teach it; and from this doctrine, instantaneous conversion is a fair inference. Also it is plain, that Calvin, Doddridge and Baxter, all teach the doctrine directly, and that the passage quoted by the author from Calvin to prove the contrary, is nothing to the purpose. Well did our author say, "according to my recollection of the Dissenters, of Baxter, of Doddridge, &c." We presume that he read Lightfoot, Calvin, Baxter and Doddridge at the same time that he did the fathers of the English church, and the works of the Dissenters, and all of them with equal honesty and intelligence; and that his memory, as it regards them all, is alike accurate; and that all his statements concerning the sentiments of the Orthodox are just as correct, and worthy of credit, as those which have already been considered. And we are happy to have so illustrious an exhibition of Unitarian learning, and accuracy, and fairness, so highly recommended by the leaders of that party. And we are gratified to perceive that there is no discordance in their general practice, with the principles here so happily illustrated. For a more full exhibition of Unitarian practice, in accordance with these principles, see their quotations as it regards the damnation of infants, already considered in this work; and a Review of Dr. Channing's discourse delivered at New York; and a Reply to a Review of a sermon entitled *The Faith once delivered to the Saints*; and a notice of the *Unitarian Advocate*, published in our last number. We hope that all candid Unitarians will diligently "read and ponder" the principles of honesty and fairness adopted and practised upon by their most distinguished leaders and periodical publications. We have long been convinced that Unitarian views of the Christian graces differed in some important respects from ours, and we are glad to be furnished with practical illustrations of their views on a subject of such consequence.

We think then that our charge of misrepresentation is fully sustained.

4. He attempts to array the bad passions of the human heart against the personal character of the Orthodox, and to make them appear deficient in certain excellencies, which some Unitarians are inclined to arrogate, as the peculiar glory of their own system. Unitarians profess to admire all that is noble, majestic, rational, refined, charitable and lovely. They eulogize independent thinking and free inquiry, and abhor all mental slavery, and ecclesiastical domination. They profess to regard all the rules of refined society, and to value highly the social virtues. They abhor all that is cruel and uncharitable, unkind and unfeeling, either in words or in action. And they profess to live in a world of light of uncommon brilliancy. Now when two parties are opposed to each other, there are two ways in which an advocate of one may attack the

other. He may charge them directly with gross deficiencies, or he may arrogate certain excellencies to his own party in such a manner as to imply that the opposing party is deficient in these respects. Both of these modes of attack our author has used. As to the Orthodox clergy, they rule; and the people are superstitious and deluded. As to the system, it is a "narrow and gloomy theology, which turns the earth into one vast field of slaughter;" p. 46; and the preacher glories in it, so that the author "could almost discern a smile of triumph in his countenance as he drew the lines, and set up the fences, of this narrow and gloomy theology." He speaks of the "whole enormity of their treatment of sinners," p. 43, and speaks of their "cutting the heart strings of the people," "as mechanically and coldly as ever did surgical operator." He speaks of "the reasonable anger" which many persons feel at such treatment, pp. 45, 46, and seems to deny that pity and sympathy are any part of the character of such as preach such doctrines. He describes the atrocious conduct of an Orthodox clergyman addressing a female school, and speaks of tears, and sighs, and groans, enough to break the hearts of these young creatures." p. 56. The habit of visiting families, for prayer and exhortation, he thinks, "deserves to be branded;" and accordingly he brands it. He speaks of the "preternatural solemnity" of the visitors, and of the timidity of "the females," and of the most pointed questions "of these *inquisitors*," "put in the most awful manner, concerning their most secret, solemn, and delicate feelings." He speaks of tremendous warnings, and more tremendous prayers; and calls the whole "horrifying." pp. 56, 57.

He speaks, pp. 20, 21, of taking advantage of "a sudden death, or the death of a young person, to produce an excitement," and of converting it to this use "with the remorseless disregard of all the claims of relationship and private grief." He then enlarges on the atrocious cruelty manifested in visiting, and warning, and praying with a young and tender female, on a sick bed, and in warning others, in the most horrible way, when God closes her life. If he finds an Orthodox man in a stage, he is represented as speaking in a "solemn guttural voice" "as deep as if it had come from a cavern," and in a "measured and sepulchral tone." pp. 64, 65. He speaks of "cruel and shocking liberties taken with private feeling, from which a man with any high tone of moral delicacy would revolt, if his moral discrimination were not whelmed in this flood of excitement;" and of "whisperings, or bold innuendoes, or rumors circulated on slight evidences, or easy inferences, that in secret stab the fairest character." And these things are spoken of as among the means adopted for carrying on revivals! pp. 125, 126. He speaks of revivals as unfavorable to intellectual improvement. "To conduct a revival," we are told, "requires no range of thought; to experience it, forbids the calm-

ness of inquiry." p. 128. And he ascribes to revivals an influence unfriendly to a pure and elevated morality. p. 122. We are also told that "the province of revivals is chiefly limited to *less reflecting* and *refined* minds, which are less liable to be injured by *rude* and *harsh* treatment." p. 8. As a contrast to all this, he exhibits the enlarged, generous, and noble system of the Unitarian party, and assumes in their behalf the character of a philosopher, gentleman, and Christian, of no common order. He implies that the friends of revivals are ignorant, and gives us a splendid specimen of his own superior learning. He also exhibits his own views of morality, as contrasted with the pernicious influence of revivals in this respect, and a prominent part of his views, is, "kind thoughts, forbearing words, and charitable judgments." He also gives his views of a religion "beyond the aim and imagination of most good men," and of course implies that the Orthodox are deficient where he most excels. Now how much easier it is to prejudice a certain class of the community against the personal character of the Orthodox, than to refute their system, or answer their arguments. How completely is their influence destroyed, as soon as the impression is made that they are irrational, ignorant, illiberal, gloomy, cruel, unfeeling, without refinement, indelicate, and barbarous. How easy it is to assume all the intellect, and refinement, and knowledge of the day. And surely the Orthodox have no reason to complain; for if they are such barbarians, why not expel them from society? But what if the Orthodox have feelings, and are sincere, and have a character to gain or lose? Is it nothing that "whisperings, and bold innuendoes, or rumors circulated on slight evidence, or easy inference," are employed to "stab," not in secret, but publicly, and on the highest Unitarian authority, "the fairest reputation?" How far removed are such proceedings as these from "cruel and shocking liberties taken with private feeling, from which a man with any high tone of moral delicacy would revolt?" We request all candid and gentlemanly Unitarians to "read and ponder" these things, and to "read and ponder" the eulogies pronounced by their leaders on this book, and then decide. Do the Orthodox deserve such treatment as this? Have they no reputation, and no feelings?

5. He attacks, directly or indirectly, those institutions, which are of fundamental consequence in extending the influence of vital religion, and which greatly impede the progress of Unitarianism.

He attacks the Orthodox clergy, and all parts of their system adapted to promote revivals. He censures public visitations, and private visits to converse and pray in families. He censures the employment of evangelists, and meetings of inquiry, and frequent meetings for prayer and conference. He even exposes to con-

tempt the prayers offered in such meetings. For a specimen of this see pp. 111, 112. Concerning the clergy he says :

“ Indeed, my friend, it cannot be concealed, and everything that I see, and all my reflections convince me of it more and more, that most of the evils of a religious nature, in this country, and our own, and in every other, are owing to the clergy ! To them is chiefly owing the *odium theologicum*, that has existed in all ages—to them, the slavish dread of inquiry and innovation—to them, the variance, strife, and uncharitableness that prevail among the people—to them, the extravagance of these religious excitements.” pp. 28, 29.

These remarks cannot apply to the clergy who oppose the extravagance of these religious excitements ; of course, the Unitarian clergy are not included. Now this “ is all that the most arrant sceptic ” about the Bible could desire. The Christian ministry is an institution of the Bible. Has it, then, done more hurt than good ? And if so, is God the author of the Bible ? To allege the evils of a corrupt clergy in all ages is nothing to the purpose ; the abuse of an institution by the devil, is no argument against its use. Do we not read, “ there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. And many shall follow their pernicious ways ; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of.” But has there never been an order of true clergymen on earth ? There is one order which, in all ages, has been the constant subject of attack, and that is the Orthodox. And they have encountered from infidels the same charges which our author heaps upon them. “ Priestly power ” is always the theme of the friends of error who fear the influence of the Orthodox clergy. We admit indeed that the Orthodox clergy have been the indirect cause of great excitements, and tumults, and bitterness, among the wicked ; and so were Christ and his apostles ; and so have holy men, in all ages ; and for the same reason : because they testify of the world that their deeds are evil. But, are Christ and his faithful servants to be condemned, as the guilty cause of the wickedness of those who oppose the truth ? But we are not surprised at our author’s attack on the clergy, and on all that tends to promote a revival. The enemies of the Bible have in all ages taken the same course, and for the same reason. They, and the leaders of the Unitarians, alike hate revivals of evangelical religion, and those clergy who promote them.

We proceed now to our fourth inquiry.

IV. What has our author accomplished ?

He has produced a work which will gratify various classes of the enemies of revivals, for the following reasons : the author assumes a garb of sanctity and religion, and makes great professions, while



he attacks revivals as bitterly as any one could desire. Yet he professes to be perfectly candid and impartial. He has thus gained two points : he persuades the enemies of revivals that he is not opposing real religion, but fanaticism, while he really opposes the very religion which they hate. Hence they are not obliged to seem to oppose the truth, for no man wishes to seem to do this, and yet they can fully gratify their passions, and appear to themselves to do it in a candid and liberal way. Now this is certainly very convenient to all who dislike revivals of religion ; and as the book comes out so highly recommended by the leaders of the Unitarian party, they are, doubtless, highly gratified, and very thankful. This book, we suppose, would please all immoral persons, and all infidels, and scoffers, and all worldly minded people who love gain, or pleasure, or honor, more than God, and hate nothing so much as a revival.

Once more ; he has produced a book which will grieve all the friends of evangelical religion. These are by far the majority in our religious community, and they take the lead in all the religious and benevolent operations of the present day ; whilst the party, by whom they are thus attacked, does little or nothing to promote the great work of emancipating a world from the slavery of error and sin. All the friends of evangelical religion, of all denominations, will be grieved, and all its enemies will rejoice. But there is no cause for fear ; this book has not stopped revivals, nor weakened the confidence of the community in the clergy, nor do we at all apprehend that it will. But it has caused the leaders of the Unitarian party to assume a most singular attitude, and to expose most clearly the state of excited and bitter feeling which exists among them. This work so exactly gratified their feelings, that they made a very natural mistake, and concluded that what was so pleasant to them, rational and candid as they are, must, of course, be rational and candid. And as the author made great pretensions, they have recommended this book in terms of unbounded applause, as worthy of being extensively circulated, "read and pondered."

We now proceed to our fifth and last inquiry.

V. What is the general tendency of the book ?

In the minds of a certain class, it will manifestly tend to foster pride, bitterness, supercilious contempt of the truth, and of all sober reasoning. To the minds of the young and unguarded, it will be a deadly poison, more fatal than the writings of infidels, because clothed in a religious garb. Hence, from many minds it will probably exclude the light of truth, and ruin them forever.

But its tendencies are not evil only. It will tend to warn the friends of revivals carefully to avoid all those defects which are so often made a pretext for an indiscriminate attack on revivals in general. We hope, also, that it will lead all candid and gentlemanly Unitarians to suspect the soundness of a cause which needs

to be defended by such means, and to examine more accurately the principles of their leaders, and the tendency of their measures. The present tumult of party feeling will soon be over, and eternity is near at hand. If any man does not deem the Bible a fable, and heaven and hell mere dreams, let him weigh this subject carefully. Is the soul of no value? May an immortal being trifle with a subject which involves his own eternal interests, those of a nation, nay, of a world? Let no man act irrationally. Let no man be deluded by philosophy, falsely so called, nor by the cunning craftiness of men, whereby they lie in wait to deceive. The Judge is at the door. Soon will the Lord appear, who will both bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsel of the hearts. Decide and act aright now, and in that day thou shalt rejoice; neglect or despise the truth now, and on that day probation will cease, and the ruinous consequences of error and sin will be fully disclosed, and you will utterly perish, and that without remedy.

We have thus finished our remarks upon the general principles of revivals, which is the main subject of this work. One important topic yet remains, which deserves a separate consideration. We refer to the New Lebanon Convention, so much reviled by Unitarians, and stigmatized by the Rev. Mr. Ware, as an "outrage on religion and morality." Our author devotes one whole chapter to this subject, and seems to think that this Convention has an important bearing upon the religion of revivals. That such is the fact, there can be no doubt; but whether he has correctly apprehended and illustrated that relation, is still a matter of fair inquiry. We shall endeavor, at some future period, to discuss this subject. And we trust that we shall be able to show, that our author's character, as a reasoner, philosopher, gentleman, and Christian, is illustrated, in his treatment of that Convention, with no less splendor than has marked the developements of it already made and considered, in our review of his discussion of the general subject of his work.

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#### NOTICES OF RECENT PUBLICATIONS.

1. *A Sermon preached before the Annual Convention of the Congregational Ministers of Massachusetts, in Boston, May 29, 1828,* by EDWARD D. GRIFFIN, D. D. President of Williams college. Boston, T. R. Marvin. pp. 24.

This is an impressive exhortation to ministers and churches, to rise up and build the walls of Zion. The duty in question is stated and explained, and various reasons are urged to enforce it; and throughout, the preacher evidently has no other object, but to ex-

hibit and impress his important subject, and to bring his brethren to understand and feel it, and to pray, and live, and act accordingly. We might say much in commendation of this excellent Discourse, and might justify our opinion of it, by extracting beautiful and eloquent passages; but we hope all, who desire to know and feel their obligations, will endeavor to obtain it, and peruse it for themselves. We may have occasion to refer to this Discourse again, in connexion with the general subject of Convention.

2. *A Discourse delivered at the Installation of the Rev. Mellish Irving Motte, as Pastor of the South Congregational Society\* in Boston, May 21, 1828, by WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING. Boston, Bowles & Dearborn, pp. 43.*

On former occasions, Dr. Channing has felt authorized to speak in the name, and on the behalf, of his party. He has taught, and endeavored to defend, certain positions, as constituting not only his own faith, but that of American Unitarians in general. In the Discourse before us, he, for some reason, assumes a different attitude. He assures us, first of all, that he speaks in "his own name, and in no other. I am not giving you the opinions of any sect or body of men, but my own. I hold myself alone responsible for what I utter. Let none listen to me for the purpose of learning what others think." Of late, we have heard similar expressions from other members of the Unitarian fraternity. Are we to infer from this, that the party is disbanded, the community dissolved, and that henceforward we are to know them only as individuals? Or are we to infer, that their views, as a body, are so various and self-contradictory, that no one can any longer be trusted, as the organ of expressing them?

The leading thought, in this Discourse of Dr. Channing, which he repeatedly calls "a great truth," and which he urges and reiterates with a variety of illustration, is in substance this: *the chief end and purpose of Christianity is to influence and improve the characters of men.* "Every office, with which Jesus Christ is invested, was intended to give him power over the human character." And again; "Christ lived, taught, died, and rose again, to exert a purifying and ennobling influence on the human character." This view of the subject, as our readers will perceive, presents the Lord Jesus Christ before us as a mere *reformer*. He is not our atoning Priest. He is not our prevalent Intercessor. He is not our almighty Sovereign and Disposer. He is not our final Judge and Awarder. "Every office with which he is invested, was intended to give him power over the human character." He came to instruct and reclaim his erring fellow creatures; or, in other words, to be their *reformer*.

Nor, on the principles of Dr. Channing, is this work of reformation, which is assigned to Christ, so very arduous or difficult. For mankind are not entirely depraved. They begin their moral existence pure, and, as might be expected in a world where all are free,

\* We infer that Mr. Motte is not the pastor of a church.

some of them wander; and the work of Christ is, to instruct, persuade, and influence such, and, if possible, lead them back to the way of their duty. Now if this is not detracting from the work of the Saviour, if it is not belittling it, if it is not sinking it down to a comparative shadow, we know not what views of religion can. What is there, we ask, in all this pretended work of Christ, to answer to those glowing and sublime descriptions of his offices and works, with which the Holy Scriptures are filled?

And the reformed character, which Dr. Channing supposes Christianity is calculated to produce, is, in our apprehension, very different from that which is actually enjoined in the Gospel. "The happiness and glory of Christianity," he tells us more than once, "consists in the healthy and *lofty frame* to which it raises the mind." Christianity does indeed tend to elevate the human character; but it does this, by first abasing human pride. *He that humbleth himself shall be exalted. Blessed are the POOR IN SPIRIT, for theirs is the kingdom of God.*

Speaking of what he considers the corruptions of Christianity, Dr. Channing says, "That word, *hell*, which is so seldom used in the sacred pages, which, as critics will tell you, does not occur once in the writings of Paul, and Peter, and John, which we meet only in four or five discourses of Jesus, and which all persons acquainted with Jewish geography know to be a metaphor, a figure of speech, and not a literal expression,—this word, by a perverse and exaggerated use, has done unspeakable injury to Christianity." Now the truth is, this unfortunate English word, *hell*, occurs more than fifty times in our English translation of the Bible; it is used both by Peter and John;\* and is inserted more than a dozen times in the record which is left us of the discourses of Jesus. It is used often enough, certainly, to have its fearful import understood and felt.—After making and publishing the declaration above given, Dr. Channing can preach most impressively, no doubt, upon the doctrine of future punishment. He will be able to exhibit, with much power, "the *terrors of the Lord*;" and make them tell upon the heart and conscience of a thoughtless and unbelieving world.

Other topics are suggested in this Discourse, on which we might remark at considerable length; but we deem it unnecessary.—As an effort of mind, we think the whole performance far behind several of Dr. Channing's printed discourses, and not calculated to produce any great effect, one way or the other.

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## SELECTION.

### TESTIMONY OF A UNITARIAN MINISTER.

The following extract of a letter from a Unitarian clergyman was first published in the Hopkinsian Magazine for April, 1828. The writer "professes to be a Unitarian; but rests his hope entirely," as

\* 2 Pet. ii. 4. Rev. i. 13; vi. 8; xx. 13, 14.

he says, "upon the atonement." He was once a settled minister in ———, Mass. and is now settled in ———, though not in the ministry. In reply to an earnest persuasion "to become more decided, and to leave behind him, before he left the world, a testimony to the truth," he writes as follows:—

You must let me say, I never did, and, with my present views, I never will, throw my little weight into the scale of the *new gospel*, the scale in which a denial of all the peculiar doctrines of the Christian system is found. I, in my whole soul, am as much opposed, as sincerely at war, with what is justly termed "the modern system of theology," as any man on earth. I do not hesitate to say, it is *another gospel*, and not that which Christ and his apostles preached. But, Sir, it will prevail. It must spread, till arrested by divine agency. It is studiously and ingeniously adapted to the feelings, and wishes of unprincipled and impious men—and such men are pleased with it, give it their support, and readily enlist for its defence. A young man of popular talents, pleasing address, and Chesterfieldian politeness, becoming a candidate for the Gospel ministry, has, in many places, no need of piety, no need of particular respect for religion. Piety would rather injure than assist him. He must write, speak, converse, and bow handsomely, study human nature, make himself agreeable, tell of his charity, rail at Orthodoxy, dine with Herod, praise his wine, admire his situation, and, instead of John's imprudence and folly in telling the Governor he must not marry a brother's wife, be more polite, and extol the charms of Herodias, and be enraptured with her divine daughter—the most enchanting figure ever seen on a floor! He will soon be settled handsomely, and Herod will find him wine.

I am justified, fully justified, in saying, that the new system must be popular with a large part of the community, for various reasons. It treats all persons, of decent moral habits, as regenerated heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ. It utterly discountenances revivals, as the deplorable offspring of ignorance and fanaticism, urging that a regular, orderly course of life leads to glory, with or without a profession of religion—with or without the less startling vices found in common life—with or without any particular attention to religion or its duties. People of this description, attending public worship pretty well, paying their taxes willingly, and never meddling with religious disputes, I certainly know, are, in some places, and I doubt not, in many, spoken to, and spoken of, living, dying, and dead, as those who prayerfully endeavor to follow the Lamb—as vitally interested in Christ. This is not coloring, it is not painting; but a cool, deliberate, unvarnished statement of facts. Where this ministerial course is pursued, clergymen are sustained, caressed, encouraged, and eulogized; nay more, they are warmly and ardently supported and defended, by men who live without God in the world. These, in some places, (God knows how many,) are the select, the prominent, the confidential associates and friends of professed ministers of Christ.

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THE

# SPIRIT OF THE PILGRIMS.

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## COMMUNICATIONS.

REFLECTIONS OCCASIONED BY THE DEATH OF LORD BYRON,  
WITH SOME ACCOUNT OF HIS CHARACTER.

To the Editor of the Spirit of the Pilgrims.—Sir,

THE following Reflections on the life and character of the late Lord Byron, written a short time after his death, may not, perhaps, be unsuitable or unprofitable at the present time. They are at your disposal.

It is easy, in this sinful world, to acquire celebrity by splendid perverted talents; but it is not easy to perpetuate that admiration through succeeding ages. If dazzled by the nearness of the luminary, cotemporaries worship it; but to succeeding generations, beholding it without passion, and seeing it through the mists of its own pestilent atmosphere, it will seem rather a baleful comet than a genial sun. On the contrary, great talents, associated with moral worth, are magnified by the increase of distance, and shine more and more through succeeding generations.

This decline of evil greatness, and this increasing estimation of consecrated talent, is the result of a divine constitution, which none can set aside. It would seem, at times, as if powerful minds, in their eccentric flight, would bid defiance to the laws of the moral world; but as time passes, and distance increases, they blaze less fiercely, until they set at length, in the darkness of their own creation, leaving to the world the regret only that such "glory should be obscured."

There is an obvious allusion to such a constitution of things, in the Bible. Solomon, the inspired observer of men and things, as the result of his own observation, has made the following record:—"The memory of the just is blessed; but the name of the wicked shall rot." The one becomes fragrant by age, the other putrifies.

If we appeal to facts furnished by history, or by our own observation, we shall find them confirming abundantly the operation of the same unrepealed law of the moral world. There may be a

limited immortality of estimation, in particular circles. On the turf, some worthies may be as immortal as their horses; and in the theatrical world, a few persons of perverted greatness may be always known, who have never been known in any other world. The musical world may have, also, its luminaries, which, in that hemisphere, never set, and were never seen in any other. But where the character is of universal notoriety, and the appeal is made to the common principles of our humanity, there is a feeling which awards honor to virtuous greatness, and pours contempt on perverted talent.

We here use the terms virtue, and moral worth, not as synonymous with holiness, but in their more extended, and not less common acceptation, to indicate the useful application of the human powers in accordance with the eternal principles of right in human actions,—actions, not as they are qualified by motives, but as they affect the interests of society in the present life.

In this view of consecrated greatness, how is the name of the good Alfred embalmed, while those of Henry VIII. and Charles II. are hung in gibbets, spectacles of shame and abhorrence through all generations!

The great conquerors of the earth, who kindled, in their day, a temporary lustre, are fast sinking amid the dense vapors which their cruelties and crimes have caused to ascend around them. The transcendent talents and successes of Buonaparte, will not exempt even him, from the common lot of perverted greatness; while the character of Washington, will expand and brighten as it goes down to other ages. Voltaire possessed a vivacity and versatility of talent, and power of execution, sufficient to make a library of books, and to turn the heads of a capricious and inconstant people. But the inspiration of his genius, and the spring of his industry were, hatred of Christianity. He charmed to destroy. The poison of his writings, circulating for half a century in the political body, produced, at length, convulsions and death. And already his sun has passed its meridian. Already human nature has begun to pronounce the sentence, which will render him soon a man of light estimation. Rosseau, a man of deleterious ingenuity, has received his award; and Hume and Gibbon are fast descending from the bad eminence to which their perverted talents, in an infidel age, had raised them. Swift, once a popular author, and really a man of talents, and a fine writer, has nearly exiled himself from respectable libraries, by his obscenity and irreligious levity. And if Shakspeare holds on his course, it is because his are more the faults of the age, than of the man. But even he, adored as he is in the theatrical, gravitates in the moral world; and in spite of his powerful wing, sinks by the moral gravitation of his irreligion and his obscenity. Not such is the fame of Locke, and Howard, and Jenner. And Milton, too, will hold on his

course, with no 'middle flight,' to the end of time; and Cowper hath arisen also upon the earth, as "the light of the morning, when the sun ariseth, a morning without clouds."

But if the fact is undeniable, how shall we account for it? We should think that an evil world, would love always, and always eulogize its own. How is it, then, that the breath of cotemporaneous applause dies away with the death of the wicked, while it rises in full chorus over the grave of the righteous?

It may be accounted for, upon the principle of the natural fitness which there is in the overt duties of Christian morality, as God has constituted the various relations and duties of life. This tendency of the divine requirements, men see and feel, and in spite of the obliquity of their hearts, admire! Independent of personal obligation to be good, and of punishment for doing evil, men approve of good conduct in others, upon principles of mere selfishness. No man approves of pride in other men, or of selfishness, or of dishonesty, or of envy. It is only those that are, themselves, flagrantly immoral, who take pleasure in those that do the same things; and this, chiefly, on account of the countenance it gives them in their own evil way. Wicked men are cowards, and are, like children, afraid to go in the dark ways of sin alone. Conscience troubles them, and is quieted by the multitude who go with them to do evil. It is, of course, the example of the living wicked which helps men to sin fearlessly; and it is the example of living excellence that alarms and offends them. The example of the dead, good or evil, is too distant to aid or to irritate. When, therefore, another generation comes upon the stage, it judges with comparative impartiality, of departed greatness. This is the reason why the wicked, in works of fiction, take the side of virtue, and condemn vice. It has been inferred from this fact, that there is some innate virtue in all men; whereas it is the inherent difference between good and bad conduct, seen in such distance as brings no aid and no remorse to a guilty conscience. But let a preacher of righteousness come forward at the close of this goodnatured sympathy with afflicted virtue, and the heartless condemnation of crime, and press home upon the consciences of these self-complacent weepers at virtue in distress, their own obligations and sins, and by the terrors of the Lord, call them to repentance, and their tears would soon stop, and their applause be turned into hissing. A fire in the house would scarcely empty it sooner, than such an application of the obligations and sanctions of Christian morality.

By these remarks, we would apprise young men of promising talents, of the importance of moral worth. Too many confide in their talents and learning, exclusively. These may acquire money, and a momentary estimation; but like the gourd of Jonah, a worm is at the root, or like the mushroom which comes up in the night, it will wither before the sun. No hosannas of the living, to the

living, can place disastrous greatness in permanent honor. Even in a man's lifetime, often, this law of posthumous efficacy commences its operation, and many are the instances, in which a man of great talents and bad morality, has outlived his ill earned fame. The admiration of perverted talents may corrupt the living, but it cannot avert the condemnation of the dead.

The preceding reflections have been suggested by the life and death of Lord Byron, one of the geniuses of the age. We do not profess a critical acquaintance with him or his writings, but from all we have read and learned, we give the following as the result of our judgment.

He seems to have possessed a mind of the first order; saw with intuition, almost, the properties and relations of things; saw with precision, and grasped and wielded what he saw, with a power seldom given to mortals. To this power of intellect, was added a vivid imagination, and in reference to literary propriety and beauty, a discriminating taste; and to all these, were added, strong passions. All his natural and all his moral affections, moved in a broad, deep, precipitous channel, and rolled, and dashed, and foamed, alike fearless and impatient of restraint.

Such was Lord Byron by nature; and though his intellectual powers had received from early life appropriate culture, his passions and affections had been abandoned to their impetuous career. He was never governed, it is presumed, from his childhood upward; and it is especially manifest, that he was not "trained up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." Born for high life, his will was never curbed, but was rendered more furious and inflexible by indulgence. His pride, fed to the full, would brook no insult; and this, coupled with his decision of character, made him reckless of consequences in any course he had taken, if it were only because *he had* taken it. He felt his superiority to most men, and despised their judgment, even when his own was in the wrong, and he knew it. He is one of the few literary despots who compelled both admiration and fear, and caused even his enemies to be at peace with him. His passions made powerful demands for gratification, and in his ample resources and unrestrained mind, found a ready and ample indulgence. He pushed his course early through all the mazes of criminal enjoyment, and found them to be vanity, and was ferocious at the disappointment, and cursed his Maker, for limiting his capacity of vicious enjoyment, and not allowing, with impunity, the perversion of his powers. With all his intellectual greatness, then, and capacities of moral worth, Byron set at nought his Maker, and trod under foot his Redeemer, and all his salutary laws. A star of the first magnitude, he refused to obey the central attraction, and to rejoice in the central light of the universe; but broke indignantly away, to wander, as we fear, in blackness of darkness for ever.

In saying these things of Byron, we have not 'set down aught in malice.' We have been among the thousands who have gazed upon him with admiration and regret, alleviated only by the hope, that prayer might yet prevail, and, in him, be given to the world, at length, a pattern of the long-suffering and patience of God. But the scene is closed, and we weep to think that we have no evidence that he repented of his wickedness, and found forgiveness through the blood of Jesus. But while we mourn, we cannot but indulge the reflection, What had Byron been, had he enjoyed a religious education, and his heart been touched with the love of Christ! What godly sorrow, what carefulness, what indignation, what vehement desire, what zeal, and O! what a harp had he strung, and what notes of admiration had he flung upon the ear of a listening world!



A POPULAR OBJECTION TO REVIVALS OF RELIGION, CONSIDERED  
AND REFUTED.

The more common objection to revivals of religion, is, that such seasons are not clearly distinguishable from cases of strong and prevalent excitement in regard to other things. It is admitted, that individuals are often very much excited, on the subject of religion. It is admitted, also, that whole parishes and districts are not unfrequently excited, in a similar way. Religious meetings are multiplied and thronged; religion assumes a new importance, and becomes the general topic of thought, of interest, and conversation. But it is contended, that such excitements are no exception to the common course of events, and that there is no need of supposing the special agency of the divine Spirit, in order to account for them. Very frequently, it is said, there are instances of great and general excitement in regard to other things. A town meeting, a law suit, a parish quarrel, or some incident of the like nature, is capable of producing an excitement, (on a different subject indeed,) but as great, as general, and as lasting, as any of those on religious subjects, which are dignified with the name of revivals of religion. Why, then, it is asked, shall we suppose an effusion of the Holy Spirit, in seasons of excitement on religious subjects, more than in similar seasons in regard to other subjects? If natural causes are sufficient to account for existing appearances in the one case, why not in the other?

It will be the object of this paper, to shew, by a recurrence to facts connected with revivals of religion, that this objection to them is unfounded; that they are widely and gloriously distinguished from all other cases of strong excitement; and that there is no way of accounting for them on philosophical principles, but by



supposing the special interposition and agency of God. What I am about to say may not apply, indeed, to all the seasons which have been denominated "revivals of religion." There have undoubtedly been *false* and *spurious* revivals—scenes of tumult and confusion, in which it would be degrading the Holy Spirit to suppose he had any direct concern. I shall speak of such revivals only, as I suppose to be genuine, and as are commonly so reputed, by Orthodox ministers and Christians, at the present day. And,

1. Such revivals are distinguished from all other cases of prevalent excitement, in respect to their *origin*. It is true, indeed, that the minds of people are not unfrequently excited and inflamed, and very generally so, on other subjects besides religion. It is true, that these excitements are to be attributed to natural causes. And it is farther true, that we can, in all cases, ascertain the causes, to which they are to be attributed. There is no mistaking on this point; for the circumstance or event which has caused and continues the excitement, will itself be the topic of general conversation. But in respect to most revivals of religion, no sufficient natural cause for their occurrence can be assigned. The Gospel to be sure has been preached, and the means of grace have been in operation as usual, but no event of special interest has occurred, and no reason can be given why they should take place when they actually do, rather than at any other time. From some invisible and unknown cause, the minds of people often are simultaneously impressed with religious considerations. Christians feel deeply humbled and engaged, and are led to pray frequently and fervently for the prosperity of Zion; while sinners begin to be solemn and anxious, and to manifest an unusual concern for their souls. Instead of any extraordinary means being used at such times to bring about this state of feeling, the feelings of people in most instances impel them to a more diligent use of means, and to open their minds one to another, on the great subject which impresses them. It is from the fulness of their laboring hearts, that they *begin* to speak. I do not say that this is the invariable method, in which revivals of religion commence; but every day's observation testifies, that it is the frequent, if not the common method. So far are they from being dependent for their origin upon some great and striking external event, such as the prevalence of a disease, or an instance of mortality, that the occurrence of such an event, although a serious one, has, in many instances, served to interrupt their progress.

We see, then, that revivals of religion differ from all other cases of prevalent excitement, in their *origin*; and that, in accounting for their commencement, we are necessarily led to suppose the interposition and agency of an Almighty Spirit.

2. They are distinguished from other cases of general excitement, by the nature and *depth* of those feelings, which are brought into exercise. In cases where the existing cause is an external one,

the feelings excited are necessarily superficial. They are flighty, boisterous, and it may be, powerful; but they have no settled and uniform character, and do not spring from the deep recesses of the soul. But not so the feelings which are brought into exercise, in a genuine revival of religion. Whether holy or unholy, these are always of a deep and solemn kind, such as nothing merely external could produce. The most deeply hidden parts of the soul are affected, and the cause is felt to be the naked influence of Him, who alone trieth the reins and the heart. The distressed sinner feels a load upon his conscience, which he cannot remove, and can scarcely sustain. Wherever he goes, his burthen follows him; and whatever means he employs to remove it, still it remains. While the rejoicing Christian feels an elevation of spirit, which the world could not give, and cannot take away. Whether the feelings which are exercised in a revival of religion are right or wrong, they commonly agree in this: they do not float on the surface of the soul, the sport of conflicting circumstances or events; but have their origin and seat in the deep places of the heart. They spring from that region of the inner man, over which the external world has little direct power, and which can be touched efficiently only by the finger of God. They are excited by the influence of an Almighty Spirit, and lost only when this influence is grieved away.

3. Revivals of religion are distinguished from other cases of strong and prevalent excitement, in *this* respect—the views and feelings produced by them are reasonable in themselves, and they lead to a rational course of conversation and pursuit. In seasons of great excitement on other subjects, the feelings of people frequently become unreasonable. They are aroused and inflamed beyond proper bounds. They fall little short, often, of a species of insanity. And as the feelings of persons at such times are unreasonable in themselves, so they lead them to speak and to act unreasonably. They lead them to say and to do many things, which in their sober moments they regret, and of which they are ashamed. But totally different from this are the views and feelings which are entertained in a revival of religion. Though strongly excited, these are perfectly reasonable in themselves. They are such as comport with the truth, and with the actual state of things. Persons at such times, view religion to be all important; and it is so. It engages their attention, and interests their feelings; and it is right it should. They regard themselves as great sinners; and they really are such. They are distressed too, and in bitterness on account of their sins; and they have reason to be. The inquiry, which their hearts most frequently suggest, is, “What shall we do to inherit eternal life?” And what more important inquiry could their hearts suggest? Frequently they are seen acquiescing sweetly in the will of God, and rejoicing in him as their friend and portion; and this is certainly their duty.

They find all parts of his instituted service pleasant, and engage in it with interest, with fervor, and delight; and with what better feelings could they engage in it? The subjects of a genuine religious revival are conscious that their feelings, while under its influence, are reasonable and proper; and instead of condemning themselves that they have now such feelings, they feel condemned that they have not always had the same.

And as the views and feelings of persons, at such times, are reasonable in themselves, so they prompt them to a perfectly rational course of *conversation* and *pursuit*. They prompt them to speak often one to another, and freely to converse on the great subject of religion; and on what more suitable or profitable subject could they converse? They also prompt them to be much in prayer, both in secret and in public; and in this respect, obviously, they are no more than imitating and obeying their glorified Saviour. Their feelings, moreover, prompt them to *live*, as though time was short, and eternity long—as though the body was a trifle, and the soul infinitely valuable—as though the world was fleeting and empty, and the religion of Jesus of the utmost importance; and how could they pass away their lives in a manner more truly commendable or rational?

When persons look back upon their feelings and conduct, in seasons of high and strong excitement on other subjects besides that of religion, they commonly think of them with pain and regret, and it is their sincere desire that they may never feel so again. But do those, who have passed through a genuine revival of religion, and been themselves the happy subjects of it, ever look back with sorrow and pain upon the course of conversation and conduct which they have pursued? Do they ever afterwards regret their feelings at such a time, or desire, or pray, that they may feel so no more? On the contrary, do they not, in all subsequent life, remember their feelings and conduct during the revival with great satisfaction? Do they not consider the loss of such feelings a heavy loss; and the declining from such a course of conversation and practice, a most unreasonable declension? And is it not their desire and prayer that they may be revived again, and again experience the blessedness they enjoyed in the day of their espousals? This shews, that the feelings of persons, in a season of revival, will bear *looking at*, when the excitement is past; that they are truly reasonable in themselves; and that they prompt to a rational and proper course of conversation and pursuit. In this respect, therefore, which is a cardinal one, revivals of religion are widely distinguished from all other cases of strong and prevalent excitement.

4. They are also distinguished from other cases of this kind, by the sudden and surprising *changes* which often take place in the feelings of persons, especially of *opposers*, in respect to them.

In seasons of excitement on other subjects, there are usually parties; and party lines, when once drawn, in most instances remained unaltered. Or, if there are changes in a few individuals, these changes are brought about gradually, and are easily assignable to natural causes. But in revivals of religion, the case is often different. Here, indeed, there are commonly parties—there are opposers of the work—there are those who do everything in their power to stop it, and bring it into discredit and contempt. And it not unfrequently happens, that these very persons are arrested in the height and violence of their opposition, and in the course of a few days, or hours, their feelings undergo a total change. Instead of opposing the work, they become entirely favorable to it, and deeply interested and warmly engaged for its continuance and support. They are made to feel that it is a reality, and begin, with others, to weep and to beg for mercy. Their pride is humbled; their enmity slain; their hard hearts are broken at a stroke; and their reproachful lips begin to speak forth the praises of the living God. Thus it was with Saul of Tarsus; and thus it has been with hundreds, and thousands, since. God manifests in this way, that the work is his own, and that there is no stopping or interrupting it, in opposition to his pleasure and power.

5. It may be added, that revivals of religion are distinguished from all other cases of prevalent excitement, by the *permanency* of those impressions which they leave on the mind, and the *unalterable* change which they produce in the character. Other cases of excitement do not leave such impressions, or produce such a change. Events may occur in providence, which rouse up the minds of people to a strong and general excitement. Something may take place, for instance, which calls forth a general burst of indignation. But, in this case, persons do not remain indignant forever. The storm passes over, and all is again calm. Or something may take place, which excites an universal feeling of joy. But, in this case, the tide of joy quickly ebbs, and things revert to their former state. Or something may take place, which becomes the common topic of interest and of conversation. But neither respecting this, whatever it may be, do persons think or talk forever. It soon grows stale, is dropped, and is forgotten. And in none of these cases of excitement, are the characters of the persons affected essentially altered. If they were saints before, they are saints afterwards; and if they were sinners before, they are sinners still. But in a genuine revival of religion, persons receive impressions which they never lose. A change is produced in their characters, which is radical and permanent. They are suddenly arrested in their career of vice, of vanity, or of worldly pursuit; their thoughts are turned almost wholly to new subjects; their feelings receive a new direction; a new aspect is given to their whole characters; and this is perpetual. It exists, not for a day,

a week, a month, or a year; but in every case of genuine religious excitement, *it is perpetual*. The person affected becomes, in the strong language of Scripture, "a *new creature*." "Old things have passed away with him, and all things have become new." He contemplates almost every object around him, with new eyes. He has new thoughts, new feelings, new motives, connexions, and attachments, new hopes and fears, sorrows and joys. What he once hated, he now loves; and what he once loved, and delighted in, he now detests. And this new character which is assumed, he never loses. It continues, it may be with some interruption, but on the whole with increasing evidence, till he dies; and then, as we doubt not, it continues forever. Here then we have a decisive characteristic of religious revivals, and one by which they are widely and gloriously distinguished from all other cases of excitement whatever. They leave *permanent* impressions on the mind, and produce a great, and happy, and settled change in the character. It is this, especially, which stamps revivals of religion as the work of God.

In view of the remarks here made, our readers will know how to estimate the opinions of those, who place revivals of religion in the same class with cases of strong and prevalent excitement on other subjects. They will be satisfied, we think, that they cannot thus be classed, nor can they be accounted for in the same way. They are attended by palpable and important traits, which render them as distinct from most other cases of prevalent excitement, as wisdom is from folly, or religion from sin; which indeed elevate them as far above these other excitements, as the heavens are above the earth. Such are the appearances which accompany them, that they can in no way be accounted for, but by attributing them to the special power of God—the special influence and agency the Holy Spirit. There are the best reasons, therefore, why all Christians should desire them, and rejoice in them; why they should pray for them, and labor to promote them; and why they should think and speak of the frequent revivals, which are distinguishing and blessing the present age, with the liveliest gratitude and praise.

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THE INSPIRATION OF THE SCRIPTURES. NO. I.

Many, at the present day, who call themselves Christians, and who profess a serious respect for the Bible, do not believe that the several parts of it were written under a *special divine guidance*. And many, who seem to believe the inspiration of the Scriptures, have still no clear and definite views of the importance of the doctrine, or of the manner in which it is to be proved. I propose,



therefore, in a few successive numbers, to offer such explanations and reasonings on this important subject, as may be suited to aid the inquiries of the young, and to establish the faith of sincere Christians.

The present number will be occupied with *remarks on the proper mode of reasoning, and on the nature and source of the evidence, by which divine inspiration is to be proved.*

It will be proper for us to inquire, in the first place, whether the inspiration of those, who wrote the Scriptures, can be proved by the *miracles* which they performed.

Miracles, as commonly understood, are visible effects produced, not according to the established laws of nature, but by a special and preternatural interference of divine power. By such a preternatural agency, God gives an intelligible and certain testimony to the truth of those, whom he employs as instruments in these miraculous operations. He does as much as to make a public declaration, that they are his messengers; that they have been commissioned by him; and that what they say is infallibly true, and is invested with divine authority. Thus, in the contest of Elijah with the prophets of Baal, the miracle which he performed, or rather which God performed by him, was a public demonstration, that he was a true prophet, and that the God, whom he worshipped, was the true God. Thus the miracles, which Jesus performed, proved that he was the Messiah, as he claimed to be, and that all his declarations were true. Miracles, then, are proofs of the divine commission of those who perform them, and of the truth and authority of what they teach. But miracles furnish no *direct* and *certain* proof that those who perform them are under divine inspiration. So, in the case of Elijah. The miracle he performed proved the truth of what he taught; that is, that Jehovah, the God of Israel, was the only true God. But this fundamental doctrine of religion was held by the posterity of Jacob generally. It was the doctrine which they had been taught from their childhood. And how can we prove that Elijah was taught it, or was enabled to declare it, by divine inspiration, any more than we can prove, that every martyr, and every faithful Christian is inspired, because he believes that Jesus is the Messiah, and openly acknowledges him as such, in the face of an opposing world.

The commission of God's messengers, which is confirmed by miracles, may indeed be such, as obviously to imply, that a special divine influence is necessary to enable them to execute it. They may, for example, be commissioned to *predict future events*, or to declare doctrines which God only can teach them. But here the proof of their inspiration comes from the nature of the work which they are commissioned to perform, not from the miracles by which their commission is established. Miracles, in such cases,

prove their commission; and the nature of their commission, proves the necessity of divine inspiration.

Secondly. Can we prove the divine inspiration of those who wrote the Bible, from *the excellence of what it contains?*

It is clear, that an argument of this kind, must fail of being satisfactory, because we allow great excellence to what is contained in many books, which no one supposes to be inspired. Merely writing a book which contains excellent doctrines and precepts, and which exhibits them in a very impressive manner, cannot surely be deemed sufficient to prove that the writer is inspired. It is indeed true, that, if a writer is under the supernatural guidance of the Holy Spirit, his doctrines will be pure and excellent. But, it is not true, that whoever writes pure and excellent doctrines, has the supernatural guidance of the Holy Spirit. No decisive argument in favor of the inspiration of any writer, can be drawn from the doctrines he teaches, unless it can first be proved that it was impossible for him to come to the knowledge of those doctrines by any natural means. In regard to various predictions contained in the Bible, this can be proved. And here the argument in favor of the inspiration of the prophets, is perfectly clear. But in regard to other things contained in the Bible, however excellent they may be, the proof of inspiration cannot be equally clear, unless it is equally evident, that it was utterly beyond the power of the writers to know them, or to commit them to writing, without supernatural aid. But we should find it no easy matter to make this evident in regard even to the principal part of what the Bible contains. I am speaking, it will be recollected, of the proof which arises merely from the excellence of what an author writes. Now how could we prove, from the simple consideration of the doctrines and precepts contained in the four Gospels, that the writers were divinely inspired? They received those doctrines and precepts from Christ. And who could certainly prove, on the grounds above mentioned, that they were unable to make such a record of them as they have made, without supernatural guidance? Who could prove, that they were by divine influence raised to an infallibility, above the reach of human wisdom?

Thus, every argument which has been urged in proof of inspiration, merely from the sublimity, the purity, the harmony, and the efficacy of the Scriptures, will be found inconclusive. And I must say the same of the argument drawn merely from the character of the writers, and the care of divine providence in the preservation of the sacred books. These circumstances are of great consequence, and must be regarded by all Christians as perfectly corresponding with the common doctrine of inspiration, and as affording, not by themselves, but in connexion with other things, very satisfactory evidence of its truth. Indeed, they are indispensable to our belief of the doctrine. For were not the Scriptures

marked with purity ; and were they not harmonious among themselves ; and did they not proceed from holy men ; and had they not the efficacy which the writers ascribe to them ; we could not admit them to be inspired, how confidently soever the writers might assert their inspiration. At the same time we must remember that other books can be found, which were written by good men, and which are remarkable for their purity, for their consistency, and for the influence they have had in promoting human happiness, but which we do not consider to be divinely inspired.

To show that my views respecting the proper mode of reasoning on this point are not singular, I shall quote a few remarks of the late Dr. Knapp, on the same subject.

“ These two positions ;—*the contents of the sacred books, or the doctrines taught in them, are of divine origin ; and, the books themselves are given by inspiration of God,* are not the same, but need to be carefully distinguished. It does not follow from the arguments which prove the doctrines of the Scriptures to be divine, that the books themselves were written under a divine impulse. A revealed truth may be taught in any book ; but it does not follow that the book itself is divine. We might be convinced of the truth and divinity of the Christian religion, from the mere genuineness of the books of the New Testament, and the credibility of the authors. The divinity of the Christian religion can therefore be conceived, independently of the inspiration of the Bible. This distinction was made as early as the time of Melancthon.”

Now every attempt to prove the inspiration of the Scriptures by unsatisfactory arguments, and by multiplying arguments, and adding to those which are strong and conclusive, others which are feeble and inconclusive, is likely to have a very injurious effect on the mind. It is far better to begin and end with those arguments which are clear and satisfactory. And if there is only *one* proof which has this character, that one is sufficient. And the conviction produced of the truth of the proposition to be supported, will often be deep and lasting, very much in proportion to the simplicity of the evidence on which it is made to rest.

The single argument, on which I propose to rest the doctrine of inspiration, is *the testimony of the sacred writers themselves.* Their testimony, whether expressed or implied, is as worthy of credit on this subject as on any other. They are surely as able to inform us under what influence the Scriptures were written, especially considering that their own agency was employed in writing them, as they are to teach us the doctrines of Christianity, or to make known distant future events. The inspiration of those who wrote the Scriptures, is a matter of fact. And we must rely on them to teach us, not only the fact of their inspiration, but the extent and degree of it, and its results also.

It will be seen at once, that in the method of reasoning which has now been proposed, it is considered as a given point, that the sacred writers are competent to give testimony in relation to the subject under discussion, and that their testimony is entitled to entire credit. If proof of their credibility is called for, I refer ultimately to the miracles which they performed for the very purpose of proving their divine commission, and the truth and authority of what they taught. Miracles furnish an obvious and satisfactory proof of all this. They show the hand of God in a special manner. They are the testimony of God, and always have been and always will be received as such. And if we admit the infinite intelligence and the perfect veracity of God, his testimony must be regarded as the highest possible evidence.

But I shall not enter on the consideration of those arguments which prove the Scriptures to contain a revelation from God, in opposition to Deists. Those arguments are presented with great perspicuity and force by a variety of authors, who have undertaken to defend the Christian religion. In my reasoning on the question, whether the writers of the Scriptures were divinely inspired, or whether they wrote under the infallible guidance of the Holy Spirit, I assume the genuineness, truth, and authority of the Scriptures; and rely for evidence in proof of the doctrine which I shall maintain, on the information which the writers themselves have given. With this manner of proceeding, every *Christian* must be satisfied.

PASTOR.

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EXPOSITION.

1 Peter, iii. 18, 19, 20. "*For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit; by which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison, which sometime were disobedient, when once the long suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls, were saved by water.*"

The part of this passage which most needs explanation, and to which the attention of the reader will be chiefly directed, is that in which Christ is said to have "*preached unto the spirits in prison.*"

*What spirits* were these?—They were the spirits of those who lived "in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing." This wicked generation was suddenly and awfully destroyed by the flood. "They were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, and knew not till the flood came, and took them all away." They went down in a moment into the pit of destruction, the prison of hell, and here they remained, "*spirits in prison,*" at the time when the passage before us was written.

How did Christ preach to those, who lived in the days of Noah, who perished in the flood, and whose spirits were afterwards imprisoned in the world of darkness? He preached to them, not personally, but by his *Spirit*. Of this we are expressly assured by the apostle: "Being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the *Spirit*, BY WHICH, also, he went and preached unto the spirits in prison." Some have imagined that Christ went personally, and preached unto the spirits in prison. But this is contrary to the letter of the passage; for the apostle assures us that he preached to them, not personally, but *by his Spirit*.

When was the preaching spoken of in the passage before us performed?—Those who believe that Christ performed this preaching in person, have supposed that he performed it during the space which intervened between his death and his resurrection. While his lifeless body lay in the tomb, his soul, they think, descended into hell, for the purpose of preaching to the imprisoned spirits of darkness. Now this strange supposition is expressly contradicted by the declaration of the Saviour to the dying thief upon the cross: "*This day* shalt thou be with me in Paradise." The human soul of Christ, when released from the body, instead of descending into hell, went directly into the Paradise of God. This supposition is also contrary to the plain import of the passage under consideration. The apostle here definitely *fixes the time* when the preaching in question was performed. It was "*when* the long suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing." This adverb *when* must either express the time when Christ went and preached to the spirits in prison, or the time when these spirits were disobedient. That it does not express the latter is evident from this, that although the spirits in prison were disobedient in the days of Noah, this was not the only, or the principal period of their disobedience. They have been disobedient ever since. We see, then, that the adverb *when* does not fix the time when the spirits in prison were disobedient; but rather the time, when Christ preached to them by his Spirit. And this, as we have said already, was "*when* the long suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing." He preached to them while they lived here on the earth, before they were overtaken and destroyed by the flood. The phrase in the passage under consideration, "*which* sometime were disobedient," is obviously an interjected one, and might with propriety be included in a parenthesis. If it were thus included, the sense of the whole would be more plain. *Christ preached, by his Spirit, "to the spirits in prison, (who sometime were disobedient) when* the long suffering of God waited in the days of Noah."

It may be inquired still farther, how Christ can be said to have preached, by his Spirit, to those who were alive in the days of Noah.



In the first place, he preached to them by his Spirit, in *sending his Spirit to strive with them*. We read in Genesis that the Spirit actually did strive with them; and when they had long resisted him, God said in anger, "My Spirit shall not always strive with man." By the striving of his Spirit with those who lived and perished in the days of Noah, Christ suggested truth to their minds, and impressed it upon their hearts, and in this way may be said to have preached to them.

But secondly, Christ preached to the antediluvians by his Spirit, since, through the influence of his Spirit, he *called, qualified, and disposed Noah to preach to them*. Noah, we are told, was a "preacher of righteousness." During the whole period in which the ark was preparing, he ceased not to warn the wicked of their danger, and exhort them to escape from the impending ruin. He was called, qualified, and impelled to do this, by the Spirit of Christ. So that through the instrumentality of Noah, and by the influence of his Spirit, Christ himself may be said to have preached to that wicked generation. In common language, the sovereign is said to do what his accredited ambassador does. Ministers of the Gospel at the present day are ambassadors for Christ; and when they speak in his name, Christ himself is said to speak by them. Thus Christ preached to sinners before the flood, by means of Noah. Through the influence of his Spirit, calling and qualifying Noah as a "preacher of righteousness," he sounded his messages in their guilty ears, and warned them to flee from the wrath to come.

The substance of the foregoing explanation may be given, in few words, in the following paraphrase:

"When once the long suffering of God waited in the days of Noah while the ark was preparing, Christ preached, by his Spirit, to ungodly men; or, in other words, he sent his Spirit to strive with them, and constituted Noah his ambassador, to proclaim his warnings in their ears. But they, refusing to listen, were swallowed up in the flood, and their souls were confined, where they still continue, in the prison of despair."

From the passage, as here explained, we gather the following important lessons:

1. Christ has been, from the beginning, a Sovereign in the kingdom of grace. He existed before Abraham, before Noah, before all worlds; for by him, we are assured, they were all created; and from the first opening of the plan of redemption, he has acted as a Sovereign in the dispensations of his grace. He has given his Spirit, and withheld it; has appointed ministers, and removed them; he has waited to be gracious as long as he pleased, and when and how he pleased, has cut off the incorrigibly wicked. In other words, he has been a Sovereign, and, as such, has done all his pleasure.

2. There is a state of punishment for the wicked, in the future world. By some, this doctrine is disbelieved. Mankind, it is pretended, receive all the punishment in the present life which their sins deserve; and consequently, when any are removed by death, they are admitted immediately to the happiness of heaven. But what became of those, to whom Christ by his Spirit preached in the days of Noah? Their bodies perished in the flood; but what became of their undying souls? These descended directly to the prison of hell; and near two thousand years afterwards, we hear from them by the apostle Peter, that still they are there, "spirits in prison"—in a state of confinement, a state of punishment. There is, then, a state of punishment for sinners in the future world.

3. The present life is the state of *probation*, or the period in which the long suffering of God *waits* upon sinners to repent and accept of mercy. The long suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, all the while the ark was preparing. During these hundred and twenty years, Christ, by his Spirit and prophet, was preaching, and God was waiting upon hardened men. This whole period was allotted them as a season of trial, a space for repentance, in which they might turn from their sins and live. But when this period closed, God would wait no longer. Their state of probation was at an end; the flood came and swallowed them up; and their immortal spirits descended to the prison of darkness, to enjoy the light of hope, and to hear the voice of mercy, no more. This passage, therefore, which has so often been quoted for a very different purpose, teaches us that the present life is the season of probation, or the period in which the long suffering of God waits upon sinners to turn and live.

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## REVIEW.

A DISCOURSE ON REGENERATION. *By Bernard Whitman, of Waltham.* Second edition. Boston, Bowles & Dearborn, 1828. pp. 57.

This is the same Mr. Whitman, who published the sermon on "Denying the Lord Jesus;" who took it upon him to prove from his pulpit, that those who believe in the Divinity of Christ are guilty of denying him, and may expect to be denied by him before his Father and the holy angels. We mention this fact, not to excite a prejudice one way or the other, but to apprize our readers of the views and spirit of the man, with whom we shall have to do in the following pages.

He here discusses the very important subject of regeneration. His text is the noted declaration of our Saviour, in John iii. 3:

‘Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.’ He first notices “some of the conversions which took place under the preaching of the inspired apostles;” particularly those of the three thousand, and, as he says, of Cornelius and his family. His object is to shew, that these conversions were accomplished by a purely natural process, without the special influence of the Holy Spirit. In the second place he considers the *necessity* of regeneration. The ground of this is “ignorance, error, and sin;” and these are the result of “the imperfection of our nature, the imperfection of our education, and our invincible desire for happiness.” Our nature, he contends, is as good every way, as that of Adam before his fall. We have no natural, prevailing bias towards evil, more than good. And all the “sin, which ever has been, now is, or ever will be, on the earth,” is fairly attributable either to “the imperfection of our nature,” which he explains to mean nothing more than a *liability* to do wrong; or to “the imperfection of our education,” using the word education in its largest sense; or to “our invincible desire for happiness,” which he calls “an innate and innocent desire.” p. 26. In the third place, he “proceeds to examine the spiritual condition of those born and educated in Christian lands.” He “begins with infants;” who, he says, “are pure and innocent, in the kingdom of heaven, and, consequently, have no need of being born again.” His next class “includes those who have been practical Christians from their earliest years;” who have never been born again, and who need not be. In his third class are included “all who are not real Christians.” Under his fourth general head, he considers the *evidences* of regeneration; which he supposes to be comprised in “a sober, righteous, and godly life.” With the filling up of this plan, and an application at the close, the Discourse is concluded.

In remarking upon it, we begin with his explanation of the text: ‘Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.’ The phrase, ‘kingdom of God,’ means, he says, “the reign of the Christian religion. Consequently, for a person to ‘see the kingdom of God,’ must mean, that he becomes a real Christian.” With this explanation, the text will read, ‘Except a man be born again, he cannot become a real Christian.’ What, then, is it to ‘be born again’? Why, this phrase, he observes, “denotes the change in religious opinions and moral character, which the first converts to Christianity necessarily experienced” “in becoming Christians.” Or, in fewer words, it denotes their “becoming Christians.” Here, then, we have both parts of Mr. Whitman’s explanation of his text, all occurring on less than half a page from the commencement of the Discourse. Let us put the two ends together: ‘Except a man become a Christian, he cannot become a real Christian’! Yes, ‘Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a man become a Christian, he cannot become a real Christian’!!! Now this is certainly a

very remarkable declaration. No wonder Nicodemus marvelled, when he heard it. How could he but marvel, to hear such a truth, pronounced and reiterated by such a teacher, and with such imposing and awful solemnity?

Having succeeded thus admirably in opening and exhibiting the sense of his text, Mr. W. proceeds to the body of the Discourse. Let us follow him, as we are able.

The three thousand who were converted on the day of Pentecost, he tells us, "were believers in the Hebrew Scriptures; observers of the laws and institutions of Moses; worshippers of the one true God; *devout men*, who had assembled at Jerusalem for religious observances." p. 7. But he proceeds to inform us, what we believed before, that "they had considered Jesus an impostor, who wrought miracles by the assistance of the devil;" that "they had crucified him as a malefactor;" and "had circulated the report that his body had been stolen away by his disciples." p. 8. Here, then, we are presented with some very singular combinations of character. Mr. W. has brought before us three thousand deliberate liars and murderers, who had all along regarded Jesus as in league with the devil; and performing miracles by his assistance, who still were "*devout men*"—*devout "worshippers of the one true God"!!* Three thousand *devout liars, traducers, and murderers!!!* After a presentation of character such as this, we cannot possibly be surprised, let what will come up.

Mr. W. professes to give, under six specifications, all the doctrines which Peter preached to the three thousand; and under six similar specifications, all that he preached to the family of Cornelius. To what he has said on this part of the subject, we have two objections. First, his account of the apostle's preaching is *defective*. His specifications do not contain all the doctrines that Peter taught. He might, in either case, have increased them to twelve, as well as to have stopped short at six. And secondly, his account is not a *correct* one, as far as it goes. His specifications, in several instances, do not express the sense of the apostle. For instance; Peter said to the three thousand, '*Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins.*' This, says Mr. W., teaches the "pardon of sins, on *reformation*." But Peter said not one word directly about reformation. Repentance and reformation do not mean the same. The one is a natural consequence of the other; and of course they cannot mean the same. Again; Peter said, in the presence of Cornelius, '*In every nation, he that feareth God, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him.*' By this we are taught, says Mr. W., "man's acceptance with God *on account of personal righteousness.*" Now every one who reads the passage knows, that Peter taught no such thing. He merely announced the fact, that those who fear God and work righteousness *are ac-*

cepted of him; but on *whose account* they are thus accepted, he leaves us to be informed from other parts of the sacred writings.

Mr. W. regards these discourses of Peter as containing all that is essential in the Gospel—"the fundamental points of Gospel orthodoxy." They contain all that was preached to the three thousand, and to the family of Cornelius, before their conversion and admission to the church. But is it certain, in the first place, that these persons had no acquaintance with the Gospel, *previous* to the preaching of Peter on these occasions? The three thousand "were believers in the Hebrew Scriptures;" and do these Scriptures inculcate none of the doctrines of the Gospel? They had been favored, too, in all probability, with the personal preaching of Christ, and of John the Baptist. Mr. W. says that Cornelius and his family "had not heard a word of Christianity," before they were visited and addressed by Peter. But Peter, in his address to them, says they had heard of it; and he appeals to their previous knowledge of the subject. 'The word which God sent unto the children of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ (he is Lord of all)—*that word*, I say, YE KNOW.' Acts x. 36, 37. The apostle Peter, and Mr. W. are here directly at variance.

But, secondly, all that Peter preached on these occasions is not recorded in the Acts. In the one case it is expressly said, that 'he testified and exhorted *with many other words*;' and in the other, the same thing is necessarily to be presumed.

Indeed, the supposition that these written discourses contain the whole Gospel, is absurd and ridiculous. Are the preceding and subsequent parts of the Bible no more than repetitions of what is contained here? Or is it possible to conceive that the whole Gospel, with all its doctrines, duties, motives, and promises, should be compressed within the compass of some twenty or thirty verses?

What then, if Mr. W. can say, with truth, of this doctrine, that, or the other, It is not contained in these discourses of Peter. Suppose it is not. It will not follow, that those whom Peter addressed were not previously or subsequently made acquainted with it. It will not follow that it is not in the Bible.

But, says Mr. W., "Peter not only omitted" to teach certain points, which are now regarded as essential to orthodoxy, "he taught other doctrines with which these are wholly at variance." He taught that our Lord "received his anointing with the Holy Spirit, and his power to work miracles, from God;" which is inconsistent with the doctrine of the Trinity. He taught "that Jesus had been crucified by wicked hands, and raised to life by the power of God;" which is inconsistent with his being regarded as Divine. He taught "that sins are remitted on reformation, and that all who fear God and work righteousness are accepted with him;" which is inconsistent with the idea "that God pardons sin, and accepts the sinner, only on account of the sacrifice of an infi-



nite person." He taught "that God is no respecter of persons ;" which is inconsistent with his "choosing a part of the human race to salvation, and leaving the remainder for eternal misery." He taught also, "that Jesus was ordained the Judge of quick and dead ;" which is inconsistent with the doctrine that "men can do nothing to secure their salvation." pp. 14, 15. We have given these sentences, each containing, in the estimation of Mr. W., a frightful inconsistency, not for the purpose of saying anything, to remove the mistakes and misrepresentations, and to correct the partial and distorted views of truth, on which the appearance of inconsistency in every instance is grounded : for *our* readers would think such a labor superfluous, if not, indeed, an implied reflection upon their understandings ; but for the purpose of saying to Mr. W., that when he has lived longer, and studied more, and become better acquainted with his Bible, and with our views of truth, and has learned to conceive of them and represent them with greater fairness ; we doubt not these seeming inconsistencies will gradually "vanish in thin air," without our interference or help.

In discussing the general subject of the Spirit's operations, Mr. W. begins by endeavoring to give his hearers "a definite idea of the phrase 'Holy Ghost, or Spirit.'" In doing this, he first denies the personality of the Spirit. "Merely" because it is personified in the Scriptures, "you would no more consider it a person, than you would consider wisdom or death a person." p. 16. But within less than a dozen lines, we have the following sentence : "As the spirit of man is man himself, so the Spirit of God is God himself." God, therefore, in the theology of Mr. W., is not a person ! He denies the personality of the Divine Being ! Not only are there not three persons in one God, the one God himself is not a person, and cannot speak, or be spoken to, or spoken of, as a distinct personal existence !

"The Spirit of God is God himself." Mr. W. does not, of course, use this phraseology in the Trinitarian sense, meaning that the Spirit of God is the third person in the Trinity ; but in the Unitarian sense, meaning that the Spirit of God is 'the only living and true God.' Adopting for a moment this explanation, let us read, in conformity with it, several passages of Scripture.

"The Lord God and his Spirit hath sent me." Isa. xlvi. 16.

"It shall come to pass in the last days (saith God) I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh." Joel ii. 28.

"We are witnesses of these things, and so also is the Holy Ghost whom God hath given." Acts v. 32.

"God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost." Acts x. 38.

"God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit ; for the Spirit searcheth

"The Lord God and God himself hath sent me."

"It shall come to pass in the last days (saith God) I will pour out of God himself upon all flesh."

"We are witnesses of these things, and so also is God himself whom God hath given."

"God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with God himself."

"God hath revealed them unto us by God himself ; for God himself

all things, yea, the deep things of God." 1 Cor. ii. 10.

"The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost be with you all." 2 Cor. xiii. 14.

"In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God, through the Spirit." Eph. ii. 22.

"He that despiseth, despiseth not man, but God, who hath given unto us his Holy Spirit." 1 Thess. iv. 8.

"God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth." 2 Thess. ii. 13.

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"The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of *God himself* be with you all."

"In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God, through *God himself*."

"He that despiseth, despiseth not man, but God, who hath given unto us *God himself*."

"God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation, through sanctification of *God himself*, and belief of the truth."

As Mr. W. holds to no distinctions in the Godhead, when he says, "The Spirit of God is God himself," he must mean by the words, "God himself," God the Father. The Spirit of God, then, is *God the Father*. Let us now read in conformity with this explanation, several other declarations of Scripture.

"Baptizing them in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." Matt. xxviii. 19.

"If ye, then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him." Luke xi. 13.

"I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever; even the Spirit of truth." John xiv. 16, 17.

"But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things," &c. John xiv. 26.

"But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me." John xv. 26.

"Through him, we both have access by one Spirit, unto the Father." Eph. ii. 18.

"Baptizing them in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the *Father*."

"If ye, then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the *Father* to them that ask him."

"I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another *Father*, that he may abide with you forever; even the *Father*."

"But the *Father*, which is the *Father*, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things," &c.

"But when the *Father* is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the *Father*, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me."

"Through him, we both have access by one *Father*, unto the Father."

The passages here given are but a specimen of what might be given. They are sufficient, however, to shew, the perfect contrariety of Mr. Whitman's views to the general current of Scripture representation, and, if attempted to be carried through the Bible, in what utter confusion they involve the sacred page. Yet, as has been already said, he expressed these incoherent and unscriptural views, for the purpose of exhibiting to his misguided people and the public, "a definite idea of the phrase 'Holy Ghost, or Spirit.'"

In speaking of the operations of the Holy Spirit, Mr. W. makes no distinction between his *miraculous* influences, and what have

been termed his *special* or *sanctifying* influences. Indeed, he seems not to know that any such distinction ever had been made, or thought of. The drift of his argument is to prove, that conversions were not effected, either in primitive times, or since, by that same kind of influence, by which the apostles were enabled to speak with tongues, and cast out devils, and perform all manner of miracles. Doubtless, he will be greatly astonished when he is told that there are none among *us* who suppose that conversions are effected, or ever were, by this kind of influence. Some Unitarians and Arminians have strenuously contended, that the conversions recorded in the Acts were many of them miraculous, and consequently, no example of what is to be expected now. We shall leave Mr. W. to adjust this point with his brethren as he can, while we assure him that *we* do not regard conversions in the light of miracles. We suppose they are effected by a *special* operation of the Holy Spirit, but not by a miraculous operation. In the work of conversion, we believe there is a necessity for means. Truth must be exhibited, and must be received. Motives must be presented, and must prevail. The understanding must be enlightened, the will bowed, the heart won; and all this through the instrumentality of wisely adapted means. Is it asked, What need then of the special influences of the Holy Spirit? We answer, to apply these means, and render them effectual. Means of themselves are not sufficient to melt and break the hard hearts of men. Nor are they sufficient, when attended only by that "ordinary influence," spoken of and admitted by Mr. W.—the same "by which we are preserved in being," and without which "we cannot breathe a moment." pp. 17, 42. The three thousand, who were converted on the day of Pentecost, had all their lives enjoyed this "ordinary influence," and enjoying it, they had often heard the truths of the Gospel. They had witnessed the miracles, and listened to the teaching, of Him who spake as never man spake. Still they were unaffected. The words of Jesus fell powerless and inefficient upon their darkened minds and hardened hearts. But no sooner does Peter, a frail and feeble instrument, but just enlightened from above, begin to address them on the day of Pentecost, and present the truths, and urge the motives, of the Gospel, than they begin to be awakened and distressed, their hearts begin to melt and yield, and they are prepared in a short time to go all lengths with him in building up that cause, which before they had labored to destroy. Now these are the facts; how shall we account for them? They cannot be attributed to the means that were used; for means much more powerful had been used with these men before, and with no effect. Nor can they be attributed to the mere "ordinary influence" of the Divine Spirit, that "by which we are preserved in being." For these Jews had constantly experienced this "ordinary influence," but no good

effect had followed. We say, then, because in view of recorded and admitted facts we can say nothing less, that on the day of Pentecost these Jews were the subjects of a *special* influence of the Holy Spirit; not one which superseded the necessity of means, or the regular exercise of their own intellectual and free moral powers; but still a *special* influence, which gave unwonted power to means, and rendered them effectual to the renewing of the heart.

Facts of the same general class with those here considered are of frequent occurrence in our own times. They fall continually under the observation of evangelical ministers of the Gospel. Such ministers preach as plainly and closely as they can, and their people hear, and individuals remain unaffected, perhaps for a considerable time. They have the means of grace, and the "ordinary influence" of the Spirit; but the sleep of sin continues unbroken, the heart remains hard, and no good effects are seen to follow. At length, however, there are different appearances. These same individuals, with precisely the same means and outward advantages, are awakened, are alarmed, are distressed for their souls, and begin for the first time to feel the power and yield to the influence of the Gospel. There can be no more doubt of the existence of these facts, than of the fact that there is a sun in the heavens. They have occurred in thousands and thousands of instances; they occur continually. In what way can they be accounted for, but by admitting a *special*, not a physical or miraculous, but a special influence of the Divine Spirit, imparting energy to the truth, and melting and breaking the stubborn heart?

The reason, probably, why most Unitarian clergymen deny the special agency of the Holy Spirit, is, that they rarely, if ever, witness facts like these under their ministrations. Their preaching is cold, it is heartless, it is another Gospel, which the Divine Spirit will not own and honor, as the instrument of bringing sinners to repentance. And because they see no evidence of the special operations of the Holy Spirit among their people, and do not pretend to have felt anything of it in their own souls, they flatter themselves, and endeavor to persuade others, that there is no such thing. But how can they satisfy themselves to reason in this way? Are they sure there is nothing true, which they have not seen? And nothing real, which they have not felt? Said our blessed Saviour, when on this very subject, 'Verily, verily, I say unto you, we speak that we *do know*, and testify that we *have seen*, and *ye receive not our witness*.'

We might support our views of the doctrine of divine influences by a direct recurrence to the Scriptures; for in most of the passages which speak of regeneration, this change is expressly ascribed to the Holy Spirit. Thus those who have been born again are said repeatedly to have been 'born of the Spirit,' and 'born of

God.' We read also of the 'sanctification of the Spirit,' and 'renewing of the Holy Ghost.' But we have chosen rather to avoid a recurrence to the Scriptures, and to rest the point at issue on an appeal to facts. A plain declaration of Scripture is of small account, in the estimation of some persons; but facts are stubborn things. And sure we are, a denial of the special agency of the Spirit in the conversion of sinners, is as inconsistent with facts, as it is with the Bible; as inconsistent with sound philosophy, as with sound theology.

In one respect, Mr. W. carries the doctrine of regeneration as far, we presume, as any who have preceded him. For he holds that some truly *pious* persons have needed to be born again, in order to see the kingdom of God. He admits, that Cornelius, before he saw Peter, was a good man, who "faithfully performed the duties of piety and benevolence." Still, says he, he "must be born again, before he can be a real Christian, or enter the kingdom of heaven"! p. 11. The eleven disciples too, were good men, who loved their Master, and had left all to follow him. Mr. W. informs us, however, that "none of them were born again, until after his resurrection"! p. 17. In another part of his Discourse, he tells us of a class "who have been practical Christians from their *earliest years*," who have *never* been born again, and never need be!

It is amusing to follow this writer from step to step, and see how he can say one thing, or another, just as he finds it necessary to answer a present purpose. This remark has had a pretty full exemplification already. If farther illustration of it is needed, the reader may compare the different descriptions which are given in different connexions, of the characters of the early converts to Christianity. In the commencement of the Discourse, they are spoken of as those who "believe the Christian truths, possess the Christian spirit, and practise the Christian duties"—who have "experienced a very sensible change, from ignorance to knowledge, from error to truth, and from sin to holiness." pp. 5, 6. Here, the character of the first Christian converts is set high enough. But by and by, it becomes necessary, to accomplish a purpose, that their fair reputation should be tarnished; and Mr. W. shews that he can easily tarnish it. Having spoken of the sins of the apostles themselves, he adds,

"Look next at some of their first converts. Many in the Corinthian church became intoxicated at the celebration of the Lord's Supper. The Ephesians were exhorted to put away "all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamor, and evil speaking, with all malice." Unless they had been guilty of these sins, they would not have been directed to forsake them. Peter exhorts his converts to "add to their faith virtue, and to virtue knowledge, and to knowledge temperance, and to temperance patience, and to patience



godliness, and to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness charity." Unless they had been destitute of these virtues, they would not have been urged to their acquisition." p. 18.

Here, those who had been previously spoken of as "believing the Christian truths, possessing the Christian spirit, and practising the Christian virtues," and as having "experienced a very sensible change, from ignorance to knowledge, and from sin to holiness," are represented not only as chargeable with intoxication at the Lord's table, but as living in "bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamor, and evil speaking, and malice," and as being "*destitute*" of virtue, and knowledge, and temperance, and patience, and godliness, and brotherly kindness, and charity"! A most pitiable account, truly, of the fruits of Paul's labors! If such were the primitive Christians, after their conversion, we beg to know what they were before. Mr. W. must doubtless believe, that the doctrine of total depravity was true in that age, if it is not now.

In the account given us of the state of Adam at his creation, we have a fine specimen of Mr. Whitman's power of putting together incoherent ideas, and passing them off with an appearance of consistency. "Adam," he says, "was created in the *full exercise* of his bodily functions and mental powers. Yet he must have been destitute of both knowledge and holiness. For knowledge implies the possession of ideas; and these he could not have possessed at his creation." He proceeds to inform us that Adam was destitute, not only of holy affections, but of sinful ones. "His soul could not have been polluted with sinful thoughts, desires, or habits." p. 20. Adam, then, at his creation, had no thoughts, no ideas, no knowledge, and no moral affections, either holy or sinful. And yet he was "in the *full exercise* of his mental powers"! About what, in the name of reason, did he exercise them? And what shall his intellectual and moral exercises be called, at the time when he had no thoughts, no ideas, and no moral affections?

But farther, says Mr. W., Adam at this time was "a free agent," who had "power over his own thoughts, volitions, and actions." p. 20. But how could he have "power over his own thoughts, volitions, and actions," when as yet he had no thoughts, volitions, or actions!

Our author still farther informs us, that Adam, at his creation, was "pure and innocent; *pure*, for he was just as he came from the hands of his holy Creator; and *innocent*, for he had transgressed no law." And yet, strange to tell, he is represented, at this very time, as "having a law in his members, warring against the law of his mind"! Will the reader pause for a single moment, and contemplate the situation of our first father, as it is here represented? "In the full exercise of his" understanding, and yet without thoughts, ideas, or knowledge! "In the full exercise of

his" moral powers, and yet without moral affections, either holy or sinful! With "power over his thoughts, volitions, and actions," when he has no thoughts, volitions, or actions! And to crown all, while yet he is perfectly "pure and innocent," without thoughts, ideas, knowledge, or moral exercise, he is obliged to struggle against a "law in his members," which is "warring against the law of his mind"!!

We have shown already, in giving the plan of Mr. Whitman's Discourse, that he denies the existence of any natural prevailing bias in man towards evil, and attributes all the "sin which ever has been, now is, or ever will be, on the earth," to the operation of three causes: "the imperfection of our nature, the imperfection of our education, and our invincible desire for happiness." He explains the imperfection of our nature to mean nothing more than a *liability* to do wrong. It attached to Adam before he fell, as much as afterwards; and attaches to holy angels as really as to us. It is the necessary imperfection of *creatures*, from which no being but the Creator is exempt. This imperfection Mr. W. regards as one cause of sin, and as one ground of the necessity of regeneration. p. 19. But so far as an imperfection of this sort creates a necessity of regeneration, Adam needed regeneration before his fall, as much as afterwards; and holy angels need regeneration as really as men!

There is no propriety, however, in regarding an imperfection of this sort as a *cause* of sin. It obviously is not a cause; but a mere liability or *possibility*, growing out of the fact that we are dependent creatures, and not the independent Creator, that we should sin. It is *possible* for the most upright man in the world to steal; but this does not *cause* him to steal. Nor was the liability of our first parents to sin, in any sense, a *cause* of their sinning.

The second, and, as Mr. W. supposes, the principal cause of sin, is *wrong education*; taking the word education in its widest sense. But the difficulty in regard to this alleged cause of the existence of sin, is, that before it can operate, sin must already be in existence, and must have made fearful progress. Before the father can set a bad example before his child, and train him up wickedly, he must himself be a wicked man. How, then, did this wicked father become wicked? Was it owing to a bad education? Then *his* father was a bad man; and how did *he* become bad? Did he learn to sin from a sinful father? But how came this more remote ancestor to be a sinner? Following back the subject in this way, we see at once that we want some other cause of the existence and prevalence of sin, besides a wrong education. The first cause alleged by Mr. W. is no cause at all, and the second will not account for it.

Let us look then at the third, which he describes as our "innate and *innocent*," though "invincible desire for happiness." This leads us into sin, by leading us to *mistake* the true object of happi-

ness. We "are not really *convinced* that a truly Christian course is the happiest course both for the present and the future." Consequently we "give ourselves up to hurtful and momentary gratifications." pp. 25, 26. Now we ask, Is this mistake in regard to the object of happiness, *voluntary* or *involuntary*? If involuntary, there is no sin in it, and we never can feel ourselves *culpable* for making it. It may be a very unhappy mistake for us; but if wholly involuntary, it involves no sin, or blame, or guilt. But if the mistake is *voluntary*, if it is *wilful*; then the difficulty is to see how a perfectly "*innocent* desire" for happiness can lead a person to fall into it; since a desire after what is *known* to be a forbidden object of gratification, cannot be innocent. And such a desire cannot be the *first* cause of sin, for it is itself sinful.

Mr. W. deals out the usual misrepresentations of his party on the subjects of depravity, and of original sin. Regarding us as believing in physical depravity, and as holding all men to be guilty of Adam's sin, he says,

"You may as well attempt to repent, because a tree in your garden grows crooked, as to think of exercising repentance, on account of Adam's transgression. And if you accuse your nature of being totally depraved, and make an original sinfulness the cause of your open wickedness, you slander the nature which God has given you, and pronounced very good, and you make him the author of your iniquities." p. 28.

Now we no more believe than Mr. W. himself, that our *physical* nature or constitution is depraved. Nor do we believe any more than he, that mankind are guilty of Adam's sin. But we do believe that, for some reason or other, and as a consequence of Adam's transgression, mankind are naturally and fearfully in love with sin. It is as natural to them to be selfish, and proud, and thoughtless, and lovers of the world, and lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God, as it is to breathe. For some reason or other, we choose the wrong road in preference to the right; we begin of our own accord to walk in it, as soon as we can walk at all; and we persist in it freely and constantly till we die, unless arrested and delivered by the special interposition of the Holy Spirit. We believe these humbling truths, because we find them in the Bible. And we could not but believe them, if we had no Bible. For they lie most prominently on the whole surface of human affairs. Whether we look around us, or within us, they are the first to meet us and stare us in the face.

Speaking of infants, Mr. W. says, "they are already in the kingdom of God," and "need not to be born again." "And this conclusion includes the infants of all parents, godly and ungodly, Christian and heathen." p. 31. We shall not attempt to follow him in all his speculations respecting the character and state of

infants; but would merely inquire, how the above sentences, comprising the result of his investigations, can be true. For if the kingdom of God means the kingdom of glory, surely infants, while living here in the body, are not there. Or if the kingdom of God means the Christian church, the Christian community, and if (as is the opinion of many) the children of Christian parents are in some sense connected with this community; still, in what sense are the children of ungodly parents, and of heathens, connected with it? In what sense are *they* in the kingdom of God?

According to the definition of Mr. W., at the commencement of the Discourse, to be in 'the kingdom of God' is the same as to be a real Christian. But he says, "the infants of all parents, godly and ungodly, Christian and heathen," "are already in the kingdom of God." Consequently "the *infants* of all parents," without excepting even the heathen, are *real Christians*!! He cannot possibly escape this inference, with all the absurdities growing out of it, but by substituting some other and broader definition of the kingdom of God.

In speaking of his second class "of those born and educated in Christian lands," "who have been practical Christians from their earliest years," Mr. W. gives us some precious specimens of his talents as a commentator. '*The carnal mind is enmity against God.*' The carnal mind, says he, is "a mind given to adultery, fornication, uncleanness, wrath, strife, envyings, murders, drunkenness, and such like." p. 34. A most wonderful disclosure, truly, that a mind such as this is enmity against God, and not subject to his holy law! We are to conclude, of course, that all, whose minds are not given to such odious vices, are in possession of that *spiritual* mind, which the apostle contrasts with the carnal mind, and which he assures us 'is life and peace!'

'*The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God.*' "The natural man," says Mr. W., "is one who takes the works of nature for his guide, and rejects revelation." p. 35. Every *natural* man then is a deist, or an atheist; and every believer in Divine revelation, whatever his moral character may be, is a *spiritual* man!\* Doubtless, the apostle regarded those Jewish believers in Divine revelation, by whom he was so cruelly persecuted, as *spiritual* men!

'*We all.....were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.*' This assertion of the apostle, Mr. W., if we understand him, directly contradicts. In his estimation, none are the children of wrath, *by nature*. "None, but the disobedient, are ever the children of wrath." "Infants and youth cannot sink into such sinful

\*The natural and spiritual man are contrasted by the apostle in this passage, as the carnal and spiritual mind were, in the former. See 1 Cor. ii. 14. Rom. viii. 7.

degradation; and, of course, cannot be children of wrath until they become dead in trespasses and sins." p. 36.

Nor is this the only instance, in which Mr. W. contradicts directly the testimony of the inspired writers. We can point him to more than a hundred passages of Scripture, in which *anger* or *wrath* is ascribed to the Supreme Being. But he takes it upon him to say, in so many words, God "*can never feel anger or wrath in his bosom*"! No; God "**CAN NEVER FEEL ANGER OR WRATH IN HIS BOSOM**"!! p. 36. Mr. W. and his Bible are here fairly at points. Which shall be believed?

In the declaration last quoted, Mr. W. discloses a sentiment, which is discoverable in other parts of the Discourse, but which he seems willing to conceal: we mean the doctrine of *universal salvation*. In relation to this subject, we find expressions such as these: "We were made for ever-increasing and never-ending felicity." God "*made us for goodness*," and "he has so constituted us that *our goodness will produce temporal and eternal happiness*; and is it not reasonable to suppose he assists us in the acquisition of that holiness *for which we were created?*"—in obtaining that moral conformity to his image" which is "*the very object and end of our creation?*" God "*is infinite love, and perfectly unchangeable in his nature, and can never feel anger or wrath in his bosom; but will forever love all the works of his hands, even the vilest sinners, whom he is continually striving to reclaim from their self-inflicted misery.*" pp. 25, 36, 40. Mr. W. may not be willing to call himself a Universalist, or that others should call him so. But certainly, none who read the sentences here given, can mistake his meaning. He has declared his belief in universal salvation, 'with an explicitness which need not and cannot be misunderstood.'

Mr. Whitman's third class "of those born and educated in Christian lands" "includes all who are not real Christians." There is then a class, under the Gospel, who are not real Christians; and consequently there must be a *distinction* between those who are real Christians, and those who are not. We should like to know definitely, on the principles of our author, what this distinction is. He does not consider *real Christians* as advanced to a state of sinless perfection, but very far from it; for he describes "some of the first Christian converts," members of the apostolical churches, as living in "bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamor, and malice," and as being "*destitute*" of virtue, and knowledge, and temperance, and patience, and godliness, and brotherly kindness, and charity! p. 18. But if such, in the judgment of Mr. W., may be the character of "converts," of *real Christians*; what is the character of those who are not real Christians? Why, "some of these," he says, "have very correct notions of the instructions of the Gospel;" while "the outward



conduct of some of them is so correct, that you might suppose they were advancing to Christian perfection." And there are none of them who have not some "virtue left, sufficient to save them from total depravity." p. 37. Now the puzzle is, to make out a distinction between the two classes. There are two classes, as Mr. W. allows; and consequently there must be marks of distinction between them. *What, then, are these distinctive marks?* The real Christian may be in a state of great imperfection; and some who are not Christians are in no worse state; and what, we demand, is *the difference*, so much insisted on in the sacred volume, and admitted by Mr. W. himself, between saints and sinners, the righteous and the wicked, between those who serve God, and those who serve him not? It is perfectly easy, on Orthodox principles, to make out a distinction between these two classes, a distinction which is plain and palpable, and comes home to the consciences and hearts of men; but on the principles of our author, no such distinction can be invented; and it is idle for him to talk of any distinction between real Christians and the rest of mankind. The Bible talks of such a distinction. Indeed, the instructions of the Bible, we had almost said are *based* upon the fact of its existence. But there is no place found for this radical distinction in the system of Mr. Whitman. On the principles he advocates, it cannot be satisfactorily explained.

In his class of characters who are "born and educated in Christian lands," but "who are not real Christians," Mr. W. mentions those "who entertain the erroneous belief that the Father *alone* is not the almighty God." p. 38. In other words, Trinitarians, who regard the Son and Spirit as Divine persons, are not real Christians. This is in agreement with his former printed Discourse, in which he asserts, that those who ascribe divine honors to Christ, are guilty of denying him. On this point, we shall not contend with him at all. If he is pleased to refuse us the Christian name, and charge us with denying the Lord that bought us, he is welcome to do it. It may be pertinent however, to observe, that he makes another class of "those who are born and educated in Christian lands," but "are not real Christians," to consist of those, who "deny to others the Christian name, because they cannot embrace the peculiarities of their creed." p. 39. In this class, Mr. W. must unavoidably *include himself*: for he virtually denies the Christian name to those who ascribe divine honors to Christ, to those who "cannot embrace the peculiarities of his creed"!! We really hope he will remember some of his own exhortations, and "begin in *earnest*, the work of reformation and improvement."

In speaking of "the evidences of regeneration," Mr. W. asks and answers the very important question, "*What is faith in Jesus?*" "It is believing," he says, "this one, plain, simple proposition—

**JESUS IS THE CHRIST.**" No matter what you think of Christ, or what views you entertain of his person, character, and offices—whether you believe him a man, or an angel, or a creature above angels, or a derived divinity, or the second person in the adorable Trinity—whether you believe he existed before his incarnation, or that his existence commenced with his birth—whether you believe him the Son of God, or the son of Joseph—whether you regard his character as perfect, or as subject in some degree to human imperfections—whether, in your opinion, he has made an atonement for sin, or not—whether he ever liveth to make intercession, or not—and whether he will judge the world, or not;—no matter at all for any of these questions. These are points of doubtful disputation, about which great men have differed, and every one must think as he pleases. If you only believe the mystical, wonder-working words, "JESUS IS THE CHRIST;" whatever meaning you may choose to attach to them, this is enough. You are entitled, in consequence, "to the Christian name, the Christian church, and to salvation." p. 44. Such are the ideas of Mr. W. concerning "faith in Jesus;" explained, not to be sure in his own language, but in perfect conformity with his avowed system, and with the popular Unitarian notions of the present day.\* We shall not stop one moment to refute them; for in the judgment of all serious Christians, the bare statement of them will carry its own refutation with it. We may just inquire, however, as we pass along, how opinions such as these will comport with the idea, that to believe in the divinity of Christ is to deny him; and that those "who entertain the erroneous belief, that the Father alone is not the almighty God," are to be classed with those "who are *not real Christians?*"

Speaking farther of "the evidences of regeneration," Mr. W. directs us "never to refer to any of our *inward experiences* to prove that we are born of the Spirit," but to consult our *motives*, and *tempers*, and *lives*." p. 42. We had supposed, previous to this, that the "*inward experiences*" of persons consist very much in their "*motives and tempers*." But it is no strange thing with our author to make strange distinctions.

On a subsequent page, he tells us explicitly what he means by "the experiences of Christians." "They are the reflections indulged, the feelings cherished, the resolutions formed, when their attention is particularly directed to their soul's salvation." Or they are "the workings, the operations, the thoughts and feelings of the human mind and heart," at such times. pp. 46, 47. Our readers will be surprised, if, after what has been said, anything can surprise them, to learn, that in the judgment of Mr. W. these "are *no evidences* of regeneration." No, "the reflections indulged, the

\* We certainly regard it as the present prevailing sentiment of Unitarians, that it matters little what opinions are entertained concerning the person and work of Jesus, if he is only believed to be the *Christ*—the *anointed messenger of God*.

feelings cherished, the resolutions formed, the workings, the operations, the thoughts and feelings of the human mind and heart"—be they ever so proper, and pure, and peaceful—"are no evidences of regeneration"!! A person may feel sensibly the love of God in his soul—he may feel deeply grieved and penitent for sin—he may feel the triumphs of faith, and the aspirations of hope, and the peace of God which passeth all understanding—and he may resolve, with Joshua, that he and his house will serve the Lord; but all this internal experience is no evidence at all, that he is regenerated!! Among the fruits of the Spirit, the apostle enumerates 'love, joy, peace, long suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness,' or, in other words, *Christian feelings*; but, in the judgment of our author, the apostle was mistaken. The mere *feelings*, the "*inward experiences*" of persons constitute "no evidence of regeneration"!!

It will be asked, no doubt, What does he regard as evidence of regeneration? And his reply is, "*A sober, righteous, and godly life.*" But does he mean such a life, as disconnected with correct internal experience? Then many of the Pharisees gave good evidence of regeneration; for our Saviour bears them witness, that they 'made *clean* the outside of the cup and platter,' and, like 'whited sepulchres, appeared *beautiful* without.'

We would by no means depreciate the evidence of regeneration, resulting from a "*sober, righteous, and godly life;*" and neither would we depreciate the evidence, resulting from a correct religious experience. Such an experience *is* evidence of regeneration. It is evidence so essential, that without it all other evidence is worthless. A correct internal experience will invariably result in a sober life; but a sober life may exist, and in ten thousand instances has existed, where there was no true love to God in the heart.

Mr. W. thinks "he who has but just entered the school of Christ, and only tasted the joys of a new-born soul, *has not experienced religion*, and is not an experienced Christian." p. 52. We admit that such an one is not, in the strictest sense, "an experienced Christian;" but has he not experienced religion? What, "entered the school of Christ, and tasted the joys of the new-born soul," and yet "not experienced religion"!! We cannot remark upon such a sentiment! For it carries a degree of absurdity upon its naked front, which could not be heightened or increased, were we to discuss it through a dozen pages.

Mr. W. occupies several pages, in narrating an example of Christian experience—not indeed one which has actually occurred, but which he would consider a proper one, if it had occurred. In regard to it, we can only observe, that it is just such an experience as one might be expected to relate, who discarded the special influence of the Holy Spirit, and attributed conversion to the natural operation of external causes. In other words, we are constrained

to say—and we were never more serious than while we are saying it—it is just such an experience as one might be expected to relate, who had *no acquaintance with the peculiar views and exercises of Christians*. We find in it no deep sense of sin, and guilt, and ruin; no expression at all of repentance; no fleeing to the blood of Jesus for cleansing and for help; no cordial submission to the will of God; no panting after greater degrees of holiness; no entire consecration of the soul to Christ; and in short, none of the distinguishing characteristics of those, with whom old things have passed away, and all things have become new. There are in it some pretty expressions, and some soaring ones; and an effort is manifest throughout, to catch the spirit, and speak the language of the saint; but after all, it is cold, and hollow, and artificial. It expresses nothing of Job's self-abhorrence for sin; or David's longing and thirsting after God; or Paul's glorying in the cross of Christ; or of the feelings of those who sing in heaven, '*Unto him who hath loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, be glory and dominion, for ever and ever. Amen.*'

In reading this Discourse, we marked other passages, yet untouched, which we thought at the time deserving of notice—passages evincing the same obliquities of sentiment, and strangeness of assertion, and recklessness of consistency, and seeming ignorance of truth, which have appeared in those already examined. But really we can proceed with our author no farther. We have become heartily tired of exposing him, and we are sure our readers must be tired of following us.

We are astonished at the encomiums which leading Unitarians have suffered themselves to bestow upon the printed Discourses of Mr. Whitman. Since commencing his career as an author, he has been one whom they have literally delighted to honor. To puff those who engage zealously in promoting their cause, we know is a matter of course with them; but the approbation awarded to him has been more than ordinary. One periodical has sounded forth his praise, and another has repeated it, and another has prolonged the strain. On the appearance of the "Discourse on Regeneration," the *Christian Examiner* is "*glad* to see the author of the sermon on Denying the Lord Jesus again in print." He "*exhibits his usual plainness, directness, and power*. He has chosen a most important subject, and *appears to have done it justice*." vol. v. No. 1. While the *Christian Register* devotes whole columns to reviewing and extolling this luminous Discourse. "We are *glad*," says the editor, "to receive so soon another Discourse from the lucid pen of Mr. Whitman. We find in it the same *plainness of speech*, the same *perspicuity of statement*, and the same *closeness of reasoning*, that characterized his former Discourse. We therefore anticipate for it the same popularity and success." vol. vii. No. 11.

Now, instead of acquiescing in these high encomiums, we must be allowed to say distinctly, that we have never undertaken to review a discourse from any quarter (and our experience in works of this kind is not inconsiderable), which presented so many vulnerable points as this. The author is flippant, and confident, and would seem to know almost everything, and he talks on, often contradicting the Bible, and about as often contradicting himself, and appears never to suspect, all the while, that his Discourse is not perfectly correct and coherent, or that others will not regard it with as much complacency as he does himself.—The fault, we think, is partly in the author, and partly in the system of which he is the advocate. ‘Error is fated to run crooked,’ and usually the more crooked, the greater are the pains taken to pass it off under the semblance of truth.

We conclude our remarks by inviting the attention of all candid and thoughtful Unitarians to this Discourse. Although entitled “A Discourse on Regeneration,” it is really an exposition of Unitarian doctrine, on most of the disputed topics. For the author, instead of going through with a single subject, by spreading out his plan, and turning aside as he pleases from his course, seems to have laid himself out to make as many controverted points, and to hit and push in as many directions as possible. The Discourse, therefore, will shew, perhaps as well as anything in the same compass, what Unitarianism is. We hope then, as we said, that the candid, and thoughtful, and inquiring, among Unitarians, will give it their most serious attention. We hope they will read it, and ponder it, and even pray over it. We hope they will compare it with the Bible, and compare the different parts of it among themselves, and will not lay it down till they have taken it to pieces, and seen through it, and made themselves sure that they understand it. And when this is done, let them pause and inquire, ‘Can the system here advocated be the religion of Jesus? Can a system, so palpably in contradiction to a great portion of the Bible, and so inconsistent with itself, be the truth of God? We are about to appear, where all delusion will vanish, and the whole truth will shine; and can we venture on a system like this? About to take a leap into unknown worlds, we need a rock on which to stand; and does this system afford us a rock? Can we in our consciences regard it as a safe foundation, on which to build the interests of eternity—on which to rest the undying soul?’

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## NOTICES OF RECENT PUBLICATIONS.

1. *Memoir of Herbert Marshall, a Presbyterian of the Protestant Episcopal Church.* Published in aid of the Missionary cause in the Eastern Diocese. Boston, R. P. & C. Williams, 1828. pp. 126.

This is an interesting little volume, especially to the friends and acquaintances of the lamented Mr. Marshall. We knew him well, and are persuaded that the account here given (making some allowance for the coloring of friendship) is correct. Mr. Marshall was singularly gifted, both by nature and grace; and while able to continue the duties of his profession, was a faithful and successful minister of Jesus. He was called to the endurance of much suffering and trial, through all which he passed with the submission and triumph of a Christian. Our single regret, on laying down the volume, is, that the writer of it felt constrained to make so very much of the *change* in Mr. Marshall's religious opinions. He was first a minister among the Baptists; but thought proper to renounce his connexion with them, and attach himself to the Episcopalians; and this is referred to, again and again, as furnishing "a sort of demonstration of the correctness of their" particular views. This author's ideas of demonstration must certainly be very different from our own, or he could not speak of the subject in such terms. He must know there are frequent changes, one way and the other, in all denominations of Christians; and if every such change is "a sort of demonstration" of the falsity of the sentiment renounced, and the truth of that embraced, we shall be puzzled to determine what is truth, and what is error. We are ourselves Pedit-baptists in principle and conscience; and we know not that our belief would be at all the more confirmed, if half the Baptists in the country should think proper to join us; or at all the less confirmed, if half the Pedit-baptists should turn the other way.

We give the following as a specimen of Mr. Marshall's private devotional effusions, written on the day of his leaving his family and home to reside for a time in South America, for the recovery of his health.

"Though without health now for nearly three years, and having been, for most of that period, a lonely wanderer in the world, and passed through dark and trying scenes, and experienced bitter and painful separations; *this day*, I number among the darkest, most trying, and heart-rending, I have ever experienced. For one to whom home is ever a paradise, to part from it under circumstances the most favorable, and to leave wife and children for the long term of a year, in a world ever changing and uncertain, must be a trial of no trifling lightness. But when all spirit, energy and resolution, are worn out by disease—when every day brings along with it debility, languor, and pain—when a year is in all probability the most, and a few months may, not improbably, be all, he has to pass in the present world,—to tear himself away from his family, and pass that term, either in floating upon the ocean, or in foreign countries, among strangers, with whose language he is unacquainted, and whose customs are nearly barbarous,—*is trial*, the severity of which is not easily described;—though that, perhaps, of *her* who is left behind, is scarcely less. Yet *Thou, O God!* and thou *alone*, art able to support and comfort both *her* who remains, and him who goes! Dark as is the day of parting, *Thou* canst enlighten it! Heavy and overwhelming as is the affliction, *Thine* almighty arm can sustain

us under it! Widely and long as we may be separated, *Thou* canst ever be with us, to preserve, support, and prosper us! To *Thee*, therefore, O God, would we commend ourselves—into thine hands commit soul and body—beseeching *Thee*, wherever we may be, whatever the trials and sufferings laid upon us—never to leave, or forsake us. But grant that, through the efficacy of *thy* grace and Holy Spirit, we may improve all the dispensations of thy providence, to thy glory, and our own highest, and immortal interests!"

2. *Perils and Safeguards of American Liberty. Address pronounced July 4, 1828, in the Second Baptist Meeting-House in Boston, at the Religious Celebration of the Anniversary of American Independence, by the Baptist Churches and Societies in Boston, by JAMES D. KNOWLES, Pastor of the Second Baptist Church. Boston, Lincoln & Edmands. pp. 27.*

We are glad of the publication of Addresses like this, if it is only to give currency to the practice of celebrating the day of our national independence in a *religious* manner; a practice which we hope is to extend, and prevail, till it has essentially modified, if not superseded the more common modes of noticing—we might say, in regard to some instances, of *profaning*—this memorable day. We are glad also of the publication of this Address, because it contains some important sentiments, very happily expressed. After an introduction, which we must be allowed to think disproportionately long, the author proceeds to speak of several things, which deserve to be regarded as high national advantages, which yet expose us, by the very elevation which they impart, to peculiar dangers. Such are our civil liberty; "the freedom of the press;" "the great extent of our country;" and "the division of our Union into separate States." Against dangers of this sort, our best and only safeguard is the prevailing influence of Christianity. "The Christian religion, exerting its beneficent sway over the minds and hearts of our citizens, furnishes the only moral power, which can preserve this country from destruction."

"The prevalence of religion would strengthen all the securities of our freedom," as it "is the friend and patron of knowledge;" as it will form the most interesting ties "between citizens of different parts of the country;" as it will lead Christians to "combine their influence, for the support of pure political principles, and for the election of good men to offices of trust and power;" and finally, as it will secure for us "the favor and blessing of Almighty God.

"Let us not think," says Mr. Knowles, "that we are in no danger from the displeasure of God. He has turned many a fruitful land into barrenness, for the wickedness of them that dwelt therein. Go, look at the sullen and dismal waters of the Dead Sea, which now cover the fertile valley, where once the cities of the plain flourished like the garden of the Lord. Go, search on the marshy and solitary banks of the Euphrates, for the ruins of the mighty Babylon. Stand on the deserted rocks of Tyre, and ask for the proud city which once defied the power of Alexander. Visit the place, which the all-grasping Romans adorned with the spoils of a conquered world, and seek among ruined temples and broken arches for the monuments of their power. Repair to the city of God, and see the crescent of Mahomet, gleaming over the sacred mount, where once stood the magnificent temple of Jehovah. And look at the wretched Jews, the miserable victims of Turkish oppression, outcasts in

the very city where David and Solomon reigned, and forbidden, on pain of death, to approach the spot where once their fathers worshipped God. Look at all these melancholy proofs of the mutability of human things, and learn the danger of offending God. It was his wrath, which destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah; which made Babylon a place for the bittern and the serpent; which swept away Tyre, and left her rocks for the fisherman to spread his nets on; which hurled the magnificent Rome from her height of grandeur and power, and made Judea and her children a hissing and an astonishment through the earth. Truly, it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. Great and flourishing as our country is, he can bring her down to desolation. He has many ministers of his vengeance; and when he bids them empty their vials on the earth, the proudest cities and the most powerful nations become as the chaff before the whirlwind.

"Let us, then, sincerely repent of our sins, and contribute all in our power to spread the influence of Christianity through our land. Let us lend our aid to check the sway of vice; remembering that "righteousness exalteth a nation, while sin is a reproach to any people. Surely his salvation is nigh them that fear him, that glory may dwell in our land. Salvation will the Lord appoint for walls and bulwarks." Then will our beloved country be great and happy; and her increasing millions will enjoy the blessings of a secure and tranquil freedom, till,

Wrapt in flames, the realms of ether glow,  
And Heaven's last thunders shake the world below."

3. *The Influence of the Christian Ministry. A Sermon delivered at the Ordination of Rev. Benson C. Baldwin over the Norwich-Falls Church, (Con.) January 31, 1828, by Rev. JOHN NELSON, of Leicester, Mass.* Boston, T. R. Marvin. pp. 22.

This is a sensible and well written Sermon on "The influence of the Christian Ministry;" describing "the nature of this influence; the proper sphere of its operation; the circumstances which are necessary to render it powerful and efficacious; and some of its important results." In defining the proper sphere of ministerial influence, the preacher well observes,

"Men are not called to the sacred office, in order that they may gain a livelihood, or make a figure in the world. They are not called to it as a mere appendage to a well organized society, to take a place in the funeral procession, to get up a Sabbath's entertainment, or, for the sake of companionship with the affluent and the refined. No;—they are invested with the high office of ambassadors for Christ. Their business is, to negotiate peace and reconciliation between offending creatures and the offended majesty of heaven; to lead the thoughtless and the unbelieving to a knowledge of salvation; to point the perishing sinner to the heavenly paradise, and to lead the way by an example, in which lives and breathes the spirit of Christianity."

"The principal aim of the Christian minister should be, to win souls to Christ and to heaven. This is the paramount object that should fire his soul, and call into action his strongest energies, and engage his best powers. Of course, then, there are some things which are admired in other men, that cannot be reckoned among the prominent excellencies of the minister. It is, in my opinion, poor praise to say of him that he is the best farmer, or the best politician that can anywhere be found. Such was not Paul, and such can no man be, who is duly intent on his Master's work. We are not formed with sufficient capacities to excel in everything; nor has the minister, amidst the multiplied avocations of this busy and excited age, time for everything. Having, therefore, been called to the most responsible office on earth, let him be content with *well* discharging its duties, and at the same time, let him be content with nothing less."

4. *Christians should Support and Defend the Truth. A Sermon delivered March 12, 1828, at the Ordination of Rev. Asahel Bigelow, as Pastor of the Orthodox Congregational Church in Walpole, Mass.,* by JONATHAN BIGELOW, Pastor of the Centre Church, Rochester. Boston, T. R. Marvin. pp. 20.

The writer of this Sermon shews himself a bold and able defender of the Gospel. His text is 2 Cor. xiii. 8. "We can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth." His plan is to shew "first, what Paul meant by the truth; secondly, what we can do for it; and thirdly, to present motives to induce us to do all we may for its support and defence."

In shewing what we can do for the truth, which to us is the more interesting part of the Discourse, he observes, "we can cordially believe it;" "we must practise it;" we must "make a public profession of it, and form ourselves into churches;" "we are to choose, ordain, and support *pastors*, who will, without reserve or disguise, earnestly, clearly, and fully, before all persons, and on all suitable occasions, preach the truth—and to withdraw ourselves from the ministrations of all others;" and "we must, with firm reliance upon God, use all means, and seize all opportunities, to promote *revivals of religion*." Speaking of the duty of churches to provide pastors, who will *faithfully* preach the truth, Mr. Bigelow has the following just remarks:

"Dependant as they are upon the congregation, for the support of their pastor, their greatest solicitude too frequently is, to select a pastor of popular talents, eloquent and refined, and who, withal, will be very *prudent* in preaching the truths of Christianity, lest he should offend those who do not believe, or do not love the truth; instead of making it their first care, to select one who will be honest in his master's cause, and who will, with the eloquence of a soul imbued with the love of the truth, preach it so as to be neither mistaken nor misunderstood.

"Many churches, from fear of causing division in the societies connected with them, or to gratify a few influential men, have consented to the settlement of pastors who preach nothing clearly, or what is believed by the majority, a departure from the Gospel. The consequence has been, that those churches have declined in *piety*—become erroneous in *sentiment*—been diminished in numbers—revivals have ceased, and the Spirit of God has departed;—next, their creed has been changed, or thrown aside as a pernicious instrument calculated to retard the progress of the age,—a "cord to bind the conscience and posterity, hand and foot;"—and the scene has been closed by the voice of unblushing error, crying, "peace, peace"—"I know it shall *ultimately* be well with the wicked!"

We see much to commend in this excellent Sermon; and yet we should be as well pleased, if in some parts it breathed a more tender spirit. It is not too plain, or too bold, or too decided; and yet there is a sort of *defiance* about it, with which we cannot altogether sympathize—which rather repels and hardens the unbeliever, than attracts and melts him, and prepares him to receive the truth.

5. *A Sermon delivered at Lunenburg, December 3, 1827, by David Damon, at the close of his Ministry in that town.* Lancaster, F. and J. Andrews. 1828. pp. 22.

The greater part of this closing address of Mr. Damon to his people is occupied in stating what he had preached, and what he had

not preached, during the period of his ministry. And the short of it is, that he had not preached evangelical religion, but had preached Unitarianism.

We know nothing of the past history or the present state of things in Lunenburg, or of facts which led to the dismissal of Mr. D., any farther than these are incidentally disclosed in the progress of this Sermon. Some facts however are disclosed here, which, if we mistake not, may be generally interesting and instructive.

It appears that in "former days," within the memory of some now living, the "ancient and spacious temple" in Lunenburg "was generally filled with worshippers, and not unfrequently to overflowing, on the return of the Sabbath." This was in the good old times of Massachusetts, before the present alleged reformation, from Orthodox errors and abuses to Unitarian light and purity, commenced. For reasons not assigned, when Mr. D. was settled, thirteen years ago, he found "the town divided," and the Congregational society somewhat "reduced." Many "expected," however, at the time of his settlement, "that the people would again gather round the old altar, where their fathers delighted to worship;" but these, it is acknowledged, "have been disappointed." The ministry of Mr. D. has been followed with "apparently small success." He has "had great occasion of discouragement, through the neglect of many in regard to a uniform attendance upon public worship." "The number of baptisms has been comparatively small, and the addition to the number of the regular communicants not equal to the diminution by death and removals." The church and society are in "a reduced state," and although the fault is attributed to "the spirit and tendency of the times," "it has frequently seemed to me," says Mr. D., "that there must have been some fault in me, other than those of which I am conscious, that I have not been made instrumental of producing some more visible good among you." p. 16.

We wonder not that it seems strange to Mr. D. that his ministry at Lunenburg has terminated as it has. From the evidence of talent afforded by this Sermon (and this is our only means of knowing him) his want of success would seem strange to us, were it not for a single consideration: But it does not now. We can easily account for it, without blaming "the times." We see not how a Unitarian minister can ever be, in the best sense of the word, successful. We see not how in ordinary circumstances, he can give to his discourses interest enough to keep a society alive and together. Novelty, to be sure, may excite attention for a time; or opposition may provoke to zeal; or the force of education, or the example of other denominations, may produce an attendance on the forms of religion. Incidental advantages too, such as voice, and manner, and style, and social intercourse, may do something for a season. But we see not how a Unitarian minister can, through a course of years, give interest enough to his discourses, his *preaching*, to keep a society from going to decay. We see not how he can keep his people, or many of them, from receiving the impression, 'If what you tell us is true, we do not much need you—we can do well enough without you—and we will not be at the expense of supporting you, or at the trouble of attend-



ing on your ministrations.' We see not, in short, why Unitarianism does not, and in a long continued state of quietude we have no doubt it would, *die*—of its own inherent emptiness. We wonder not therefore at all at the painful result of Mr. Damon's labors, in the place of his recent settlement. It is just the result which he might have expected; just the result which has taken place in many other Unitarian congregations; and just the result which he will realize again (for we understand he is re-settled) unless he change his style of preaching, and, in fact, his religion, and inculcate truths which will arouse his own soul, and the souls of others, and which the Lord of the vineyard will own and honor, as the means of spiritual and eternal good.

6. *A Declaration of the Yearly Meeting of Friends, held in Philadelphia, respecting the proceedings of those who have lately separated from the Society; and also shewing the contrast between their doctrines, and those held by Friends.* New York, Samuel Wood & Sons, 1828. pp. 32.

*An Epistle and Testimony from the Yearly Meeting of Friends, held in New-York, by adjournment, from the twenty sixth of the fifth month, to the second of the sixth month, inclusive, 1828.* New York, Mahlon Day. pp. 24.

It may not be known to all our readers, that a separation, growing out of radical differences in sentiment, has recently taken place among the Friends or Quakers, particularly those of Pennsylvania and New York. The seceding party are the followers of one Elias Hicks, a zealous Unitarian, Universalist, and, as we say, Infidel. In honor of him, his followers have sometimes been denominated Hicksites. The pamphlets before us are published by the yearly Meetings of Friends in Pennsylvania and New York—that is to say, by the opposers of the Hicksites; and contain an account of the rise and progress of this heresy, and of the sentiments and practices of Hicks and his followers. We should not have noticed these pamphlets at all, but for the fact, that the Unitarians of Boston and the vicinity claim close affinity with Hicks, and even speak of him and his party as their *brethren*. The *Christian Register* for Jan. 13, 1827, professes to “*respect and wish success to the principles of Christian liberality, embraced by Mr. Hicks and his friends,*” although it disapproves of some of their proceedings. And in the *Christian Register* for July 12, 1828, it is said expressly, “*We greet the friends of Elias Hicks as our friends and BROTHERS.*” If leading Unitarians in this region “*wish success to the principles*” of the Hicksites, and “*greet them as their friends and brothers,*” it may be of some consequence to our readers to know more than perhaps they do at present, respecting the principles and practices of this new denomination. And in regard to these subjects, the pamphlets before us furnish all needful or desirable information. From them we learn,

1. That Hicks denies the *miraculous conception* of our Lord, and believes him to have been the literal son of Joseph. In an argument on this subject, he says, “*Spirit cannot beget a material body; be-*

cause the thing begotten must be of the same nature with its father. Spirit cannot beget anything but spirit; *it cannot beget flesh and blood.* No, my friends, *it is impossible.*" And again; "I examined the accounts given by the four Evangelists, and *according to my best judgment*, there is considerable more evidence for his being the son of Joseph, than otherwise." Phil. Pam. p. 21.

2. Hicks denies the *perfection* of our Lord, from the fact of his being tempted. "How could he be tempted, if he had been fixed in a *state of perfection*, in which he could not turn aside? Can you suppose that such a being could be tempted? No, not any more than God Almighty could be tempted. Perfection is perfection, and *cannot be tempted.* *It is impossible.*" Ibid. p. 22.

3. It is believed by Hicks and his followers, that Jesus *became a Christian*, and *needed salvation*, like other men; and, indeed, that all the truly good are in some sense *his equals*. "The same power, that *made him a Christian*, must make us Christians; and the same power, that *saved him*, must save us."—"See how we came up into an *equality with him.*"—"Here now *he was put upon a level,*" &c.—"God has been as willing to reveal his will to every creature, as he was to our first parents, to Moses and the prophets, or to Jesus Christ and his apostles. *He never can set ANY of THESE ABOVE US*; because, if he did, he would be partial."—When Christ was brought to trial before his enemies, he "saw no alternative; for if he gave up his testimony to save his natural life, he *could not be saved with God's salvation.*" Ibid. pp. 6, 22.

4. Hicks and his followers virtually *reject the Holy Scriptures*, and, as we have already said, are to be regarded as *Infidels*. They speak of the Scriptures as "*not necessary*, and perhaps *not suited, to any other people than they to whom they were written.*"—"The parables of Jesus have *no tendency* to turn men about to truth, and lead them on in it."—The "letter" of Scripture is "*a thing without any life at all; a dead monument;*" "*it is all a shadow.*"—"The book we read in says, 'Search the Scriptures;' but *this is INCORRECT*; we must all see it is *INCORRECT.*"—"Let us attend to spiritual reflections, and *not be looking to the Scriptures.*"—"In vain does any man quote the *Scriptures as authority for his opinions*; for if they have not been immediately revealed to his own mind by the Holy Spirit, they deserve no better, as it respects him, than *speculations.*"—"The revelations made to the Israelites are true, when viewed as in connexion with, and as having relation to, their spiritual condition; but to any other state, *they are not true*; therefore, *such revelations*, abstractedly taken, *ARE NOT TRUE IN THEMSELVES—ARE NOT THE TRUTH OF GOD.*" Ibid. pp. 17, 18.

We make no apology for denominating those who can preach, and write, and publish, in language such as this, *Infidels*. They are *Infidels*; and the manner in which they have been exposed and treated by the Meetings of Friends in Philadelphia and New York, is *greatly to the credit of the latter*. Yet these are the men whom our Unitarian neighbors "greet," as their "*friends and BROTHERS,*" and to whose "*principles of Christian liberality*" they wish success"!!! Let the Christian public pause here—and ponder.

But it is said, We care nothing about the "wild notions" of Hicks and his followers. We "greet" them only as "the asserters and defenders of *Christian liberty*."—Liberty, we ask, to do what? To deny the Lord that bought them! To deny the truth of the Holy Scriptures, and pour contempt upon 'the Oracles of God'! Liberty, too, to disturb the religious meetings and worship of the Friends, (as it is admitted on all hands they have done) by noise, and tumult, and menace, and violence! Liberty to "hiss," and "stamp," and "drum with their canes," and "cry out," in regard to those who oppose them, "Down with them—Down with them—Out with them—Out with them"!! This is the "liberty" which the followers of Hicks have not only asserted, but actually taken. And is it for this that they are to be greeted as "friends and *brothers*"?—But we have done. We have felt under obligations to bring this subject before the public. We leave every one to make his own reflections.

Unitarians are welcome to all the credit, and to all the disgrace, which may result from their courted alliance with the followers of Elias Hicks.

7. *Gospel Luminary*. Published under the Patronage of the General Christian Conference. D. Millard and S. Clough, Editors. Vol. I. New Series.

This is a semi-monthly paper, published by the direction, and "under the patronage, of the general Christian Conference." It is their authorized organ of communication with the public.

Those who have read the various publications of Unitarians, for several of the last years, need not be informed how much interest and fraternal regard have from time to time been expressed, in behalf of the Christians. The Executive Committee of the American Unitarian Association, in their First Annual Report, speaking of the Christians, say, "From members of that body," we "have received expressions of *fraternal* regard." They "maintain *many similar views of Christian doctrine*" with us, and "have the *same great work* at heart." And the Christian Register for Oct. 6, 1827, says, "There is much cause to rejoice in the spread and increasing influence of this denomination of Christians. We bid them Godspeed."

It is chiefly on account of the connexion, which Unitarians have invited and claimed with the Christians, that we have been induced to examine the file of papers, the title of which has been given, with a view to learn the *present* opinions and practices of this religious denomination. These papers do not, indeed, contain the creed of the Christians, for they pretend not to have a creed; but they express the views of leading and prominent individuals. They give an account of such sentiments and practices as are current, in the connexion. From them we learn,

1. That the Christians, as a body, believe that "true ministers of Christ are *inwardly moved* by the Holy Spirit to preach the Gospel." No. vii. This inward moving of the Holy Spirit is explained to mean a *sensible call*, which the individual receiving it, cannot misunderstand.

2. The Christians suppose, that *females* are sometimes called in this way, as well as males; and the names of several females are given, who are "laborers," at present, within the bounds of "the New York Eastern Christian Conference." No. xiv.

3. They believe, that teachers, called in the manner above described, "can teach *infallibly*," in the same sense that the apostles could. The apostles could err, and so can teachers now, when not under the special guidance of the Spirit; but it appears from the account, that regularly called Christian ministers are as infallible as the apostles. No. viii.

4. The Christians believe, that regularly called ministers in their connexion, have the power of *working miracles*; and indeed, that *miracles are frequently wrought* by their means. On this head we give the following quotation:

"Since the revival commenced, in the beginning of this century, there have been, under the preaching of the Gospel, many miraculous displays of supernatural power, on congregations and individuals. We have seen hundreds struck down, and lay under the great power of God, unable to move hand or foot, and, to all human appearance, breathless, for several hours, and then rise, praising God, and speaking with a wisdom and power, of which they were no more capable the day before, than the most illiterate man is capable of delivering a well ordered discourse on Astronomy."

"The jerks is a *great miracle*. I have seen people jerked, by an invisible power, with such velocity, that if it had been done by any external force, it would have killed them in a minute; and still they received no injury."

"Besides all this, there have been, in the bounds of my acquaintance, many *miraculous cures* performed, in answer to prayer. I have been acquainted with several of the people who were healed; and some of these cures I have seen myself. I as firmly believe that elder David Haggard had the gift of healing, as that the apostles had. He has fallen asleep; but there are many alive who saw him perform cures; and what I saw myself puts the matter beyond doubt with me." No. xiii.

5. The Christians further believe, that Thomas Munzer or Munzer, the companion of Stubner and Storek, who pretended to act under "a divine impulse," to be favored with "visions and revelations," and to "work miracles;" but who, failing by these means to accomplish his purpose, undertook to effect it by the sword, and fell before the Elector of Saxony in 1525—they believe that this same Thomas Munzer was the *greatest and wisest* of all the Reformers. "Munzer," say they, "was the man, who placed the doctrine of the Reformation on its *true ground*, and *proper basis*." Nos. xiii. and xiv.

Unitarians in this region have long stood in shuddering fear and terror of being tainted with *fanaticism*. It has been their principal objection to revivals of religion, that revivals often lead to fanaticism. And the New Lebanon Convention has been rung through all their little world, as disclosing the dangers and evils of fanaticism. And yet these same Unitarians claim a "fraternal" alliance with the Christians—asserting that they "maintain many similar views of Christian doctrine," and "have the same great work at heart," rejoicing in their success, and "bidding them Godspeed"—all of whom are advocates and promoters of revivals, in those very forms which Unitarians so incessantly deprecate, and some of whom are undoubtedly among the greatest fanatics of the age! They claim a "fraternal" alliance with those who believe, among other things,

in an *inward sensible call* to the work of the ministry—in *female preaching*—that regularly called ministers “can teach *infallibly*”—that they can and do “work *miracles*”—and that the notorious German fanatics of the sixteenth century were the greatest and wisest of all the reformers!

The cry of *fanaticism*, so long resounded from the Unitarian pulpits and presses, may hereafter lose, with many, somewhat of its piercing energy and thrilling effect.

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## SELECTION.

### MEMOIR OF THE REV. ROBERT HALL, M. A.

THERE are few living men, in whom our religious public feel more deeply interested, than in Robert Hall; and perhaps no one of equal eminence, with the incidents of whose life they are so generally unacquainted. We make no apology, therefore, for presenting to our readers the following apparently authentic Memoir, taken from a late English Magazine.

The subject of this biographical sketch is the son of the Rev. Robert Hall, one of the most excellent and esteemed ministers of the communion known by the name of Particular Baptists, to distinguish them, as the appellation imports, from another class denominated General Baptists.

The elder Mr. Hall was for many years pastor of a congregation at Armsby, in the county of Leicester; and a leading man in the Northamptonshire Association, being venerated by all who knew him, for his piety and wisdom; and he had the satisfaction of witnessing, in the dawning mind of his son, who was born in August, 1764, the promising gifts of grace and genius. Such, indeed, was the precociousness of intellect displayed by this extraordinary youth, that at the age of nine, he perfectly comprehended the reasoning contained in the profoundly argumentative treatises of Jonathan Edwards on the “Will,” and “Affections.” At this time he was placed in the academy of the late, eccentric, but ingenious and pious Mr. John Ryland, of Northampton. From thence, he was removed to the institution established at Bristol for the education of young persons destined to the ministry among the Particular Baptists. Dr. Caleb Evans, who at that time presided over the academy, and officiated as pastor of the respectable congregation adjoining, in Broadmead, was a man of extensive learning, fervent piety, captivating eloquence, and of the most liberal sentiments. Between the tutor and the pupil there immediately commenced a mutual attachment, which increased every day, till it soon became evident that the latter was already marked as the intended successor of the principal, both in the church and the school.

At the age of seventeen, Mr. Hall proceeded, on an exhibition, to King’s College, Aberdeen, where he formed an intimacy with his fellow student, Mr. (now Sir James) Mackintosh; who, though one year younger than himself, and intended for the medical profession,



took a great delight in classical and general literature. During the residence of Mr. Hall at Aberdeen, which was nearly four years, he constantly attended the lectures of the learned Dr. George Campbell, professor of theology and ecclesiastical history, at the Marischal College. At intervals, however, and especially in the vacations, he exercised his gifts in preaching, as we learn from the diary of his friend Mr. Fuller, who thus notes, on the seventh of May, 1784: "Heard Mr. Robert Hall, junior, from 'He that increaseth knowledge increaseth sorrow.' Felt very solemn, on hearing some parts. O that I could keep more near to God! How good is it to draw near to him!"

It was about this time, that he took his degree as Master of Arts, soon after which, he became assistant to Dr. Evans in the academy, and his coadjutor in the ministry. At Bristol, he was exceedingly followed and admired. The writer of this well remembers to have seen, oftener than once, the meeting crowded to excess, and among the hearers, many learned divines, and even dignitaries, of the established church. But in the midst of this popularity, a dark cloud arose, which spread a gloom over the congregation, and threatened to deprive the Christian world of one of its brightest ornaments. Symptoms of a disordered intellect, which had occasionally appeared, assumed at last such an alarming character, that it was deemed imprudent to suffer the patient to be alone, much less to take any part in public duty. The malady increased, and Mr. Hall, being now deemed irrecoverable, was taken home to his friends in Leicestershire. By slow degrees, and judicious treatment, however, the light of reason once more dawned, and at length his noble mind regained its perfect liberty and former power.

About this time Dr. Evans died, but the trustees and congregation at Bristol had already made their election in favor of the younger Mr. Ryland, who continued with them till his death. Meanwhile, Mr. Hall received a cordial invitation from the Baptist society at Cambridge, which had been under the pastoral care of Mr. Robert Robinson, till that singular man fell from one error to another, and ended his wanderings and his life together under the roof of Dr. Priestley, who, though he hailed his disciple with joy, wondered at being out-done by him in extravagance.

Mr. Hall accepted the call of the congregation at Cambridge in 1791, and the consequences were soon visible in the revival of a society, which had been for some time in a sad state of torpidity. The power of divine truth was again abundantly experienced, and many, who had hitherto considered morality as the all-in-all of Christianity, now began to see that divine revelation is somewhat more than a system of ethics, and that the doctrine of the atonement is not a figure, but a vital principle, without which mere moral righteousness is nothing worth. The fundamental truths of the Gospel were stated in language equally clear and elegant; the precepts of this heavenly code were enforced with commanding eloquence; and the various obligations of men were set forth and explained, in a manner that could not possibly be eluded or misunderstood.

When Mr. Hall fixed his residence here, the wonderful change

that had taken place in France excited general attention, and even the religious world did not escape being agitated by the discordant spirit which that mighty revolution produced. The conduct of Dr. Price and Dr. Priestley, in particular, alarmed the friends of government; and the imprudence of the latter had the effect of rousing the feelings of the populace at Birmingham into outrage, and acts of violence of the most disgraceful nature. At this juncture, Mr. Clayton, a highly popular minister among the Calvinistic Independents in London, printed a sermon, recommending to Dissenters in general, an entire forbearance from all political associations and discussions. Mr. Hall, conceiving that such counsel tended to the introduction of slavish principles, and the degradation of the religious society to which he belonged, deemed it his duty to enter a protest against the adoption of a rule, that was at once repugnant to the fundamental rights of mankind, and in no respect warranted, either by the written code, or the example of the founders of our common faith. With a view, therefore, to prevent the progress of the debasing maxims that had been speciously propounded, as it were, *ex cathedra*, from one of the leading pulpits in the metropolis, Mr. Hall published a powerful pamphlet, entitled "Christianity consistent with a Love of Freedom;" to which we apprehend no reply was ever attempted. The argumentative reasoning of this tract was afterwards expanded by the author, and arranged in a more formal manner, under the title of "An Apology for the Freedom of the Press." This publication, which came out in the beginning of 1794, contains six sections on the following subjects: 1. The Right of Public Discussion. 2. Associations. 3. Reform of Parliament. 4. Theories, and Rights of Man. 5. Dissenters. 6. Causes of the present Discontents. Of the Apology, it was observed at the time, by some of the critics to whom the principles of the book were most offensive, that, "if a book must be praised, at all events, for being well written, this ought to be praised."

The next appearance of Mr. Hall before the world, as an author, gave him still greater distinction, and procured him the esteem of many illustrious characters in church and state. The alarming extent of sceptical principles at the close of the century, and their pernicious effects upon public manners and private conduct, greatly affected the mind of this zealous preacher, and led him to investigate the evil, in its causes and consequences. The result of his inquiry appeared in a sermon, printed in 1800, with this title, "Modern Infidelity, considered with respect to its influence on Society." In this profound discourse, the metaphysical sophistry of the new school of scepticism is exposed in all its native deformity, and the total inefficiency of it to the production of any moral good, either for the benefit of society or the improvement of the individual, is demonstrably established. A performance like this could not pass without irritating the tribe whose hideous system is so minutely analyzed and laid bare, by way of warning the rising generation against the subtleties of a false philosophy, which deprives virtue of a motive, and vice of a sting. The sermon was immediately answered, in a flaming invective, by Mr. Anthony Robinson, who,

having laid aside the ministerial character at the same time with his religion, thought, perhaps, that he could not give a stronger proof of his sincerity, than by acting the part, as far as he could, of a persecutor. Another member of the new school, but of a higher class, the author of an "Inquiry concerning Political Justice," who had also been a dissenting minister, contented himself with glancing at what he called the "much vaunted sermon of Mr. Hall, of Cambridge, in which every notion of toleration or decorum is treated with infuriated contempt."

The manner in which Mr. Hall held up to public abhorrence the malevolence of these apostates and other scorers, was spiritedly severe, but not more so than the occasion called for, and the interests of society demanded.

Mr. Hall, when he published his masterly sermon, promised to enter into a fuller and more particular examination of the infidel philosophy, both with respect to its speculative principles, and its practical effects; its influence on society, and the individual. Unfortunately, this pledge, though made near thirty years ago, has not yet been redeemed; and the work, which of all others would be the best antidote to scepticism, remains a desideratum.

On the 19th of October, 1803, being the day set apart by authority for a solemn fast, Mr. Hall was at Bristol, where he preached before a crowded congregation, consisting chiefly of volunteers. The period was gloomy, and the immense preparations then going on in France for an invasion of Britain, were enough to impress the most inconsiderate with serious thoughts and apprehensions. Such was the state of the country, when this matchless preacher, collected in himself, and full of holy confidence, endeavored to impart the same spirit to his hearers. The peroration of this discourse contains such a striking portraiture of the ruler of France, and affords such a happy specimen of the eloquence of Mr. Hall, that we shall make no apology for extracting it in this place.

"To form an adequate idea of the duties of this crisis," said the preacher, "it will be necessary to raise your minds to a level with your station, to extend your views to a distant futurity, and to consequences the most certain, though most remote. By a series of criminal enterprises, by the successes of guilty ambition, the liberties of Europe have been gradually extinguished; the subjection of Holland, Switzerland, and the free towns of Germany, has completed that catastrophe: and we are the only people in the eastern hemisphere who are in possession of equal laws and a free constitution. Freedom, driven from every spot on the continent, has sought an asylum in a country which she always chose for her favorite abode; but she is pursued even here, and threatened with destruction. The inundation of lawless power, after covering the whole earth, threatens to follow us here; and we are most exactly, most critically, placed in the only aperture where it can be successfully repelled—in the Thermopylæ of the universe. As far as the interests of freedom are concerned, the most important by far, of sublunary interests, you, my countrymen, stand in the capacity of the federal representatives of the human race; for with you it is to determine (under God) in

what condition the latest posterity shall be born. Their fortunes are intrusted to your care, and on your conduct at this moment depend the color and complexion of their destiny. If liberty, after being extinguished on the continent, is suffered to expire here, whence is it ever to emerge, in the midst of that thick night that will invest it? It remains with you, then, to decide whether that freedom, at whose voice the kingdoms of Europe awoke from the sleep of ages, to run a career of virtuous emulation in everything great and good; the freedom, which dispelled the mists of superstition, and invited the nations to behold their God; whose magic touch kindled the rays of genius, the enthusiasm of poetry, and the flame of eloquence; the freedom, which poured into our lap opulence and arts, and embellished life with innumerable institutions and improvements, till it became a theatre of wonders: it is for you to decide, whether this freedom shall yet survive, or be covered with a funeral pall, and wrapt in eternal gloom. It is not necessary to await your determination. In the solicitude you feel to approve yourselves worthy of such a trust, every thought of what is afflicting in warfare, every apprehension of danger, must vanish, and you are impatient to mingle in the battle of the civilized world. Go then, ye defenders of your country, accompanied with every auspicious omen: advance with alacrity into the field, where God himself musters the hosts to war. Religion is too much interested in your success, not to lend you her aid; she will shed over this enterprise her selectest influence. While you are engaged in the field, many will repair to the closet, many to the sanctuary; the faithful of every name will employ that prayer which has power with God; the feeble hands, which are unequal to any other weapon, will grasp the sword of the Spirit; and from myriads of humble, contrite hearts, the voice of intercession, supplication, and weeping, will mingle, in its ascent to heaven, with the shout of battle and the shock of arms.

“While you have everything to fear from the success of the enemy, you have every means of preventing their success; so that it is next to impossible for victory not to crown your exertions. The extent of your resources, under God, is equal to the justice of your cause. But should providence determine otherwise, should you fall in this struggle, should the nation fall, you will have the satisfaction (the purest allotted to man) of having performed your part; your name will be enrolled with the most illustrious dead; while posterity, to the end of time, as often as they revolve the events of this period, (and they will necessarily revolve them,) will turn to you a reverential eye, while they mourn over the freedom which is entombed in your sepulchre. I cannot but imagine the virtuous heroes, legislators, and patriots, of every age and country, are bending from their elevated seats to witness this contest, as if they were incapable, till it be brought to a favorable issue, of enjoying their eternal repose. Enjoy that repose, illustrious immortals! Your mantle fell when you ascended; and thousands, inflamed with your spirit, and impatient to tread in your steps, are ready to “swear by Him that sitteth upon the throne, and liveth forever and ever,” they will protect Freedom in her last asylum, and never desert that cause which you sustained by your labors, and cemented with your blood. And

thou, sole Ruler among the children of men, to whom the shields of the earth belong, 'gird on thy sword, thou Most Mighty! go forth with our hosts in the day of battle!' Impart, in addition to their hereditary valor, that confidence of success which springs from thy presence! Pour into their hearts the spirit of departed heroes! Inspire them with thine own; and, while led by thine hand, and fighting under thy banners, open thou their eyes to behold, in every valley, and on every plain, what the prophet beheld by the same illumination,—'chariots of fire, and horses of fire!' 'Then shall the strong man be as tow, and the maker of it as a spark, and they shall burn together, and none shall quench them.'"

After reading this affecting and sublime appeal to the best feelings of men, who is there that will not, with a learned friend of the author, exclaim, "Oh! why will the most captivating, energetic, and profound preacher, and religious writer, now living, rest satisfied with giving to the world scarcely any but fugitive publications of temporary interest, the whole of which it is already difficult to collect; when all who know him, or are able to appreciate the value of his efforts, are anxiously anticipating the period, when he will favor the public with some work of respectable magnitude and permanent interest, which shall enlighten and instruct its successive readers, for ages to come."\*

Not long after this, the exquisitely toned mind of Mr. Hall again sustained so violent a shock, that his removal from Cambridge was the unavoidable consequence; and he was placed under the care of the late Dr. Thomas Arnold, of Leicester, by whose judicious treatment a renovation of intellect was once more effected. On leaving the lunatic asylum, he was entreated to undertake the pastorate of the Baptist church at Leicester; and he accepted the invitation, much to the advantage of that society, which had fallen into a very low state. The chapel would then contain about three hundred at the most; the members were poor, few in number, and the congregation scanty. In a short space of time, however, the building was found to be too contracted to accommodate the crowds that attended, and in consequence, three successive enlargements took place, so that, at present, it is capable of seating eleven hundred persons, and the members have increased in proportion.

Shortly after Mr. Hall's settlement at Leicester, he formed an intimacy with that excellent man, Mr. Robinson, vicar of St. Mary's. Similar in their views of the great truths of Christianity, equally liberal in their sentiments, and both possessing talents of a superior order, it is not to be wondered that the acquaintance should have ripened into friendship.

How free from all selfishness and jealousy it was, appears from one anecdote. Some of Mr. Robinson's hearers left the church, and joined the Baptists; on which the vicar said in conversation one day, "I cannot think, brother Hall, how it is, that so many of my sheep should have wandered into your fold."—"Oh," replied Mr. Hall, "they only wanted washing."

The death of Mr. Robinson occurred in 1813, previous to which Mr. Hall published two admirable sermons, one entitled "The Ad-

\* Dr. Gregory's Letters on the Christian Religion, Vol. i. Letter the Ninth.



vantage of Knowledge to the Lower Classes, preached for the benefit of a Sunday School;" and the other an ordination sermon, with the title of "The Discouragements and Supports of the Christian Minister."

In regard to the composition of the last mentioned discourse, a periodical critic says, "The diction displays an unlimited command and an exquisite choice of language; a vocabulary formed on the basis of Addison's, but admitting whatever is classical in the richer literature of the present age, and omitting everything that is low or pedantic. The copious use of Scriptural language, so eminently appropriate to theological writings, bestows upon the style of this writer an awful sanctity. The uncouthness and vulgarity of some religious authors, who are driven to employ the very words and phrases of Scripture, from an ignorance of other words and phrases, and an incapacity to conceive and express a revealed truth in any form but that of the authorized version of the Bible, has co-operated with an irreligious spirit, to bring this important resource of theological eloquence into great disrepute. The skilfull manner in which it is employed by Mr. Hall, may restore its credit. Quotations and allusions, when borrowed from profane literature, are much admired. There is nothing, we think, to render them less admirable when borrowed from holy writ. If properly selected, they possess the same merit of appositeness in one case as in the other; they may be at least equal in rhetorical beauty; and the character of holiness and mystery which is peculiar to them, at once fills the imagination and warms the heart."

The settlement of Mr. Hall at Leicester, appears to have wrought an important change in his mind and conduct; at least so we may infer from the following memorandum of his steady friend, Mr. Fuller, in the spring of 1807.

"Mr. R. Hall is with us to-day; he made the annual collection for the mission at Leicester, and has consented to go to Nottingham on the same business. He is well, and seems more than ever ardent in his attachment to evangelical religion."

On the death of the Princess Charlotte, a sermon was preached by Mr. Hall, suited to the awful circumstances, and at the desire of his congregation, he sent the discourse to the press.

The subject was one well adapted to the great powers of the distinguished author, and he did it ample justice, in elegance and pathos. About this time, he reprinted his tract on the Freedom of the Press, with additions and corrections. This republication, however, involved him in a controversy with an unknown opponent, who attacked him on the ground of his politics, in the *Christian Guardian*. These animadversions, being industriously copied into the *Leicester Journal*, compelled Mr. Hall to vindicate his principles and conduct. This defence called forth a reply, and a rejoinder followed, till the dispute grew warm, and the antagonist of Mr. Hall quitted the field in a tone of self-gratulation, at having gained an imaginary conquest.

Not long after this, another occasion called our author into the field of controversy. In 1823, a Socinian teacher, at Leicester, began a course of lectures on the peculiarities of his negative creed,

in the course of which he dealt out such invectives against the Orthodox faith, that Mr. Hall was induced, for the sake of his flock, to engage in a series of discourses, on the opposite side of the question. These lectures gave such satisfaction, that he was earnestly requested to publish them; but for some reason, never explained, he resisted the application.

In the summer of 1825, Dr. John Ryland died; and as the situation which he filled at Bristol could not easily be supplied, the universal voice of the society called upon Mr. Hall to accept the pastoral charge, and the presidency of the academy. Flattering as the invitation was, it occasioned many painful sensations; for he had now been nearly twenty years at Leicester, and seen his ministry blessed in an uncommon degree, among an affectionate people. The distress of the congregation, in the apprehension of losing a teacher so accomplished by talents, and endeared by his virtues, cannot be described. The struggle was hard on all sides; but one consideration prevailed over every tie of affection, and that was the obligation of duty to the entire connexion. Some months, however, elapsed, before an absolute decision took place, and in the month of March, 1826, Mr. Hall departed from Leicester, and fixed his residence at Bristol, where the congregation, which had been for some time in a declining state, began immediately to revive, and has continued upon the increase ever since.

Here the narrative part of this Memoir terminates; and we have only to observe, that Mr. Hall in conversation is lively and instructive, in manners dignified, and in sentiment generous. Benevolence and humility are the prominent features in his character. In Mr. Hall, real courage for the cause of truth is blended with unaffected simplicity and modesty: of which perhaps we need give no more striking instance, than his declining to append the title of Doctor of Divinity to his name, though bestowed upon him, some years since, by the university where he completed his academic education.

As a preacher, he stands high among his contemporaries, and yet it has been well observed, that there is nothing very remarkable in his manner of delivery. He engages the attention by solemnity of deportment, rather than by assumed earnestness. His voice is feeble, but distinct, and as he proceeds, it trembles beneath his energies, and conveys the idea, that the spring of sublimity and beauty, in his mind, is exhaustless, and would pour forth a more copious stream, if it had a wider channel than can be supplied by the bodily organs. The plainest and least labored of his discourses are not without delicate gleams of imagery, and felicitous turns of expression. He expatiates on the prophecies with a kindred spirit, and affords awful glimpses into the valley of vision. He often seems to conduct his hearers to the top of the "Delectable Mountains," where they can see from afar the glorious gates of the eternal city.

In the recorded judgment of Dr. Parr, who frequently attended the meeting at Leicester, and left a legacy to its pastor, "Mr. Hall has, like Bishop Taylor, the eloquence of an orator, the fancy of a poet, the acuteness of a schoolman, the profoundness of a philosopher, and the piety of a saint."

## MISCELLANEOUS DEPARTMENT.

## THE REFORMATION IN ITALY.

(Concluded from p. 336.)

PERSECUTION, if begun in time, conducted with discretion, and continued long enough, will break the heart of a stouter nation than the Italians; and if the reign of Mary had been as lasting as that of Elizabeth, and as wary, it is not impossible that the fate of the Reformation in England and Italy might have been the same. Popish historians are right enough, when they attribute the salvation of the Roman Catholic religion south of the Alps, in a main degree, to the establishment of the Inquisition at Rome, in 1543. There was, at least, wisdom in this wickedness. It drove out of the country, or buried in its dungeons, or pursued to the death, all who ventured to think for themselves; and so the unity of the church was restored—*Solitudinem faciunt, pacem appellant*. For twenty years and more was this accursed engine in the utmost activity, and so well it did its work, that all traces of the Reformation at length disappeared; down it went, with a shriek, like a drowning man, and the waters close over him, and not a sign is left that he has ever been.

It was not the practice of the Inquisition of Italy to outrage the feelings of the people by a public display of its terrors. The tribunal was not popular in that country; to say the truth, the Italians are not a sanguinary nation, nor ever have been so in Christian times. It is a matter of just surprise, that with such governments as theirs, blood should be so seldom shed; and that society, constructed as it is, should hold together at all, with so little recourse to capital punishment. In Spain, it was otherwise; there the hatred of a Protestant succeeded to that of a Moor, and the burning of either was a holiday spectacle.

'Drowning was the mode of death to which they doomed the Protestants at Venice, either because it was less cruel and odious than committing them to the flames, or because it accorded with the customs of the place. But if the *autos da fê* of the queen of the Adriatic were less barbarous than those of Spain, the solitude and silence with which they were accompanied were calculated to excite the deepest horror. At the dead hour of midnight, the prisoner was taken from his cell, and put into a gondola, or a Venetian boat, attended only, beside the sailors, by a single priest, to act as confessor. He was rowed out into the sea, beyond the two castles, where another boat was in waiting; a plank was then laid across the two gondolas, upon which the prisoner, having his body chained, and a heavy stone affixed to his feet, was placed; and, on a signal given, the gondolas retiring from one another, he was precipitated into the deep.'

The persecution throughout Italy was, of course, co-extensive with the heresy; but the blackest page in the annals of these hard-hearted times will be found in the history of that colony of Waldenses which, we have already said, had emigrated to Calabria. Here had they been dwelling for some generations, prosperous, and in peace. By the sixteenth century, they had increased to four thousand, and were possessed of two towns on the coast, Santo Xisto and La Guardia. Constant intercourse with their Catholic neighbors, and a long separation from their kindred in the Alps, had corrupted their primitive simplicity, and though they still retained a form of worship of their own, they did not scruple to frequent mass. The report of a new doctrine abroad, resembling that of their forefathers, had reached their ears; they sought to become acquainted with it, and, convinced that they had been wrong in their conformity with the Roman Catholic ritual, they applied to their brethren in the valleys of Pragela, and to the ministers of Geneva, for teachers, who should give them a better knowledge of these things. The circumstance was not long a secret at Rome, and two monks, Valerio Malvicino and Alfonso Urbino (it is a pity to defraud them of their fame,) were sent to reduce them to obedience. They did their work, like genuine sons of St. Dominic. In ancient times, heathen inquisitors required suspected Christians to cast a handful of incense upon an

altar, and in default of this, they condemned them to the flames. These inquisitors of the holy office substituted attendance at mass as their test of orthodoxy. The people of Santo Xisto refused to comply, and fled to the woods. Those of La Guardia, deluded into a belief that their brethren had already submitted, reluctantly acquiesced, only to reproach themselves with what they had done, when the truth was known. Two companies of foot soldiers were now sent in quest of the fugitives; but these latter were not to be intimidated by cries of 'Amazzi, Amazzi!' and, taking their post on a hill, they came to a parley with the captain. They entreated him to have pity on their wives and children: they said that they and their fathers had for ages dwelt in the country, and had given just cause of offence to no man; that they were ready to go by sea or land wherever their superiors might direct; that they would not take with them more than was needful for their support by the way, and would engage never to return; that they would cheerfully abandon their houses and substance, provided they could retain unmolested their principles and faith. To this address, as well as to the hope expressed at the same time, that they might not be driven to a desperate defence, the officer turned a deaf ear. His men were ordered to advance, and most of them fell by the swords of the Vaudois. The monks now wrote to Naples for assistance, which was sent, and all the cruelties which could be exercised by the combined ingenuity of pitiless banditti, (for such were literally the troops now employed,) and yet more pitiless inquisitors, were put in force against this devoted race.

In the language of a Roman Catholic historian, who surely would not exaggerate,

'Some had their throats cut, others were sawn through the middle, and others thrown from the top of a high cliff; all were cruelly, but deservedly, put to death. It was strange to hear of their obstinacy; for while the father saw the son put to death, and the son his father, they not only gave no symptoms of grief, but said, joyfully, that they would be angels of God: so much had the devil, to whom they had given themselves up as a prey, deceived them.'

Dr. Mc'Crie thus winds up this miserable narrative:—

'By the time that the persecutors were glutted with blood, it was not difficult to dispose of the prisoners who remained. The men were sent to the Spanish galleys; the women and children were sold for slaves; and, with the exception of a few, who renounced their faith, the whole colony was exterminated. "Many a time have they afflicted me from my youth," may the race of the Waldenses say, "Many a time have they afflicted me from my youth; my blood, the violence done to me and to my flesh, be upon" Rome!

The Protestants who survived, were, for the most part, scattered abroad. Those who lived near the borders, sought an asylum in Switzerland and France, and some travelled even as far as Flanders and England. They introduced into the countries which received them, many of the arts peculiar to their own: silk manufactories, mills, and dying-houses, were built under their instructions, and, like the fugitives from the intolerance of the Duke of Alva shortly after, and again from that of Louis XIV., they repaid the hospitality shown them by opening, wherever they came, sources of wealth hitherto unknown. Sometimes, they migrated in a body, as did those of Locarno, but with the mark of Cain set upon them by the church, and left to struggle through the snows and ice of the Rhetian Alps as best they could, it being one of their misfortunes that their flight was in the winter.' These achieved their liberties like men; but all had not their hardihood. A band of Neapolitans resolved upon the same course; but when they came to those noble mountains, where they were to take a last view of the land of their fathers, 'the greater part, struck with its beauties, and calling to mind the friends and comforts which they had left behind, abandoned their enterprise, parted with their companions, returned to Naples, and lived to find that the loss of self-esteem is a far greater evil than the loss of country, and that infirmity of purpose in a good cause is the last sin which society forgives. Many, again, dwelling in the interior of Italy, where escape in a body was hopeless, stole away singly, and if tempted to return, as they sometimes were, for their families, or the wreck of their fortunes, fell a prey to the vigilance of the Inquisition. Nor were there wanting those, who, dismayed alike at the prospect of banishment or death, looked back from the plough to which they had put an unsteady hand, and made their peace with Rome by timely compliance. Thus ended the Reformation in Italy.

## INSTALLATION AT CHARLTON.

Though it has not been our practice to notice Ordinations and Installations, for special reasons we have concluded to publish the following, from the Christian Register, for June 28.

## "INSTALLATION AT CHARLTON."

"On Wednesday, June 18, Rev. Edward Turner was installed over the first Congregational church and society in Charlton. The occasion was made more solemn and interesting, by the gathering of a church, which was public, and took place in the morning, previous to the Installation services. Twenty two persons offered themselves; twelve of whom received the rite of baptism from Dr. Bancroft of Worcester. The *Pastor elect* was one of this number; who, it is well known, has long been a minister among the *Universalists*, by whom baptism is generally disused. An appropriate Address was made by Dr. Bancroft, and prayers were offered by him, and by Mr. Allen of Northborough. We have seldom, if ever, witnessed a scene more impressive.

"The Council being convened, all the proceedings of the Society were freely submitted to their consideration, and were found regular; the *testimonials*, also, in regard to the private and *professional* character of the pastor elect, and the motives which had induced him to separate himself from the *Universalists*, and become a *Congregationalist*, were *entirely satisfactory*.

"The Installation services were conducted as follows: the Introductory Prayer by Mr. Noyes of Brookfield; reading the Scriptures by Mr. Alden of Marlborough; the Sermon by Mr. Walker of Charlestown; the Installation Prayer by Mr. Huntoon of Canton; the Charge by Mr. Thompson of Barre; the Right Hand of Fellowship by Mr. May of Brooklyn, Conn.; and the Concluding Prayer by Mr. Osgood of Sterling."—"The house was well filled, and the audience appeared unusually serious and attentive."

We presumed, when we read the foregoing article, that Mr. Turner had not undergone any great moral transformation, or made any considerable sacrifice of former opinions, in his change from *Universalism* to be a *Unitarian*. By the following account, our presumption, it appears, is more than confirmed:

"We understand," say the Editors of the '*Trumpet and Universalist Magazine*,' "that he (Mr. Turner) has experienced *no change in his religious views*, as he has informed the Editor of the *Christian Repository*; and that he takes charge of the church and society in Charlton, without *any sacrifice or renunciation* of the principles, for which, during thirty years, he has contended." Vol. I. No. 2. New Series.

On some occasions, *Unitarians* have manifested strong resentment, at being denominated *Universalists*. They have rejected the appellation, as a reproach and a slander. But actions will always speak louder than words; and what, we ask, is the *language* of the transaction above recorded? An Ecclesiastical Council, composed of leading and distinguished *Unitarians*, baptize a man in the name of the Trinity—admit him to the church—induct him into the ministry—declare themselves *perfectly satisfied* with the testimonials relating to his *professional character*—give him the *right hand of fellowship*—and thus proclaim distinctly to the world, that he is a *good minister*, who will teach the way of *God truly*; when it is known and admitted, that he has long been a teacher of *Universal Salvation*; and when he declares, that "he has experienced *no change in his religious views*," made no "*sacrifice or renunciation*" of former principles, but is now as much a *Universalist* as ever!! The members of this Council, after what has passed, may say what they please; and some of their brethren, high in office, may say what they please; the religious community will regard them, and treat them, as *Universalists*; and they will have no reason to complain.



## REMARKS ON 'LETTERS OF AN ENGLISH TRAVELLER.'

The following extract of a Letter from a lawyer in Maine, late a Unitarian, but now a hopeful believer in Jesus, contains remarks on the "Letters of an English Traveller"—the work reviewed in our three previous numbers.

"We have had the 'Letters of an English Traveller' among us; and if their ingenious, but deluded author had *himself* been with us, he would have witnessed, *not* the effervescence of weak or distempered minds, but the *workings of the 'still small voice of God,'* appealing to the heart. And he would have seen the strugglings and opposition of this heart, and its gradual yieldings to the Spirit of Almighty power. He might converse with individuals, as rational and intelligent as himself, who would tell him that they were not suddenly awakened to a sense of their sinful character and alarming situation, but became convinced, by comparing their hearts and lives with the precepts of the law and Gospel of God, that they had always lived in disobedience, had never acted from such motives as God requires, and consequently, had never done anything acceptable in His sight. They felt, that they were justly condemned; that they had no claim on him for the least favor; and that, if ever they were saved, it must be wholly of His rich and sovereign grace. Arguments to prove them enemies to God were unnecessary. They found, that they had a 'carnal mind, which was enmity against him.' They believed, that their characters were about to take a decided cast for eternity. They generally obtained relief by experiencing an acquiescence in the character and will of God, a satisfaction at the thought of being in his hands, and a readiness to yield themselves unreservedly to Christ, in view of his loveliness and preciousness. Joy has not been in many instances, rapturous; but a calm delight, a peace of indescribable sweetness in contemplating divine things, has been felt for a length of time, in some cases for several days, before the subjects of these feelings have really dared to indulge the idea, that they had been renewed by the Holy Spirit."

## TESTIMONY OF A UNITARIAN EDITOR.

In our last, we published the "testimony of a Unitarian Minister." The following is the testimony of one of the Unitarian editors of Boston on the same general subject.

"On the whole, we do not consider the Unitarian sect so zealous, or so sincere, in promoting the faith it professes, as the Orthodox. There are men, and we revere them, who feel the beauty and applicability to the wants of man, of the Unitarian construction of the Scriptures. They toil hard and do much good; but look at the mass,—they are not so constant and zealous in endeavoring to spread a knowledge of the Gospel, in administering to objects of Christian charity, and in giving a fervent attendance on such rites of our religion, as they acknowledge to be important. The Orthodox may not,—we think they do not give wisely or believe truly,—but they certainly bestow heartily, and act up to their belief in a great proportion of cases. They are liberal in their public charity, and constant in private beneficence and kindness—more so than can be said of the Unitarian sect. The fact is, that a great number of the latter, are people who do not wish to obey any calls of religion, who are sober, honest people in the main, but who have no great feeling, and perhaps no firm belief in any creed; they join that kind of church which imposes the fewest restrictions, and makes the fewest demands—and if it were as respectable, would prefer to belong to no church at all. These are frequently good men, and liberal to objects of distress; but they care little for any of the religious interests of the community, and are sure to avoid exertion and contribution.

"If this view of the Unitarian community be correct, and we believe it to be so, it is plain, that in our section of the country, it is the duty of publications devoted to the promulgation of the Unitarian faith, to abandon for a time, a course of speculations about doctrines, and to lay before the public the exact situation in which it exists, to state the demands of religion which should be answered, and to warm the hearts of the people to better feelings and greater exertions."

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COMMUNICATIONS.

WHY DO YOU NOT EXCHANGE WITH UNITARIAN MINISTERS ?

THOSE who are at all conversant with the progress of Unitarianism in this country, need not be told how very frequently and earnestly this question has been pressed upon Orthodox Congregational clergymen. Nor will any one, who knows how important are the consequences depending upon its decision, doubt, but it ought to receive a careful examination. Such an examination we propose to give it in this place.

We shall attempt to show, that an Orthodox minister cannot, without inconsistency, and unfaithfulness to Christ, exchange pulpit services with Unitarians.

And to come directly to the main point, on which the whole subject rests, we assert that such exchanges are not consistent on the part of the Orthodox minister, BECAUSE HE BELIEVES THAT UNITARIANS DENY ONE OR MORE OF THE ESSENTIAL TRUTHS OF THE BIBLE ; and by such exchange he would give a public and solemn testimony, that between his sentiments and theirs there is *no essential difference*. Such a testimony, therefore, he cannot conscientiously give. He dare not give it, lest it should destroy the souls of some of the people of his charge.

On comparing the Orthodox and Unitarian systems together, there appears to him to be a radical difference between them ; so that if the one is the Gospel, the other cannot be. He believes that the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments were written under a constant and infallible inspiration : but " whether the plenary inspiration of the Scriptures be a doctrine of the Christian religion, is one of those questions upon which Unitarians are divided in opinion." Yates' Vindication of Unitarianism, p. 19. He believes that Christ was really the supreme God, as well as truly a man : but " that Christ was not the supreme God is the faith of all Unitarians without exception." Unitarian Miscellany, Sept. 1822, p. 203. They believe, also, in his infinite inferiority to God, and that the doctrine of two natures in Christ " could not be proved by

the clearest declarations of Scripture. On the contrary, its occurrence in the Scriptures would prove them to be false." Yates' Vind. p. 176. He believes the Holy Spirit to be really the supreme God, yet distinct from the Father and the Son: but Unitarians maintain, that "there is no plausible pretext of scriptural evidence for the existence of any being distinct from God the Father, called the Holy Spirit." Christian Disciple, vol. ii. p. 365. New Series. He believes that men come into the world morally depraved and disinclined to holiness: but Unitarians believe, that man "is by nature no more inclined to vice than virtue; and is equally capable, in the ordinary exercise of his faculties, and with the common assistance afforded him, of either." Ware's Letters to Trinitarians, p. 21. He believes that no man of any age or nation can enter heaven without regeneration, or a new birth, through the special influences of the Spirit: but Unitarians deny the distinct personal existence of the Holy Spirit, and believe that when men, at the present day, are told of "the necessity of a new birth, the call, as it relates to them, is without meaning." Christ. Discip. 1822. p. 420. He believes that Christ suffered as a substitute for sinners, and was made a propitiatory sacrifice, that God might be just, while he justified the believer in Jesus: but Unitarians "do not believe that Christ has once offered himself up a sacrifice to satisfy divine justice and reconcile us to God; because this is making the innocent suffer for the guilty"—"and supposes God has introduced a principle in his administrations which would disgrace any government on earth." Unit. Miscel. 1821. p. 19. and Bancroft's Sermons, p. 224. He believes that Christians are justified solely through the merits of Jesus Christ, by faith: but Unitarians believe, that "to build the hope of pardon on the independent and infinite sufficiency of Jesus Christ is to build on an unscriptural and false foundation." Christ. Disciple, vol. i. p. 440. N. Series. He believes that the future misery of the wicked will last as long as the happiness of the righteous; that is, eternally: but "the proper eternity of hell torments is a doctrine which most Unitarians of the present day concur in rejecting." Christ. Disc. vol. iii. p. 451. N. Series.

Such is a brief view of the difference, in the more important doctrines, between the Orthodox, as a body, and the Unitarians, as a body. And will any reasonable man doubt whether this difference extends to fundamentals? The truth is, there is *no such thing* as embracing the leading doctrines of the Evangelical or Orthodox system of faith, sincerely and understandingly, without admitting a belief in them to be *essential to salvation*—essential, we mean, to those who have the capacity and the means of becoming acquainted with them. Such is the nature of these doctrines, that to regard them otherwise than indispensable, amounts to a virtual rejection of the system.

That all men are naturally children of wrath, because naturally depraved, is a doctrine lying at the foundation of this system. Now suppose a man, who assents to this view of human depravity—as all the Orthodox do—to admit that one person can be saved who understandingly rejects the doctrine of regeneration: certainly he must admit that every other man, who rejects this truth, may be saved. Or suppose he admit that an individual can be saved who rejects the doctrine of atonement: then must he also acknowledge that a belief in this truth is not indispensable to any other man's salvation. For the reason why regeneration and the atonement are necessary for one man—viz. his depravity—shows them to be necessary for every other man. The same reasoning will apply equally to other leading doctrines of Orthodoxy. Hence we see, that the idea, that a belief of these is essential to salvation, is so interwoven with the doctrines themselves, that they stand or fall together. If, therefore, an Orthodox man gives up the position that some doctrines in his system are essential, he virtually abandons the system itself. And this is the reason why the Unitarian regards such a man with so much complacency.

But suppose it be admitted that the difference between Unitarianism and Orthodoxy is essential; on what principle is it therefore necessary for the Orthodox to refuse ministerial exchanges with Unitarians? How is it that such exchanges are a public and solemn testimony that no essential difference exists between the two systems?

These are very natural and important inquiries, which demand a clear and satisfactory reply. And an answer to them involves the principles of Christian communion, or fellowship. For an exchange of pulpit services can be regarded in no other light, than as a deliberate and public act of fellowship. The ministry is the highest office in the Christian church, and to preach the Gospel is one of the most solemn and important services of that ministry. And when one man invites another to take his place, and preach to his people, he invites him to perform some of the most sacred acts of religion, as an ambassador for Christ, who has a commission from his Master to preach the Gospel. He gives, therefore, by this act, a public testimony, of the most decided character, in the house of God, and on the holy Sabbath, that he regards the man, thus introduced into his pulpit, as a Christian brother, possessed of a Christian character, and duly authorized to administer Christian ordinances. Were he publicly to invite this minister, with whom he exchanges, to a seat at the Lord's table, (an act universally regarded as an indication of fellowship) in what respect could it be considered as a more decisive expression of fellowship? But Unitarians, it is believed, universally regard ministerial exchanges as an expression of fellowship; and they would not press the subject with so much earnestness, did they

view them in any other light. It seems unnecessary, therefore, to dwell on this point.

The question, then, comes to this: Can a minister admit to his fellowship, as a Christian brother, a man who denies one or more of the essential doctrines of the Gospel? By attending to the nature of Christian fellowship, the answer to this inquiry will become easy.

To extend Christian fellowship to any one implies that we treat him in all respects as a brother in Christ; as one who is justly entitled to a public participation in all the privileges and ordinances of Christianity. If he does not belong to that particular branch of the church with which we are connected, he may be refused any peculiar and local advantages, which that church has thought it expedient to connect with membership, and yet not be denied Christian fellowship. For he might still be invited to a seat at the Lord's table, and acknowledged as a Christian brother in other public religious acts. And so a particular church might require, as an indispensable condition of membership in her body, an assent to certain minor peculiarities in faith or practice, to which very many, whom she would acknowledge to be Christian brethren, could not subscribe; and yet, if she publicly acknowledged them as brethren, and invited them to the communion board, she would be regarded as extending to them the right hand of fellowship.

We do not, therefore, inquire in this place, what particular churches have a right to require, as a condition of membership; but what qualifications ought the members of those churches to demand in an individual, as indispensable to his occasional admission to their communion board; and as entitling him to every other expression which can be given, of that Christian fellowship, which should be exercised towards one another, by Christians of every name throughout the world. The Bible, it seems to us, requires, as an indispensable condition of this fellowship, *a professed belief of the essential doctrines of the Gospel, and a correspondent practice*. In other words, we are not "to prescribe as an indispensable condition of communion, what the New Testament has not enjoined as a condition of salvation."

An essential doctrine is one, whose rejection would subvert the Gospel; and, therefore, a belief of all such doctrines is indispensable to salvation. We speak here of those only, who possess the Bible in a language with which they are familiar, and have come to years of understanding, and are not prevented from apprehending the meaning of the Bible through a deficiency of intellect: for we do not wish in this place to discuss the case of the heathen, or of idiots, or of any others in Christian lands unavoidably ignorant of divine truth. Nor would we say how great, in peculiar cases, may be the errors of the head, while the heart is essentially right. But to those who can read and understand the Bible, we say, that the



belief of *certain doctrines* is made an indispensable condition of their salvation. For example : *he that believeth on the Son, hath everlasting life ; and he that believeth not the Son, shall not see life ; but the wrath of God abideth on him.*

Non-essential doctrines are those whose rejection does not amount to a rejection of the Gospel ; and, therefore, men may differ about them, and yet not forfeit their claim to the Christian character. We may not agree with a man in these minor points of doctrine, and yet see evidence in the leading articles of his faith, and the tenor of his life, that he is really born of God. To refuse fellowship to such an one, on account of any difference of opinion which we regard as not essential, is to exclude one, whom we acknowledge the Saviour has accepted, and with whom we hope to spend eternity in heaven. It is to act, as if fellowship on earth were more sacred than fellowship in heaven. In the days of the apostles, though the members of the church sometimes differed about points not essential, they did not therefore refuse to one another the fellowship of brethren. And although Paul urged believers to turn away from such as had a form of godliness, but denied its power, he severely reproved those who made divisions in the church, on account of non-essentials. Distinct churches, refusing fellowship, although acknowledging each other to be real believers, was a spectacle reserved for later times. The Saviour prayed that the church might be one ; and the idea of its unity runs through the apostolic epistles. It is there called the household of faith—not several households, nor a divided house ; also the body of Christ, animated by the same spirit, and therefore no more to be separated than the members of the human body. All this, however, does not preclude the idea, that those agreeing in minor peculiarities might unite together in separate branches ; but it forbids them, however distinguished from one another by modes and forms, to refuse fellowship to any, who agree with them in all they deem essential to salvation.

To this view of Christian fellowship, we doubt not, Unitarians will assent. Indeed, most of them will probably contend, that we ought to carry the principle so far, as never to refuse fellowship to a professing Christian, merely on account of his opinions, however widely he may differ from us in his views of doctrine. In other words, they believe that no doctrines, about which professing Christians differ, are absolutely essential to salvation ; much less to communion. To show that some of these doctrines *are* essential, in both these respects, becomes therefore necessary.

A man may deny every doctrine of the Bible, that is, he may give it such a construction as amounts to its rejection, and yet profess to be a Christian. If, then, no difference of opinion, that may exist between those who profess to believe the Bible, ought to be regarded as essential, it follows, that no doctrine of revela-

tion is essential; and a man may reject every truth it contains, and yet be saved. How directly contradictory is such a sentiment to the Bible, which says, *He that believeth not shall be damned!*

In all their preaching and conduct, Christ and his apostles most evidently proceeded on the principle, that the Gospel contained certain truths that must be believed, in order, not only to salvation, but to admission to the fellowship of the church. When Christ said, *He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned;* the context shows us, that he meant a belief in the truths of the Gospel. When Philip was requested by the Ethiopian eunuch to baptize him, he consented to perform the service on this condition: *If thou believest with all thy heart.* From the answer of the eunuch, *I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God,* it appears, that the character and offices of Christ were the fundamental truths which he must profess to believe, before Philip would admit him to Christian fellowship. Said Paul to the Galatians, *I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ, unto another gospel: which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the Gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you, than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, if any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed.* Let the reader ponder well this passage; for it clearly establishes several important points, in relation to the subject under consideration. In the first place, it shows us, that there is a definite collection of truths, or doctrines, which constitute the Gospel; and that there may be also a false gospel; a system called the gospel, which lacks something essential to it. It shows us, secondly, that men are able to distinguish between the true and the false gospel, and to determine what system of truth the Bible teaches: for had the Galatians been incapable of understanding the Gospel, why should the apostle marvel that they had removed from it? If the difference between the true and the false gospel had not been strongly marked, it would not, surely, have been strange, that artful men had led them to adopt the erroneous system. In the third place, this passage shows us, that men are bound to determine what constitutes the Gospel, on peril of their salvation. For Paul pronounced those accursed, that is, devoted to destruction, who should preach another gospel; and error is no more dangerous to the preacher, than to his hearers; except that he may resist greater light, and act under a weightier responsibility. Were it necessary to fortify still farther the position, that men put their souls in jeopardy, who do not determine what constitutes the Gospel, we might quote the words of Paul to the Corinthians: *But if our Gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: in whom the god of this world hath*

blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them. If, therefore, men do not determine what truths constitute the Gospel, it is not because these truths are indistinctly revealed, but because their minds are blinded by the god of this world; and until they do decide what these truths are, and believe them, they are in a lost state. Finally, the passage above quoted from Galatians, shows, that we ought not to receive those to Christian fellowship who deny any of those doctrines we deem essential to the Gospel: for such are pronounced accursed; and how absurd to regard those as Christian brethren, whom God has devoted to destruction.

With these passages agree the other sacred writers. Says Peter, *But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction.* Says John, *Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets have gone out into the world. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: for he that biddeth him God speed, is partaker of his evil deeds.*

If these passages, to quote no more, do not prove that Christ and the apostles regarded certain truths as essential to the Gospel, the professed belief of which was indispensable both to salvation and fellowship, then are they unintelligible, if not ridiculous.

But who shall determine what these essential doctrines are; and how can the unlearned man know, amid so many clashing opinions among men of equal talents, which side is right, and which side is wrong? Every man, we reply, must determine for himself, what are the essential truths of the Bible; and we have just shown that the Scriptures require him to decide this point. Nobody can settle it for him; and he is accountable to God for his conclusions. Nor let any one suppose, that it requires, either great talents, or great learning, to ascertain the terms of salvation: for, as far as essentials are concerned, the Bible is a remarkably plain book. But it does require an honest, a humble, and a holy heart. *The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.* A heart, sincere, humble and holy, will earnestly and perseveringly pray for divine assistance, when reading the Bible; and every man of common sense, with such a heart, and adopting such a course, will, without difficulty, determine all in the Gospel that is essential to salvation. But, destitute of such a heart, and leaning to his own understanding, many a learned scholar has stumbled at the plainest declarations of the word of God. The one receives, with childlike confi-

dence, every truth he finds in the Bible ; the other admits nothing which does not agree with his preconceived opinions, nothing which will show him to be radically wrong.

The man of sincerity, and prayer, in his examination of Scripture, will, in the first place, set down, without hesitation, as essential doctrines, *all those which the sacred writers expressly declare essential* ; for example, the existence of God, the necessity of holiness, repentance, and justification by faith. He will also perceive, that some doctrines are so connected with those which are declared to be essential, that, if the one be essential, the other must be ; such, for example, as the immortality of the soul, which cannot be disbelieved, without rejecting everything else of importance in the Bible. Following, then, these two rules, first, to regard all essential which is declared to be so in the Bible, and, secondly, all which is implied to be essential, this man will not be long in determining what constitutes the essence of the Gospel.

It has been said, however, with much apparent deference to the Bible, that as all creeds, or articles of faith, not in the words of Scripture, are framed by fallible men, and the Scriptures are infallible, we ought to require nothing of a man, as a condition of fellowship, but the general expression of his belief in the Bible, as containing a revelation from God, and a sufficient rule of faith and practice. But the English version of the Bible was made by fallible men, and is, therefore, a fallible explanation of the original ; and hence, the same objections lie against acknowledging a belief in the English translation, as against any other creed ; for a creed is nothing but a summary of the Bible. Yet the English and other translations must be used, since the great majority of men cannot read the original Hebrew and Greek, in which the Scriptures were first written, and, therefore, they cannot tell whether they believe in the originals or not. There is, however, another more serious objection to such a test of fellowship. There is probably no doctrine of revelation which some have not denied, who have professed themselves believers in the Bible. But all these, according to this test, must be admitted to Christian fellowship, and treated as Christian brethren. It might, indeed, be thought a bright exhibition of liberality, to see such a motley collection of men around the communion board ; but it would resemble anything else, more than a church of Christ.\* It would at once annihilate all distinction between the church and the world ; nay more, all distinction between the religion of the Gospel, and the religion of nature.

Others maintain that we ought to require nothing more of a man, as a condition of fellowship, than a professed belief in Jesus

\* A curious illustration of the consequences of adopting so lax a test of fellowship, is now exhibiting among the Unitarians of England. An animated discussion has taken place among them, upon the question, whether avowed unbelievers or deists, shall be admitted into the church.

Christ, as the Messiah; since this, in their opinion, was all that was required by the apostles. It would seem, indeed, from the history, that in some cases, this was all the test they employed to ascertain the piety of those they admitted to baptism. But it should be considered, that the sole object of requiring a belief in any article of revealed truth, is to determine whether a man possess a genuine religious character. And it demanded so much courage and sincerity to acknowledge Jesus to be the Messiah, in the days of the apostles, that an assent to this single article, furnished stronger proof of piety, than can now be attained by an assent to every doctrine of the Bible.

At this day, many who are openly immoral may be found, who, with apparent sincerity, will acknowledge Jesus to be the Messiah; yet, according to this test, we are bound to admit such to our fellowship as Christian brethren: for the sacred historian does not tell us that a moral life was one of the conditions of admission to the church among the apostles; and we must follow their example, as it is on record. Do you say that the apostles directed the churches to excommunicate immoral members; and, therefore, a moral life must have been required as a condition of fellowship? So we say the sacred writers represent other doctrines to be essential, besides that of the Messiahship of Jesus; and, therefore, we ought to ascertain whether a man believes or rejects these, before we receive him to our fellowship, although, in the particular cases referred to, the apostles did not perhaps require anything more than an assent to the general truths above named. And yet, they probably made such an explanation of this doctrine, as they have in their epistles; and their converts avowed their belief in it as thus explained. But if you have a right to add to a belief in this doctrine, the requisition of a moral life, as a condition of fellowship, because you think you find this condition in other parts of the Bible, then have we the same right to require a belief in any other doctrine, besides the Messiahship of Christ, if we think we find others that are essential in any part of the Bible. If you depart from the example of the apostles, as recorded in the Scriptures, by adding the smallest condition to this single article, every other man has a right to add what he deems important; and if you do not add anything to it, then must you admit to Christian fellowship the most immoral wretch who acknowledges Jesus to be the Messiah. If you refuse admission to such an one, on account of his immorality, he will have as real ground for representing you as intolerant and exclusive, and as saying, *Stand by thyself, I am holier than thou*, as that man has, who is required to subscribe to the thirty nine articles of the English Episcopal church, as a condition of membership.

Another opinion not unfrequently advanced on this subject, is, that a correct and exemplary life is the only condition of Christian



fellowship that ought to be demanded: for Christ has told us, *By their fruits ye shall know them*; and we ought to conclude a man's faith to be right, if his conduct be so; since a corrupt tree cannot bring forth good fruit. Great and good men do not agree about what are the essential doctrines of the Gospel; but concerning a man's conduct, there can be but one opinion.

Is this true? Is it not as difficult to determine between essentials and non-essentials in conduct, as in doctrine? Who will undertake to say what precise degree of outward morality is indispensably necessary to prove a man to be really pious; or how much bad conduct is consistent with a state of grace and salvation? To draw such a line is just as difficult as to draw the line between essential and non-essential doctrines; and men would differ as much about the former as the latter. To make a man's practice, then, the sole test of his piety, does not at all relieve this peculiar difficulty of the subject, and we are more liable to mistake his true character, if we judge of it alone by his practice, than if we judge of it by his faith and practice; since he can more easily deceive us in regard to one, than in regard to both. In the first case, we have but one criterion of his piety; in the other, we have two.

We return, then, with increased convictions of its truth, to the position, that a *professed belief in the essential doctrines of the Bible, and a correspondent practice*, are the indispensable conditions of Christian fellowship. And hence the conclusion forces itself upon us, that the Orthodox minister, who believes that Unitarians deny one or more of these essential doctrines, cannot, without inconsistency and unfaithfulness to Christ, exchange pulpit services with them; since such exchanges must be regarded as a most decided expression of fellowship. And if, with a view to justify himself, he pretend that there is not an essential difference between the two systems, this is a virtual abandonment of the Orthodox faith.

Several objections, however, are urged against the exclusion of Unitarians from Orthodox pulpits. To these objections we will now direct our attention: premising, however, that when any particular rule of duty is clearly shown to be contained in the Bible, no considerations whatever, derived from any other source, can release us from the obligation of acting according to that rule.

It is said that there are many Unitarians whose belief is by no means so lax as has been represented; that some even profess to believe in the atonement, and in regeneration; and while they are silent in regard to the divine character of Christ, do nevertheless acknowledge him to be an all-sufficient Saviour; and that others are silent in regard to all the doctrines of the Orthodox, expressing neither a belief nor disbelief of them. And shall the Orthodox minister indiscriminately refuse fellowship to all such, simply because they are not prepared to acknowledge the doctrine of the Trinity?

If the Orthodox minister is satisfied that any man, of whatever name, believes in all the essential doctrines of the Gospel, the principles we have endeavored to establish do not forbid him, but require him, to admit such an one to his fellowship, if his life correspond to his belief. But in respect to the cases above mentioned, there are several considerations which demand attention.

Does a Unitarian believe in the necessity of a change of heart? But he does not believe in the entire native depravity of the heart, nor in the existence of the Holy Spirit, as a personal agent. According to his views, therefore, men do not need regeneration, nor is there any appropriate agent to perform the work. When, therefore, he talks of regeneration, he means something entirely different from the Orthodox.

In regard to the atonement, most of the Orthodox believe that this doctrine, and the deity of Christ, stand or fall together; since they cannot conceive how a created being can do anything more for God than his obligations impose on him, and, therefore, cannot become an available substitute for other beings. But where is the Unitarian who regards the atonement as a propitiatory sacrifice? And when this idea is abstracted from the doctrine, what is there of life and saving efficacy left? Besides, what Unitarian believes the atonement to be an essential doctrine of the Gospel? What minister among them does not admit to his pulpit men who publicly deny the doctrine? And we have shown that when we regard the belief of the doctrine as not indispensable to salvation, we do in fact abandon it. For what does that atonement amount to, which is necessary for one, and not for another; which may be safely believed, and safely rejected? Surely this is something very different from the doctrine as maintained by the Orthodox.

But you say that some ministers express no decided opinion concerning the Orthodox doctrines, unless it be election and reprobation; their preaching being wholly of a practical character. What! a minister preach sabbath after sabbath, and year after year, and yet express no opinion concerning the essential doctrines of the Bible! Then he does not believe them. His preaching has the same effect as if he denied them; or rather, it has a worse effect: for while he professes not to differ much from the Orthodox, pious people will listen to him without suspicion, and his discourses, being destitute of the savor of Gospel truth, will be exactly of that character which is calculated to deaden religious feeling, and thus prepare the heart for the reception of the grossest errors. This is actually the way in which Unitarianism has been introduced into many of the Evangelical churches of this country. The minister at first professes not to differ much from the Orthodox; and he preaches in such an ambiguous manner, that some of his hearers understand him to be advancing Unitarianism, and some suppose he means to defend Orthodoxy. Thus he keeps his real senti-

ments out of sight, until devoted piety is nearly extinguished, until the doctrines of grace are nearly forgotten, and the worldly prejudices of his people are enlisted in his favor; and then he begins to throw off the mask, and to show, that his professed neutrality in regard to sentiments was only an artful stratagem to introduce Unitarianism. Does not such duplicity answer but too well to the descriptions of false teachers given in the Scriptures? They are represented as 'not entering the fold by the door, but as climbing up some other way;' as '*privily* bringing in damnable heresies,' and as '*creeping in unawares.*' Creeping in unawares! how exactly descriptive of the progress of error!

Is it not obvious, then, that a real Unitarian, who conceals his sentiments under the mask of great moderation, and professes to be in doubt on the subject, is more dangerous than one who openly declares his sentiments? To exchange with the former, then, will exert a more powerful influence in favor of error than with the latter. There may, indeed, be found cases of this mixed character, that will greatly perplex the Orthodox minister in regard to exchanges; but the fact that a man does not openly deny the doctrines of the Gospel, is merely negative evidence in his favor; and ought not the man who believes these doctrines, to require something more than negative evidence, as a condition of fellowship? Why should a minister be desirous of concealing his opinions of Gospel truth, unless he is acting a double part, or is more lax than the world suppose him to be? If his silence concerning the doctrines of the Gospel be negative evidence in his favor, is not his neglect to preach them to his people positive evidence against him?

Besides all this, if the Orthodox minister exchange with one man, who is generally regarded as a Unitarian, even if he approximates towards Orthodoxy, the great mass of mankind, who do not make nice distinctions, will regard it as a public testimony, that between such a minister and Unitarians generally there is no essential difference.

But Christ has declared, 'By their fruits ye shall know them.' Now it is said that many Unitarian clergymen, by correct and exemplary lives, give as good evidence of piety as any class of men. How shall the Orthodox dare pronounce such in dangerous error, and exclude them from their fellowship?

If anything be taught in the Bible, it is, that a right state of heart is as necessary to prove a man's piety, as a right state of conduct. Now the Orthodox believe, as a general fact, that a right state of heart disposes a man to embrace the essential doctrines of the Gospel, when they are clearly presented to him; and hence, they must regard a reception of those doctrines as necessary to prove a right state of heart. A correct visible morality will not prove this; since this may consist with the absence of everything spiritual, and a deep rooted hostility to God.

But to refuse exchanges is to erect an arbitrary and unscriptural standard; it is to lay claim to infallibility; it is to say to others as good as ourselves, '*Stand by thyself; I am holier than thou.*'

The Orthodox minister does not pretend that he is infallibly right, and Unitarians infallibly wrong. But he claims the right of free inquiry and private judgment; the right to examine the Bible for himself; the right of believing such truths as he finds taught in it, and the right of acting according to that belief. And these same rights he cheerfully yields to the Unitarian. On examining the Scriptures, with prayer and every help within his reach, he thinks he finds there the doctrines of Orthodoxy; while the Unitarian arrives at an opposite conclusion; and both of them practise accordingly: that is, in the case under consideration, the Unitarian admits the Orthodox to fellowship, because he conceives that there is no essential difference in their belief; while the Orthodox refuses such fellowship, because he believes that difference to be essential. But on what ground can the Orthodox man be charged with erecting an unscriptural and arbitrary standard, and of claiming infallibility, more than the Unitarian? Both of them are merely acting agreeably to the directions which they suppose they find in the Bible.

It is said, however, that if, after all, the Orthodox minister may be wrong, and the Unitarian right, then is it rash and presumptuous to refuse exchanges.

A man, then, must act contrary to the dictates of conscience, because it is possible he may be mistaken. If so, men must refuse to act in almost every circumstance: for how seldom is it, that they can obtain infallible evidence to guide them. In cases where the life of a prisoner is depending, judges and juries do not hesitate to decide, because they have nothing but probable evidence before them—nothing but the fallible evidence of men. Why then should the Christian minister refuse to act, when he has the testimony of God to direct him? If the possibility of mistaking that testimony should deter him from acting in this case, it is a reason equally good, for neglecting to follow the Bible in every other case; since he can never be infallibly sure that his interpretation is correct.

Another argument in favor of exchanges, is, that to refuse them, manifests a narrow, exclusive, and intolerant spirit, totally inconsistent with the liberal views and noble feelings which Christianity inspires.

Why did not the apostles treat all men as Christian brethren? Because they had not sufficient evidence that they were truly pious; and consequently their duty to the world and their Master forbade them to extend their fellowship to all they met. They admitted to their fellowship only those, in whose faith and practice they thought they saw evidence of genuine piety; and whenever Christians, since their days, have departed from this rule, the con-

sequence has ever been, that vital godliness has been deeply wounded, if not destroyed. But if the apostles had a right to exclude from their fellowship any, whose faith or practice they judged to be essentially wrong, why have not Christians at this day the same right; for it does not appear that the apostles were guided by inspiration in this matter, since they received to their communion some hypocrites. And if Christians at this day are exclusive and intolerant in following this rule, so were the apostles.

It is said, however, by the advocates of these exchanges, 'We have an example in point, of one who was greater than the apostles. Christ himself did not scruple to hold fellowship with the heretical and corrupt Jews; whom no one will dare to say were less erroneous than Unitarians.'

When Christ came into the world, the only visible church on earth consisted of the Jewish people; and if there were any true believers among men, they belonged to that church. Christ saw fit, for a time, to attach himself to this church, as the only divine institution on earth, until he could prepare the way for the introduction of a new dispensation, and could establish a church, on essentially the same principles indeed, but remodelled, and different in its rites and ceremonies. That preparation was not completed, until near the close of Christ's earthly labors; but at the last passover, which he kept with his disciples, he formally introduced these changes, and henceforth the Jewish and the Christian churches were separated forever. It appears, therefore, that Christ remained in communion with the corrupt Jewish church no longer than the peculiar circumstances of the case rendered it necessary.

It is evident, however, continues the advocate of exchanges, that even at the time when the Eucharist was introduced, Christ's disciples had no just conceptions of the nature of his religion, and especially, that they did not understand his approaching sufferings as a propitiatory sacrifice for the sins of the world. And if Christ could admit those to his fellowship who knew nothing of the Orthodox doctrine of atonement, who shall dare refuse fellowship at this day to those who cannot receive that doctrine?

If the apostles at the time of Christ's death had no adequate conceptions of the design of his sufferings, what was the reason? Simply, because the vicarious nature of his sacrifice had never been fully disclosed to their minds. But just so soon as the doctrine was explained to them, they embraced it with eagerness and joy, as their subsequent writings testify; and they embraced it, because their hearts were prepared to receive it, having love to God implanted in them. So we can conceive of a case at this day, in which a man may give evidence of piety, who never heard of the atonement; yet the moment that doctrine is explained to him, he will receive it. But we are not now speaking of such peculiar cases. We speak of men, who, having had the doctrine of the atonement



explained to them, as clearly as inspired men could do it, deliberately reject it. We speak of ministers of the Gospel, who read the Bible every day, and profess to explain it; and we say there is no resemblance between such, understandingly rejecting the propitiatory sacrifice of Christ, and those who have never had the subject distinctly brought before their minds.

It is frequently said, that by refusing to exchange, the Orthodox minister assumes the right of judging the heart, and of condemning his brethren; although he is commanded to *judge not, that he be not judged.*

Suppose a man were to present himself for admission to a Unitarian church, who maintained that he had no particular preference for the Christian religion over heathenism and Mahometanism, and that it was of little importance to which of these religions a man attached himself, provided he was sincere. But being in a Christian country, he wished to make a profession of Christianity, since he believed that some religious forms were important. Certainly a Unitarian church in this country would reject such a man. But what right have they to judge and condemn this man; for they are commanded to *judge not, that they be not judged.* If this direction of Christ prevents the Orthodox minister or church from refusing fellowship to any, on account of their belief, it alike prohibits the Unitarian from requiring anything as fundamental in belief. Though a man deny the existence of God, yet must he be admitted to Christian fellowship, if he ask it. For this rule of Christ applies as well to a creed of one article, as to one of fifty.

But the truth is, this precept of our Lord was never intended to prohibit us from forming a judgment of the characters of others, as far as their principles and practice will enable us to do it. It merely prohibits the indulgence of a censorious spirit, and means essentially the same as that other scriptural direction, *Judge righteous judgment.* Nor does the Orthodox minister, by withholding fellowship from Unitarians, assume the prerogative of Jehovah, and judge their motives, and declare that no one among them can be pious. As a general principle, he maintains, that those who understandingly reject any of the essential truths of the Bible to the end of life, cannot be saved. But he does not attempt to decide in respect to every individual case, how far the head may be wrong, while the heart is right. But because a certain dose of poison may not in a particular instance destroy life, the physician does not therefore conclude that it will not generally destroy it. And if in particular instances there is reason to hope that gross error of faith may not destroy the soul, the minister must not hence conclude that it will not generally be fatal.

Another plea in favor of exchanges, is, that to refuse them, is inconsistent with the charity of the Gospel.

What is the charity of the Gospel? Its essence, as all will agree, is love. Now does Christian love require, or forbid the Orthodox minister to exchange with Unitarians? Suppose two physicians are called to visit a person dangerously sick, and one of them recommends certain prescriptions which the other sincerely believes will destroy the patient. Does charity for his professional brother require the physician who thus believes, to acquiesce in having the poison administered; or does charity towards the patient require him plainly to make known his opinions, and refuse to have anything to do with such practice? There can be but one opinion in this case. And why does charity any more require the minister to approve and patronise those who teach errors, which, in his opinion, are destructive to the soul.

How, in regard to those who differed from them, did charity prompt the apostles to act? When the difference did not extend to essentials, their language is, *Let not him that eateth, judge him that eateth not. Who art thou, that judgest another man's servant? Why dost thou judge thy brother, or why dost thou set at naught thy brother?* But when this difference extended to fundamentals, their language is, *Though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. If there come any unto you and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed. Having a form of godliness but denying the power thereof: from such turn away.*

Is a minister uncharitable when he declares to the irreligious part of his people, that except they repent, they will perish; and on the ground of their impenitence, refuses to regard and treat them as Christian brethren? Is not this rather one of the strongest proofs of his charity which he can give? Certainly it does not prevent him from holding a friendly intercourse with the impenitent part of his people, and frequently there is between him and them a strong mutual attachment. And why should a refusal to exchange with Unitarians prevent the Orthodox minister from cherishing toward them the most friendly feelings? As members of civil society, as engaged in similar literary and scientific pursuits, why may there not exist between them a mutual esteem and friendship, producing an interchange of all the civilities and kindnesses of social life? Since the Orthodox minister is only obeying the dictates of conscience in this matter, no feelings inconsistent with such friendship ought to have a place in his bosom, any more than in relation to the impenitent part of his people. Nor ought it to lessen the Unitarian's respect and esteem for the Orthodox, that he follows, what he conceives to be the path of duty, in despite of the solicitations of interest and friendship.

But to refuse exchanges is, in reality, a sort of persecution: for it holds up to the world as damnable heretics, those who, by

their talents, their liberality, and exemplary lives, can lay a fair claim to the name and fellowship of Christians. Hence they are regarded with suspicion, their good name is cast out as evil, and they are subjected to many privations and hardships.

Let us again recur to the case of the two physicians mentioned above. Did he, whose honest convictions and regard for the safety of the patient compelled him to protest against administering the poison—did he persecute the other physician? Suppose the latter, in consequence of this refusal to co-operate in his practice, should lose much of his business, and even be reduced to want; could any reasonable man regard this as the result of persecution? Paul went among the heathen, and told them that their opinions were fundamentally wrong, and exhorted them to turn from dumb idols, to the service of the living God; and the consequence was, that some of the idolaters were subjected to inconvenience and trouble, through the defection of many of their number. But was Paul, therefore, a persecutor of the heathen? At Ephesus, the silversmiths and craftsmen found their employment of making shrines diminishing, and themselves and families exposed to want. Was the apostle, therefore, engaged in persecuting these silversmiths? Faithful ministers are in the habit, in every age, of telling irreligious men that they are in dangerous errors, both of doctrine and practice, and of warning others against them. But who ever thought this to be persecution on the part of such ministers? Usually, the persecution, that is, the intentional personal injury on account of conscientious religious belief, lies on the other side. In the case under consideration, the Orthodox minister says to the Unitarian, ‘I cannot exchange with you, because I believe you have embraced dangerous errors; and I dare not do anything that will appear like encouraging your opinions, or lead any to suppose I do not look upon them as dangerous.’ But he does not deny to the Unitarian the same right he claims for himself,—the right of private judgment, the right of deciding for himself what doctrines are true, and what are essential, and of acting accordingly. True, there may be cases, even in this free country, where the Unitarian is intentionally and unnecessarily injured on account of the exercise of the right of private judgment. But he is no more liable to this injury than the Orthodox; and the question now is, whether the mere refusal to exchange is persecution.

But, say Unitarians, “It is to no purpose to say that these men (the Orthodox) are very sincere in the opinion they have conceived of us; or that they cannot help their opinion; or that they cannot be consistent with it, without acting as they do. The great question still recurs: Is it right that we should suffer for other men’s prejudices?” *Christ. Examiner*, for Sept. and Oct. 1824, p. 394.

Let it be even granted, that the opinion the Orthodox entertain of the Unitarian system is merely the result of prejudice; yet the Orthodox are not aware that such is the case. Most of them have formed this opinion, after a careful examination of the Bible, with prayer, and in opposition to their temporal interest. A refusal to exchange is, therefore, a matter of conscience. Unless, however, the Orthodox minister consents to exchange, Unitarians must suffer any bad effects, which a refusal brings along with it. But if he does exchange, he violates the dictates of conscience, whether that conscience be darkened by prejudice or not. Is it right, therefore, that Unitarians should suffer whatever unpleasant effects may result from the conscientious refusal of the Orthodox to exchange with them? Or is it right to compel the Orthodox to act contrary to the dictates of conscience? Which, we ask, is of the nature of persecution?

But who suffers the most by this refusal to exchange, the Orthodox or the Unitarian? In what other way have Orthodox ministers, in this Commonwealth, brought upon themselves more obloquy and reproach? What other cause has alienated a greater number of their people? And what other cause has operated more powerfully to produce the dismissal of many? And, on the other hand, what engine have Unitarians more successfully employed than this, for building up their societies? Have not the Orthodox, then, quite as much reason as Unitarians, to inquire, "Is it right, that we should suffer for other men's prejudices?" for they do most sincerely believe, that it is prejudice alone, that prevents Unitarians from embracing the doctrines of the Gospel.

Unitarians proceed to inquire, "But ought not a man to act as he *thinks*?" We answer, he ought not to *act at all*, especially in a case where the rights of others are concerned, so long as it can be shown to be his duty to hesitate." *Christ. Examiner*, for Sept. and Oct. 1824, p. 394.

But how is a man, whose opinion is made up on any subject, to be convinced it is his duty to hesitate? If he has not thoroughly weighed the subject, he is, to be sure, bound to re-examine it, and to listen to any arguments others may produce; and, in some cases, expediency may justify one in delaying for a time to act according to his opinion. But merely the complaint of those, whose cause is likely to suffer, and whose principles or conduct will be reproved if a man act, is no sufficient reason for hesitation. It is to be expected that such persons will complain loudly of a violation of their rights; and suppose they can prove, to their own satisfaction, that it is the man's duty to hesitate. But suppose the man himself is not convinced by their reasoning; what can release him from that obligation which lies upon every man, "to act as he thinks?" If others think their civil rights are invaded by his conduct, their remedy lies in the law of the land. If their

religious rights are violated, they can appeal to the Christian church. Or if their social rights are trampled upon, their resort must be to the justice of the community.

But in regard to exchanges, the very head and front of the Orthodox minister's offending lies in his *refusal* to act. Unitarians will not be satisfied unless he does act; that is, unless he *exchanges*. To satisfy them, therefore, it will be insufficient, "not to act at all;" he *must act* contrary to the dictates of his conscience.

But Unitarian writers continue, "The real question before us is, not *who* have adopted this measure (in regard to exchanges,) or *why* they have adopted it, or whether *they themselves* are justified in what they have done; but whether the *measure itself* be a good one, a just one, one which THE PEOPLE should approve and countenance." *Christ. Examiner*, for Sept. and Oct. 1824, p. 392.

How can any man, or body of men, be justified in adopting a measure which is not a good one, or a just one? To inquire, therefore, why the Orthodox do not exchange with Unitarians, is to inquire, "whether the measure be a good one, a just one;" and if it be such, as we have abundantly shown from the word of God, then "the people" are solemnly bound to acquiesce in it. But who does not perceive, that the grand object of the extract here quoted (and we might add, of the whole essay from which it was taken,) is to excite *popular odium* against Orthodox ministers?

"This system of exclusion owes its existence to a combination among the clergy. The measure, we believe, was secretly determined on long ago, and has been slowly, systematically, and in some places covertly introduced, as the people would bear it" *Ibid.* p. 384.

In regard to these declarations, we have nothing to say, except to declare them utterly false; and to challenge those writers who make them, to produce the evidence of their truth, or to retract the slanderous imputation.

It is urged in favor of exchanges, that where Unitarians assist, as is the case in some places, in supporting an Orthodox minister, they have a right to demand that preachers of their own sentiments shall be occasionally introduced into his pulpit.

It is not necessary, at this age of the world, and in this free Protestant country, to prove that no man has a right to compel another to violate the convictions of conscience, and to act contrary to his sense of duty. But the Orthodox minister says that his sense of duty will not permit him to introduce a known Unitarian into his pulpit; therefore his Unitarian hearers have no right to require this, unless they have a right to persecute him.

Some maintain that Orthodox ministers ought to consent to exchanges, that their people may hear both sides of the question.



But Unitarians are not in the habit of preaching and defending their peculiar sentiments plainly, in Orthodox pulpits. Indeed, they disclaim the idea of having any particular system of truths, in which they agree. Their chief bond of union seems to be, a disbelief of the doctrines of Orthodoxy. But these they would not attack in an Orthodox pulpit. Their policy would rather be, to differ as little as possible, in their preaching, from the Orthodox. Hence those ignorant of the subject could not in this way obtain a correct view of Unitarianism; but would conclude that it differs much less than it does from Orthodoxy. Besides, every other denomination has as good a right as Unitarians, to have their preachers heard occasionally. So that the Orthodox clergyman must one Sabbath introduce, as a minister of Christ, a Universalist; the next Sabbath a Quaker; the next a Swedenborgian; and so on, through all the countless sects that fill the world. And as the Deists have no preachers, we should suppose it right that a Sabbath should be occasionally devoted to reading from the pulpit an essay of Herbert, or Hume, or of Thomas Paine.

To such extravagancies does the principle lead, which would demand that men ought to hear from the same pulpit, opposite and various religious opinions defended. It would be building Babel, rather than the kingdom of Christ. Were men to wait till they had heard all the clashing religious sentiments in the world explained and defended, before forming their own, they would wait, till the judgment overtook them, as sceptical as ever. But, thank God, we have an infallible standard of truth in our hands, and it is not a difficult matter for the sincere and humble inquirer to determine from this, what are the essential truths of religion. For a minister, therefore, to attempt to enlighten his people on controverted points by introducing men of opposite sentiments into his pulpit, while the Bible is in their hands, would be to send them in pursuit of a dancing meteor, while the sun shone upon them from the zenith.

Another argument in favor of exchanges, is, that thereby Unitarians would hear the true Gospel preached, which otherwise they would probably never hear. And if the Orthodox feel it to be a duty to make great efforts to send the Gospel to the heathen, surely they ought to be willing to make some sacrifices to bring it before their own countrymen, whom they conceive to be in dangerous error. It is the minister's duty to preach the Gospel to every creature; and how can he excuse himself, if he suffers so fine an opportunity of fulfilling this command, as exchanges present, to pass away unimproved?

What good can be expected from the most powerful medicine the physician can give, if he mix with it some other substance, by which it is entirely neutralized; or if it meet with something in the stomach of the patient that renders it inoperative? And of

what use is it to preach the Gospel, under such circumstances, that there is no probability it will produce a saving effect? By the very act of exchange, the Orthodox minister practically and publicly testifies, that there is no essential difference between him and Unitarians. But the Unitarian society, to which he preaches, have already manifested their preference for the Unitarian system, by settling over them a minister of that character. Is there any prospect, then, that they will receive the doctrines of the Gospel, however faithfully they are preached, when the preacher himself has virtually told them that they are safe without such a belief?

But further; it would be considered a breach of civility for the Orthodox minister, in such cases, to preach his plainest and most discriminating sermons: and should he do this, his Unitarian hearers would regard it as the mere ebullition of sectarian zeal, and regard his efforts with contempt. Accordingly, we believe, that almost without an exception, Orthodox ministers, who make such exchanges, are not in the habit of selecting for Unitarian congregations, those sermons which exhibit most clearly the doctrines of the Reformation, and which have produced the deepest effect upon their own people. And they do this on the principle, that such sermons will probably do no good, because they will excite only enmity or contempt. They select, therefore, sermons which come nearest to the more serious discourses of Unitarians. And hence another unhappy effect is produced upon the Unitarian congregation. They are led to the conclusion that there cannot be any important difference between the two systems, since they cannot perceive it in the preaching.

Effects of a similar character are also realized upon the Orthodox minister's own congregation and church. The sermons which he preaches abroad, he will preach at home; and as exchanges multiply, sermons of this character must be multiplied. The inevitable effect will be to lower the general standard of his pulpit efforts; and in the place of that bold, frank, and earnest exhibition of truth, by which men are converted, there will be substituted those tame, ethical, unimpressive essays, which send a death-chill into the soul of devoted piety, and thus pave the way for the most fatal errors. Accordingly, it is not, in general, to such churches, that we look for bright examples of Christian character, and for great sacrifices in the cause of Christ. And although such churches usually remain professedly Orthodox, so long as their minister does; yet upon his decease, or removal, the fruit of his timeserving policy appears, in the total defection of his people to Unitarianism, or in the banishment from their funds, and their house of worship, of a despised minority of Orthodox Christians. Indeed, the most decided Unitarian philippics against the doctrines of grace, delivered weekly in an Orthodox pulpit, would not be half as likely to produce such disastrous results, as sermons of the

negative character above described, whether coming from Unitarians or Orthodox.

But suppose the Orthodox minister who makes these exchanges, should continue, as plainly as ever, to exhibit the doctrines of the Bible, and endeavor to impress them upon the irreligious part of his audience. Will they receive these doctrines? Suppose, for instance, he should urge the necessity of regeneration in order to be admitted to heaven. Would not his impenitent hearers be apt to reason in this way: 'Do you say that a change of heart is necessary to our salvation? But last Sabbath you sent a man to preach to us, who believes nothing of this doctrine, in any such sense as you explain it. And surely, you would not send any one to preach to us, who denied any truth inconsistent with salvation. For you have frequently told us, that the object of your preaching was, to save our souls; and we suppose you hold to this intention when you preach by a substitute, as well as when you supply the pulpit yourself. Certainly we cannot believe you would send a substitute, whose preaching, if believed, would destroy our souls. When you place a minister in your pulpit, we understand you as recommending him to us as a spiritual guide, whose directions it is safe to follow, in regard to things essential, although perhaps you may not agree with him in regard to every minor point of doctrine. In regard to a change of heart, we feel as safe without it, as he is, whose preaching you recommended to us the last Sabbath; and after exchanging with such a man, you must surely be inconsistent or insincere, to press this doctrine upon us in such an indiscriminate manner.'

Does the Orthodox advocate for exchanges still inquire, how a refusal is consistent with the imperative command to preach the Gospel to every creature? We answer by inquiring, whether there is any command in the Bible to preach against the Gospel, as well as in its defence? Now a man may preach by his conduct, as well as by his words; and indeed, men always consider the language of actions to be more eloquent and impressive than the language of the lips. Of what use, then, will it be, if the Orthodox minister preaches the Gospel ever so eloquently with his lips, provided his conduct conveys the impression, that none of its doctrines are essential? And such is the natural and just inference which men draw from the pulpit exchanges of an Orthodox minister with Unitarians.

Suppose, however, that the Orthodox minister, in complying with a request of his people to exchange with Unitarians, declare publicly, that he does it merely to gratify them, and that he does not regard the exchange as an act of fellowship.

If any minister is willing to descend so much below the dignity of his sacred office as to play such a farce as this, the principles we have endeavored to support will not forbid him; though expe-

diency and Christian integrity would utter a warning voice against it. And he must remember, too, that his declaration, that he does not regard exchanges as an act of fellowship, must be sounded beyond the limits of his own parish, even as widely as Unitarianism has spread; otherwise his example will be quoted in support of the propriety of exchanges. But after such a declaration, we do not believe, that any Unitarian would consent to an exchange. There would be no reason why he should wish it, and motives of delicacy and self-respect would forbid it.

But in nearly all Unitarian societies, and in some Unitarian churches, are found individuals who are Evangelical in their faith. Ought not the Orthodox minister to consent to exchanges, that he may establish and edify these by the truth?

It is indeed important that these individuals should occasionally hear faithful preaching; and if the Orthodox minister is invited to preach in a Unitarian pulpit, it is not an expression of fellowship for him to comply, provided he does not reciprocate the invitation. Or if no such opportunity offers to address these Evangelical members of Unitarian societies, let them occasionally assemble during the week for religious instruction; and let this Orthodox minister go and preach the truth to them. But let him not, for the sake of edifying a few individuals, bear public testimony in favor of essential error by exchanging with its advocates, and thus jeopardize the interests of the whole church of Christ on earth. For no man, however obscure, can tell how far the mischief may extend, when, to advance the interests of individuals, he violates a general rule of duty.

But though some unpleasant effects result from exchanges with Unitarians, yet their advocates would have us believe, that consequences still more terrific follow a refusal. It tends to confirm Unitarians themselves in their errors, and to drive them still farther astray. It produces a prejudice against Orthodox ministers, and the truths they deliver. It leads the neutral and the wavering to embrace errors, and prevents the truth, in almost every instance, from taking effect. Bitterness and alienations spring up among families and individuals. New parishes are formed, too weak to support the Gospel, and existing societies are broken down. But were the Orthodox minister only to consent to occasional exchanges, all these painful results might be avoided, and families and societies remain united, harmonious, and happy.

What, we ask, are that union and harmony worth, which are purchased by sacrificing the Gospel, and sacrificing the soul? And such is the price that must be paid for peace and union, in his opinion, who believes the Unitarian essentially erroneous. The Unitarian will not consent to union, unless the Orthodox minister publicly testifies, by an exchange, that there is no essential difference of opinion between them; that is, unless he yield the point,

that any of the peculiarities of the Gospel are essential. Had Christ and his apostles consented to give up these peculiarities to the prejudices of the Jews and the heathen, none of those terrible and bloody contentions and divisions, whose history is contained in the Acts of the apostles, would have taken place. But highly as they valued peace and union, they regarded the truths of the Gospel as of still greater value; and when the former could be purchased only by a sacrifice of the latter, they did not hesitate to draw the line of separation, fearful as were the consequences impending over them. And since the value of the truths of the Gospel has not diminished, when a like alternative presents itself, we are bound to follow their example.

We do not doubt but the anticipated consequences of a refusal, have operated more powerfully upon the minds of Christians in favor of exchanges, than every other consideration. But what is the Christian minister's rule of duty? Is he to regulate his conduct by a calculation of consequences, or by the revealed will of heaven? 'Duties are his; events are God's.' We ought, indeed, to have an eye upon the consequences of our conduct; because these are, in some cases, the only means of ascertaining the will of God. But whenever we can find principles in the word of God to direct us, it is very unsafe to suffer apprehended consequences to influence us. For though we may determine, with some degree of certainty, the immediate effects of our actions, we cannot, probably in a single case, look forward to all the ultimate effects. Besides, in the case under consideration, the Orthodox minister is peculiarly in danger of shrinking from duty, if he think too much of the consequences of a refusal to exchange with Unitarians. For in many cases that refusal will bring along with it some of the worst evils he can experience in this world;—such as a defection of friends, loss of popularity, reputation, and temporal support; and raise round him a storm of opposition and contention. In this case, therefore, where the revealed will of God is so plain, commanding him to refuse every act of Christian fellowship to all who deny any essential truth of the Gospel, why should he ever stop to inquire about consequences? If he is faithful to his duty, God will take care of the consequences, and will take care of him.

But are not some of these consequences so dreadful, as to lead us to suppose we have mistaken the will of God in this matter. In some instances, for example, a refusal to exchange will actually convert an Orthodox into a Unitarian society. A majority of the people of the society are, perhaps, in favor of such exchanges; and they insist upon it, as their right, that they should occasionally hear Unitarian ministers. If their Orthodox pastor consent, they will remain peaceable and friendly under his ministrations. But if he refuse, they will forsake him, obtain his dismissal, and settle over them a Unitarian. By yielding in this one point, he can



secure to this society faithful preaching for a long time ; whereas a refusal will entail Unitarianism upon it, perhaps for centuries.

Suppose a large number, even a majority, in a parish, are in the habit of holding a weekly meeting for the purpose of gaming, song-singing, story-telling, and intemperate drinking ; and they should come to the conclusion, that it would be desirable to have their minister occasionally join them in these carousals ; and since they assist in his support, suppose they should insist upon his attendance as a right. If he will only yield in this one point, they are willing to continue his support, and shall not object to his preaching the 'strictest morality and sobriety of conduct. But if he refuses, they are determined to dismiss him, and settle over them one, who will not only comply with their wishes in this respect, but who will preach to them conformably to their own sentiments, that is, universal salvation. Now these are distressing consequences of a refusal ; yet no conscientious man would hesitate to risk them. And why ? Simply because a compliance would seem to him directly contrary to the revealed will of God. And this is precisely the reason why the Orthodox minister cannot exchange with Unitarians. Why should apprehended consequences be regarded more in the latter, than in the former case ? The exchange might not, indeed, be as gross a violation of decency and of the divine command, as joining in the carousal ; yet to the consistently Orthodox man, it would be as real.

We have already alluded to the manner in which Christ and his apostles acted in similar circumstances. They knew that if they urged the peculiarities of the Gospel, as indispensable to salvation, the most unhappy divisions and contentions would follow ; so violent, indeed, as to bring on them and their followers all the horrors of a persecution unto death : for wherever they had thus preached, such were the almost invariable effects. But their business was to follow the will of God, and leave the consequences with him. *So we preach*, said Paul, *not as pleasing men, but God, which trieth the hearts : for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ.* A forgetfulness of this apostolic example, and an attempt to trace out the labyrinth of consequences, have exerted a most unfavorable influence upon the usefulness of many pious ministers, and produced strange inconsistency of conduct. And we cannot believe, that any Orthodox clergyman, who acknowledges that a belief of certain truths is indispensable to salvation, would consent to exchange with a minister who denies them, unless, in his alarm about consequences, he forgets the revealed will of God.

But who is answerable for the alienations, divisions, and contentions, that result from a refusal on the part of the Orthodox to exchange ? If none of our churches or ministers had departed from the faith in which our Pilgrim Fathers founded the churches

it is obvious that none of these unhappy effects would take place. Those, therefore, *who have made this departure*, are accountable for the unhappy consequences that follow. The refusal of those, who still adhere to the faith of the Pilgrims, to exchange with Unitarian ministers, is one of the effects of their rejection of Evangelical religion; and hence, they, not the Orthodox, are the original authors of all the evils that grow out of that refusal. They may be sincere in this departure, yet are they nevertheless answerable for the consequences; because they, not the Orthodox, are the innovators.

Several inferences, deducible from the general principles we have endeavored to establish, and more or less connected with the particular point that has been under discussion, will be added in conclusion.

(To be continued.)

THE INSPIRATION OF THE SCRIPTURES. NO. II.

*Mistakes to be avoided, and cautions to be observed.*

Before proceeding to exhibit the *proof* of inspiration, I think it important to guard against several of the most common *prepossessions and mistakes*, relating to the subject, and to suggest some of the *cautions*, which it is most important to observe. In this way I hope to do something towards freeing the mind of the reader from unnecessary perplexity and difficulty, and preparing him more justly to weigh the arguments which will be offered in support of the doctrine under consideration.

1. We are not to suppose that we can exactly understand the *manner* in which the mind is affected by inspiration of God, or *how any man knows* that he is under infallible divine guidance, and that his declarations are clothed with divine authority.

We have never been the subjects of a supernatural inspiration ourselves, and of course we cannot understand the subject by our own experience. Isaiah, and Paul, and others, had, probably, as real and definite a consciousness of the peculiar state of their minds, and the manner in which they were affected, when under the supernatural influence of the Spirit, as at any other time. But the effect produced upon their thoughts, and the general state of their minds, when under that supernatural influence, must have been widely different from anything which we ever experienced; and we may be as unable to form any definite conception of it, as of the peculiar state of an *angel's* mind, or the manner in which he thinks and acquires knowledge. How is it possible for us to have any clear and certain notion of the manner in which the mind is affected by inspiration, without being inspired ourselves? Indeed,

how can we form a clear conception of *any* state of mind, without being the subjects of it?

If any one should say, that we can learn the manner in which divine inspiration affects the mind, from a *description* of it by those who know what it is by experience; it would be sufficient to reply, that *we have no such description*. Neither Paul, nor Isaiah, nor any other, has informed us how his mind was affected by the supernatural influence which acted upon him, or in what way it was made certain to his mind, that he was divinely inspired. And even if an inspired writer had given a particular description of the effect of inspiration on *his* mind; the nature of the subject is such, that, in all probability, we should find, that no description could convey any just notion of it to *our* minds. As it is a fact then, that we never had the state of mind produced by inspiration; and as no exact description has been given of that state of mind in others; and as we should probably be unable to understand the real import of the language by which an inspired man might attempt to describe his state of mind to us; we must be content to remain without any exact knowledge of the subject. And we have good reason to apprehend, that any attempt of ours to form definite conceptions of it will lead us into error.

If these views are correct, then our inability to understand exactly the manner of inspiration should not be suffered to diminish our confidence in its reality, or its practical results. On the ground of the evidence which we possess, we ought to entertain as full a belief of the fact, that *all Scripture* is given by inspiration of God, and consequently, that the doctrines and laws which it contains are marked with infallibility and divine authority, as though we knew perfectly *how* supernatural divine influence affected the minds of the writers, or even as though we ourselves had written the Scriptures under a guidance which we knew to be infallible and divine.

2. We are not to assume, that the only influence of inspiration upon the writers of Scripture was, that it revealed to them *new truths*, or prompted them to make known *new truths* to others.

In many instances, it may be as suitable and important that God should influence his servants to declare old truths, as new ones, provided those old truths are as valuable as new ones, and as necessary to promote the best interests of man. Is not the supposition perfectly reasonable, that God may have as real an agency in moving his prophets to write truths with which they were before acquainted, and in affording them such guidance as to secure them against all fallibility, and render their communications exactly agreeable to his will, as in enabling them to write truths never before made known? Christ promised to give his apostles a heavenly Teacher, who should enable them rightly to perform every part of their office, and among other things, *to assist their*

*memories.* It seems to have been a principal object of that promised assistance of the Spirit, so to guide the apostles, that they should truly recollect the things which they had before seen and heard, and should infallibly, and in the best manner, communicate them, or necessary parts of them, both orally and by writing, for the benefit of others.

This principle, if well fixed in our minds, will be of great use in relieving us from needless difficulties respecting the inspiration of various parts of the Bible. There is much reason to think that the historical books of the Old Testament, generally, were composed either from traditions with which the writers were familiar, or from pre-existent records. But what difficulty can this circumstance occasion, in regard to their *inspiration*? Was it not important that the Holy Spirit should assist the memories and other faculties of the writers, in making a suitable record of that with which they were already acquainted? Was it not important that he should so influence and guide them, that they should write *just so much, and in just such a manner*, as he saw to be best adapted to answer the ends of revelation? What reason have we to suppose that they would ever have done all *this*, without divine guidance? If we examine the public addresses of the apostles which are recorded in the Scriptures, we shall find they were composed, for the most part, of facts, and arguments, and conclusions, which, in all probability, had been familiar to the apostles before? Be it so. There is no difficulty in supposing that the divine Spirit afforded them such direction, that they judged, with infallible wisdom, what was proper to be said, and, in all respects, spoke according to the will of God. The Spirit was promised for this very purpose. "Take no thought *how* or *what* ye shall speak; for it shall be given you in that same hour *what* ye shall speak. For it is not *you* that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you." The influence of the Spirit was not to be limited to the revelation of things *before unknown*. He was to guide them in giving their testimony to truths which they had before learned, and to enable them to do it without any liability to error. He was to teach them both "*how* and *what* they should speak," in reference to any portion of divine truth which the occasion should call for. The same as to other parts of Scripture. For what human wisdom would be competent, in all cases, to determine, just as divine wisdom does, *what* and *how* men should write for the benefit of all future ages? How widely different would be the judgment of any man now living, from the wisdom which presided over the writing of the Scriptures? If left to form an opinion on the subject independently of what we know to be the decision of divine wisdom, every man would think that some things included in the sacred volume ought to have been omitted. As an instance, I might mention those naked histories of human weakness, folly, and

impurity, at which common decency is ashamed, and which infidelity has so often made the subject of profane ridicule. God, who perfectly knows the nature of man, and all his wants and dangers, and how to promote his eternal interests in the best manner, doubtless saw that important ends would be answered by those parts of Scripture, which we should have thought least calculated to do good. And I am fully persuaded that we can, in no way, account satisfactorily for the writing of *such a book, by such men*, or by *any men*, without the supposition of a special divine interference.

It will be remembered that my reasoning here has nothing to do with infidels. It is meant for those, who believe that the Bible is the word of God, and that it is, in all respects, what the wisdom of God chose that it should be; of course, that it is free from faults, and perfectly adapted to promote the ends of a divine revelation. It is with those who believe this, that is, with *Christians*, that my reasoning is concerned. Now, in my view, *Christians* can have no reason to presume, that the agency of the divine Spirit in the sacred writers must have been confined to the single purpose of revealing new truths; and no reason to object to the position, that those writers were *constantly* under the direction of divine wisdom, even in making a record of those things with which they were before acquainted. For in making this record, so as perfectly to answer the ends of infinite wisdom, it was necessary there should be such a *selection of form*, and such an *adaptation* to the exigencies of the church in all ages, as must have required the presiding influence of an omniscient mind,—required it as really, as the first communication of those truths which lay beyond the discovery of human reason. It is evident, therefore, that it can never be a valid objection against the inspiration of any parts of the Bible, that those parts contain no truths, except what the writers might have known, either by *natural means*, without the help of any divine revelation, or by means of a revelation before made to others. Accordingly, if the sacred writers declare, without suggesting any qualification, that *all Scripture* is given by inspiration of God; we shall have no good reason so to qualify and restrict the meaning of their declaration, *that it shall apply to those parts only in which a revelation of new truths was made.*

3. It is no objection against the doctrine of inspiration, that the Scriptures were written in *a language completely human*, and that they exhibit all the *varieties* in the mode of writing, which are common in other works.

If God gives instruction to men, he must give it in language which men can understand. Should divine instruction be conveyed in language which is *superhuman*, it would then become necessary, either that it should be translated into human language, or else that the human mind should be enabled to understand it by some



supernatural endowments. The supposition of Shaftsbury, that a divine revelation must exhibit a style of writing essentially different from what is in common use, is manifestly inconsistent, and cannot for a moment be admitted. And as it is perfectly clear, that various kinds of writing are calculated to answer important ends, which could not be answered by any one kind alone; it would be altogether reasonable to expect, that God would employ such a variety, if he wished to make special communications to men;—that he would sometimes give instruction by history; sometimes by poetry; sometimes by allegory; sometimes by proverbs or maxims; sometimes by rational arguments; sometimes by impassioned appeals to the heart; and sometimes in other ways; and that he would make use of all those figures of speech, which are suited to make a deep impression on the mind, or to rouse its dormant faculties. The propriety and utility of this variety in the mode of conveying truth, result from the constitution which God himself has given to the human mind. And surely, it is but natural to expect that, in all his instructions, he will have a regard to the nature which, in the exercise of his unerring wisdom, he has given to man; and that he will employ that mode of teaching, which shall be best adapted to produce the desired effect. And when we find that the writers of the sacred volume made use of human language, and of all the common modes of writing; most surely, we cannot consider it as affording any argument against the position, that those writers were under the guidance of the divine Spirit. That the Scriptures were written in the *best manner*, that is, in the manner best suited to answer the ends of a revelation, is a fact which clearly shows them to be worthy of God; and if it cannot, by itself, prove conclusively that his agency was specially concerned in the production; it certainly can prove nothing to the contrary. If, in one way or another, there is evidence of the general fact, that the Scriptures were given by inspiration of God; the circumstance of their appearing in such a form as they do, cannot furnish any ground to question the fact of their having been inspired, or to suppose that their inspiration must be understood in a *restricted, imperfect* sense.

4. The manner in which the writers of the New Testament sometimes quote from the Old, has been thought to be an objection to their inspiration. The ground of the objection is, the alleged *incorrectness* of the citations.

In reply, I maintain, that what is called *incorrectness* in the citations is no incorrectness at all; and that the mode of quotation is no other than an example of a manner of writing perfectly conformed to good use, and adapted to produce the best effects. I shall not think it necessary or proper to enter on a particular discussion of this subject at the present time, as the limits I have prescribed for myself would hardly admit of it, and as the manner of

quotations from the Old Testament, by the writers of the New, has been carefully and satisfactorily vindicated by various authors. Now if it is indeed so, as I am fully persuaded it is, that the writers of the New Testament make quotations from the Old in a manner suited to accomplish the ends they have in view, and to accomplish them in an eminent degree,—in a manner, too, which agrees with common use among men of good sense; then this mode of quotation is no more an objection against the inspiration of the Scriptures, than any other example of what is proper and excellent in the sacred writings.

Let us inquire, for a moment, what is it in the mode of quotation, against which the objection is urged? It is this; *that, in some instances, when a text is cited, it is not cited in the exact words of the original; and that, in other instances, the texts which are quoted, are applied to subjects different from those to which they were originally applied.* But was this mode of quotation ever made an objection against any other writer? Is it true of the best modern authors, that they refer to passages in the Bible in no other way, than by an exact quotation of the whole? When they would cite a text containing a prediction, a doctrine, or a promise, do they not very frequently make the citation in an abridged form, or in a form different in some other respect from the original,—only taking care to show, to what particular text they mean to refer, and what is the object of the reference? And what is more common, than for writers of the best reputation to take a striking passage from the Bible, or from some other book, and make use of it for the purpose of illustrating a subject diverse from that to which the original writers referred? How often are historical facts produced for the sake of illustrating other similar facts, or some moral principle involved? How often is a sentiment, or trait of character, which was, on some occasion, aptly expressed by a distinguished writer, made a kind of maxim, or general principle, and applied with effect in all similar cases? More than half the real value of ancient history and poetry would be lost, were it not for the use which is made of them for the purpose of *illustration* or *impression*. Now if the practice of making citations from books, in the manner above described, is of important use, and is regarded with universal approbation in other men; why should it be thought exceptionable in the writers of the New Testament? And if such a mode of quotation is in itself proper, and is adapted to answer valuable ends; why should the use of it by the apostles be deemed inconsistent with their inspiration? Would not the presumption rather be, that the Spirit of God, being the Spirit of infinite wisdom, would lead those who were under his influence, to avail themselves of a mode of writing, which is universally considered so valuable? And as this mode of writing was, in an uncommon degree, suited to the taste of those

who first received the books of the New Testament, and so was adapted, in an uncommon degree, to be useful to them; would it not be reasonable to think, that the authors of those books, supposing them inspired, would be led to make a free use of it? The obvious conclusion, then, is, that quoting from the Old Testament in the manner and for the purposes described, can no more be objected to the inspiration of the apostles, than their use of *metaphors*, or even of *human language*.  
PASTOR.

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THOUGHTS ON REVIVALS OF RELIGION.

(Continued from p. 361.)

A standing topic of declamation against revivals of religion, is their supposed tendency to melancholy and mental aberration. Hence, on the approach of a revival, there are many who flap the dark wing, and lift up the monitory voice. They are sometimes persons who have themselves felt and resisted the power of conscience, and hate the light for the pain it has given them. Always, they are unfriendly to evangelical doctrine, and lift the standard, around which all the vicious and irreligious rally. They know, usually, very little, personally, concerning a revival, and receive and repeat, with the credulity of dotage, the rumor and misrepresentations which circulate around them; while, with inveterate scepticism, they refuse credence to results in favor of revivals, however manifest and glorious. With oracular confidence, they speak and decide on subjects, concerning which they are no more competent to judge, than the busy merchant or mechanic is qualified to judge concerning medical practice, in the hospitals and families of a great city.

I have been conversant with revivals, and the arts of opposition to them, for almost thirty years; and I know the stories which are commonly circulated against them are malignant fictions, or exaggerated facts—mere caricatures of the reality. No record of human transactions was ever made, of things so notorious, embracing so little truth and so much falsehood, as the accounts of revivals given by their enemies.

It is important, therefore, in this day of revivals, and of obloquy, and misrepresentation, that the intelligent and candid part of the community should be apprised of the facts in the case, and not be the sport of unfounded apprehensions.

It is proposed, therefore, to give in this paper, some account of the origin, properties, and tendencies of that solicitude, which usually precedes the renovation of the heart.

It is caused by a quickened sense of accountability, and guilt, and danger. The rule of accountability, the moral law, and the

evidence of transgression, were manifest before, but not apprehended, or, if perceived intellectually, were not felt. But the Holy Spirit, by an illumination peculiar to himself, gives reality to the law, in the presence of which the heart is realized to be without holiness, and under the predominant influence of selfishness, unfit for heaven, fitted for destruction, and exposed to a fearful and just condemnation, which, without a change in the affections, will be certain and eternal. Thus, is the moral government of God revived, which, through the darkness of the mind, had faded from recollection, or through the hardness of the heart, had applied its power unfelt. In what manner the Spirit of God thus enlightens the mind, and gives reality and power to neglected evidence of obligation, guilt, and danger, it does not become philosophy to say, at all more than to deny the fact, because it cannot perceive the the peculiar mode of the divine operation. That he, who formed the mind for moral government, should be able to administer that government, by giving presence to the mind of its precepts and motives, is certainly most credible. And, that man is so stupid and blind as to need a more vivid apprehension of his guilt and danger than he would obtain, or others could communicate, is most certain.

This sense of guilt and danger, resulting from the transgression of law, is aggravated by the recollection of abused mercy; for when He, the Spirit, comes, He reproves the world of sin, because they believe not. The obligations of the Gospel are felt; and the guilt of violating them, the ingratitude, the hardness of heart, and voluntary obstinacy in rejecting its reasonable requirements, increase both remorse and fear. These apprehensions of guilty character and danger are sometimes instantaneous; but, not unfrequently, they are progressive, and the result of faithful instructions on the part of Christian friends, and of voluntary attention and effort on the part of the subjects.

The following are some of the properties of religious solicitude occasioned by a sense of accountability and guilt.

1. It is rational.

Man is an accountable creature, and, compared with the law of God, his heart is desperately wicked. It is without holiness, and full of selfishness. The command, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart," is violated; and the prohibition, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me," is disregarded. This perverted state of the affections is voluntary, criminal, and deadly; and if not removed in time, will settle down into an obliquity, hopeless as it will be miserable. It is also true, that God has provided a Saviour, and with great sincerity of mercy, offers pardon upon terms practicable and reasonable, which the sinner, with entire voluntariness and pre-eminent ingratitude, rejects. These truths the awakened sinner feels. He realizes that it is his duty to repent immediately, and that his sins are multiplied and aggra-

vated by the delay of every moment. He is well apprised that the Holy Spirit, which has awakened him, may justly abandon him, while he wilfully refuses to yield to his requirements, and anticipates that probably a crisis has arrived in his moral history, in which what he may do speedily, or neglect to do, may be the means of perpetuating a holy or unholy character through eternity. In such circumstances, the distress of an awakened sinner is rational;—never beyond, always below, the occasion. To be unholy in presence of the law of God, and an unbeliever in the presence of his Gospel, and a resister of the Holy Ghost when he strives, constitutes both guilt and danger, surpassing all which the awakened sinner feels when his eyes are most open, his conscience most awake, and his heart most tender.

2. The solicitude which precedes renovation is indispensable.

No man can be saved without repentance. But who can repent truly, without a deep sense of sin; and who can perceive and feel his guilt and danger while impenitent, and not tremble? No man will apply to Jesus Christ to save him, who does not feel his need of a Saviour; but how can this necessity be felt, without clear, and just apprehensions of guilt; and how can these be experienced by a sinner under condemnation, and not occasion pain? It is persons in this awakened state, that Jesus Christ came to call to him;—not the righteous, but sinners,—to heal the broken hearted, to preach deliverance to captives, to set at liberty those that are bound.

3. The distress of an awakened sinner is always, in its moral tendencies, salutary.

It puts an end to stupidity and procrastination, and supersedes the fear of man, the diversions of care, the fascination of pleasure, and concentrates the energies of the soul for self-denial, and a vigorous attention to the means of grace, while it brings upon the mind the blaze of truth, and the power of obligation, by which, in the day of His power, the Holy Spirit produces repentance towards God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.

4. In all ordinary cases, it is a state of mind entirely safe.

Conviction of sin never produces any injurious effect upon body or mind, which is not produced, upon the same principles, by other causes, and much oftener. The mind is capable of stronger action and feeling than the body can endure. Intense protracted study, or long continued care, or joy, or sorrow, as well as sudden powerful emotion, affect sensibly the health, and the mind itself. But there is nothing in religious solicitude which has any peculiar tendency to produce such results, and the reiterated allegation of such tendencies, is the result of a malignant or a weak credulity, the whisperings of rumor, or the clamor of fame with her thousand tongues. I have observed carefully and long the effects of religious solicitude, and of other causes upon the nervous temperament,



and the result is, that the injurious effects ascribed to religion, are produced much oftener by other causes.

Hundreds are injured by injudicious intellectual application, to one who is injured by solicitude about his soul. Thousands are reduced to morbid melancholy by sloth and gluttony, and by intemperate drinking tens of thousands, to one who becomes the victim of perverted excitement on account of his religious anxieties. The perplexities, and cares, and disappointments of life, occasion more nervous melancholy, and mental aberration, a thousand fold, than ever appears in alliance with revivals of religion. The annual visitations of sickness and mortality, in the families of the fashionable, and thoughtless, and dissipated, produce more shipwreck of cheerfulness, and more sadness of heart, and protracted melancholy, than is produced by all the revivals so constantly occurring in our land. The instances are rare, in which any permanent evils result from solicitude for the welfare of the soul; and such as do exist, are for the most part the consequence entirely of indiscretion;—either of cruel opposition, which cuts off the unhappy sufferer from the needed evangelical instruction; or cases of indiscreet voluntary concealment, where confidential communication and instruction would have produced alleviation; or where there was antecedently such a tremulous state of the system, as precluded protracted emotion on any subject, or in any degree, without injurious nervous excitement; or, which is more common, cases of prolonged religious solicitude, without suitable exercise, nutrition, and sleep. In proportion to the tax laid upon the intellect, and the heart, of severe thought and deep feeling, is the necessity of a corresponding increase of muscular tone, to balance nervous tendency. If, then, when the tax on the nervous system is doubled, the muscular system is robbed of its energy, by utter inactivity, by irregular and diminished nutrition, and a voluntary subtraction of sleep, who can wonder that the animal spirits should flag, and the nerves unbalanced sigh to every breeze, and send out their wild vagaries through all the regions of the imagination.

I am aware, that some seem to regard the importance of the soul, and the excellence of religion, as a complete guarantee against any possible harm, in seeking salvation in any manner, whatever resistance may be offered to the ordinary rules of discretion and self-preservation. But it ought to be remembered, that the Holy Spirit, in the conviction and conversion of men, acts by the instrumentality of stated laws of body and mind, and not by their prostration. The body and the mind may easily be too much exhausted to render the influence of truth of any avail; and when this is the case, rest is required, instead of new excitement.

Animals are guided in their own preservation by instinct: man by reason and experience. Nor is it to be expected, that God will preserve by a miracle that health and safety, for the

preservation of which he has bestowed on us the ample means. The laws of mind and body are general laws, and the violation of them by indiscretion, while seeking the salvation of the soul, will be the same in its result, as if similar violence were offered in relation to any other subject. The only precautions which I have found necessary, are,

1. That the subject of religious inquiry shall continue his daily avocation, which will furnish a partial alleviation to the mind from intense thinking and deep feeling on one subject. This, attended by stated seasons for reading and prayer, will not be injurious to the progress of knowledge and salutary impression, but favorable to it; while undiverted intensity of thought and feeling will be liable to produce confusion of mind and exhausted sensibility, in such cases misnamed stupidity.

If the employment be studious or sedentary, in such cases there should be taken, every day, more than the ordinary amount of muscular exercise.

2. A second caution is, to continue, as near as may be, the ordinary amount of nutrition and sleep, and at the times which habit has rendered natural. A momentary loss of appetite, or an occasional encroachment on the regular hours of sleep is not to be feared; but the continuance of this robbery of animal nature, at a time when a double tax of thought and feeling is laid upon it, and an increase, instead of a diminution of care is needed for its healthful preservation, cannot fail, if persisted in, to impair the muscular tone, and induce nervous debility. By such causes, the power of digestion may be invaded, and the corroding acid formed, to prey upon the great organ of sensibility, bringing upon the soul disastrous twilight, and perplexity, and fear, and faintness of heart, all which will now be taken by the suffering subject, as evidence of unparalleled guilt and hopelessness, and by the enemies of religion, as demonstration strong of the morbid influence of revivals of religion; when in fact, it is the result of ignorance, or of a presumptuous neglect of the means of self-preservation, which, in any other case, would produce the same effect. No wonder, that abused nature groans and travails in pain, and shuts out the light of heaven, and shrouds the soul in sackcloth. It is the cry of exhausted feeling—the ebbing of nervous energy—the going out of the lamp of life, because its oil is wantonly consumed, and not replenished.

Short seasons of acute distress are not dangerous. But where solicitude is protracted, there is a liability to nervous affection, which should be understood by ministers, and Christian parents, and all Christians, and guarded against by a vigilance and care, to secure a temperate regularity of food, and sleep, and exercise. With these simple precautions, there is, in every case of religious awakening, next to absolute safety.

What Edwards used to call Satan's temptations, which came in at the close of a revival, were evidently the effect of nervous debility, in case of seriousness protracted, without a due regard to the means of preserving an unperverted healthful flow of nervous feeling. It was the flagging and mourning of exhausted, neglected nature. In proportion as I have paid a careful attention to this subject, have those cases of stubborn melancholy been rare in their appearance, and when incorrigible to moral influence, have yielded usually to regimen and exercise, until, in many cases, when the preternatural darkness was driven away by the pulsation of health, the Sun of righteousness arose upon the soul in a cloudless day.

But with all the preceding liabilities to nervous affection, the danger attendant upon the mental solicitude which precedes and is indispensable to repentance towards God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, is not so great as that which attends the ordinary avocations of life.

There are more accidents injurious to health, in voyages and journeyings for amusement, and in the daily occupations of men, than attend the exertions of men to obtain salvation. I have looked with admiration upon the safety with which, in ordinary cases, the mind acts in this great concern. There is a moral excitement in the open-eyed vision of truth to an unholy mind, which, though painful, is salutary; and with proper instruction, is much more calculated to prevent, than to produce morbid melancholy. Where the proper instruction is given, God is not accustomed to permit the spirit to fail before him, but within a period safe to body and mind, grants deliverance.

Nor is there any such liability to improvidences, as creates any peculiar danger. Children in the hands of the most judicious mothers, come to harm as often as awakened sinners under judicious treatment. Indeed, the odium which is got up against revivals, as tending to melancholy, and mental aberration, does in reality belong to another quarter. The infidelity, and irreligion, and profligacy, which trumpet this objection against revivals, produce a thousand fold more distress, and melancholy, and nervous insanity, by vicious excitement and exhaustion, than all the evils which have ever been occasioned by mental solicitude on account of religion. It is impenitent profligacy and infidelity, which wear out the body, and war against the soul. Infidelity and intemperance occasion a hundred murders and suicides, to one death which is occasioned by religious anxiety; and if the example of the wicked should be imitated, in publishing all the suicides produced by atheism, and infidelity, and heresy, and profligacy, it might require a weekly gazette extraordinary, devoted to that single theme, inscribed within and without with mourning, and lamentation, and wo.

## REVIEW.

THE LIFE OF JOHN LEDYARD, *the American Traveller*; comprising selections from his Journals and Correspondence. By Jared Sparks. Cambridge, Hilliard & Brown, 1828.

Biographies are so multiplied in these times, that in order to be patronized they must possess merit; at the same time they offer, in general, so many attractions for the mass of readers, and are so extensively called for and read, that in no other sort of writing does merit stand in better prospect of reward. Two things only are requisite to give them certainty of success—a worthy subject and good execution. If the character portrayed is one of little prominence, if its various shades are marked by no striking peculiarities, if it is associated with no national blessings, no enterprize of greatness, no purposes of benevolence, it may not rise into notice, even though the execution be first rate. Greatness will command interest, under the disadvantages of poor description. And even though it may be *wicked greatness*, if it is set forth with the view of deterring others from vice, it is not the less adapted to excite and fix the attention. On the other hand, good judgement in the selection of incidents, and the graces of good style, are indispensable to a finished biography. Men of judgement are disgusted, when circumstances of little or no moment are detailed in the character even of a great man. And men of taste will loathe the inelegancies and vulgarities that too often abound in the biography of eminent men. It becomes necessary, therefore, that good selection of character, and also of the incidents of character, should be combined with the best taste in the use of style, and the happiest talent at illustrating the nice shades of feelings and of actions, in order to ensure the perfection of biographical sketches. Every man of reading knows how admirably these different qualities were associated and evinced in the “Lives of the Poets,” by Dr. Johnson. So judicious was his selection of the incidents of character, that the reader almost forgets the excellencies of style, in admiration of the character drawn; and yet so accomplished was the execution, that poets little known to fame by their *own* writings, are made famous by the pen of their biographer. There is one other thing which may be mentioned in connexion with this notice of Dr. Johnson as a biographer. Remarks of a *general nature* frequently escaped him, when he was drawing the portraits of illustrious individuals. In the hands of a *master*, this is highly instructive and proper. But it requires the hand of a master. It should be done in the proper place, and with suitable brevity. If general remarks are made without judge-

ment, without appropriateness, and with prolixity, they tire and disgust the reader.

We proceed now to apply these principles to the work before us. We think it possesses a high degree of merit, both as to matter and manner. Ledyard was certainly a very extraordinary man. "The acts of his life," his biographer remarks, "demand notice, less on account of their results, than of the spirit with which they were performed, and the uncommon traits of character which prompted their execution. Such instances of decision, energy, perseverance, fortitude and enterprize, have rarely been witnessed in the same individual." To trace the progress of such a mind is an object worth the efforts of the most gifted writer. A skilful delineation of the early developement of a great mind, is among the most profitable studies of the youthful learner. As his own mind is unfolding its powers, he is most interested in learning how others have been unfolded before him. But besides this circumstance, the scenes of his life were extremely diversified, and connected with some of the most curious and most noble objects of public interest. Almost at the outset of the Memoir, we find his name connected with the subject of Indian Missions. We soon find him sailing to Gibraltar, afterwards to London, to seek for wealthy family connexions; and after a disappointment in this particular, embarking with Captain Cook in his last voyage round the world. In the course of this celebrated voyage, Ledyard made observations, which abundantly shewed the discrimination of his mind. His remarks concerning the first peopling of the South Sea Islands, concerning the language, manners, and superstition of the natives, his singular digression on the origin and practice of sacrifices, and other speculations of like character, are among the most entertaining records afforded by voyagers. His account of the last scene in the life of Cook is probably the most ample and correct that has ever been given. During this voyage, also, several adventures of his own are recorded, which possess no common interest. We afterwards find him in his native land, proposing, for the first time, a voyage for mercantile adventure to the northwest coast. This he did, in consequence of witnessing, in his voyage with Cook, the astonishing profit made by procuring furs on that coast, and selling them in different parts of the world. After great exertion, delay and perplexity, he entirely failed in his attempt. Had he succeeded, he would undoubtedly have enriched himself, and all embarked in the expedition. He next went to Europe, and endeavored to set on foot the same enterprize there; but notwithstanding his incredible toils and anxieties, he met, in the end, with bitter disappointment and entire failure. He was, however, without question, the first to propose, in both continents, the fur trade on the northwest coast, which has been the source of wealth to many in each hemisphere. We next find him prosecut-



ing his perilous travels through European and Asiatic Russia. Whether we regard the courage manifested, the danger incurred, the fatigues endured, or the treacherous conduct of the Empress, which led to his final disappointment, we cannot help contemplating this adventure with extreme interest. He made many observations on the peculiarities of the Tartar race, to which we shall have occasion to refer in another place. In the mean time it will not be uninteresting to allude more in detail to his journey through Sweden, Lapland and Finland. This was occasioned by his disappointment, in not being able to pass the Gulf of Bothnia on the ice. It was performed in the midst of ice and snow; and the dangers attending it may be imagined from Maupertuis' description of the cold of Tornea, contained in the following extract.

“The town of Tornea, at our arrival on the thirtieth of December, had really a most frightful aspect. Its little houses were buried to the tops in snow, which, if there had been any daylight, must have effectually shut it out. But the snows continually falling, or ready to fall, for the most part hid the sun the few moments that he might have showed himself at mid-day. In the month of January the cold was increased to that extremity, that Reaumur's mercurial thermometers, which in Paris, in the great frost in 1709, it was thought strange to see fall to fourteen degrees below the freezing point, were now down to thirty seven. The spirit of wine in the others was frozen. If we opened the door of a warm room, the external air instantly converted all the air in it into snow, whirling it round in white vortices. If we went abroad, we felt as if the air were tearing our breasts in pieces. And the cracking of the wood whereof the houses are built, as if the violence of the cold split it, continually alarmed us with an approaching increase of cold. The solitude of the streets was no less than if the inhabitants had been all dead; and in this country you may often see people that have been maimed, and had an arm or a leg frozen off. The cold, which is always very great, increases sometimes by such violent and sudden fits, as are almost infallibly fatal to those that happen to be exposed to it. Sometimes there arise sudden tempests of snow that are still more dangerous. The winds seem to blow from all quarters at once, and drive about the snow with such fury, that in a moment all the roads are lost. Unhappy he who is seized by such a storm in the fields. His acquaintance with the country, or the marks he may have taken by the trees, cannot avail him. He is blinded by the snow, and lost if he stirs but a step.”

Concerning the remainder of Ledyard's life, it is only necessary to add, that having arrived at London, he was engaged by several Englishmen of rank and philanthropy, in an expedition to explore the interior of Africa. He proceeded to Alexandria, and thence to Cairo, where he was released from all earthly suffering, by death, occasioned by a fever. His remarks on the inhabitants of Africa, and the “land of Nile,” though very brief, are marked by the

same close observation and discriminative power, for which he was so remarkable.

It will be seen by the above outline, that the subject of Mr. Sparks' Memoirs is one of sufficient pre-eminence to secure general attention. As a man, he was extraordinary; and the scenes, with which he was connected, were in themselves highly interesting. We regret that no more is said of his religious character. From the circumstance of his once studying divinity, and from some extracts of his letters, it might seem probable that he was a religious man; but we are disappointed in hearing so little about it. We are anxious to know how far he was sustained by an unshaken trust in Providence, amidst the ineffable hardships he was called to endure; and how far his views of the power of the Gospel might affect his opinion of the practicability of Indian civilization. Of his amiable disposition we have abundant proof; and of his grateful remembrance of favors, there is sufficient testimony in his well known eulogy on women. "I have observed among all nations, that the women ornament themselves more than the men; that wherever found, they are the same kind, civil, obliging, humane, tender beings; that they are inclined to be gay and cheerful, timorous and modest. They do not hesitate, like man, to perform a hospitable generous action; not haughty, nor arrogant, nor supercilious, but full of courtesy and fond of society; industrious, economical, ingenuous; more liable in general to err than man, but in general more virtuous, and performing more good actions than he. I never addressed myself in the language of decency and friendship to a woman, whether civilized or savage, without receiving a decent and friendly answer. With man it has often been otherwise. In wandering over the barren plains of inhospitable Denmark, through honest Sweden, frozen Lapland, and churlish Finland, unprincipled Russia, and the wide spread regions of the wandering Tartar, if hungry, dry, cold, wet, or sick, woman has ever been friendly to me, and uniformly so; and to add to this virtue, so worthy of the appellation of benevolence, these actions have been performed in so free and kind a manner, that, if I was dry, I drank the sweet draught, and, if hungry, ate the coarse morsel, with double relish."

Having spoken thus far of the subject which Mr. Sparks has chosen, we now come to speak of the execution. It is with pleasure we can speak of this in terms of almost unqualified praise. We know not how copious may have been the materials, with which he was furnished, but certain it is, that there is nothing tedious or incoherent in his own remarks, or in the extracts from Ledyard's letters and journal. His style of writing is perspicuous and forcible. He is indeed too well known to the literary world, to be greatly affected by our censure or applause. Yet, such as it is, he is welcome to our hearty approbation. We con-

gratulate the lovers of memoirs, that the "Life of Ledyard" has fallen into such hands; and we congratulate the lovers of learning generally, that so valuable a journal as the North American Review is conducted by this gentleman. We could point to more than one article in that work, that fully justifies this opinion; and we would name the one on 'African Colonization,' not more for the intrinsic excellence it possesses, than for the opposition with which it has met in other reviews and papers.

But to return to our subject; we are quite certain that the "Life of Ledyard" will be considered one of the most entertaining and instructive biographies, which has appeared in this country for many years, and we doubt not it will meet with merited success.

Our only remaining topic of remark is one on which we are obliged to dissent both from Ledyard and his biographer. We have before hinted that this adventurous traveller speculated boldly and singularly concerning the race of Tartars. He thought them and the American Indians to be the same people. He seems indeed to have simplified the whole human family, so far as to ascribe their difference of manners and customs, and even of color, to their difference of circumstances. Had he lived to complete his African expedition, and to prepare, at leisure, his journal for publication, his theory concerning the human race would probably have been in many respects the most simple and unembarrassed, and supported by the best arguments, of any on record. Considering the great influence which he attributed to the difference of moral and national condition, it is singular enough that he should have thought the Indians incapable of civilization. According to his opinion, they may be placed in circumstances sufficiently diverse to change their *color*, but not sufficiently powerful to overcome their predilection for savage life! The time in which he lived, and the experience he had, might naturally enough have encouraged this belief, if he were strongly inclined to indulge it. But his biographer certainly lives a half century too late, to be the advocate of such a sentiment. We are surprised, therefore, to hear him hold the following language: "There has never been a more idle scheme of philanthropy, than that of converting a savage into a civilized man. No one attempt, it is believed, has ever been successful." The reason he assigns for this assertion is, that savages, brought into a civilized country, feel their own inferiority, and are thus driven back to their native woods. If this were uniformly true, it might be accounted for from the fact that they have not been brought in sufficient numbers to encourage each other, nor kept sufficiently long, nor treated with sufficient kindness, to make a fair experiment. But what has this to do with the trial now going forward to carry the Gospel into their own habitations, and to instil into their wandering tribes the principles of religion

and of civil government? We appeal to facts, which are worth more than a thousand speculations. What is the Cherokee nation *now* doing? Let any one read their *Phœnix*, edited by one of their number, who received his education in the midst of us. Let him study their laws, their governments, their improvements in agriculture and manufactures, their partial adoption of the Christian religion, with the restraints and habits which it imposes, and he will not hesitate to say, that Indians can be civilized. We could mention those among them, who would be an honor to any society, and in whose personal acquaintance we have taken great delight. And lest it should be said that these are in danger of apostatizing, we could name those who have already died in the enjoyment of a Christian hope, and who, for years before their departure, were an honor to the Christian profession. Similar experiments have been made in different parts of the world, and with similar success. Missionary labors in the Society Islands, and in the Sandwich Islands, afford incontestible evidence to this effect. We therefore read the remarks quoted above, with *astonishment*. They are disproved by facts of recent date, and of great extent and variety. We might indeed concur in them, if we looked merely to the influence of philosophy or civil government, without the aids of Christianity. But when we think of the Gospel of Christ, we cease to despond. We know that it is distinguished from every other system of religion in this respect,—it is wonderfully adapted to every feature of humanity. It is as much suited to raise the abject, as it is to humble the arrogant oppressor. We know that it *has* produced these effects, and we have reason to know that it will continue to produce the same. Wherever the indefatigable exertions of our missionaries are felt among the sons of the forest, there Christianity and civilization go hand in hand. And these results, we doubt not, will be more and more common and conspicuous. We are confident in the promises of God, that the time is approaching, when the wild Tartar that roams the Siberian waste, the African burnt by a vertical sun, the Islander in the Pacific and Indian Oceans, together with the afflicted tribes that wander up and down our own wilds, shall rise to the enjoyments of civilized life, beneath the influence of that benign religion, which converts into one brotherhood, the whole human race.

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## NOTICES OF RECENT PUBLICATIONS.

1. *Remains of the late Rev. Charles Wolfe, A. B., Curate of Donoughmore, Diocess of Armagh; with a brief Memoir of his Life.* By the Rev. JOHN A. RUSSELL, M. A., &c. Hartford, H. & F. J. Huntington, 1828. 12mo. pp. 294.

We took up this volume with something like an *expectation of disappointment*, when we recollected that the Rev. Mr. Wolfe was the author of the much celebrated "*Ode on the Burial of Sir John Moore,*" and when we considered how often it happens that a writer, by some happy hit, which may almost be termed accidental, is raised to an elevation in the literary world which he is afterward unable to retain. We thought it *might* be so with *him*; and that perhaps we should find little in his "*Remains*," to support the high character which his first publication had given him. But this apprehension was soon removed. Wolfe was a man of sterling talent. In his mind, strength and brilliancy were, in an uncommon degree, united. The natural amiableness of his character, too, gives additional interest to his productions; and the sanctifying power of divine grace has left little wanting to the finished excellence of the author, or the man. The biographical part of the work is well written. The *Editor*, as he modestly styles himself, has very successfully avoided the "*apparent self-obtrusion,*" which he feared, in preserving the memorials of a friend, "*whose existence had been for many years blended with his own;*" and has enabled us almost to forget that we are indebted, for the pleasure with which his volume is perused, to any one beside its dear departed subject. We cannot *quite* forget it however; and we sincerely thank him, in behalf of the literary and religious community, for a portrait of his justly valued friend, so delicate in its touches, and so full of living warmth in its coloring, as nearly to conceal the skilful limner's hand.

We find in Mr. Wolfe all that openness and vivacity, which, when chastened and refined by the influence of evangelical truth, so happily mingle with the more important qualities of a vigorous and cultivated mind; and which embellish the best specimens of Irish character which we have had opportunity to inspect. So discernible are these national peculiarities in the Memoir and Remains before us, that we are inclined to say of him, in his own playful language,

"So bold and frank his bearing, boy,  
Should you meet him onward faring, boy,  
In Lapland's snow,  
Or Chill's glow,  
You'd say, What news from Erin, boy." p. 31.

This scrap from one of his earlier and lighter poems, may prepare our readers to expect a rich variety of composition in the volume which contains it: and we can assure them they will not, in this respect, be disappointed. In his minor poems, written, like Cowper's, for the entertainment of an endeared and attached circle of



friends—in his letters—in his college exercises—and in his sermons, they will find evidence of mental fertility, of diversified and powerful talent, of warm social feeling, and of pure and exalted piety, not often to be met with in such intimate and harmonious combination. We should, with much pleasure, enrich this article by copious extracts: but we trust the book will soon be in the hands of all our readers, and they can better suit themselves.

2. RELIGIOUS LIBERTY. *A Sermon preached on the day of the Annual Fast in Massachusetts, April 3, 1828.* By WILLIAM COGSWELL, A. M., Pastor of the South Church in Dedham, Mass. Boston, Peirce and Williams. pp. 22.

We recommend this sermon to the perusal of all, who would understand the nature and extent of their religious rights, and would duly appreciate the importance of steadfastly maintaining them. It is here shewn, that "*Individuals* have the right to think, speak, and act for themselves," on the subject of religion. "They possess the right to have a creed, and to avow it openly, and no one has just cause to complain if they do. They have the right to attach themselves to what religious denomination they choose, and to worship God according to the dictates of their own consciences, without fear or molestation. They have the right, and the privilege, to contribute of their property to charitable purposes, and thus be the almoners of God's bounty." "No person should be disfranchised for his belief and conduct in things religious, unless he so use his liberty as to impair the liberty of others, or corrupt the public morals." "*Towns, Parishes, and Religious Societies* have also rights of a religious nature." "A parish has a right to elect a public teacher, and contract to support him, and procure for him, in some way, a formal induction into office. And this minister will be entitled to all the privileges and immunities of "a teacher of piety, religion, and morality;" although, "not being ordained over any church, what is peculiar to a minister as a *pastor*," does not belong to him.—"*Churches*, too, have religious rights and privileges." They have a right to adopt their own formularies, creeds, and covenants. They "have the right of admitting and excluding members." They "have a right to elect their own officers;" and if property is given to them, "to hold and control it, according to the will of the donor." "A church and parish in *copartnership*, have religious rights and privileges. They have the right to settle a minister of the Gospel, in this united capacity. They may agree to have, for the pastor of the church, and the minister of the parish, the same person." They may do this, not by voting "together, as one body, but by a concurrent vote or choice." And "if the church and parish, as distinct bodies, cannot harmoniously live together in copartnership, let them peaceably separate. But let not the parish control the church, nor the church control the parish."—Again; "*Ministers of the Gospel* have religious rights and privileges. They may inquire and think for themselves, and exercise the right of private judgment in matters of religious faith, as well as the people. They may preach, and

are bound to preach, what they honestly and sincerely believe." "Ministers, too, have the right of regulating their exchanges according to their own sense of duty; to introduce into their pulpits whom they please, and to exclude whom they please. The pulpit is wholly under their control. This, reason dictates. For if the people may direct in regard to one exchange, they may with regard to another, and another, and so in regard to every exchange. They may debar the minister from exchanging altogether, or compel him to exchange all the time. One parishioner may advise to one exchange, and a second to another, and a third to none at all; according to their religious views and feelings; and so the minister become the sport of passion, and prejudice, and partialities.—Finally, "The connexion between a pastor and his church, and a minister and his parish, may be dissolved otherwise than by death; and in this respect they have distinct rights and privileges." A parish cannot separate a pastor from his church, without their consent; nor can a church separate a minister from his parish, without their consent.

The religious rights and liberties, thus defined and explained, should be steadfastly maintained, "because no man, or body of men, have a right to deprive us of them;" "because they were bequeathed to us by our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and have been handed down to us by our pious ancestors;" "because of the evils which would result from abandoning them;" "because they are productive of the happiest effects;" "and because attempts are making to wrest them from us."

The estimation in which we hold this discourse may be learned from the number and variety of the extracts we have made from it. The subject is one of the utmost importance, and it is discussed in a plain and popular way, so as to be accommodated to the understanding of all classes of readers. We hope it may be read in every part of our Commonwealth, and by Christians of different denominations.

3. *A Sermon on the Mode of Baptism.* By G. C. BECKWITH. Andover, Flagg and Gould. 1828. pp. 30.

This sermon is literally "a dissuasive from controversy respecting the mode of baptism," particularly in seasons of special attention to religion. The circumstances which led to its delivery and publication are thus detailed by the author:

"During a prosperous revival of religion, and at the very time of its greatest power and prosperity, the *mode* of baptism became all at once a topic of conversation from one end of my parish to the other. It checked, and threatened ere long to stop, the work of God. Many of my people importuned me to say something; but I adhered to my usual maxim of silence for the sake of peace, until I saw the revival brought to the very brink of total declension. I then consulted my fathers in the ministry, and at length consented, not indeed to dispute, but barely to dissuade my own people, whatever others might do, from agitating such a subject of controversy. The crisis was met, and the blessing of God on a humble effort gave a new and lasting impulse to the revival. My church requested me to publish the discourse; this request has often been ur-

gently repeated by individuals; but with the hope of its being unnecessary, I have delayed, until I find that among a people so transient and so peculiarly exposed, I must either preach often, or publish."

We have frequently trembled at the presumption of those, of whatever denomination, who could allow themselves to push a controversy on the subject of baptism, in the midst of a revival of religion. When blinded eyes are beginning to open, and the careless and stupid are brought to see their guilt and danger—when the world is comparatively forgotten, and religion and eternity are felt to be the most interesting topics—when all minor inquiries are merged in this, 'What shall we do to inherit eternal life?'—that the professed friends of Jesus, and lovers of souls, should interpose at such a time, and take off the mind from these great subjects, by urging questions connected with the mode of baptism—such a course surely is pitiable and dreadful! If controversy on the subject of baptism is ever justifiable, (and we doubt not it may be,) it cannot be justifiable, or even excusable, at such a time as this. And those, of either sentiment, who take upon themselves the fearful responsibility of introducing this controversy at such times, we cannot but regard, whatever may be their intention, as, in fact, doing more to advance a sect, than to promote the cause of Christ, and hazarding the loss of souls for the sake of gaining proselytes to their own party views.

Impressed with considerations such as these, we were glad to see the sermon before us. It will be read with interest, and we doubt not with profit, in circumstances similar to those which called it forth.

4. *Sabbath School Treasury*. July, 1828. Vol. I. No. 1. pp. 12.

This little monthly magazine is designed, as its title imports, "to promote the general interest of Sabbath schools. Vigorous efforts will be made," say its conductors, "to fill its pages with what will most deeply interest parents, teachers, and scholars, and most distinctly and forcibly portray the responsible duties which grow out of their several relations." On the general importance of Sabbath schools we are thankful that we need say nothing. By the good they have already done, as well as by their promise of still greater benefits, they are fully entitled to that almost universal interest which has been excited in their favor. By publishing facts and appeals, and circulating information by the *Sabbath School Treasury* can hardly fail of extending, and strengthening, and perfecting the system of which it is the advocate. We rejoice therefore in its appearance, and wish it all desirable success.

5. *A Sermon on Christ's sense of dependence on God, particularly as shewn in his Intercessory office*. By Rev. JOHN PIERPONT, Boston. Published in the *Liberal Preacher* for July, 1828. pp. 14.

Mr. Pierpont rests the necessity of Christ's intercession, not on a want of tenderness in God the Father, but on the impiety and the criminal imperfections of men.

"How many are there, who *do not themselves pray for blessings*, and who yet are blest! Are we sure that upon such, good gifts have not been poured forth from the hand of God, in answer to the intercessory prayers of others?"—"And how much do even the best of Christians fail of cherishing, as they ought to cherish, the feeling of dependence, and of pious gratitude, and of filial devotion towards God! And how much do we all come short of our duty, in asking at his hand the bounties of his providence, and the gifts of his Spirit!" "We need not indeed, and we *have* not an Advocate with the Father, because he has lost the character of a Father; but because we so often lose that of children:—not because he *withdraws* himself from the prayer of penitence, but because we so frequently fail of *offering* it:—not because he will not listen to the request of filial and grateful dependence, but because we are so often ungrateful, and so often forget that we are dependent:—not because we *cannot* go to him for his blessing, but because we *do not*. And surely, it is not injurious to the most exalted views that we can take of the mercy of the Most High, to say that his ear is ever bowed to the prayer which is offered by the Son of his love in behalf of the fallible and the thoughtless among his brethren,—the sinning and the suffering ones who are called by his name."

Our Saviour represents himself as interceding specially, if not exclusively, for his people. "I pray not for the world, but *for them which thou hast given me*." But Mr. Pierpont represents him as praying specially for the ungodly—those "who *do not themselves pray for blessings*, and who yet are blest." And so far as he prays for his people at all, it is only because their own prayers are imperfect—they do not pray as they ought. "We need not, and we have not, an Advocate with the Father, because he has lost the character of a Father; but because *we so often lose that of children*." Accordingly he reckons it among the consolations resulting from his doctrine, that "when we have been attempting to" pray, and "sit down with the disheartening conviction, that our coldness has chilled our plea," we may cherish the hope "that the prayers of our Intercessor for us will be more fervent, and more prevalent, than ours for ourselves." Whether views such as these of the intercession of Christ are agreeable to the Scriptures—whether they do not encourage a neglect of prayer, under the impression that if we do not pray for ourselves, Christ will pray the more for us—and whether, in this way, they do not make him "the minister of sin," we leave it, without note or comment, for our readers to determine.

Mr. Pierpont does not regard Christ as the only being in heaven who intercedes. He represents all the *celestial host* as praying for one another, and for men on earth.

"May we not hope that all 'who are worthy to attain that world' may and will look up in prayer to him who is *over all*, in behalf of those who are coming on after them to the regions of light, as well as for those who are around and before them in those blest regions?" p. 11.

Indeed, Mr. Pierpont goes further than this, and makes it the duty of Christians on earth to *pray for the redeemed in heaven*.

"Why may we not, even here, according to the truly catholic doctrine, let our prayers ascend to God, that those whom we have loved on earth, but who have now gone down through the gates of the grave, may still be the objects of the divine benevolence, and be introduced to the bright circles of the just, and enjoy the blest society of the redeemed and their Redeemer? If the tide of celestial love flows down over the barriers of death, and, by intercessions, brings down blessings for the dwellers upon earth, cannot the love that

mortals feel for those who have put on immortality, overleap the same barriers, and appear before the throne of mercy, and pray that those who have entered upon their celestial career may go on from glory to still greater glory?—Shall not our prayer, that those who have already passed through the golden gates of life may continue to rise forever towards the Source of good, come up with acceptance even from the dim and distant earth?" p. 12.

Mr. Pierpont is not a little mistaken, in representing his notions about praying for the saints in heaven as a "Catholic doctrine." The Roman Catholics pray *to* the saints, but not *for* them. They enjoin prayer for those who are suffering in the fires of purgatory; but we have yet to learn that they require or offer prayer, in behalf of those who have gone to their eternal rest.

However, Mr. Pierpont does not here hold us in long suspense. He immediately falls upon the Catholic doctrine, and urges it in 'style poetic.'

"Shall we not go still further, and believe that He who ever bows his ear to his children's requests, will open it to the prayer which a child of earth offers him, that a brother who has sunk into the grave even without hope, may yet find favor with his Judge,—the favor that shall pity—shall uphold—shall bring him up from the fearful depths into which he has sunk, and make him still a partaker of immortal life. Until it is known,—and *now* it cannot be known—that intercessions offered by the living for the dead can never find audience with God,—is there not something in them congenial to our natures, and interesting to the devout spirit? To say nothing of the Christian spirit—is there nothing interesting to a generous philanthropy, in the spectacle of holy men kneeling before the throne of mercy, in behalf of those, who, all unholy though they were, have gone to their dread account?—Who knows—who dares to say—that such intercessions of the living shall be of no avail for the dead!" pp. 12, 13.

It would have been satisfactory, no doubt, to some of Mr. Pierpont's readers, if he had brought an *example* from the Scriptures of praying for the dead; or any *precept* requiring such prayer; or any *promise* to encourage it; or if he had shewn the propriety or advantage of praying for those, who are either confirmed in a state of ever-rising, increasing glory, or are confined in the prisons of darkness, beyond mercy or hope. Or if he supposes the miserable in the future world will be forgiven and restored, as it seems he does, it might have been satisfactory, if he had distinctly *proved* this point. It might not have been without its uses, also, if he had brought the two ends of his discourse together, and endeavored to harmonize them. In the first part, he tells us, "We need not, and we have not, an Advocate with the Father, because he has lost the character of a father, but because *we so often lose that of children.*" But do the saints in heaven ever lose the character of children? And if they do not, for what, on *his own ground*, do they need the intercessions either of Christ, or of their fellow believers?

But we cannot enlarge. From the remarks we have made, our readers will gain some idea of this strange discourse; and we leave them to their own reflections.



## MISCELLANEOUS DEPARTMENT.

### UNITARIAN EXPOSITION OF THE RIGHTS OF THE CHURCHES IN 1806.

THE following "digest of the ancient laws" of Massachusetts "relative to the constitution and rights of the churches," is from "the Monthly Anthology and Boston Review," for Nov. 1806. The "Society of Gentlemen," by whom the Anthology was conducted, included the leading Unitarians in and around Boston at that period. The Anthology stood for several years, as many of our readers will remember, in direct opposition, on religious subjects, to the Panoplist. Although the remarks which follow have respect particularly to the churches in Boston, they will apply, with little modification, to the churches throughout the State.

#### *To the Editors of the Anthology.*

GENTLEMEN,

Having lately examined the ancient laws of this State, relative to the constitution and rights of churches in the town of Boston, and reduced them into a digest, I submit it to you for insertion, provided you shall not deem it incompatible with the object of your useful miscellany. ANTIQUARIUS.

#### THE RIGHTS OF PROTESTANT CHURCHES IN THE TOWN OF BOSTON.

To constitute a body corporate, it is not necessary that there should be a formal act of incorporation. For if any body of men are, by the supreme authority of the State, recognized as such, it will be a virtual act of incorporation. In the early settlement of this Commonwealth, so unrefined were the inhabitants in their legal notions, that districts were constituted and invested with municipal rights by a single order of the governor and assistants of the colony, that they should be called by certain names. There is no other act of incorporation for the towns of Boston, Salem, Ipswich, and most others in the Commonwealth. In considering the rights of the churches in Boston, we shall have occasion to notice the above principle, as none of them have, until very lately, been incorporated into distinct religious communities by special acts of the government.

The congregations in Boston are invested with rights and immunities, which have descended entire through successive generations. Now where a body of men do possess certain rights, which they can, under a general name, and in their united capacity, legally maintain, which rights have descended to them, but will not die with them; they are corporations, "maintaining a perpetual succession, and enjoying a kind of legal immortality." As for the origin of these communities, they may claim corporate rights both from *prescription*, and by *implication* from acts of the colony, province, and commonwealth. They have names, by which they are distinguished from each other; they may raise monies; they may sue and be sued; and they may do all legal acts, which may be done by other artificial persons.

In these communities (the congregations,) there are several distinct corporate bodies, each known in law, and having its peculiar

rights and duties; viz. 1. The Church. 2. The Minister. 3. The Deacons, and, in Episcopal churches, Church-Wardens. And 4. The Proprietors of Pews.

1. The Church. By a law of the colony,\* passed in 1641, it is declared, that "all the people of God within the jurisdiction, who are not in a church way, and be orthodox in judgement, and not scandalous in life, shall have liberty to gather themselves into a church estate, provided they do it in a Christian way." But it adds, "that the General Court will not approve of any such companies of men, as shall join in any pretended way of church fellowship, unless they shall acquaint three or more magistrates dwelling next, and the elders of the neighbor churches, where they intend to join, and have their approbation therein." In the same law it is enacted, "that every church hath free liberty of election and ordination of all her officers from time to time, provided they be able, pious, and orthodox. By the expression "the church," is here meant, according to a definition thereof contained in a law passed in 1660,† such as are in full communion only. The teaching officer is intended, "the minister to all the people where the church is planted." All inhabitants, who were not in full communion, were excluded from any right in the choice, and if any one such should presume to act therein, he was accounted a disturber of the peace, and might be punished by the court of the shire, by admonition, security for good behavior, fine, or imprisonment, according to the aggravation of the offence. The church is invested with liberty to admit, recommend, dismiss, expel, or dispose of its officers and members for due cause: to assemble when it pleases, and to exercise all the ordinances of God, according to the Scriptures: to deal with its members, who are in the hands of justice, but not to retard its course: and even with the civil magistrate, "in case of apparent and just offence given in his place," but not to degrade him from his office or dignity in the Commonwealth.

The government of the colony consisted, in those early periods, of a spiritual and a temporal power. It was usual to consult with the elders of the churches in affairs of a civil nature,‡ relating to the institution of laws, and the conduct of public affairs. And in 1642, it was ordered, that the public treasurer should defray the charges of the elders, when they were employed by the order of the General Court. It is to this circumstance, that we must attribute the incorporating of so many of the provisions of the Levitical law into the jurisprudence of the early period of the State.

In the choice of the ministers, the church were originally the sole electors; but for more than a century past, it has been an established rule in the town of Boston, and in the other towns of the Commonwealth, that all who contribute to their support, shall have a voice in their election. By a law passed in the 4 and 5 of W. and M.,§ it is declared, that whenever a church is destitute of a minister, such church is invested with power to choose one. If the major part of

\* Laws and Liberties of the Colony of Massachusetts, 43.

† Laws and Liberties, &c. p. 42.

‡ *Ib.* p. 44.

§ *Prov. Laws*, p. 33.

such of the inhabitants as usually attend public worship, and are qualified by law to vote in town affairs,\* with whom likewise the members of the church may vote, shall concur with the act of the church, and the person elected shall accept thereof, he becomes the minister, to whose support all the inhabitants and rateable estates are obliged to contribute. In case of a disagreement between the church and the inhabitants, the former may call in the help of a council, consisting of the elders and messengers of three or five neighboring churches. This council is empowered to hear, examine, and consider the exceptions and allegations made against the election of the churches.† If they should approve of the choice, and the person elected should declare his acceptance, he became the minister of the society to all intents, and entitled to be supported by the parish. But the act of 4 and 5 of W. and M., which applies to the towns and parishes throughout the Commonwealth, expressly provides, that it shall not “abridge the inhabitants of Boston of their accustomed way and practice as to the choice and maintenance of their ministers.” Each society in this town should, when proceeding to choose a minister, ascertain and pursue the *ancient practice*, if it has followed any one mode in preference to another, from which it is presumed it would be illegal to depart, in respect of the rights, which, by the choice and acceptance, rest in the minister.

By a law of the province, passed 28 Geo. II. and re-enacted‡ in part by this Commonwealth, Feb. 20, 1786, churches are constituted corporations to receive donations, to choose a committee to advise the deacons in the administration of their affairs, to call the church officers to an account, and, if need be, to commence and prosecute any suits touching the same.

2. The Minister. The ministers of the several protestant churches, of whatever denomination, are made capable of taking, in succession, any parsonage land or lands, granted to the minister and his successors, or to the use of the ministers, and of suing and defending all actions touching the same. But no alienation by them of such lands is valid any longer, than they shall continue to be ministers, unless it be with the consent of the town, district, or precinct,—or, if such ministers are of the Episcopal denomination, with the consent of the vestry.

3. Deacons and Church-Wardens. By the same act, the deacons of the Congregational churches, and the church-wardens of the Episcopal churches, are constituted corporations, including the minister, elders, or vestry, where they are named in the original grant, to take in succession all grants and donations, real or personal, made either to their several churches, the poor of their churches, or to them and their successors; and to sue and defend in all actions touching the same. But they cannot alienate any lands belonging to churches, without the consent of the church, or of the vestry, where the gift is to an Episcopal church.

4. Proprietors of Pews. Prior to the year 1754, the several congregations in Boston could not, by law, raise money for the support

\* Prov. Laws, p. 62. † 7 W. iii. lb. p. 62. ‡ Prov. Laws, 370. Mass. Laws, 282.

of the ministry and public worship among them.\* It was therefore enacted by the same law, that the proprietors of the pews, or the persons to whom they are allotted in the houses of public worship, may, at a public meeting to be called for that purpose, cause the several pews in such houses to be valued according to the convenience of their situation; and new valuations to be made from time to time, as shall be found necessary, and impose a tax on each pew according to such valuation, provided it shall not exceed two shillings a week. The monies so raised must be applied to the support of the ministry, and other parochial charges. The proprietors are authorised to choose a clerk, treasurer, and likewise a collector of the assessments. Reference is made in this act to a committee of the proprietors, which may, therefore, be chosen at such meeting. These meetings are to be called by the proprietors' clerk, deacons, or church-wardens, and notice immediately after divine service given ten days, at least, before the meeting. In the notice, the purpose for which the meeting is to be convened, must be specified.

If any owner of a pew should neglect for three months, after a demand made, to pay his assessment, his pew may be sold by the proprietors, who, after deducting from the proceeds the debt and costs, shall return the surplus to the owner, unless he shall tender the same to the proprietors, or to their committee, at the last valuation. In this case, if they refuse or neglect to accept the same, no sum shall be deducted out of the sale of the pew, but such only as became due prior to the tender.

The proprietors of the pews are owners of the soil on which the meeting-house stands, and are the rightful persons to sue and defend in all cases respecting the same, and likewise in all cases respecting the house.

Where the general laws of the Commonwealth, relating to parishes, apply to the societies in Boston, they may avail themselves of them. Because they are general, and contain no exclusive expressions. Where those laws do not apply, they are not obligatory. Parishes in the country towns are in general separated from each other by boundary lines. Where in a town any district has been set off into a new parish, the remaining part is denominated the "first parish," and by an act, passed in the 4 Geo. I.† all country parishes are invested with the rights and immunities of bodies corporate, whether they constitute the original stock, or are branches from it.

This subject has been considered without reference to the law which was passed March 4, 1800,‡ providing for the public worship of God, and repealing the laws heretofore made on the subject. The first section of that law confirms to churches, connected and associated in public worship with towns, parishes, precincts, districts, and other bodies politic, being religious societies, established according to law within this Commonwealth, all their accustomed privileges and liberties respecting divine worship, church order and discipline. It declares that contracts, made by these bodies with any public teacher, shall have the same force, and be as obligatory

\* Prov. Laws, 371.

† Ib. 198.

‡ Mass. Laws, 931, &amp;c.

on the contracting parties, as any other lawful contract, and be sustained in the courts of justice. It prescribes the mode, in which the monies, paid by the subject to the support of public worship, shall be applied to the use of the teacher of his own denomination. It provides, that nothing in the act shall take from any church or religious society in Boston, or any other town, the right and liberty to support the public worship of God, by a tax on pews, or other established mode. And lastly, it repeals all laws, providing for the settlement of ministers, and the support of public worship, made prior to the adoption of our present constitution, except as to the recovery of fines which had accrued, and the fulfilment of contracts made under them. This act was probably drawn up by some one, who was not well acquainted with the ancient laws relative to the subject, for such construction must be given to this repealing clause, as will very much limit its operation. 1. The rights and privileges which had been vested in the several religious communities, still remain in them, by virtue of the first section of the law, which amounts to an act of confirmation. Therefore, the rights of the churches, to lead in the election of ministers, and of other officers, and to maintain order and discipline, where they have been accustomed to exercise and enjoy those rights, still remain in them. 2. The established mode in which the societies in Boston have supported public worship, is likewise preserved, together with the rights of the several bodies politic, of which they are composed. If there is anything in those old laws, as undoubtedly there is, which is repugnant to the provisions of this act, it is repealed. For it is a rule in the construction of a clause in a statute, that it is to be taken with the other parts of the statute, and to be restrained or enlarged by them, so as to give, if possible, that force and efficacy to the whole, which was intended by the legislature.

It will be seen at once that the views exhibited in the foregoing article (written evidently by a lawyer, and, if we are not misinformed, by one in an elevated station) are diametrically opposite to those for which Unitarians now so strenuously contend. They are substantially the views of the Orthodox at the present time. It is here maintained, that "to constitute a body corporate, it is not necessary that there should be a formal act of incorporation;" that in the congregations, "there are several *distinct corporate bodies*, each known in law, and having its peculiar rights and duties," the first of which is "*the church*;" that by the act of 1754, re-enacted in 1786, since the adoption of the constitution, the "*churches are constituted corporations*, to receive donations, to choose a committee to advise the deacons in the administration of their affairs, to call the church officers to an account, and, if need be, to commence and prosecute any suits touching the same;" and that by the constitution and the law of 1800, "the rights of the churches to *lead in the election of ministers*, and of other officers, and to maintain order and discipline, where they have been accustomed to exercise and enjoy those rights, *still remain in them*."

In view of these things, what will Unitarians now say? They cannot say that the Anthology was not a publication of their own, conducted by their own men, and devoted to their interests. They cannot say that the article above given is not there; for there it stands, and there it did stand, uncorrected and



uncontradicted, from the time of its publication, till the Anthology ceased. Nor can they say that the positions assumed in it are not directly opposite to those for which they now contend. They will say perhaps that the reformation from Popery has made great progress, and that they have received much new light on all manner of subjects, since 1806. But it will be remembered that the constitution and laws, so far as they relate to the questions at issue, remain the same; and that the rights of the churches are the same now, as then. The progress of Unitarian light, however great and glorious it may have been, has not altered one letter of the statute book, and has not impaired or confirmed the chartered rights of the churches in this Commonwealth.

The truth is, for there is no disguising it, the plan which, in its operation, goes to break down the churches, to take from them the right of election, and deprive them of their property, their communion furniture, and records, had not been started in 1806. It had not been thought of, so far as appears, except perhaps by a select few. Consequently, Unitarians at that period, interpreted the laws, and regarded the rights of the churches, in the same manner as others. But the times have changed, and interests have changed, and legal opinions have changed, so that what was law and right in 1806, is now, by the same statutes, illegal and wrong!

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ELIAS HICKS.

In our last we gave a notice of two pamphlets, published by the Yearly Meetings of the Society of Friends in Philadelphia and New York. As some Unitarians have taken offence at the manner in which we spoke of their claimed *brethren*, the friends and followers of Elias Hicks, we take the liberty to publish an extract from a Review of one of the same pamphlets in the last number of the *Christian Advocate*, issued at Philadelphia, and edited by the venerable Dr. Green, one of the most experienced and respectable ministers in the U. States.

When differences arise among members of the same religious community, we think it officious, and to be regarded as justly offensive, for those who belong to other communions, actively to take a part, if the controversy relates only to the circumstantial or peculiarities of the litigating sect. It is far otherwise, however, when the contending parties come before the public with discussions which involve any essential or very important principles, of our common Christianity. This creates a common cause for all who name the name of Christ, because the prevalence of error in matters of fundamental importance, no real Christian can regard with unconcern.

Now we know of nothing which strikes more directly at the very vitals of every thing which deserves to be called Christianity, than an open denial of the plenary inspiration, and the consequent supreme authority in matters of faith, of the holy Scriptures; and a like denial of the proper divinity of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the necessity of the sinner's resting for salvation on the merit of his atoning sacrifice; and decrying as imaginary and unnecessary the renovating influences of the Holy Spirit. No system of religion which utterly and avowedly excludes these great principles, has any just claim to be regarded as a *Christian system at all*. By whatever name it may be

called, it is in fact DOWNRIGHT INFIDELITY. Yet it is a matter of notoriety, that for some time past, the principles which have been specified, have been explicitly denied, and sometimes even treated with scorn, by a large party among the Society of Friends. We therefore not only feel ourselves at liberty to animadvert on these advocates of infidelity, but obliged in duty to do all in our power to prevent the influence and extension of their pernicious tenets.

We regard it as no evidence that the men of whom we speak are not infidels, because they pretend to spiritual illuminations and revelations. So did the Indian prophet, who not long since deluded nearly the whole of his unhappy tribe: and for ourselves, *we would as soon be followers of Tecumseh as of Elias Hicks.* It was indeed high time for those of the Society of Friends who have issued the pamphlet which has given occasion to these remarks, to disown all connexion and fellowship with these daring opposers of revealed truth: and in our judgement they have done well in distributing copies of this pamphlet among the members of the Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church, and those of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, who lately met in Philadelphia. Although Friends differ from these churches in regard to some of the ordinances of the Christian system, it was highly proper to let it be seen that they agree with them in the essential doctrines of the sacred Scriptures. By doing this, they have saved themselves from sharing in the reproach of abandoning "the sure word of prophecy," to "follow cunningly devised fables."

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#### AMERICAN LYCEUM.

From the Daily Advertiser of Aug. 25.

This institution proposes a system of mutual instruction, fitted to the towns and villages in New England, and other parts of the country. The instruction is to be conducted at weekly or occasional meetings for reading, conversation, discussions, dissertations, illustrating the sciences, or other subjects of useful knowledge, or popular, *practical* education.

More than fifty societies upon this plan are already formed, and from the greater or less success which has uniformly attended their operations, it is most earnestly hoped, that every town and village in New England, at least, will take the subject into early and serious consideration, to determine whether they cannot, during the approaching autumn and winter, participate in spirit, and engage in the exercises, that they may enjoy the benefits of an institution designed for the diffusion of knowledge and the benefit of the world.

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#### MAP OF PALESTINE.

As this sheet is going to the press, we have had the opportunity of examining "An Historical Map of Palestine or the Holy Land," now publishing by T. B. Wait and J. W. Ingraham of this city, with improvements on the English copy, by Mr. Ingraham. We shall feel under obligations to notice this Map, with Mr. Ingraham's Pamphlet accompanying it, more at large hereafter; but are unwilling that our readers should be unapprised of its publication, or should fail to avail themselves of the advantages it offers, even for a month. The plan of it is ingenious, and the execution complete and elegant. We can now do no more, as we can do no less, than to invite all who feel interested in the geography or history of the Holy Land to examine this Map for themselves.

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# SPIRIT OF THE PILGRIMS.

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## COMMUNICATIONS.

### WHY DO YOU NOT EXCHANGE WITH UNITARIAN MINISTERS?

(Continued from p. 474.)

THE principles we have advanced, throw light upon the course which the Orthodox man ought to pursue, who belongs to a very small minority in a Unitarian parish.

A more trying situation can scarcely be conceived, than that of a man of Orthodox views, placed perhaps with a family of children, in a society where Unitarian principles and influence decidedly predominate, and where no other preaching than Unitarian is heard. He may be in such straitened circumstances, that to remove would reduce him to absolute beggary: yet he believes that the preaching he hears from sabbath to sabbath is essentially defective; and that there is scarcely a gleam of hope that his family, if brought up in such a place, will ever be converted. What shall he do? Shall he go with his children to hear this preaching, and thus seem to countenance it? Shall he give his money to support such preaching? Or shall he attach himself to an Orthodox parish in some other place, and thus bring down upon himself the contempt and bitter hostility of his neighbors?

If Unitarianism reject any of the essentials of the Gospel, as we have endeavored to show, how can there be a moment's doubt, whether such a man ought to contribute one cent of money to support it? No unkind feelings are ordinarily excited against the Baptist, who, residing almost alone in a Congregational society, withdraws his support from a pædobaptist minister, and gives it to one of his own denomination at a distance, upon whose preaching perhaps he can rarely attend. Why should the conscientiously Orthodox man feel any more hesitation, why should he suffer any more reproach, in withdrawing from the Unitarian society? Nay, who will pretend that the difference of opinion, which causes the Baptist to separate, can be compared in importance with that existing between the Orthodox and Unitarian systems?

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But suppose the Orthodox member of a Unitarian society withdraws from it; what shall he do in relation to public worship on the sabbath? Shall he attend upon Unitarian preaching, and take his family with him; or shall he bring up his children in the habit of neglecting the house of God? This is indeed a most trying dilemma. If he will not permit his children to attend upon public worship in the place where all their companions attend, they, while too young to understand the reasons of the prohibition, and having hearts by nature averse to true religion, will be apt to imbibe an early prejudice against the principles of their parents, and embrace lax views of truth: And if he suffers them to attend religious worship under such circumstances, they will be apt to imbibe early prejudices in favor of error. Let him, therefore, be willing to make great efforts to attend worship, as often as possible, where the truth is preached; so as to give to his children, and the public, decisive evidence of his views of Unitarian preaching. And if the Unitarian clergyman where he resides, is in the weekly habit (as some are,) of attacking and ridiculing the truth, let him refuse to hear it altogether, and advise his family to follow his example, and leave the event to God. And let a man thus situated encourage, by his attendance and co-operations, those occasional prayer-meetings and conferences, in which a few in almost every place are disposed to join, and which have often proved the despised but powerful instruments, by which God has built up the waste places of many generations.

In the second place, the subject we have discussed throws light upon the course which ought to be adopted by the Orthodox member of a Unitarian church.

If any should doubt whether an exchange of pulpit services indicates fellowship, they cannot doubt that to continue a *member of a church* constitutes the highest expression of it that can be given. This man, therefore, may talk as zealously as he pleases about the dangerous errors of Unitarians; while he continues connected with them by church covenant, his conduct will completely nullify his declarations, and he may depend upon it, should he die without removing his church relation, that his example will be quoted in opposition to what Unitarians call the Orthodox system of exclusion and bigotry. How can he then delay to throw his influence, before and after death, into the opposite scale, by uniting himself, while God prolongs his days, with a church which he believes is *built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone.*

I know that in thus doing, he, as well as the seceding members of a Unitarian parish, will bring upon themselves a persecution as real as that endured by the primitive martyrs. It cannot, blessed be God, be carried to the same extent, nor be exhibited in the same undisguised manner; but so far as uncharitable censures,

contemptuous and insolent treatment, slanderous imputations, and the withholding of the kind offices of social life,—so far as these constitute persecution, (and what ingredients of it are more bitter?) they may expect to feel its iron hand. But if they really believe Unitarianism to be wanting in anything essential to the Gospel, they cannot hesitate to face the storm, calling on God for strength to sustain them.

Thirdly; from the discussion of the subject of exchanges, the Orthodox minister may learn what his duty is, in regard to preaching in Unitarian pulpits, and in Unitarian parishes.

If invited to occupy a Unitarian pulpit, it is no indication of fellowship on his part to comply, nor is it so regarded by the public. Hence, without betraying the cause of religion, he may comply with the invitation: and if Unitarians, to display their liberality, give such invitations, it may perhaps be the duty of the Orthodox minister to accept them, that he may proclaim the truth, as he understands it, with plainness, yet kindly and mildly, to those who, in his opinion, have not received it.

But shall he go into a Unitarian parish, without the knowledge, or contrary to the wishes of its minister, and preach to those within its limits who are disposed to hear him?—Why should he not go? He believes the Unitarian minister to be essentially wrong, and he expects no revivals or conversions will take place under his ministrations. And very probably the little circle of hearers he may collect around him there may form the nucleus of a church, that holds the Head; the Spirit of God may be poured out; and an Evangelical society, with a faithful minister set over them, may ere long exist as the fruit of his labors. True, the minister who takes such a step must expect to be assailed with a furious cry, about his intrusion, and his disturbing the peace and harmony of the place. But being thoroughly convinced that the truths of the Gospel are infinitely more important than the fancied peace and security of spiritual death, such a cry cannot move him, recollecting as he will, that the same cry was vociferated in louder tones against the apostles, as *those who turned the world upside down*. Neither let such a minister suppose that any strange thing happens to him, if he, or the beast or vehicle that carries him, should experience the rude assaults of the 'baser sort' among Unitarians. Too many worthy men have already suffered in this way, for those who follow in their steps to expect any other treatment from Unitarian liberality, when, in vulgar minds, it exhibits its genuine nature.

But in case Orthodox ministers thus enter Unitarian societies, will not Unitarian ministers in like manner break in upon the peace of Orthodox societies?—They do not believe the Orthodox to be so essentially erroneous, as to endanger their salvation; and, therefore, they cannot plead the same reason for such a course as the Orthodox. But if they suppose the prevalence of their



system is more important than peace and harmony, they will doubtless adopt this course. And what if they do? Particular Orthodox societies may indeed suffer materially; but the general result will be, the more complete separation of the advocates of the two systems, in all their religious concerns; so that it will be seen, what are the genuine fruits of the systems, when standing entirely alone. The world have yet to learn how much of the appearance of piety, existing in Unitarian parishes, is owing to the lingering influence of Orthodox principles, or to those evangelical and demi-evangelical members still connected with them.

Fourthly; the discussion of this subject shows us, that for the Orthodox minister to invite, or permit Unitarians to supply his pulpit, amounts to the same thing as an exchange with them.

No reason can be given, why, in either of these ways, fellowship is not as distinctly expressed as by an exchange. He cannot give such invitation or permission, without bearing public testimony to the Christian and ministerial qualifications of the man whom he introduces into his pulpit. It is not, therefore, a matter of mere courtesy, as many suppose, who press their minister to give such invitation or permission; but the imperative command of his Saviour binds him to refuse compliance. He sincerely believes, that, by a compliance, he should sin against God. How illiberal, how ungenerous, then, to endeavor to excite popular odium against him, as is often done, on this account!

Fifthly; the discussion of this subject shows us that ministers have an undoubted right to regulate their pulpit exchanges as they see fit.

If people have a right to control their minister in this matter, they have the same right to dictate to him what shall be the sentiments and the manner of his sermons. For it is an old and just maxim, *qui facit per alium, facit per se*—what a man does by another, he does himself. What is the difference, then, whether a man be required to find a substitute to preach Unitarianism, or be required to preach it himself. It would in fact be no more a violation of a minister's rights, to require him occasionally to defend Unitarianism, Universalism, or any other false doctrine, than to require him to exchange with ministers of these denominations; and it would be just as absurd to reproach him with intolerance and illiberality for refusing a compliance in the one case, as in the other. For when he exchanges with the Unitarian, or the Universalist, he does in fact, to all intents and purposes, preach their sentiments to his people. If, therefore, Orthodox ministers can be compelled to exchange with Unitarians, it is idle for them any longer to talk about their rights: for these are gone. They are mere machines, not for building up the Gospel, but for battering it down. And when any people settle a minister over them, (or

rather under them,) on condition of his making such exchanges, this is the use that will be made of him.

Sixthly; the discussion of this subject shows us the principal reason, why Unitarians have pressed the Orthodox with so much earnestness to exchange pulpits with their ministers.

If they gain this point, they conclude (and they judge correctly,) that the Orthodox have virtually given up all that is essential in the controversy between them. They have obtained a public testimony, in the house of God, and on the holy Sabbath, that there is no essential difference between Unitarianism and Orthodoxy. And after this, the question with men, which system they shall embrace, becomes one of mere expediency; since both are thus represented to be safe: and we all know which system is most agreeable to the perverse natural inclinations of unrenewed men. Hence, if Unitarians succeed in effecting such exchanges, they will not merely in a silent manner root out Orthodoxy and introduce Unitarianism, but they will make use of the Orthodox minister as the chief instrument in accomplishing the work; and that too, while he supposes himself to be laboring to establish the true Gospel. So long as a large and respectable body of professing Christians declare their solemn convictions that Unitarianism is essentially defective and dangerous to the souls of men, very many will hesitate to embrace it, who are in heart inclined to it; and even among Unitarians, many will feel uneasy, lest this testimony against them should prove true, and their ruin be the consequence. But if Unitarians are admitted to the fellowship of the Orthodox, the fears of both these classes will be removed, since the testimony of this same body of Christians to their safety is thus obtained; and they will stand forth the bold advocates of error.—Or if Unitarians do not succeed in persuading the Orthodox to exchange, a fine opportunity is thus afforded to them of raising a popular clamor about Orthodox intolerance, exclusion and persecution; and of stirring up the bad passions of men against the Evangelical system. No wonder, therefore, that the subject of exchanges should be the entering wedge, by which Unitarianism is introduced into Orthodox societies.

Seventhly; the discussion of this subject shows us that the manner, in which Orthodox ministers who refuse to exchange have been treated, manifests an uncharitable, intolerant, and persecuting spirit among Unitarians.

Orthodox ministers, who have refused fellowship and ministerial exchanges, have declared that they act thus from convictions of duty; and that it appears to them God has commanded them to adopt this course. But Unitarians, on account of their refusal, are in the habit of charging them with arrogating infallibility, and superior sanctity; with endeavoring to impose their opinions on others; with assuming the place of Jehovah in judging and con-

demning others ; with attempting to check free inquiry, and controul the right of private judgment ; with being narrow-minded, ignorant bigots, who exhibit the spirit of the inquisition, and want nothing but the power, to give them the character of the Pope. By ringing over and over again charges of this kind, in their inflammatory addresses, in their sermons, and in their conversation, they endeavor to excite the irreligious and unprincipled to form combinations for forcing the Orthodox minister, either to comply with their wishes, or abandon his post : and all this is said and done, too, under the cloak of charity and liberality. Says a Doctor of Unitarian divinity, " Let those in the Christian ministry, who bear the title of Orthodox, be told, that if they, in an unchristian manner, separate from their more liberal brethren, their liberal parishioners will separate from them. Then they may perceive the danger of their own plan, and may be induced to desist from its prosecution."\*

Now all this is uncharitable, because it does not display that tenderness for the conscientious opinions of others, which the Gospel requires ; and because it severely judges the motives by which the Orthodox are actuated. It is intolerant, because it is an attempt to force the lax system of Unitarians upon the Orthodox, by threatening them with personal inconvenience and suffering, if they will not acknowledge them as brethren. It is persecution, because it is an endeavor to make the Orthodox act contrary to the dictates of conscience, through fear of these personal trials ; and this constitutes the essence of persecution. It is high time, therefore, that the tables should be turned, and the charges of uncharitableness, intolerance, and persecution, which have been so long borne in silence by the Orthodox, be transferred to the other side. Already, if we mistake not, are the public beginning to see, that to the other side they in most cases more justly belong ; and there, we doubt not, they will be found to lie, at that solemn day, when judgement shall be laid to the line, and righteousness to the plummet.

In the eighth place, the principles of this essay show us why it is not consistent for Orthodox ministers to sit in ecclesiastical councils with avowed Unitarians.

It is simply because such an act is as much an expression of fellowship as an exchange. If any man doubts this, let him endeavor to point out the reason why this is not an act of fellowship ; and it seems to us, he must be convinced that it is so. At any rate, so it is considered by the public ; and, therefore, the same unhappy effects will result from it, as from any other act of fellowship, in regard to those whom we believe in essential error. In particular instances, indeed, as is the case with exchanges, where, for example, a compliance in this particular would save a church

\* Bancroft's Sermons, p. 196.

or society from becoming Unitarians, expediency would plead for a compliance. But so clear is the general rule on this subject, (which we have endeavored to develope,) that it seems to us, no Orthodox minister, who takes enlarged views of duty, would think of yielding, any more than he would violate any other command of his Saviour.

Finally, we infer from this discussion, what should be the conduct and feelings of the Orthodox towards Unitarians generally.

A radical difference of opinion upon religious truth, constitutes the wall of separation between the two systems. But this is no reason why unkind, uncharitable, or intolerant feelings should be harbored on either side, or why hard speeches should be made; or efforts to injure the persons, the property, or the honest reputations, of any. Nay more, it is no reason why, as upright, intelligent, and amiable members of this world's society, mutual attachments and friendships should not be cultivated between them. The Orthodox and the Unitarians have the same right to examine the Bible for themselves, and to derive thence their religious opinions; and to God only are they accountable for those opinions, unless their character be such as to interfere with the rights of others. Let the Orthodox recollect these things in all their intercourse with Unitarians. Who are these Unitarians? In some instances they are our brothers, or sisters—our parents, or children—our husbands, or wives—our friends, or neighbors; and in nearly every case, they are our countrymen. And we believe them to have embraced a system of religion fatally erroneous. We cannot, therefore, hesitate, in a frank and explicit manner, to declare to them our honest conviction of their danger, and our fixed resolution to testify to the world, by withholding our fellowship, what are our views of the system they have embraced. But does this imply that we harbor towards them one unfriendly feeling? They may think so; they may hence be excited to hostility towards us, and load us with a torrent of ridicule and uncharitable epithets, and raise against us a tempest of popular odium. But towards them—our fellow citizens—fellow students—early companions—neighbors—friends—nay more, bone of our bone, and flesh of our flesh—towards them, how can any other feelings, than a desire for their salvation, be harbored in our bosoms? When they attempt to support their system by argument, we are to meet them clad in the panoply of the Gospel. When they make against us unfounded charges, we are to repel them with the firmness and the meekness of Christians. But when they abuse us, and revile us, and persecute us, we are to show them that our system of religion has taught us to return such treatment with patience, forbearance, forgiveness, and kind offices. Many of us should remember that we were once ourselves advocates for the same erroneous system; and recollect how thick were the scales upon our own eyes, and

the folds around our own hearts, and how tenaciously we clung to our favorite delusions, yielding them up, only one by one, as the Spirit of God tore away their deep-seated roots. We cannot expect that others will abandon them more easily, or that any other power can accomplish the work. Whatever unkind feelings or conduct Unitarians may exhibit towards us, they ought not, therefore, to diminish either the number, or the fervency of our prayers in their behalf. In short, under every circumstance, ours should be the deep-toned feeling of the apostle: *I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost, that I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart. For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ, for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh.*

#### NOTE.

The argument of our respected correspondent in the foregoing communication is based on the position, that the differences of sentiment existing between the Orthodox and Unitarians relate not merely to circumstantial points, but to the *vital, essential* principles of the Gospel. What we propose to add is, that the truth of this position has been often admitted by Unitarians themselves, both in England and in America.

Says Dr. Priestly, "I do not wonder that you Calvinists entertain and express a strongly unfavorable opinion of us Unitarians. The truth is, there neither can be, nor ought to be, any compromise between us. If *you* are right, **WE ARE NOT CHRISTIANS AT ALL**; and if *we* are right, *you are gross idolaters.*"—Says Mr. Belsham, speaking on the same subject, "Opinions such as these can no more harmonize with each other, than *light and darkness*, than *Christ and Belial*. They who hold doctrines *so diametrically opposite, cannot be fellow-worshippers in the same temple.*"

In 1815, a Pamphlet was published by a noted "Layman" of Boston, entitled, 'Are you a Christian or a Calvinist?' implying in its very title, as well as in its pages, that a *Calvinist is not a Christian*. Another pamphlet was published in Boston, in 1820, entitled, a 'Letter from a Congregationalist to a Friend, on joining the new Episcopal Church,' in which it was contended, that the Unitarians and the Orthodox have a 'different object of worship'—that they in fact *worship different Gods.* p. 7. This was said to have been written by a distinguished Unitarian. A sermon was published in this city the last year, and highly extolled by Unitarians, the design of which was to shew, that the Orthodox are justly chargeable with '*denying the Lord Jesus.*'

CHRISTIAN DISCIPLE. The Orthodox "represent God as *worse than the devil*; *more false, more cruel, more unjust.*" Nov. and Dec. 1820.

CHRISTIAN EXAMINER. "We may safely say that *transubstantiation* was a *less monstrous doctrine* than the five points of Calvin." Jan. and Feb. 1826.

DR. CHANNING. "Did I believe what Trinitarianism teaches, that not the least transgression could be remitted without an infinite expiation, I should feel myself living under a legislation *unspeakably dreadful*, under laws written, like Draco's, in blood." Unitarians "look with *horror and grief* on the views of God's government which are materially united with Trinitarianism." Sermon at New York.



MR. O. DEWEY. "In more than half the pulpits of this land, representations of God are constantly made, which every generous and honorable man in the community would shudder to have applied to himself." Unitarian's Answer,\* p. 8.

MR. J. PIERPONT charges the Orthodox with "representing the government of heaven as administered upon a principle, which not the most profligate government on earth dare adopt, and not the most abject people on earth could or would endure for a moment." Sermon on Retribution, p. 19.

MR. M. L. HURLBUT.† "We regard it" (the Orthodox system) "as being, in its essential principles and tendency, opposite to the true spirit of the Gospel. And we believe, that if the influence of its peculiar doctrines, by themselves, should be fully imbibed, and permitted to operate uncontrolled, it would turn the fruits of the Gospel into wormwood." Presumptive Arguments &c., p. 6.

Quotations from Unitarian writers similar to those here given might be multiplied indefinitely; shewing that Unitarians themselves, either in express terms, or by necessary implication, admit the principle, on which the reasoning of our correspondent is based—that they regard the Orthodox as differing from them, not in mere circumstantial points, but in the *vital, essential* doctrines of the Gospel. How then, we ask, can Unitarians wish to hold ministerial and Christian fellowship with the Orthodox? How can they wish to exchange pulpits with those who, being Calvinists, are not Christians—who worship different Gods—and who "deny the Lord Jesus"? How can they wish to exchange pulpits with those, who "represent God as worse than the devil"—who make such representations of God, as "every generous and honorable man in the community would shudder to have applied to himself"—who entertain "views of God's government," which they behold "with horror and grief," and which they regard as "unspeakably dreadful"—views "which not the most profligate government on earth dare adopt, and not the most abject people on earth would endure for a moment"? How can they wish to exchange pulpits with those, whose system they "regard as being, in its essential principles and tendency, opposite to the true spirit of the Gospel," and which, if "fully imbibed, and permitted to operate uncontrolled, would turn the fruits of the Gospel into wormwood"?—The subject is too plain to be misunderstood even by a child. Unitarians urge us to an exchange of pulpits, not because they believe what we teach, or regard the difference in sentiment between us and them as merely circumstantial, or have the least fellowship or complacency in our religious system and views; but because, if we comply, they shall have our countenance and aid in propagating another gospel, and we shall in fact do their own work for them better than they can do it for themselves; or, if we refuse, they will have a popular subject of outcry against us, and will be able to fill the surrounding region with the odious sounds of bigotry and exclusion. And we call upon all fair and honorable men to judge between us and them in this thing. We call upon an enlightened and impartial public to mark and reprobate that spirit which, while it denounces the whole Orthodox system in terms of no measured disapprobation, is still craving the fellowship of Orthodox ministers, and censuring them, if this is withheld.

\* Published and sanctioned by the American Unitarian Association.

† One of the Vice Presidents of the American Unitarian Association.

"IN HOC SIGNO VINCES."\*

To the Editor of the Spirit of the Pilgrims.—Sir,

I am a minister in a retired country parish, and have little to do in the prominent movements of the day. I have my sphere of duty among my own people, and have neither time nor talent to take hold of things that are going on at a distance. Congratulations, therefore, or apprehensions, coming from me, may seem, perhaps, hardly worthy of your notice. Yet, without saying half that my heart prompts me to say, I might speak of both.

I have looked with pain at the events of past years, in and around the metropolis of New England. With pain I have seen what my heart loves, lightly esteemed; and what constitutes the only foundation of hope for man, assailed with a spirit that wanted nothing but arm and sinew to overturn it. It has indeed been pain without fear; for I have still felt that the foundation is sure, and the seal upon it as legible as ever. But it was painful to see an error gaining ground, under the influence of which many would probably be led to ruin, as unsuspectingly as the ox is led to the slaughter, not knowing that it is for his life.

I have therefore been ready to congratulate myself, at various recent events in Boston and the vicinity. I was glad to see a gathering there of men of learning and influence, and I trust, men of God. There they can move on more efficiently, and can more effectually act the part of Moses when he "stood in the breach." I was glad to see the system of colonizing churches adopted. And in the operations of this system, I have felt not a little satisfaction, as I have seen the uncertainties of hope give place to the certainty of actual experience. I was glad of these things, because I believe in the necessity of means in order to accomplish any thing in the moral world, as truly as in the natural. But I believe also in the dependance of means on divine influence; and what my apprehensions deprecate, is, that in the increasing strength and increasing success of the cause of truth, this will be forgotten.

I did especially congratulate myself, when, all things being, as they seemed to be, in readiness, I saw announced "the Spirit of the Pilgrims." Nor has the gladness of that moment been at all abated, by what has appeared in the numbers already issued. It has increased. And I now see, or seem to see, a spirit hovering over us, which many were ready to think had fled the hemisphere, and sought asylum in its celestial home.

At movements such as these, I have been ready to congratulate myself, and the friends of truth, throughout our Commonwealth

\*"BY THIS SIGN THOU SHALT CONQUER"—the motto of Constantine in his wars with the Pagans, at the first establishment of Christianity.

and country. They are movements which betoken a Christian enterprise, and a Christian boldness, that are truly commendable. As I have looked at them, I have thought of Paul in the midst of Mars Hill, and before Felix, Festus, Agrippa and others. I have thought of the Tishbite, when he was left alone and they sought his life. Who has not admired his boldness, when, near the close of the three years and six months' famine, he dared to look Ahab in the face and rebuke him? Who has not admired his firmness, when he singly braved the host of Baal's prophets, and confounded them?

But with all these preparations and movements, so full of promise, I have feared lest somewhere there should be a heart that feels strong, not in the Lord, and in the power of his might, but in the wisdom of man, and in an arm of flesh. I see arrangements made, that are highly encouraging; I see a gathering together of human power, a system of operations adjusted, a spirit putting all in motion, and much that is cheering to the heart that loves the truth, and the eye that sees by faith. But with all this, I remember there is a strong propensity in the heart to say, "Hath not *my* hand gotten me these riches?"—"Is not this great Babylon that I have built?"—And I remember, too, that it is written, "Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm." Oh the defeat attendant on that curse! It shows me Elijah, not looking Ahab in the face, and boldly rebuking him for his sins—not braving the host of Baal's prophets and covering them with confusion, but intimidated, and fleeing with cowardly weakness from the presence of Jezebel. It shows me churches calling back the churches they have colonized and planted. It shows "the Spirit of the Pilgrims" giving way, and timidly shrinking before the deniers of the Lord that bought them. And my heart exclaims, Shine not the day that must behold these things.

Let him, then, who has put his hand to the plough, look right on; and at every step, let his heart say, "Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it;"—"It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." Yes, let there be this, and my voice shall be the voice of thousands, when it says, *God speed you*; and all that is meant by this language shall be fulfilled upon you. Let an arch stretch over Boston, from Warren's grave to Dorchester heights, and on it let there be written in glowing capitals, "NOT BY MIGHT, NOR BY POWER, BUT BY MY SPIRIT, SAITH THE LORD." Let this be transcribed to every heart beneath it; and then the voice of *prayer* shall begin to ascend for the needed influence of the Holy Ghost—and the spiritual heavens shall begin to gather blackness—and a rain of righteousness shall be enjoyed—and a voice from above shall soon proclaim, "The darkness is past—the conflict is ended—the arm of the Lord hath gotten him the victory, and praised be his holy name."

TENNENT.

## REVIEWS.

THE COURSE OF TIME, A Poem, in Ten Books. *By Robert Pollok, A. M.* Boston, Crocker & Brewster, 1828.

It has been said by many, who would have done well had they kept their reading to plain prose, that Cowper owed his popularity mainly, if not wholly, to the religious character of his writings. Such men, we fear, are as ignorant of the true spirit of the world, as they are of the true spirit of poetry. Should we reverse the remark, and say, that the truth of his poetry made him popular in spite of his religion, we might be thought harsh; we will therefore leave his fame to the safe keeping of men of sincere piety and just taste.

It must be acknowledged that the works of Cowper are familiar to a large class of people who might not have known so much as his name, had not his original and poetic mind been sanctified by the Gospel of his Lord and Saviour. It was because he sang by the waters of Siloa, as well as those of another stream, that there gathered to him so many of the humble and the poor; and it is because of this that we so often meet an odd volume of his works, with its worn leaves and soiled cover, in the remotest parts of the country, and in some of our more plain dwellings.

The true poet, he who sees through manners into the hearts and minds of men, will often be conscious of as grateful a feeling, at finding himself in a lowly abode and in this worn dress, as in the apartment of a bookish man, and in a costlier and cleaner attire. He knows that the seriousness which religion brings to the mind, and the tenderness which the touch of God's Spirit gives to the heart, will help to his being understood and felt, when he speaks simply and truly to man's better nature. He is conscious, too, that learning, instead of warming into full life the very little of the poetic temperament with which some are originally blessed, often strikes it with a death-chill; that the giddiness of fashionable life deranges the even workings of the mind, and that its frivolousness dries up the flow of the affections faster than the hurrying streams from the mountains are sucked in by the hot and thirsty sands; that learning is apt to be proud, and that pride is scarcely more fatal to religion than to poetry; that the fashionable will be thoughtless, and that thoughtlessness is a surer destroyer of those sympathies upon which poetry depends, than even poverty and toil with all their attendant ills. In defiance of all the outward show of superiority and distinction which the world may make, it is the heart of man which the poet mainly regards for his subject, and with which he chiefly has to do. In this, prince and beggar are both alike to him, and all beyond this is of little or no concern.

He looks for sympathy rather from those of plain sense and kind affections, than amongst those whose intellectual has been cultivated at the expense of their moral nature, or whose affections have been left to run broad, and shallow, and to waste, over the surfaces of things.

No doubt a well cultivated intellect is essential to the full comprehension of an art, which springs from the highest exercise of our faculties; but as the grand superiority of poetry consists in the due combination of our moral with our intellectual natures, taking in not the brain alone, but the whole and perfect man; so those whom religious principle has led to self-examination, to the study of motives, and the strength, and action, and tendencies of the passions and affections, and to the straight or wandering courses of the thoughts, are, through this sacred discipline, in a fairer way to receive right impressions and form true estimates of the essentials of poetry, than those of over-labored minds, but untrained hearts.

Besides, those who have considered religion only partially would be surprised were they to observe how much it does for the intellect simply; and to find how well balanced, how searching and discriminating, how quick of perception, how clear, and calm, and open to intellectual beauty, may be the mind of that man who has read little else besides himself and his Bible.

No man can be truly religious without much thoughtfulness; and this quality does that for the mind which a multitude of books could never do without it. Yet how many read, and how few think. How many go about showily dressed in the robes of other men, who, should they be clad in what alone they themselves had wrought, would be wretched and naked indeed. The grave and learned man, though differing widely in acquisitions, is often led to feel, and if a good man, to feel with pleasure, how nearly upon an equality are his mental powers, and those of the common-sense Christian. He who has read most, and at the same time thought most, sees most quickly and clearly how little, after all, is the difference between himself, and him whom the world calls a plain man. If the rightly learned man perceives this, how much more clearly does the man of originality, of imagination and sentiment—the poet, perceive it; he who holds an almost supernatural communion with the minds and hearts of his fellow-men. How often has the fresh thought and homely yet strong turn of expression of those in ordinary life struck him; and how often, on the other hand, if he is wise and has learned self-control, does he sit silent and abstracted, while the literary and the fashionable are retailing opinions upon master-works of imagination. In short, how much truer and better is a simple moral education, than much learning with little nature.

Let us not be understood as taking from the culture of the



intellect. We have, however, too nearly observed the mind and affections in middle and lower life, not to know that they have been superciliously and superficially underrated by the better sort. And we have seen too much of the educated class, not to have felt painfully what the character often loses amidst the many acquisitions of the mind. With our views of religion, morals and intellect, we have discovered but too little of that improvement in the modes and the results of the systems of education upon character, of which we have been wearied with the so much talk. How beautiful, but how rare a creature, is a highly educated, yet thoroughly natural man; one who, with all his refinement, looks with contempt upon fastidiousness; who has all his purified impulses free; who not only holds, with Sir Thomas Browne, that "there is a *general* beauty in the workes of God, and therefore no deformity in any kinde or species of creature whatsoever;" but has a pulse, too, that keeps time with every kind and honest heart, beats it in master or in slave.

We are satisfied that our hasty view contains enough of truth to be a just cause of gratification to him who takes pleasure in seeing that the distinction between the moral and intellectual state of the various classes of society, however great it may be, is far less than the outward differences and opportunities would seem to show; that, however wide apart rank may set men, there is a common principle at work in them which is ever bringing them near.

To the poet, who cares less for fame than he does for that sympathy which draws the hearts of his fellow-beings to him, which moves them with his emotions, and opens the intellectual eye in them to see everywhere the beauty which he sees, there is something in this thought to bring comfort, when the sense of loneliness is heaviest upon him. He feels that when God, in giving him peculiar powers and an ardent and sensitive temperament, ordained him, in this very privilege, to peculiar pains, and sufferings, and sorrows, he at the same time blessed him with that, by which he might not only hold communion with all material nature, but hear, too, a brother's familiar speech throughout all the tribes of his fellow-men.

We do not wish to make it seem as if there were no order of society which does not come under these remarks. There is the utterly uninformed class—too generally a loose and unprincipled one. There is a class above this, with a common school education, in comfortable circumstances and duly gainful callings, and, in the main, fulfilling decently the neighborly duties and courtesies; but, at the same time, their minds are absorbed in these things, seldom giving reach to their powers by carrying them forward into the invisible world, and rousing them at the thoughts of its coming glories. The heart, too, clings to earth; nor is it softened by pouring itself out in supplication and thankfulness to its God and

Saviour. Knowing, in the affairs of the world, yet self-ignorant, men of this class do nothing to prepare themselves to understand and feel the higher and more beautiful workings of the poet's soul. They are under an insensibility of the heart and blindness of the mind to these things, which render them as incapable of being touched by them, as if they were a race of beings made up of an entirely distinct set of thoughts, affections and sympathies. What heart-searchings have they? Their hearts, they think, are as well, upon the whole, as can reasonably be required of them. Why need they look to the holy and illuminating Spirit, if indeed they acknowledge any such? Have they not a lamp to their path in the all-sufficient light of their reason? Have they not been told—and are they not of easy faith in this matter at least—that the earth is kindling to a blaze with the glories which come, and the greater that are yet to come, from this god the world has newly set up? Why need they feel holy tremblings and repentant sorrows? Is it not in amount declared to them, that God is their good Father, that he formed them to be happy, and that if they deal fairly and decently in the affairs of this world, it would be having hard thoughts of God not to believe that he will take care of them and deal kindly with them in the next?

And is it so? Are there no daily, no hourly duties set apart and sacred to God alone? Is there not a continuous labor needed to bring the soul into a state congenial with the things of another life, and a continual watchfulness required to keep it so? Is happiness something extraneous, to be given and received as we give and take the dross of this world; or is its vital principle in the character of the soul?

No man who is much in the world, and keeps his eyes and ears open, can avoid perceiving that such loose feelings and opinions as these are fast spreading through a portion of society, and that there is a growing disposition with those belonging to that part of the community to overrate their good qualities, to lower the standard by which they should measure themselves, to lessen the requisitions of Deity, and to lighten more and more all earnestness and concern respecting their condition in a future life. It is in vain to deny this. Every serious and observing man knows it to be true. There is a portion of the upper classes in the same condition, who show upon system, if we may so speak, a dangerous ease and carelessness upon the subject of their responsibilities. And mixed here and there amongst these are a few more refined individuals, who add to these notions, and for the religion of the Bible substitute, a vague sentimentality, and beautiful floating thoughts of some ideal God.

Those, who are helping the most to work this evil in the community, probably see less of its effects than any other men. Too many of them, lost in a sort of dreamy philosophising, and as

ignorant of their fellow-men as of themselves, are not conscious of it at all. But ignorance takes not a whit from the responsibility here; and a fearful responsibility it is. They may find it easy indeed to gratify man, by telling him of the dignity and grandeur of his nature; but what shall afterwards prostrate him in the dust before his Maker? They may find it easy, by this soothing delusion, to rock him to sleep; but when they shall see it is the sleep of death into which they have lulled him, who shall then awake him?

Though this is cause enough for anxiety to every serious mind, yet we may still turn, and find comfort, and hope, and confidence. The Spirit of God is moving over the moral world, as it once moved upon the face of the waters. Then God divided the light from the darkness, and he is beginning to do it now. The lights that men are lighting up, and that are flashing here and there through the darkness, though they are to flare and dazzle for a season, shall be quenched; and where they burned shall be utter darkness; and nations shall turn to the pure light which is growing brighter and brighter, and shall bow before it, and it shall shine in upon their souls: on the walls of the holy city they shall behold it—the Cross of Christ glorified by their Saviour and God.

Here it is that the religious poet is to perform his work. It is a great work, and his reward shall be great.

Several religious poems have appeared within a few years; but the one taking the widest range, and with a subject requiring the very highest powers to master it, is the *Course of Time*. It opens in eternity, long after the judgement. The creation of the world and of man is related to a spirit from some distant sphere. The narrator describes the fall of man, the consequences of it, and the great scheme of redemption. The various ways in which the effects of the fall discover themselves in our perverted feelings and modes of reasoning are set forth with great truth, particularly where the Gospel is brought to bear upon them. The end of the world, the resurrection, and the judgement, follow in succession, and close the scene. How all this is filled up, and how relieved, we have no intention of stating; for we know of nothing so tedious, and at the same time so unsatisfactory, as a detailed account of the contents of a poem. We have answered our object, if we have laid enough before the reader to enable him to perceive, that to fill up such a plan as it should be filled, requires not only a man earnest in his religious views, but one of profound thought, and of almost unmatched poetic powers.

The two first qualifications we believe we may grant in full to our author; but we cannot, in sincerity, say so much for him in the last requisite. We doubt whether the mere *poetic* excellencies of the work are such as to make it deeply interesting to any but truly religious minds. And to render its sound evangelical senti-

ment palatable with the world at large, would require in its poetry all the magnificence and beauty of Milton himself. It is a pity that any, in their zeal for religion, should have compared our author with him, the sublime character of whose mind has not been equalled since the days of the prophets. Simply as a poet, Mr. Pollok is neither a Cowper nor a Young. Still, he is a poet; and must be allowed to take rank after a few of his contemporaries, such as Byron, Wordsworth, Crabbe, and one or two more. Nor would we so far dishonor him as to put him down with the Glovers and Haleys, who made a noise in their day. There are also living male and female poets of some celebrity, who must be content to take their places after him. He does not, like some of them—to use a homely but applicable expression—lose himself in a smother of words. His diction is plain; he never writes without thought; and when you lay his work by, it is with a definite notion of what you have been reading; which is a great deal more than Mrs. Hemans' admiring readers can say for her.

Wordy indefiniteness is the vice of the age; and people read on, page after page, vaguely pleased with a certain flicker and show of things, without having seen one simple and clear image, or having thought one simple and clear thought. Mr. Pollok is a thinker; and though this may prove a cause of unpopularity with the diligent readers of books which have taught them not to think, yet it has led those who do think, but have not been careful in this instance to carry along with them the great essentials of poetry, to over-estimate him as a whole. His being distinguished by calm, firm thought, and his having led them into the midst of it, and taken them from the indistinct writings of others, have made them feel as they would upon setting foot on solid land again, after having stood for hours on the tremulous deck of a steamboat, or upon coming out from the buzz and the dusty atmosphere of a factory, into the clear, silent air. They had been under a half-consciousness of something like weariness and confusion, but were not fully alive to their state, till wakened by the contrast of perfect rest and stillness. If this reason be the true one, it is no small praise to our author.

Poetry is essentially more than this. A man must have something besides a taste for poetry, and a power of putting just and strong thoughts into fair verse. He must have a poet's temperament—that in which all coming from him is first fused, and then, running into the mould of the imagination, is turned out a perfect form. It must not be a cold, lifeless form however, but alive and glowing with the spiritual fire out of which it has come. Let a man be as intense with thought as he may, still the thought must appear to have arisen out of the depths of the soul; out of those depths all things must have come up, whether man, or beast, or creeping thing; yea, regions fairer than earth must rise out of

them, as rose the earth above the waters, self-moved, effortless, and instinct with life. So

Rose, as in dance, the stately trees, and spread  
 Their branches hung with copious fruit, or gemm'd  
 Their blossoms : with high woods the hills were crown'd,  
 With tufts the valleys, and each fountain side,  
 With borders long the rivers :—

Passion must utter for itself its own vehement and broken language ; and sentiment and sorrow must pour forth their own soft and melancholy sounds like the flow of a fountain. Passions and thoughts should not so much be described ; nor should they be so many abstractions ; but rather be, as it were, living, sentient, speaking, acting beings. And when it is at any time necessary so to treat the subject as not to allow of this being the case, the poet should not affect you as a mere writer, but should put you into that state of illusion, so to speak, that you shall feel as if it were some imaginary being who was revealing to your mind's eye the thoughts and emotions of his soul ; or you should be so wrought upon by the poet as to become, virtually, yourself the very being who thus thinks and feels. There must be the life-giving, the forming and the informing principle : though the mind thinks, it must be from a feeling as if it were from some mysterious impulse communicated to it from the soul deep within ; otherwise, though all may be very wise and good, and in very tolerable verse, it will not have in it the great and distinctive qualities of poetry.

We do not intend to say that our author is destitute of these qualities, but that it cannot be said they are characteristic of his Poem. He appears to us to *think out* what he has written : it does not affect us as if poured through the mind from those deep and living springs within the soul, of which we have spoken—his images have not floated out from those invisible, spiritual waters into the mind ; no, the brain furnished the material, and wrought it out by itself. His description of hell, in the first book, strikes us as the result of this process, as ingenious rather than imaginative, and frightful rather than poetical.

Mr. Pollok aimed at producing his effect by multiplying circumstances. But circumstances, however well fitted to move us when taken singly, by being over-multiplied lose their power, and serve only to distract us. There is something of monotony in all the strong feelings ; so much of it, that the mind, not being able to relieve itself by variety in a natural way, betakes itself often to the most ludicrous images and forced conceits ; thus breaking violently from one black, changeless object to which it was bound, and playing with fantastic creations, or earnestly busying itself, like a little child, with the most insignificant things imaginable. Shakspeare has frequently exemplified this in his characters when under



intense grief; and the critics, ignorant of the action of mind, and more ready to make a show of their own acuteness and taste, than to learn humbly of this greatest of philosophers, have set it down to his ignorance of rules, and fondness for conceits.

Besides, Mr. Pollok's particulars, when taken singly, too often fail of the intended effect, from want of peculiarity—that which gives individuality. Now, one may go on forever multiplying particulars, but while each has this air of generality, he will not only come short of his object, but also produce weariness. Take as a favorable specimen of our author, his character of Lord Byron. Surely, no thoughtful man can read it without being made more thoughtful. It contains many exceptions to our remarks, and many fine reflections, yet before getting through it we catch ourselves casting an eye forward to see where it will end; while reading it, we wish it was not quite so long; when we have finished, we wish again that it had not been so long: we leave it with self-dissatisfaction that we were not more affected by what we cannot but allow to be good, and wish we could admire it more than we do. The truth is, that with all there is to praise in it, it lacks the absorbing power.

It is not alone the want of that peculiar poetic vitality, upon which we have said so much, nor the lengthening out of particulars, and the dwelling too long upon a subject, that weakens the effect. Notwithstanding all the merits of this work, the language gives it a certain heaviness. We have said that there is no want of plainness in Mr. Pollok, that he never writes without meaning, and that we take his thoughts fully and at once. But his style is not poetic. We do not mean that it is not sufficiently ornamented. Ornamental terms are well nigh used up; and the poet nowadays must trust almost solely to the happy combination of the simplest words. No poet, however great he may be, will ever appear in that Asiatic gorgeousness in which Milton robed himself, his costly drapery lying full and rich, fold over fold. But the simple terms of our language never can grow old. Taking endless changes of combination, they will ever have in them the complexion, life, and vigor of the thoughts and feelings that gave them birth.

This brings us round again to the same cause with that of the former mentioned defects of our author—a want of the poetic temperament in all its warmth and vitality. We have acquitted him of a certain kind of fashionable wordiness; but we cannot of another kind. He abounds in epithets; and these too often of a character so general, that they might almost as well be applied to any other object, as to that with which they are connected. This remark belongs in a degree, and as far as can be consistently with an intelligible expression of strong thought, to his style generally. Select any of Shakspeare's better passages, and try to take out the smallest word from one of them; so closely is his work joined together, so

exactly proportioned and fitted is each part to each, and each to the whole, that should you attempt to remove one timber, the building would come tumbling down upon your heads. There is, we think, a commonness in Mr. Pollok's style; there certainly is diffuseness—a want of tenseness. He may be called a strong man; but his bulkiness gives him a somewhat heavy movement. The same bone and muscle and nerve in a smaller and more compact frame would show action and energy. He should not be harshly censured for this; for nature formed him so. And you might as well attempt to make a colorist of a painter who wants an eye for color, as to cure such a defect. Language, though it is something more, is the poet's only color.

Mr. Pollok cannot be so easily excused in another particular—a fault which is hardly to be accounted for in a man of his good sense and independent thinking—we mean in his imitations. In the first two books we met with so much of Milton's structure of sentences, and so many of his favorite terms of expression, that we had no expectation of finding Mr. Pollok so manly and profound a thinker as he turns out to be. He works himself pretty free of this fault, as he gets used to his labor; though occasional imitations occur, and these so close, that you cannot but smile now and then, even in the most serious passages.

He sometimes affects certain words; these, however, are few; such as,

“The frothy orator who *busked* his tales.”

“His lures, with baits that pleased the senses, *busked*.”

“How happily  
Plays yonder child that *bushes* the mimic babe.”

We have, “eldest hell,” “eldest energy,” “eldest skill,” and often the old word, “whiles.” The sentences frequently end with an adjective brought feebly in to fill up the measure. Violence is sometimes mistaken for strength; and where he attempts sarcasm, after the manner of Cowper, unlike Cowper, he not seldom misses his aim. In Young's bad taste, he occasionally introduces conceits into the more serious passages; and we find him aiming at impression by repeating an emphatic word; which is little better than trick in oratory, and very bad in poetry.

Having seen Mr. Pollok most extravagantly and indiscriminately praised, we have dwelt the longer upon his faults and deficiencies; being aware that nothing so endangers a man's just reputation as excessive commendation. Our author has already reaped some of the natural consequences of this conduct in his admirers; and we know of no surer way to secure to him his fair deserts, than by giving up freely all which we are not satisfied he is entitled to.

His main defects were probably radical, and such as would have gone with him through life, though he had lived to be old.

Time and culture may improve what a man hath, but cannot give him what nature has denied him.

After all, let us be neither too positive nor too sweeping in our judgement. There are other passages, besides some which we shall quote, which are strictly poetic; and we have never intended to apply this epithet loosely, or with indulgence. The Poem is virtually without machinery; and so great a work will almost of necessity go sluggishly without it. Had a more dramatic form been given to it, qualities might, perhaps, have been developed, in which we have all along supposed the author to be wanting, and more vividness, energy, and closeness have been imparted to his whole work. If he had in him the power of conceiving a character of sufficient individuality, and of possessing himself fully of it, the character, as always happens in such a case, would have taken possession of him in turn, and have spoken through him, as though he had been its mere organ. There is much of loose writing, and illogical use of terms, in the tales of the great novelist of the day; but these will be found out of his dialogue, and never in it.

Mr. Pollok also chose blank verse. This tasks a man more than any other form of writing, and least of all forms endures diffuseness.

Taking these difficulties into consideration, and recollecting that a man never can put forth all his strength when he has a misgiving at heart that what he is undertaking may be beyond his strength, no one can say how much greater poetic power Mr. Pollok might have shown, had he undertaken a work requiring less. He appears to have been a truly religious man; and it may be that the very awfulness of his subject subdued rather than aroused all his energies; that he felt himself a mere mortal, setting his foot upon holy ground.

His mind was in a striking degree meditative. He must have devoted to wise and enlarged meditation no small portion of those early years, which are spent by others in little else than acquiring knowledge. His work is not a mixture of youthful crudities and clever thoughts, but is remarkably characterized by maturity of thinking. He writes like an old observer of men, one who had looked long enough upon the world to have seen just what all its glosses are worth. He was not to be deceived into a false estimate of human nature, either by the pride of his own heart, or by short and disconnected views of the hearts of others. He not only had penetration sufficient to perceive wherein lay the errors of the philosophy of former times, but he had independence and clear-sightedness enough to look quite through the fallacies of his own day, and to see, moreover, that most of the boasted discoveries in what is styled the philosophy of religion, were little better than old errors in new dresses; that many of the schemes, so vaunted of for their originality, were but modified forms of those

which moved in the twilight, when the old revelation was set upon nigh all the world, and the sun of righteousness was not risen to bless it,—schemes, which floated in that light to darken it when it did at length arise, and which would overshadow it now, were not God more than man.

There are men who have a certain acuteness at detecting a fallacy, and an activity and clearness of intellect, which work very well within a particular sphere; but who want a largeness of thought to enable them to follow out the many and far-reaching relations of a great scheme, and to comprehend it as a whole. Mr. Pollok had such a comprehensive mind, and he brought the exercise of it to the greatest of all subjects—the relation of man to his God, and to a future state. He appears to have wrought with it, clear of the perversion of human vanity, and with a most sincere and humble reliance upon his Maker for aid. We believe his prayer in the last book came from a fervent heart, and that it was one which often went up from him during his labor.

"Jehovah! breath upon my soul; my heart  
Enlarge; my faith increase; increase my hope;  
My thoughts exalt; my fancy sanctify,  
And all my passions, that I near thy throne  
May venture, unreprieved."

He seems to have been led to this theme from a holy love of it; and to have been sustained by the hope that he was laboring in the cause of God, and for his fellow-men. Notwithstanding what we have said of his deficiencies, we trust his labor will not be in vain. The holy cast of thought which pervades his work from beginning to end, the striking manner in which he sets forth man's fall from holiness, and the evil of sin, not only as it is discovered in our acts, but in its perversions of our reason, and in its pollution of the secret springs of our hearts, and in our littleness and folly, compared with that grandeur and wisdom to which God ordained us—these, and all he has written, make the book an excellent monitor to go to, when we are getting lightminded, or growing into too good a conceit of ourselves, from comparing ourselves with others, or from hearing eulogies upon human nature, when we should have been listening to admonitions upon our sins, and fearful warnings against their dangers. There is, likewise, so much clear strong thinking in the book, that a serious plain sense man will find it so in accordance with his own mind as to awaken sympathy, and give it a hold upon his attention. Above all, that comprehensive view of God's government, to which we have alluded, adds to this work a double value in these days of bold assumptions, grounded on careless and imperfect notions of the nature of sin, and partial and half-way reasonings upon the character and providence of God,—days of daring doubt, too, as to the fearful woes pronounced against sin, because, forsooth, they sort not with our no-

tions of benevolence. Would that he, who thus speculates, would remember the words of Baxter, that "self-discovery is not the least part of illumination;" then might his eyes be opened to what he is, and what he should have been; then might he "perceive, that it is not possible for the best of men, much less for the wicked, to be competent judges of the desert of sin;" then might he understand that benevolence itself may require what had before so shocked his perverted reason, and be ready to say to himself, in the language of the same beautiful writer, "Alas, we are all both blind and partial. You can never know fully the desert of sin, till you fully know the evil of sin: and you can never fully know the evil of sin, till you fully know the excellency of the soul which it deformeth, and the excellency of the holiness which it doth obliterate; and the reason and excellency of the glory which it violateth; and the excellency of the glory which it doth despise; and the excellency of the office of reason which it treadeth down; no, nor till you know the infinite excellency, almightiness and holiness of that God against whom it is committed. When you fully know all these, you shall fully know the desert of sin." Believe the word, then, and be humble in thy present ignorance;

Be content;  
It will seem clearer to thine immortality.

In the mean time ponder the words of our author :

" Not God, but their own sin,  
Condemns them. What could be done, as thou hast heard,  
Has been already done; all has been tried,  
That wisdom infinite, or boundless grace,  
Working together could devise; and all  
Has failed. Why now succeed? Though God should stoop,  
Inviting still, and send his only Son  
To offer grace in hell, the pride, that first  
Refused, would still refuse; the unbelief,  
Still unbelieving, would deride, and mock;  
Nay more, refuse, deride, and mock; for sin,  
Increasing still, and growing, day and night,  
Into the essence of the soul, become  
All sin, makes what in time seemed probable,—  
Seemed probable, since God invited them,—  
For ever now impossible. Thus they,  
According to the eternal laws which bind  
All creatures, bind the Uncreated One,  
Though we name not the sentence of the Judge,—  
Must daily grow in sin and punishment,  
Made by themselves their necessary lot,  
Unchangeable to all eternity."

And again;

" The form thou saw'st was Virtue, ever fair.  
Virtue, like God, whose excellent majesty,  
Whose glory virtue is, is omnipresent.  
No being, once created rational,  
Accountable, endowed with moral sense,



With sapience of right and wrong endowed,  
 And charged, however fallen, debased, destroyed ;  
 However lost, forlorn, and miserable ;  
 In guilt's dark shrouding wrapped, however thick ;  
 However drunk, delirious, and mad,  
 With sin's full cup ; and with whatever damned,  
 Unnatural diligence it work and toil,  
 Can banish Virtue from its sight, or once  
 Forget that she is fair. Hides it in night,  
 In central night ; takes it the lightnings wing,  
 And flies forever on, beyond the bounds  
 Of all ; drinks it the maddest cup of sin ;  
 Dives it beneath the ocean of despair ;  
 It dives, it drinks, it flies, it hides in vain.  
 For still the eternal beauty, image fair,  
 Once stamped upon the soul, before the eye  
 All lovely stands, nor will depart ; so God  
 Ordains ; and lovely to the worst she seems,  
 And ever seems ; and as they look, and still  
 Must ever look, upon her loveliness,  
 Remembrance dire of what they were, of what  
 They might have been, and bitter sense of what  
 They are, polluted, ruined, hopeless, lost,  
 With most repenting torment rend their hearts.  
 So God ordains, their punishment severe,  
 Eternally inflicted by themselves.  
 'Tis this, this Virtue hovering evermore  
 Before the vision of the damned, and in  
 Upon their monstrous moral nakedness  
 Casting unwelcome light, that makes their wo,  
 That makes the essence of the endless flame.  
 Where this is, there is hell ; darker than aught  
 That he, the bard, three-visioned, darkest saw."

We are glad to find such views as these becoming more and more prominent ; not so much for the sake of the humble believer, who, having once felt assured that the Bible is the word of God, receives, without questioning, whatever that word reveals—though it must be a help to him to catch glimpses of the reasons for all that God has ordained—but because it serves to counteract the influence of those who set aside the authority of the Bible, where convenience requires it ; or professedly admitting it, torture its meaning, or render it unmeaning, that it may not speak contrary to their notions of what God should do, and God should be. Such treat the denunciations of eternal woe as if they must necessarily be the mere arbitrary threatenings of a severe judge ; and therefore, with them, eternal woe cannot mean eternal woe, and God still be merciful. They have never asked themselves, whether, taking *our* views of the Bible, God may not have presented the strongest possible motives to man here, and whether any thing beyond these, instead of alluring man from vice, would not drive him madly into deeper sin. They have but superficially considered the effects of purity presented to an impure, or holiness to an unholy mind. "Horrible doctrine," they cry, "that God should condemn man to eternal misery for the sins of time." Just as if through all eternity God would not suffer man to be happy.

There is a vague impression that men would not go on forever and ever enduring unmixed misery, if the agonized soul could by any effort free itself and find joy. But God, in his benevolence, has ordained that the joys of eternity shall spring from holiness alone; and who is prepared to say that measureless suffering will drive man to pray for *that* with all the heart? And if the evil passions are never to be satisfied in the other world, will man therefore turn away from them? How is it in the present world? Are not unsated lust, and ungratified envy, and hate, causes of misery? Needs he that lusts, and envies, and hates, be informed that they are? Is not his spirit stretched hourly upon the rack; and needs he be told who bind him there? If hate cannot avenge itself, nor envy rejoice over the fall of the envied, nor lust satiate its beastly longing, will telling the man this, cut his cords, and set him free from the torture? Does not the very despair give a blind and wild energy to his passions? Does he not cling closer and closer to his torment? Though it sounds of paradox, does not his very torture make his delight? If those, who, to rid themselves of hard thoughts of God, are ready to give up the plain meaning of the Bible, would but substitute the terms holiness, and unholiness, for happiness, and misery, there is a possibility that in good time they might be able to reconcile God's goodness, and the truth of his book. Let them take along with them the principle that in the future world, mixed character, and mixed happiness and suffering will be at an end; that man, assimilated either to his God, or to evil spirits, will be conscious of happiness only as an effluence of holiness, or of misery only as an effluence of sin; and then they may come to the conclusion that all the incongruity had been in their own brains; and each one of them, be at last ready to say, with sincerity, in the language of one who scarcely acted up to his profession, "I have no ambition to be a philosopher in opposition to Paul, or to postpone Christ to Aristotle."

In expressing our approbation of the passages which have given rise to these suggestions, we cannot but regret that the principle held in them does not discover itself more in the tenth book. We would not have had it the sole pervading principle; for we read in the Bible of God's anger against the wicked, and his direct punishment of them hereafter; and though we may not be able fully to comprehend the natures or modes or reasons of these, we will not fall into the very errors to which we have been objecting, and to rid ourselves of difficulties, resolve the whole into mere self-torture. We believe the terms to have a distinct meaning from that, and a fearful one too; and suppose it the part of justice that punishment should follow on the heels of crime; and that if a being will go on forever making war, though a vain one, against an all-holy, and happy state, it is right that he should suffer evil from without for his rebel pride, and hate of goodness.

The principle of benevolence may be here acting along with that of justice; and it may be one of the means of maintaining beings of freewill steadfast in virtue, that where crime is obdurate they should not only witness self-paining sin, but behold also the direct displeasure of God turned against it. The fact that he who dies in his sins will voluntarily persevere in them forever under all their evil consequences, may likewise be used to the same end; and thus sin, which had set itself in array against God's scheme of mingled holiness and happiness, be brought to thwart its own evil intent, and made to give stability to that government which it would fain overthrow. Let the bright angel now standing by God's throne, see the evil spirits restored, as some dream they will be, and who can tell that pride would not arm him against his Maker, and the standard of sin be again lifted in the heavens, and uproar, and shoutings of revolt be heard ringing through the joyous and glittering hosts that are now sending up the cry, *Glory to God in the highest?* Then would the firm state of heaven be shaken, revolt crowd upon revolt, and pardon on revolt, and then revolt, and the shoreless universe be left heaving through eternity, a restless, ever-surg-ing sea.—Would this be benevolence? And yet we fear it would be thus, or must be as God has declared it shall be.

We have neither time nor inclination to pursue these speculations further at present, though they might be presented in a variety of lights, and be multiplied an hundred fold. If our faith took hold upon nothing more in eternity than that of which we could explain the shape, and purposes, we would cut loose at once, and let the current of time drift us whither it would.

It is time that we gave our readers a few more extracts from the work before us. As the passage upon Byron has been so often quoted, instead of it, we will extract one nearest to it in spirit. If the reader should be reminded by it of that nobleman, his lordship in return may recall to him the wild and imaginative "*Rime of the Ancient Mariner,*" of Coleridge.

" Great Ocean! too, that morning, thou the call  
Of restitution heardst, and reverently  
To the last trumpet's voice, in silence, listened.  
Great Ocean! strongest of creation's sons,  
Unconquerable, unrepoused, untired,  
That rolled the wild, profound, eternal bass,  
In Nature's anthem, and made music, such  
As pleased the ear of God! original,  
Unmarred, unfaded work of Deity,  
And unburlesqued by mortal's puny skill,  
From age to age enduring and unchanged,  
Majestical, inimitable, vast,  
Loud uttering satire, day and night, on each  
Succeeding race, and little pompous work  
Of man!—unfallen, religious, holy Sea!  
Thou bowedst thy glorious head to none, fearedst none,  
Heardst none, to none didst honor, but to God  
Thy Maker, only worthy to receive  
Thy great obeisance! Undiscovered Sea!

Into thy dark, unknown, mysterious caves,  
 And secret haunts, unfathomably deep,  
 Beneath all visible retired, none went,  
 And came again, to tell the wonders there.  
 Tremendous Sea! what time thou lifted up  
 Thy waves on high, and with thy winds and storms  
 Strange pastime took, and shook thy mighty sides  
 Indignantly,—the pride of navies fell;  
 Beyond the arm of help, unheard, unseen,  
 Sunk friend and foe, with all their wealth and war;  
 And on thy shores, men of a thousand tribes,  
 Polite and barbarous, trembling stood, amazed,  
 Confounded, terrified, and thought vast thoughts  
 Of ruin, boundlessness, omnipotence,  
 Infinitude, eternity; and thought  
 And wondered still, and grasped, and grasped  
 Again; beyond her reach, exerting all  
 The soul, to take thy great idea in,  
 To comprehend incomprehensible;  
 And wondered more, and felt their littleness.  
 Self-purifying, unpolluted Sea!  
 Lover unchangeable, thy faithful breast  
 For ever heaving to the lovely Moon,  
 That, like a shy and holy virgin, robed  
 In saintly white walked nightly in the heavens,  
 And to the everlasting serenade  
 Gave gracious audience; nor was wooed in vain.  
 That morning, thou, that slumbered not before,  
 Nor slept, great Ocean! laid thy waves to rest,  
 And hushed thy mighty minstrelsy. No breath  
 Thy deep composure stirred, no fin, no oar;  
 Like beauty newly dead, so calm, so still,  
 So lovely, thou, beneath the light that fell  
 From angel-chariots, sentinelled on high,  
 Reposed, and listened, and saw thy living change,  
 Thy dead arise."

The vain endeavors of man to escape death and the thoughts of death are thus described:

" He turned aside, he drowned himself in sleep,  
 In wine, in pleasure; travelled, voyaged, sought  
 Receipts for health from all he met; betook  
 To business, speculate, retired; returned  
 Again to active life, again retired;  
 Returned, retired again; prepared to die;  
 Talked of thy nothingness, conversed of life  
 To come, laughed at his fears, filled up the cup,  
 Drank deep, refrained; filled up, refrained again;  
 Planned, built him round with splendor, won applause,  
 Made large alliances with men and things,  
 Read deep in science and philosophy,  
 To fortify his soul; heard lectures prove  
 The present ill and future good; observed  
 His pulse beat regular, extended hope;  
 Thought, dissipated thought, and thought again;  
 Indulged, abstained, and tried a thousand schemes,  
 To ward thy blow, or hide thee from his eye;  
 But still thy gloomy terrors, dipped in sin,  
 Before him frowned, and withered all his joy.  
 Still feared and hated thing! thy ghostly shape  
 Stood in his avenues of fairest hope;  
 Unmannerly and uninvited, crept  
 Into his haunts of most select delight.  
 Still, on his halls of mirth, and banqueting,

And revelry, thy shadowy hand was seen  
Writing thy name of—Death."

The following is the gentle call of nature to man :

"The Seasons came and went, and went and came,  
To teach men gratitude ; and as they passed,  
Gave warning of the lapse of Time, that else  
Had stolen unheeded by. The gentle Flowers  
Retired, and, stooping o'er the wilderness,  
Talked of humility, and peace, and love.  
The Dews came down unseen at evening-tide,  
And silently their bounties shed, to teach  
Mankind unostentatious charity.  
With arm in arm the forest rose on high,  
And lesson gave of brotherly regard."

As an accompaniment, we give part of the lament over the general decay of nature.

"Ye flowers of beauty, penciled by the hand  
Of God, who annually renewed your birth,  
To gem the virgin robes of Nature chaste,  
Ye smiling-featured daughters of the Sun!  
Fairer than queenly bride, by Jordan's stream  
Leading your gentle lives, retired, unseen ;  
Or on the sainted cliffs on Zion hill  
Wandering, and holding with the heavenly dews,  
In holy revelry, your nightly loves,  
Watched by the stars, and offering, every morn,  
Your incense grateful both to God and man ;—  
Ye lovely gentle things, alas! no spring  
Shall ever wake you now! ye withered all,  
All in a moment drooped, and on your roots  
The grasp of everlasting winter seized!  
Children of song, ye birds that dwelt in air,  
And stole your notes from angels' lyres, and first  
In levee of the morn, with eulogy  
Ascending, hailed the advent of the dawn ;  
Or, roosted on the pensive evening bough,  
In melancholy numbers, sung the day  
To rest ;—your little wings, failing, dissolved,  
In middle air, and on your harmony  
Perpetual silence fell!"

Pride is thus set forth as the great cause of man's fall :

"Pride, self-adoring pride, was primal cause  
Of all sin passed, all pain, all wo to come.  
Unconquerable pride! first, eldest sin,  
Great fountain-head of evil! highest source,  
Whence flowed rebellion 'gainst the Omnipotent,  
Whence hate of man to man, and all else ill.  
Pride at the bottom of the human heart  
Lay, and gave root and nourishment to all  
That grew above. Great ancestor of vice!  
Hate, unbelief, and blasphemy of God ;  
Envy and slander, malice and revenge ;  
And murder, and deceit, and every birth  
Of damned sort, was progeny of pride.  
It was the ever-moving, acting force,  
The constant aim, and the most thirsty wish  
Of every sinner unrenewed, to be  
A god ; in purple or in rags to have



Himself adored. Whatever shape or form  
 His actions took, whatever phrase he threw  
 About his thoughts, or mantle o'er his life,  
 To be the highest, was the inward cause  
 Of all; the purpose of the heart to be  
 Set up, admired, obeyed. But who would bow  
 The knee to one who served and was dependant;  
 Hence man's perpetual struggle, night and day,  
 To prove he was his own proprietor,  
 And independent of his God, that what  
 He had might be esteemed his own, and praised  
 As such. He labored still and tried to stand  
 Alone, unpropped, to be obliged to none;  
 And in the madness of his pride, he bade  
 His God farewell, and turned away to be  
 A god himself; resolving to rely,  
 Whatever came, upon his own right hand."

For the sake of specimens varying from each other as much as possible in character, we quote the following, though aware that it may suggest an unfavorable comparison with the masterly sarcasm of Cowper. It is from a description of the dead raised, and assembled for judgement?

"It was a strange assembly; none, of all  
 That congregation vast, could recollect  
 Aught like it in the history of man.  
 No badge of outward state was seen, no mark  
 Of age, or rank, or national attire,  
 Or robe professional, or air of trade.  
 Untitled stood the man that once was called  
 My lord, unserved, unfollowed; and the man  
 Of tithes, right reverend in the dialect  
 Of Time addressed, ungowned, unbeneficed,  
 Uncorpulent; nor now, from him who bore,  
 With ceremonious gravity of step,  
 And face of borrowed holiness o'erlaid,  
 The ponderous book before the awful priest,  
 And opened and shut the pulpit's sacred gates  
 In style of wonderful observancy  
 And reverence excessive, in the beams  
 Of sacerdotal splendor lost, or if  
 Observed, comparison ridiculous scarce  
 Could save the little, pompous, humble man  
 From laughter of the people,—not from him  
 Could be distinguished then the priest untithed."

The next is a description given with a touch of tenderness.

"Wrinkled with time,  
 And hoary with the dust of years, an old  
 And worthy man came to his humble roof,  
 Tottering and slow, and on the threshold stood.  
 No foot, no voice, was heard within. None came  
 To meet him, where he oft had met a wife,  
 And sons, and daughters, glad at his return;  
 None came to meet him; for that day had seen  
 The old man lay, within the narrow house,  
 The last of all his family; and now  
 He stood in solitude, in solitude  
 Wide as the world; for all, that made to him  
 Society, had fled beyond its bounds.  
 Wherever strayed his aimless eye, there lay

The wreck of some fond hope, that touched his soul  
 With bitter thoughts, and told him all was passed.  
 His lonely cot was silent, and he looked  
 As if he could not enter. On his staff,  
 Bending, he leaned; and from his weary eye,  
 Distressing sight! a single tear-drop wept.  
 None followed, for the fount of tears was dry.  
 Alone and last, it fell from wrinkle down  
 To wrinkle, till it lost itself, drunk by  
 The withered cheek, on which again no smile  
 Should come, or drop of tenderness be seen."

We have room for only one more extract from a passage, to us the most natural, simple, and affecting in the Poem. It is supposed to describe the author's early hopes, wishes, and disappointments; and does, indeed, seem to come from the heart.

"One of this mood I do remember well.  
 We name him not,—what now are earthly names?—  
 In humble dwelling born, retired, remote;  
 In rural quietude, 'mong hills, and streams,  
 And melancholy deserts, where the Sun  
 Saw, as he passed, a shepherd only, here  
 And there, watching his little flock, or heard  
 The ploughman talking to his steers; his hopes,  
 His morning hopes, awoke before him, smiling,  
 Among the dews and holy mountain airs;  
 And fancy colored them with every hue  
 Of heavenly loveliness. But soon his dreams  
 Of childhood fled away, those rainbow dreams,  
 So innocent and fair, that withered Age,  
 Even at the grave, cleared up his dusty eye,  
 And, passing all between, looked fondly back  
 To see them once again, ere he departed:  
 These fled away, and anxious thought, that wished  
 To go, yet whither knew not well to go,  
 Possessed his soul, and held it still awhile.  
 He listened, and heard from far the voice of fame,  
 Heard and was charmed; and deep and sudden vow  
 Of resolution, made to be renowned;  
 And deeper vowed again to keep his vow.

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 Thus stood his mind, when round him came a cloud,  
 Slowly and heavily it came, a cloud  
 Of ills, we mention not. Enough to say,  
 'Twas cold, and dead, impenetrable gloom.  
 He saw its dark approach, and saw his hopes,  
 One after one, put out, as nearer still  
 It drew his soul; but fainted not at first,  
 Fainted not soon.

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 He called philosophy, and with his heart  
 Reasoned. He called religion too, but called  
 Reluctantly, and therefore was not heard.  
 Ashamed to be o'ermatched by earthly woes,  
 He sought, and sought, with eye that dimmed apace,  
 To find some avenue to light, some place  
 On which to rest a hope; but sought in vain.  
 Darker and darker still the darkness grew.  
 At length he sunk, and Disappointment stood  
 His only comforter, and mournfully  
 Told all was passed. His interest in life,  
 In being, ceased; and now he seemed to feel,

And shuddered as he felt his powers of mind  
 Decaying in the spring-time of his day.  
 The vigorous, weak became ; the clear, obscure.  
 Memory gave up her charge, Decision reeled,  
 And from her flight Fancy returned, returned  
 Because she found no nourishment abroad.  
 The blue heavens withered, and the moon, and sun,  
 And all the stars, and the green earth, and morn  
 And evening, withered ; and the eyes, and smiles,  
 And faces, of all men and women, withered :  
 Withered to him ; and all the universe,  
 Like something which had been, appeared ; but now  
 Was dead and mouldering fast away. He tried  
 No more to hope, wished to forget his vow,  
 Wished to forget his harp ; then ceased to wish.  
 That was his last. Enjoyment now was done.  
 He had no hope, no wish, and scarce a fear.  
 Of being sensible, and sensible  
 Of loss, he as some atom seemed, which God  
 Had made superfluous, and needed not  
 To build creation with ; but back again  
 To nothing threw, and left it in the void,  
 With everlasting sense that once it was.<sup>17</sup>

Our demands upon a poet are higher perhaps than would be those of many of our readers. We have spoken of the evil done to Mr. Pollok's just fame by indiscriminate praise. In the fear lest we should fall into the same mistake with others, and let our zeal for the true faith for which he wrote lead us to over-estimate his poetic merit, it is possible that we may not have done him entire justice. We have therefore given more room to selections than we well knew how to spare, that those who have not already seen the Poem might not be induced by the character of our criticism to neglect reading it. If our remarks have been rigid, we trust we have made amends by extracts from the better portions of the work.

We cannot leave this Poem without recommending it as a help to the meditations of the serious, and without expressing the wish that those inclined to think full well of human nature and their own hearts, and carelessly of what God requires of them, would read it also. There is an alarming and an increasing propensity in society to both of these errors ; indeed, they are necessarily coupled. We know of few works better calculated than the one we are noticing, to put an end to the vain, the worse than vain fancies of a preeminently vain age.

We are also becoming more and more creatures of society. The increasing facilities of intercourse, with other circumstances, are helping to make us so. The tendency of this state of things is to give us what the world calls good-natured views of our fellow-men, or in other words, to make us less scrupulous concerning points of moral conduct, and indiscriminately familiar with the good and the unprincipled, and ready enough to expend upon ourselves something of this same good nature which we are

bestowing so liberally upon the world at large. Thus much is at least true; the retired man, when occasionally amongst those living much with the world, is conscious of a depressing sensation at the absence of a certain sensitiveness where he feels quickly, and a want of earnestness and deep seriousness about that which he thinks connected with what is most important to our natures, and a disposition to pass lightly over that which lies closest to his heart.

The study of the Course of Time would serve as a corrective to these false views; and though the man of the world may think its requirements high, he will not find them urged with bitterness or severity, but pressed upon him from an enlarged principle of love; which may lead him to see how differently things have appeared in his eyes, from what they have in those of a religious man, and in connexion with God.

We are indebted to Mr. Pollok for having presented in their connexions some of the leading principles of the Orthodox faith. It is by attacks upon the system in parts only that its opponents ever venture to make war upon it. Assail it as a whole, and it is impregnable alike to stratagem or force. If Mr. Pollok has not done his part as well as it might have been done, let us remember that he is the first who has attempted it in verse, and that he has set a noble example. Let us, too, make all allowance for his difficulties. He not only had to set forth in poetry God's system in relation to man; but, alas for the children of this world, he had to argue with them, argue, not with their reason, but their prejudices, their self-conceit, and their evil hearts.

The copy of the work before us is from the Edinburgh third edition—the only accurate one we believe—yet we have no preface, no argument to the several books, and nothing more concerning the author than can be gathered from the title-page—namely, that his Christian name was Robert, and that he was an A. M. There is something of affectation in this chariness upon the last head, now the author is gone.

We learn from the *Eclectic Review* that he died of consumption, at the age of twenty-eight, near Southampton, in England, on his way from Scotland to Italy, for his health.\*

\* The following additional account of Mr. Pollok is selected from the *Christian Review*.

The Rev. Robert Pollok was born at Muirhouse, parish of Eaglesham, (N. B.,) October 19, 1798. His father still occupies the same farm, and is esteemed by his neighbors as a very worthy and intelligent person. Robert was the youngest of the family; and his early days were spent on the farm with his father, in such labors as the seasons called for. He was always fond of reading; and the winter's evenings were employed in this manner, when his companions were perhaps engaged in some trifling amusement. He is not known to have made any attempts at poetry when very young. At seventeen years of age, he commenced the study of the Latin language; and a few months after this, he produced the first poem which he is known to have committed to paper. In October, 1813, when seventeen years of age, he entered the University of Glasgow, where he studied five years; at the end of which time he obtained the degree of Master of Arts. While at college he was a very diligent and exemplary student, and distinguished himself so far as to have several prizes awarded him by the suffrage of his fellows: besides the regular

How many have died of this disease in early life, who have discovered an extent of acquirements and a development of the intellectual powers, which have led us to say of one and another of them, "Had he lived, what a man he would have made!" This is probably a mistake. This disorder often operates like a forcing system, and could it be stopped, and the subject of it be allowed to live on, there would most likely be a very little further growth. It would seem as if God had, in fatherly kindness, thus early opened to the wonders of his world here the minds of those so diseased, seeing that the days appointed to them on earth were few. Often, too, they are blessed with a clear serenity of spirit and mind that makes us look upon them as half celestial creatures passing by us on their way to a better world.

He of whom we have been writing, in truth, passed quickly; yet not without leaving us much for our eternal good.

It may be gathered from our remarks upon the poetical merits of the *Course of Time*, that we think a great religious poem in our language is something still to be desired rather than already attained.

exercises, he composed a number for his own pleasure and improvement, and several of these were poetical. Before he had finished his *curriculum*, his health was considerably impaired. In the autumn of 1822 he entered the United Secession Divinity Hall, under the care of Dr. Dick. Here his discourses attracted considerable notice, and called forth some severe criticisms from his fellow-students. A mind like his could not submit to the trammels of common divisions: the form of an essay suited better the impetuosity of his genius; and he occasionally indulged in lofty descriptions, both of character and external nature. In May, 1827, he received license to preach from the United Secession Presbytery of Edinburgh. During his previous trials he was employed superintending the printing of his poem. His first public discourse is said to have produced a powerful sensation on the audience. The text was, "How long halt ye between two opinions? If the Lord be God, follow him; but if Baal, then follow him." Some descriptive parts, respecting those who serve Baal rather than God, are said to have been awfully grand. He preached only three other times, when he was obliged to retire from public service. His labors had been too great for his constitution, in which the seeds of consumption had long before been sown. By some medical gentlemen of eminence in Edinburgh, he was advised to try the effects of a warmer climate. Italy was his intended retreat; and, after providing himself with letters of introduction to some learned men on the Continent, he set out, accompanied by a sister. He had got as far as the neighborhood of Southampton, when, overpowered with the fatigues of travelling, he was compelled to desist. He here fevered, and after a few days, expired, far from the scenes of his birth and his studies. It is comforting to learn that Mr. Pollok's death was that of a true saint; his last moments being characterized by patience, resignation and faith.

His habits were those of a close student: his reading was extensive: he could converse on almost every subject: he had a great facility in composition; in confirmation of which, he is said to have written nearly a thousand lines weekly of the last four books of the "*Course of Time*." The poem, as a whole, was, however, no hasty performance: it had engaged his attention long. His college acquaintances could perceive that his mind was not wholly devoted to the business of the classes; he was constantly writing or reading on other subjects. Having his time wholly to himself, he amassed a prodigious store of ideas. It was his custom to commit to the flames, every now and then, a great number of papers. He had projected a prose work of some magnitude—a review of Literature in all ages—designed to show that literature must stand or fall in proportion as it harmonizes with Scripture Revelation. But death has put an end to this, as to many other projects; and all that we can now look for, is a posthumous volume, for which we are glad to understand there are ample materials in the poems, essays, and sermons, found among his papers. Such a volume, with a memoir of the lamented youth prefixed, cannot fail to prove an acceptable offering to the public: and we hope soon to hear that it is in course of preparation.



Well as Mr. Pollok has done, we cannot but exclaim with the fervor, and longing, and something of the hope, we believe, which inspired Cowper when he sung,

'T were new, indeed, to see a bard all fire,  
Touch'd with a coal from heaven, assume the lyre,  
And tell the world, still kindling as he sung,  
With more than mortal music on his tongue,  
That *He*, who died below, and reigns above,  
Inspires the song, and that his name is love.

Yes, we cannot but have the hope, let us say, the faith, that from the earth will yet go up strains that shall mingle with the harps of hymning angels in the heavens.

If we are not to look for another poem so appalling, so magnificent, and yet of such paradisiacal loveliness as Milton's; still every Christian must feel that *Paradise Lost* is not of a character to answer the great religious end in view. One is dead, who, furnished by God with celestial arms, too often, in his bitterness and scorn, turned them against man, and sometimes, in his recklessness, against his very Maker. There still lives one who might build up a temple into which all might enter with wonder and awe—it is Coleridge.

Whatever he may think of his poetic powers, we believe we are not rash in prophesying, that with the course of thought which his mind has long held, and with the feelings with which he would enter upon such a work, he would leave behind him a poem worthy of God's cause, and second only to that poetic work which he so reverences.

In speaking of Mr. Coleridge's intellect we are reminded of Mr. Pollok's beautiful passage upon the poet; and it is not his only beautiful one on that theme.

"Most fit was such a place for musing men,  
Happiest sometimes when musing without aim.  
It was, indeed, a wondrous sort of bliss  
The lonely bard enjoyed, when forth he walked,  
Unpurposed; stood, and knew not why; sat down,  
And knew not where; arose, and knew not when;  
Had eyes, and saw not; ears, and nothing heard;  
And sought—sought neither heaven nor earth—sought naught,  
Nor meant to think; *but ran, meantime, through vast  
Of visionary things, fairer than aught  
That was; and saw the distant tops of thoughts,  
Which men of common stature never saw,  
Greater than aught that largest worlds could hold,  
Or give idea of, to those who read.  
He entered in to Nature's holy place,  
Her inner chamber, and beheld her face,  
Unveiled; and heard unutterable things,  
And incommunicable visions saw.*"

To whom, if not to Coleridge may be applied the words we have put in italics?

We are not entirely free from hesitation in thus speaking of Mr. Coleridge. Men of original minds, in stretching off in their flight after truth, have so pleasurable a consciousness of intellectual vigor in the exercise of their higher powers, that they sometimes unawares pass by that calm, clear-shining orb, and lose themselves for a season amidst mock suns. If, however, such men sincerely love truth, they are of use to us in the end. They rouse a common mind, give it a longer reach of thought, and here and there open to it a scene so glorious, that the light which comes from it detects the very errors to which they themselves had given life; and the errors shall at last fade and die in that light, while the light itself shall shine on, growing brighter and brighter, and spreading more and more.

We must not be impatient because we cannot make every mind just what we would have it; but should rather reflect upon our own imperfections, and lament, while we consider what it is which gives truth to the words long ago uttered by a remarkable woman, "Nothing is less in a man's power than his own mind."

It seems to be a law of our fallen natures, that evil should be connected with every great power in man, if in no other way, at least in the very excess: which must needs be; for in whom, but in Him who made us, are all the powers in even balance? Amongst the great ones of the earth, who, for instance, is there of all the reformers who has not carried overthrow beyond the bounds of error? This should render the great meek; but let it not make the little proud. Let them remember that they have their weak things too; unnoticed, because there are no mighty ones at hand to show them in contrast.

Mr. Coleridge's proneness to deep speculations upon things spiritual, and the character of his philosophical reading, have led him into some opinions which we cannot think sound. No one will suspect that when we desire him to take a religious subject for a poem, we at the same time place him amongst those who make up their minds beforehand as to what the Bible should mean, and then go to it with little other purpose than to distort it till it takes the shapes of the deformed progeny of their own brains. Mr. Coleridge's character is too well known to endanger his being numbered with these; but we do apprehend that in his fondness for speculating and refining, he sometimes runs off upon a course that leads him away from the simple meaning of the Bible, though he makes that book his starting point. Other men, truly religious no doubt, have fallen into like errors through this same propensity.

We believe Mr. Coleridge has so deep a reverence for God's Word, that could he but catch a glimpse of danger to it in the path in which, if we do not err, he is sometimes seen wandering, he would shun it as he would the way of death; knowing, as he does,

that error can never be harmless, and, however insignificant in itself, where connected with a great truth, can never be trifling.

May he, with the full sense of his responsibility in such an undertaking, mature well the plan of a poem, and give these his latter days to the work, having for the strengthening of his spirit through his labors, the sanctifying dew of which Pollok speaks,

Coming unseen——  
Anew creating all, and yet not heard ;  
Compelling, yet not felt.

In his own words to that mountain, made sacred by his noble hymn, we would call upon him,—

Awake,  
Voice of sweet song !

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THE TRINITARIAN CONTROVERSY. *A Discourse delivered at the Ordination of Mr. Daniel M. Stearns to the Pastoral charge of the first Church in Dennis, May 14, 1828. By Charles Lowell, Minister of the West Church in Boston.* Boston, N. S. Simpkins & Co. pp. 40.

The object of this Discourse is to discourage “all attempts to investigate the nature of Jesus Christ, and the precise connexion between him and his Father,” on the ground that there is *nothing revealed* on the subject. To the accomplishment of this object we should not object, if allowed to put our own sense upon the words. The metaphysical “nature of Jesus Christ” is as inscrutable as is the nature of God ; and as to “the precise connexion between him and the Father,” no Trinitarian pretends to understand this. We believe that he, and the Father, and the Holy Spirit, are in some sense one, and in some other sense three ; we believe this as revealed truth ; but of the mode of connexion subsisting between these adorable persons, we profess to know nothing. And if Dr. Lowell had intended to discourage investigations of “the nature of Jesus Christ, and of the precise connexion between him and his Father” in this sense, we should have had nothing to object, but could cordially have united our voice with his.

But though the language is so constructed as to admit of this sense, and perhaps convey it to the unwary reader ; still, this is not the sense intended—at least it is not all. By the *nature* of Christ, Dr. L. means the *person* of Christ ; for he says, “They have no cause for anxiety, who, after all their inquiry, are unable to arrive at definite notions respecting the *person* of Christ. They may be content to be ignorant of what they cannot know. If I could tell them, I would gladly do it. Others, with great ingenuity,

and with perfect sincerity, may attempt it, but they know no more than we do." p. 7.

But is it true, indeed, that we have no revelation in regard to the person of Christ? Will Dr. L. come before the public and confess that *he* knows nothing respecting the person of the Saviour? Will he presume to say, that there is nothing revealed, and that he has no means of forming an opinion on the question, whether Christ is a mere man, or an angel, or a superangelic being, or a strictly Divine person? Whether aware of it or not, he virtually does say this, in the Discourse before us. And having said it, he virtually contradicts the declaration, by describing Christ as an "inconceivably exalted Being"—which he could not have done, had he found nothing revealed, and had he formed no opinion relating to the subject.

There are two considerations presented in the Discourse, to shew that nothing is revealed or known respecting the person of Christ; one is the text; 'No man knoweth who the Son is, but the Father;' and the other is the *diversity of opinion* which has been entertained in relation to this point.

'No man knoweth who the Son is, but the Father.' Is this passage to be taken in its strictest sense; or does it require, like many other of our Lord's declarations, to be measured and qualified by a comparison with other passages—'comparing spiritual things with spiritual'? None *originally* knew anything pertaining to the Son of God, except the Deity; and none now know anything more of him than God has been pleased to reveal. But has he revealed nothing? And is it strictly true that there is now nothing known? How came Dr. L. then to know so much about Christ? Where did he learn that the Lord Jesus is "an inconceivably exalted Being"—"the Mediator between God and man, in whom dwelt all the fullness of the Godhead bodily, and to whom the Spirit was given without measure"? If we have no revelation concerning Christ, what are we to understand by 'the record which God hath given us of his Son'? And what are we to think of all that is written respecting the person and offices of Christ, in different parts of the Bible?

Says Dr. L., Christ "came not to *reveal himself*, but the Father." But is it true that *Christ* made no revelations respecting himself? When he said, 'Before Abraham was, I am'—'He that hath seen me hath seen the Father'—'I and my Father are one'—'I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last'—'I am he that searcheth the reins and the heart'—'Hereafter ye shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven;'—in all these, and similar declarations, did he reveal nothing concerning himself? If Christ did reveal himself—if the Father also has revealed him—if the Bible is eminently a revelation concerning him; then the passage, selected

by our author as the foundation of his Discourse, cannot be taken in its strictest sense. None can pretend to know who the Son is, any farther than he is revealed; but a revelation has been made; and the great and only question for men to decide is, What is the purport of this revelation? What does the Bible disclose and teach, respecting the person of the Saviour?

And here we are brought to that *diversity of opinion*, on which the writer of the Sermon enlarges, and which he regards as demonstrative proof of the correctness of the position he has assumed. The Socinian interprets the Bible to mean that Christ was a man, and nothing more. The Arian places him something higher than angels. He was "an inconceivably exalted Being," says Dr. Lowell. While the Trinitarian honors him as strictly a Divine person. '*The Word was God.*'—"The various opinions which have existed in all ages respecting the person of Christ, might have been sufficient," says our author, "without the declaration of Scripture, to demonstrate that 'no man knoweth who the Son is.'" p. 18.

Dr. Lowell's views of demonstration must be widely different from those of the generality of men, or he could not have hazarded an assertion like this. On what subject, we ask, whether of natural or revealed religion, have not men held a diversity of opinion. The existence, the perfections, and purposes of God; the inspiration of the Scriptures; the character and state of man; the offices and work, as well as the person of Christ; the promises and threatenings of the Gospel; the conditions of salvation; and the retributions of the world to come;—on all these great subjects men have differed, and differed variously and widely. But does this "demonstrate" that these are not subjects of revelation, and consequently that nothing can be known respecting them? We admit there have been different opinions, all professedly founded on the Scriptures, touching the person of the Saviour; but what does this prove? Not that the Scriptures afford no light, and contain no revelation on the subject; but that men have darkened minds and hardened hearts, and are liable now, as they were in the days of the apostle Peter, to 'wrest the Scriptures to their own destruction.'

Dr. L. gives us the sentiments of "some of the earliest Christian writers after the apostles," relative to the person of Christ. And it is evident, from the passages he has quoted, and from many which he has failed to quote, that these holy confessors and martyrs were decided believers in the Divinity of the Saviour. Clement, described by our author as "the companion and fellow laborer of Paul, who is mentioned with so much honor in the epistle to the Philippians," speaks of "the Lord Jesus Christ" as "God," and ascribes to him "glory and majesty, forever and ever." Polycarp represents Christ as one "whom every living



creature shall *worship*." The following sentences are from the seven authentic epistles of Ignatius, some of which are quoted by Dr. Lowell, and some not. "There is one physician, both fleshly and spiritual, made and not made, *God incarnate*, even Jesus Christ our Lord."—Referring to the sufferings and death of Christ, he says, "Permit me to imitate the *passion of my God*." "I glorify God, even Jesus Christ, who has given you such wisdom."—"Consider the times, and expect him who is *above all time, eternal, invisible*, though for our sakes made visible; *impalpable and impassible*, yet for us subjected to sufferings; enduring all manner of ways for our salvation."—"I wish you all happiness in *our God Jesus Christ*." This phrase, "*our God Jesus Christ*," and "*Jesus Christ our God*," is of frequent occurrence in these epistles of Ignatius. Not less than six or seven passages might be given, in which it occurs in nearly the same words.\*

We do not quote these apostolic fathers as inspired; nor should we have quoted them at all, had not the example been set us by Dr. L. Their testimony, it will be seen, is in unison with that of Paul and John; and more explicit it need not be.

We infer from the Discourse before us, that Dr. L. does not agree in all points with the generality of modern Unitarians. It can be no objection in his mind to the doctrine of the Trinity, that in some points of view it is mysterious: for he speaks of the person of Christ as a thing unrevealed, "a mystery," which "the scanty line of human reason cannot fathom." Yet he undoubtedly believes that there was, and is, such a person as Jesus Christ. We learn also from the Sermon, and from other sources, that Dr. L. is a believer in the *atonement* of Christ. He speaks of him as having "humbled himself that, by his obedience and death, he might make *propitiation for the sins of mankind*."—We are farther informed, that Dr. L. dissents from most Unitarians, in admitting what they denounce as the horrible doctrine of *endless punishment*.

Whether there are other points in which he differs from them, and agrees with us, we know not, nor are we concerned to know. But we are concerned to see him, and some few others who agree with him, who would be thought to hold a sort of evangelical Unitarianism, bestowing their countenance and fellowship upon those, who have discarded well nigh every vestige of evangelical truth. And if it could be thought likely to do them any good, we would even expostulate with these more serious Unitarians, on what we are constrained to think the inconsistency of their conduct. They must know, as well as we do, to what lengths many, whom they call their brethren, have departed from the faith once delivered to the saints. For they hear them discarding the atonement of Christ; denying the future and endless punishment of the wicked; and rejecting, in the common acceptance of the terms,

\* "Polycarp," says Dr. Lowell, "was a disciple of St. John." "Ignatius was a contemporary of Polycarp, and probably a disciple of the apostles."

the plenary inspiration of the holy Scriptures.\* And still will Dr. L., and those who agree with him, exchange pulpits with such men, and assist at their ordinations, and extend to them the right hand of fellowship? Will they thus declare, before the world, and in the most solemn acts of religion, that they regard these as good ministers, who believe and love the truth, who will direct sinners to Christ, and guide them to heaven? To the persons here addressed we must be allowed to say—in perfect friendship certainly, and with the most tender concern for the welfare of themselves and their people—that we deem this a very serious business, and we doubt not they will find it so at another day. How can they do anything to discountenance, for instance, the doctrine of universal salvation, while they hold fellowship with those who believe, and (as far as they dare) teach, this ruinous doctrine? How can they do anything to check the progress of infidelity even, while they hold fellowship with those who speak of the holy Scriptures, in the manner we have quoted in a previous note? We do therefore most affectionately and earnestly entreat them, by the blood of Calvary, by the worth of souls, and by all the precious interests of eternity, to pause where they are; to descend no further in this downward path; to come out from the congregation of those who reject what they regard as most important truth; and to return to the faith of their Pilgrim fathers—to the faith of the reformers—to the faith of the apostles and early martyrs of Jesus.

\*If any wish to know in what estimation leading Unitarians now hold the Scriptures, we need only refer them to some late numbers of the Christian Examiner. From what purports to be a Review of Professor Stuart's Commentary on the Hebrews, in the number for Jan. and Feb. 1823, written, as it is understood, by a distinguished Professor in Harvard University, we extract the following sentences; and whatever other part of our work is neglected, we do earnestly hope that these sentences will be read and pondered.

"We must recollect that the words of Christ were reported *from memory* by the evangelists, and NOT ALWAYS WITH PERFECT ACCURACY. This is evident from the fact, that in recording the same discourse or saying, the first three evangelists *differ from each other*, not unfrequently as to the words themselves, and occasionally also as to the SENSE and BEARING. Now all the evangelists, being themselves *allegorists*"—which term the writer defines to mean those who quote the Scriptures in "*imaginary, secondary senses*" which are "*in their nature arbitrary and fanciful*"—"ALL the evangelists being," in this sense, "*allegorists*, it would not have been strange, if unconsciously, and through INADVERTENCE, they had given an *allegorical turn to words*, which were used by our Saviour only by way of *application*."

"The reasoning of St. Paul *will not always bear a philosophical scrutiny*."  
Of the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, this writer says, "*His reasoning cannot be regarded as of ANY FORCE*, by an intelligent reader of the present day. It is difficult so far to accommodate our minds to the conceptions and principles of the author and his cotemporaries, as to perceive how it was adapted to produce *any effect* at the time when it was written. It is founded, for the most part, upon the Old Testament; but not upon the language of the Old Testament taken in its obvious sense, and interpreted upon common principles. On the contrary, the writer"—an allegorist, like "*all the evangelists*"—"deduces from its words *hidden and mystical senses*, and *strange and unfounded inferences*, which he adapts to his purpose."

It hardly need be said, after what we have quoted, that this writer rejects the *whole epistle to the Hebrews*, regarding it as not entitled to a place in the Bible.

We doubt whether anything can be quoted from Priestley or Belsham more palpably inconsistent with the inspiration of the Scriptures, than the sentences which have here been given.

## SELECTIONS.

SERMONS, BY THE LATE REV. EDWARD PAYSON, D. D. *Pastor of the Second Church in Portland.*

Few men have lived more beloved, or died more lamented by the people of God, than the late Dr. Payson. He was regarded, while on earth, as an invaluable treasure to the church; and when taken from us, although we almost saw him ascend like the prophet in a chariot of fire—such was the glory of his closing scene—still, we could not but mourn his departure. We knew we had no reason to mourn for him, but in the gain of the church above, and in his everlasting gain, we felt that the church on earth had sustained a heavy loss.

Knowing, as we did, the high estimation in which Dr. Payson was held during life, we could not but feel a degree of solicitude, when we heard announced a volume of his posthumous sermons. We feared it might happen to him, as in some instances it has to others, where the inconsiderate attachment of friends has prompted them to do that which was afterwards regretted. But, having perused the volume before us, our solicitude on this subject is at an end. The well earned reputation of its author is safe, and more than this need not be said for him.

These Sermons are characterized by directness, plainness, and unaffected earnestness. Occasionally they exhibit a reach of thought, a grandeur of conception, and a force and propriety of illustration, which are highly pleasing. The style, to us, is often beautiful, not because it is specially smooth, or highly ornamented, but because it is the natural expression of weighty thoughts, and of strong and holy feelings. The writer is evidently full of his subject, and his only object is to present and enforce it, and make it impressive and profitable to his hearers. In perusing these Sermons, we cannot doubt that we are listening to a holy man. We seem to ourselves to breathe a new and highly refreshing spiritual atmosphere. And it is impossible for the *Christian* to read more than a few pages, anywhere, without finding himself in a very serious frame of mind—without finding his heart warmed, and his soul enlarged, and himself spiritually strengthened and profited.

We have solicited, and still hope to receive, a formal review of these Sermons, from an intimate acquaintance and friend of the deceased author. In the meantime, we have thought it our duty to bring the volume, while yet retaining the freshness of novelty, before the public, and give a number of extracts from it, for the double purpose of edifying our readers, and of promoting its circulation. We could wish it might lie on the writing desk of every minister of the Gospel, to be frequently pondered that its spirit might be caught, during the composition of his sermons. We hope it may find its way into the parlors of the rich, and the cottages of the poor, to admonish both these classes that mere earthly distinctions are of little consequence and of short duration, being soon to be levelled in the grave, and merged in one sweeping distinction of character, as it presents itself to the view of God. And could it meet the eyes of the thoughtless and unbelieving, who live after the course of this evil world, and laugh at the idea of hell, it could hardly fail to arouse in such, at least for a moment, a smothered conscience, and to startle them with the un-

welcome suggestion, that the Bible may in truth reveal, and the invisible world ere long disclose, more terrible things, than have ever been dreamed of in their philosophy.

Our first extract is from the Sermon entitled, "Our Sins Infinite in Number and Enormity."

"If we wish to know the number of our sins, we must look first, and chiefly, at the feelings and dispositions of our hearts. And if we do thus look at them, we shall be convinced, in a moment, that our sins are numberless. Every moment of our waking existence, in which we do not love God with all our hearts, we sin; for this constant and perfect love to God his law requires. Every moment, in which we do not love our neighbor as ourselves, we sin; for this also we are commanded to do. Every moment, in which we do not exercise repentance, we sin; for repentance is one of the first duties required of us. Every moment, in which we do not exercise faith in Christ, we sin; for the constant exercise of faith the Gospel everywhere requires. When we do not set our affections on things above, we sin; for on these we are required to place them. When we are not constantly influenced by the fear of God, we sin; for we are commanded to be in the fear of the Lord all the day long. When we do not rejoice in God, we sin; for the precept is, Rejoice in the Lord always. When we are not properly affected by the contents of God's word, we sin; for this want of feeling indicates hardness of heart, one of the worst of sins. When we do not forgive and love our enemies, we sin; for this Christ requires of us. In a word, whenever our hearts are not in a perfectly holy frame, we are sinning; for God's language is, Be ye holy, for I am holy; be perfect, as your father in heaven is perfect. And if we thus sin, when we do not exercise right feelings, much more do we sin, when we exercise those that are wrong. When we are dissatisfied with any part of God's word, or with any of his providential dispensations; when we feel a disposition to murmur at our situation, at our disappointments and afflictions, at the weather, or the seasons, we sin; for these are the heartrisings of rebellion against God, and they render it impossible for us to say sincerely, Thy will be done. When we hate any one, we sin; for he that hateth his brother, is a murderer. When we feel a revengeful, or unforgiving temper, we sin; for if we forgive not our enemies, God will not forgive us. When we secretly rejoice in the calamities of others, we sin; for he that is glad at calamities, shall not go unpunished; and God is said to be displeased with those, who rejoice when their enemy falls. When we envy such as are above us, we sin; for envyings are mentioned among the sinful works of the flesh. When we covet any thing, that is our neighbor's, we sin; for this is expressly forbidden by the tenth commandment. When we love the world, we sin; for if any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.—But I forbear to enlarge; for who, that knows anything of himself, will deny, that the wickedness of his heart is great, and its iniquities numberless?"

The following extract is from a previous Sermon, but on a similar subject.

“What a disclosure is made, when, with the dissecting knife of a spiritual anatomist, we lay open the human heart, with all its dark recesses, and intricate windings, and expose the lurking abominations, which it conceals, not to the light of day, but to the light of heaven? My hearers, even in this sinful world, the spectacle which such a disclosure would exhibit could not be borne. The man, whose heart should thus be laid open to public view, would be banished from society; nay, he would himself fly from it, overwhelmed with shame and confusion. Of this every man is sensible, and, therefore, conceals his heart from all eyes with jealous care. Every man is conscious of many thoughts and feelings, which he would be ashamed to express to his most intimate friend. Even those profligate, abandoned wretches, who glory in foaming out their own shame, and whose mouths, like an open sepulchre, breathe out moral contagion, putrefaction, and death, scarcely dare utter to their own equally abandoned associates every thought and feeling which rises within them. And if this is the fact, if the heart, laid open to view, would appear thus black in this dark sinful world; who can describe or conceive of the blackness which it must exhibit, when surrounded by the dazzling whiteness of heaven, and seen in the light of God's presence, the light of his holiness and glory? How do proud, self-exalting thoughts appear, when viewed in the presence of Him, before whom all the nations of the earth are less than nothing and vanity? How do self-will, impatience, and discontent with the allotments of providence appear, when viewed as exercised before the throne of the infinite, eternal, universal Sovereign. How do angry, envious, revengeful feelings appear in the eyes of the God of love, and in those regions of love, where, since the expulsion of the rebel angels, not one such feeling has ever been exercised? How do wanton, impure thoughts appear—but we cannot pursue the loathsome, sickening enumeration. Surely, if all the evil thoughts and wrong feelings which have passed in countless numbers through either of our hearts, were poured out in heaven, angels would stand aghast at the sight, and all their benevolence would scarcely prevent them from exclaiming in holy indignation, Away with him to the abode of his kindred spirits in the abyss! To the omniscient God alone would the sight not be surprising. He knows, and he alone knows, what is in the heart of man; and what he knows of it he has described in brief, but in terribly expressive terms. The hearts of the sons of men is full of evil, and madness is in their hearts. The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked.”

From the Sermon entitled, “Recollections of God painful to the Wicked,” we give the following.

“If our hearts or consciences condemn us, it is impossible to remember God without being troubled. It will then be painful to remember that he is our Creator and Benefactor; for the remembrance will be attended with a consciousness of base ingratitude.



It will be painful to think of him as Lawgiver ; for such thoughts will remind us, that we have broken his law. It will be painful to think of his holiness ; for if he is holy, he must hate our sins, and be angry with us, as sinners:—of his justice and truth ; for these perfections make it necessary that he should fulfil his threatenings and punish us for our sins. It will be painful to think of his omniscience ; for this perfection makes him acquainted with our most secret offences, and renders it impossible to conceal them from his view :—of his omnipresence ; for the constant presence of an invisible witness must be disagreeable to those, who wish to indulge their sinful propensities. It will be painful to think of his power ; for it enables him to restrain or destroy, as he pleases :—of his sovereignty ; for sinners always hate to see themselves in the hands of a sovereign God :—of his eternity and immutability ; for from his possessing these perfections it follows, that he will never alter the threatenings, which he has denounced against sinners, and that he will always live to execute them. It will be painful to think of him as Judge ; for we shall feel, that, as sinners, we have no reason to expect a favorable sentence from his lips. It will even be painful to think of the perfect goodness and excellence of his character ; for his goodness leaves us without excuse in rebelling against him, and makes our sins appear exceedingly sinful. Thus it is evident, that the consciousness of sin committed and guilt contracted must render the government, and all the perfections of God, objects of terror and anxiety to the sinner ; and, of course, the recollection of them must to him be painful.”

In what follows, we have a graphic and most animating description of the conflict at present carried on between the friends of truth and of God, and the votaries of the prince of darkness.

“ Before every enemy can be put under our Saviour’s feet, many exertions must be made, much treasure expended, and many battles fought. Satan, the prince and god of this world, will not resign his usurped dominion without a struggle. The more clearly he perceives that his time is short, the greater will be his wrath, and the more violent his efforts. During that portion of time, which yet remains, the war which he has long waged with the Captain of our salvation, will be carried on with unexampled fury. If you would survey the progress and result of this war, cast your eyes over the world, which is to be at once the field of battle, and the prize of victory. See the earth filled with strong holds and high places, in which the prince of darkness has fortified and made himself strong against the Almighty. See all the hosts of hell, and a large proportion of the inhabitants, the power, the wealth, the talents, and influence of the world ranged under his infernal standard. See his whole artillery of falsehoods, sophistries, objections, temptations, and persecution, brought into the field, to be employed against the cause of truth. See ten thousand pens, and ten times ten thousand tongues, hurling his poisoned darts among its friends. On the other hand, see the comparatively small band of our Saviour’s faithful soldiers drawn up in opposing ranks, and advancing to the assault,

clothed in panoply divine, the banner waving over their heads, while in their hands they wield unsheathed the sword of the Spirit, the word of God, the only weapon which they are allowed, or wish, to employ. The charge is sounded, the assault is made, the battle is joined,—far and wide its fury rages; over mountains and plains, over islands and continents, extends the long line of conflict; for a time, alternate victory and defeat wait on either side. Now, exulting acclamations from the Christian army proclaim the fall of some strong hold of Satan. Anon, infuriated shouts from the opposing ranks announce to the world, that the cause of Christ is losing ground, or that some Christian standard-bearer is fallen. Meanwhile, far above the noise and tumult of the battle, the Captain of our salvation sits serene, issuing his commands, directing the motions of his followers, sending seasonable aid to such as are ready to faint, and occasionally causing to be seen the lighting down of his own glorious arm, before which whole squadrons fall, or fly, or yield themselves willing captives. Feeble, and yet more feeble still, gradually becomes the opposition of his foes. Loud, and yet louder still, rise the triumphant acclamations of his friends, till at length the cry of Victory! victory! resounds from earth to heaven; and, Victory! victory! is echoed back from heaven to earth. The warfare ceases,—the prize is won,—all enemies are put under the conquering Saviour's feet; the whole earth, with joy, receives her king; and his kingdom, which consists in righteousness, and peace, and holy joy, becomes co-extensive with the world."

Near the close of the volume we find a Sermon, in which the author endeavors to prove that the saints in heaven will be made equal to the angels. Towards the conclusion of the discourse, the audience are addressed as follows:

"My brethren, consider what is the language of your profession, what you say to the world, when you approach the table of your Lord, or perform any other act which indicates that you consider yourselves as the disciples of Jesus Christ. On every such occasion, you do in effect say, I profess to be one of those, to whom all the promises of the Gospel are made; one of those who are styled children and heirs of God. As one of this number, I expect soon to be called to mingle with the angels, and to be made, in every respect, their equal. When I shall be exalted to this state is uncertain. It may be to-morrow. It may be the next hour; for there is but a step between me and death, and, consequently, but a step between me and an angel's seat. Such, O professed disciples of Christ, is the lofty, and, as it must appear to the world, assuming language of your profession. And can you utter such language, will shame allow you to utter it, without attempting to live in a corresponding manner! If you do indeed look for such things, what manner of persons ought you to be, in all holy conversation and godliness! How far ought you to live above the world! How dead should you be to all earthly objects and pursuits! What spirituality of temper, what heavenly mindedness, should you feel and exhibit! What can be more obvious, more undeniable, than the conclusion, that, if you hope to be made equal to the angels hereafter, you ought to imitate, so far as is

practicable, angels now. That you may be induced to imitate them, and to climb with greater diligence and alacrity the steep ascent before you, let me persuade you to fix your eyes upon its summit. A dense impenetrable cloud appears, indeed, to conceal it from mortal eyes; but inspiration speaks, and the cloud is dissipated; faith presents her glass, and the sun-bright summit is seen. On him, who sits enthroned upon it, you cannot indeed gaze. His glories, though you shall see them unveiled hereafter, are too insufferably dazzling for mortal eyes to sustain. But contemplate the resplendent forms, which float around him in an atmosphere of pure celestial light. See their bodies, resembling sun-beams seven times refined. See their countenances, beaming with intelligence, purity, benevolence and felicity. Through their transparent bodies look in, and contemplate the souls which inhabit them, expanded to the full dimensions of angelic minds, bearing the perfect image of their God, and reflecting his glories, as the polished mirror reflects the glories of the noonday sun. This, O Christian, is what thou shalt hereafter be. These dazzling forms were once sinful dust and ashes, like thyself. But grace, free, rich, sovereign, almighty grace, has made them what they now are. It has washed, and justified, and sanctified, and brought them to glory. And to the same glory, O Christian, it is bringing thee. And canst thou then sleep, canst thou slumber, canst thou be slothful, canst thou complain of the difficulties which attend, of the obstacles which oppose, thy ascent to such glory and felicity as this? O let gratitude, let duty, let shame, if nothing else, forbid. Lift up, ye embryo angels, lift up the heads which hang down, and let the drooping spirit revive. Read, hear, meditate with prayer, deny yourselves, mortify sin but a little longer, and you shall mount up, not on eagles', but on angels' wings, and know what is meant by being made equal to resplendent intelligences.

“To impenitent sinners this subject, taken in connexion with other parts of revelation, is a subject of most solemn and awful import. They too possess faculties, which render them capable of being made equal to the angels; but these faculties will only serve, if they remain impenitent and unholy, to sink them down to a dreadful equality with the fallen angels, the spirits of disobedience, for whom the fires of hell are prepared, and to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness and eternal despair. And are these things so? Is it true, that, before a century shall have passed away, all the souls, who now fill this house, will be angels or demons, and fixed forever in heaven or hell? Yes, my hearers, it is true. It is as certain, as that there is a God; as certain, as that we are here. O, then, in what language can we describe, how can we adequately conceive of, the folly, the madness, of sinners, of those who neglect the great salvation. In less than a century, and, with respect to most of them, in much less than half that time, the question, which of the two opposite states shall be theirs, is to be decided. Yes, my immortal hearers, in a few years will be forever decided the question, whether your vast and almost boundless capacities shall be filled with happiness, or with misery; whether the noble faculties, which

God has given you, shall blossom and expand in heaven, or be scorched and withered in hell; in a word, whether you shall brighten into angels, or blacken into fiends. And while this question is in suspense; a question which might convulse the thrones of heaven, and throw the universe into agonies of anxiety, how are you, who are most nearly concerned in it, employed? In some childish, worldly scheme of temporal aggrandizement; or in laboring to amass wealth, which you can possess but for an hour, or, perhaps, in a round of frivolous amusements and dissipation? Yes,—let earth blush, let heaven weep to hear it,—these, these, are the employments, in which immortal beings choose to spend their hours of salvation, to pass away the time, till the great question is decided. Well may inspiration declare, as it does, that the heart of the sons of men is full of evil, and that madness is in their hearts while they live. And well may we exclaim, in the language of inspiration, O, that they were wise, that they understood this, that they would consider their latter end!"

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#### NOTICES OF RECENT PUBLICATIONS.

1. *The Plenary Inspiration of the Scriptures asserted, and the principles of their composition investigated, with a view to the refutation of all objections to their Divinity; in six Lectures, (very greatly enlarged,) delivered at Albion Hall, London Wall; with an Appendix illustrative and critical.* By Rev. S. Noble. From the London Edition. Boston, 1828. pp. 508.

This work is a labored attempt to affix a secondary and spiritual sense to the sacred writings, according to what is termed "the science of analogies; founded, we presume, on the principles of the late Emanuel Swedenborg, although the name of Swedenborg is not mentioned. The author is evidently a man of general intelligence and learning, who, so far as style is concerned, is capable of writing well. Nor is his book destitute of pertinent and useful observations, especially in the first Lecture. But we must be excused if we cannot perceive the reason or the authority for most of his mystical interpretations. There is no doubt a sufficient resemblance between certain external and internal objects, to lay a foundation for the use of metaphor, and other figures of speech. But that this resemblance or analogy is universal, so that to every word in the Bible is attached some hidden and spiritual sense, we shall need a new revelation, and one of better claims than that of Swedenborg, before we venture to affirm.

That the public may not depend on our judgement in this affair, we shall extract a few of Mr. Noble's interpretations, which our readers are at liberty to adopt if they choose.

The story of the ark being sent home by the Philistines, recorded in 1 Sam. ch. v. and vi., is thus explained.

"The ark, under the Israelitish Dispensation, was a symbol of the Divine Presence, which none but the truly good can endure, and they not too near;

and which causes the lusts cherished by the wicked more openly to become their tormentors. The Philistines represent those who exalt faith above charity, making the former everything, and the latter of no account; which was the reason of their continual wars with the Israelites, who represent the true church, or those who cherish faith in union with charity. The idol Dagon is the religion of those who are represented by the Philistines. The emeralds with which they were smitten, are symbols of the appetites of the natural man, which, when separated from spiritual affections, as is done by those who do not apply their faith to the purification of their lives, are unclean. The mice, by which the land was devastated, are images of the lust of destroying by false interpretation the spiritual nourishment which the church derives from the Word of God, as is done by those who separate faith from charity. The emeralds of gold exhibit the natural appetites as purified and made good. The golden mice symbolize the healing of the tendency to false interpretation effected by admitting a regard to goodness; for of this, as we shall see in the next example, gold is an emblem. The cows are types of the natural man, in regard to such good qualities as he possesses. Their lowing by the way expresses the repugnance of the natural man to the process of conversion. And the offering of them up for a burnt offering, typifies that restoration of order which takes place in the mind, when the natural affections are submitted to the Lord." pp. 134, 135.

In explaining the geography of Palestine and the surrounding regions, the author observes,

"In this map, the land of Israel is considered as the central region which, is the seat of all the truly spiritual affections and perceptions of the human mind. So, following the law of Analogy, the countries situated around the land of Canaan will represent the subordinate mental powers and faculties. We will illustrate this by one or two examples.

"The great neighbor of Israel—the type of the spiritual part of the mind—on one side, was Egypt; which represents what belongs entirely to the natural man, but, specifically, the Science or Knowledge of the natural man, with the faculty for acquiring it: and the powerful state which bordered upon Israel on the other side, was Assyria; which represents the Rational Faculty, and the Reasoning Powers in general. Now as Science and Reasoning, when separated from all regard to religion, or to true religion, and placed in opposition to it, are two of its most dangerous enemies; therefore we read so much of the troubles which these two nations brought upon the Israelites." pp. 191, 192.

The following is from our author's exegesis of the narrative of the crucifixion of Christ.

"The Lord was betrayed by Judas, because Judas represents the very lowest principle in the constitution of fallen human nature,—that of mere selfishness. The chief priests and elders, being the leading characters of the Jewish church, may be viewed as personifying its ruling sentiments in regard to charity and faith; and these being contrary to the love of God and to all genuine faith, and thus such as reject and destroy the truth of the Word, it was by the chief priests and elders that the Son of man was apprehended and first condemned; and his being afterwards condemned by Pilate, who was a Gentile, at their accusation and instigation, shews how the Word is rejected by those who do not profess to belong to the church, but merely to follow the law of nature. The Lord's being scourged and smitten on the head with a reed, were exact figures of the treatment which the Word receives from those who reject it: and as a crown is an emblem of wisdom, and thorns of pernicious false sentiments, his being crowned with thorns expressively symbolized the manner in which the wisdom of the Word is falsified and perverted. The dividing of his outer garments into four parts among the soldiers was indicative of the complete dissipation of the truths of the letter of the Word; but the preserving of his vesture or inner garment entire, represented that its spiritual sense could not be thus injured, being sheltered from common observation; and their casting lots for it, afforded an apt image of the conjecture and debate of which the spiritual sense, or, what is the same thing, the truth itself, becomes the subject, when all right understanding of the Word is lost." pp. 358, 359.



Our author supposes that "the prophecy by Ezekiel, (ch. xxxviii., xxxix.) of the invasion of Gog and Magog, received its general fulfilment in the state of the Jewish church, at the time of the Lord's appearing in the world;" and that the prediction of Christ's second coming in the clouds of heaven, "means, that the Lord, who is the Divine Truth itself, will discover himself, or impart a just knowledge concerning himself and the things of his kingdom, by opening the literal sense of the holy word, and disclosing its spiritual contents." pp. 202, 245. Consequently, as we must conclude, the publication of the volume before us is a fulfilment, in part, of this awful prediction; and the Lord Jesus is now actually coming in the clouds of heaven!!

The zeal of Mr. Noble for the spiritual sense of Scripture leads him in some instances to disparage very injuriously the literal sense. It should be added also, that he makes a distinction among the sacred books, pretending that a considerable portion of either Testament is not furnished with the secondary sense, and consequently is not in a full degree inspired. See Appendix, p. 29.

2 *A Discourse on the occasion of forming the African Mission School Society, delivered in Christ Church, in Hartford, Conn., on Sunday Evening, Aug. 10, 1828.* By J. M. Wainwright, D. D. Rector of Grace Church, New York. Hartford, H. & F. J. Huntington. pp. 24.

This Discourse is marked by great simplicity, and warm feeling, regulated by sound sense. The author seems aware of the difficulty attending the emancipation of the blacks, and to be of the opinion, to which we must all come at last, that liberty is not to be attained in a day, and that, could it be so acquired, men would be poorly fitted for the enjoyment of it. The object of the Society before which the Discourse was delivered, seems to imply the same;—it is for the education and improvement of the blacks in this country, for the purpose of carrying religion and civilization into Africa.

We also think that, though slavery will and must be modified in this country before long, yet it is to the growth of a great, moral, intelligent, well regulated nation of free blacks in Africa, that we are to look for the complete abolishment of slavery. It is the influence that such a nation will have upon the world, that must work this final change.

The writer of the Discourse reminds us, of the Eastern States, that we were once slaveholders, and that it was probably as much owing to our climate, as to our conscientious scruples, that slavery was abolished amongst us.

We have no inclination to make apologies for those who consider slaves as only so much property, which they are determined to hold, right or wrong; nor are we inclined to give in to the doctrine of those who are so eloquent upon the happiness of the blacks, and their freedom from care. This very freedom from care is no small part of the degradation and curse that weigh upon them. And as for their happiness; there is a nobler happiness—that of a free body and free mind. Yet, having seen the evil, let us say the *sin* of

such a state, in our eagerness to remedy it, we may not have enough considered, whether we were not, through our hurry, in danger of bringing in even greater misery.

We are, however, becoming more patient, though, we trust, not less determined or hearty in the great cause. We are now aware that it will require time, and general and steady effort. This state of the public mind should give us confidence; for impetuosity is sure to meet with disappointment; and disappointment to the impetuous is ever followed by indifference or despair. Reformers are very apt to act as if they thought God's method of working was too slow, and that they must take the conduct of affairs into their own hands. This grows out of that ardent confidence which belongs to reforming spirits. But God humbles them, and teaches them not to depend so much upon their good arm of flesh. And he sees proper to carry forward slowly his changes in the world, that his creatures may be the better fitting for them.

Let us not, then, be cast down. Great and continued effort is good for us. However slowly the work may go on, and however frequently, for a time, it may be brought to a stand, forward it must and shall go; for God has said it.

"Now, my brethren, in the contemplation of this, may we not feel encouraged to place a full trust in the words of prophecy? But what do I say? Trust in the words of prophecy! Dare we distrust them? Whose words are they? Whose Spirit pronounced them? Whose veracity is staked upon them? Whose power is put forth to accomplish their execution? No, my brethren, we dare not distrust the words of prophecy. As surely as the waters of the ocean reach from pole to pole, and from continent to continent, so surely will the knowledge of the Lord make its way to all kindreds, and nations, and people, and wheresoever it makes its way, so surely will it promote peace on earth, and good will towards men." pp. 16, 17.

We are glad to find Dr. Wainwright, throughout this Discourse, resting the improvements of all man's powers and relations upon the religion of the Gospel. It seems strange, that in a Christian community we should need to express ourselves thus. But so it is; there are those who think they deserve well of their Master, and are paying his system a high compliment, when they tell their fellow men, that it has shown itself equal to keeping up with the march of their minds! This comes of that intellectual pride, which talks as if it was reason that was improving Christianity, rather than Christianity which was bringing man's intellect out of twilight and shadows into its own clear and broad light. Notwithstanding our pride and perversity, it is doing this. The influences of the Gospel are breaking out, like so many lights, upon the ends of the earth; and the sword of the Spirit is drawn, and it will be lifted to slay, till Christ shall reign king of nations.

3. *A Discourse preached in the Centre Church in New Haven, Aug. 27, 1828, at the Funeral of Jehudi Ashmun, Esq., Colonial Agent of the American Colony at Liberia.* By Leonard Bacon. *With the Address at the grave,* by R. R. Gurley. New Haven, Hezekiah Howe. pp. 36.

This Discourse is founded on the interrogation of Judas Iscariot, when "Mary, the sister of Lazarus, had anointed the feet of her

Lord with very precious ointment, and wiped them with her hair, and poured the ointment on his head, so that the house was filled with the odor of the ointment:" *To what purpose is this waste?*" The design of the Discourse, so far as it is doctrinal, is to shew—from the example of our Puritan ancestors, and revolutionary heroes, and from the more authoritative example of Christ, and "the goodly company of the apostles"—that "there are some objects, for the attainment of which men may sacrifice their lives," as the lamented Ashmun did his for Africa, "and at the same time deserve, on that very account, our highest veneration." This point is briefly but very happily illustrated; and the remainder of the Discourse, with the Address at the grave, and the Appendix, is filled up, in delineating the character of the deceased, and in detailing some of the leading events of his history. We are happy to learn that "a Memoir of the life of Mr. Ashmun is expected, from one well fitted for the work."

This Discourse is exceedingly well written, and will be read, where read at all, with interest and profit. We give the following, as a specimen of the author's manner, and with a view to spread information of what has actually been accomplished by the American Colony on the coast of Africa.

"Do you ask, to what purpose has he (Mr. Ashmun) died? I would that we could stand together on the promontory of Montserado, and see what has been accomplished by those toils and exposures, which have cost this man his life. Hard by, we might see the island, where, a few years since, there was a market for the slave-trade. To that place, crowds of captives were brought every year, and there they were sold like beasts of burthen. From that place, they were consigned to the unspeakable cruelties of thronged and pestilential slave-ships; and those whom death released not in their passage across the Atlantic, went into perpetual slavery. At that time, this cape was literally consecrated to the devil: and here the miserable natives, in the gloom of the dark forest, offered worship to the evil spirit. All this was only a few years ago. And what see you now? The forest that had crowned the lofty cape for centuries, has been cleared away; and here are the dwellings of a civilized and intelligent people. Here are twelve hundred orderly, industrious and prosperous freemen; who were once slaves, or in a state of degradation hardly preferable to bondage. Here are schools, and courts of justice, and lo! the spire which marks the temple dedicated to our God and Saviour—strange landmark to the mariner that traverses the seas of Africa. Here, for a hundred miles along the coast, no slave-trader dares to spread his canvass; for the flag that waves over that fortress, and the guns that threaten from its battlements, tell him that this land is sacred to humanity and freedom. Is all this nothing? Is it nothing to have laid on a barbarous continent, the foundation of a free and Christian empire? This is the work in which our friend has died." p. 14.

4. *Parallel between Intemperance and the Slave-Trade. An Address delivered at Amherst College, July 4, 1828.* By Heman Humphrey, D. D., President of the College. Amherst, J. S. and C. Adams. pp. 40.

In the introductory part of this Address, the author observes,

"I have long thought, that a great advantage might be gained, by comparing intemperance with some other terrible scourge of humanity, which has fallen under deep and universal reprobation. Such a scourge is the African slave-trade; and the position which I mean to take is this, *that the prevalent use of ardent spirits in the United States, is a worse evil at this moment, than the slave-trade ever was, in the height of its horrible prosperity.*" p. 6.

In support of this alarming position, Dr. H. observes, and we think shews, that the aggregate of *misery* resulting from intemperance is greater than that occasioned by the slave-trade; and that intemperance exceeds slavery in the *guilt* with which it stains; in the *hazard* which it brings to our free institutions; and in the *destruction of immortal souls*. After a full and eloquent discussion of these several particulars, the Address is concluded with a number of inferences, in which is exhibited the duty of rulers, of magistrates, and the sober part of the community generally; and in which the inconsistency, not only of drunkards, but of retailers, distillers, and moderate drinkers, and indeed of all who will not "gird themselves up to the great work of reform," is strongly set forth.

We would gladly publish this Address entire, could it be brought, with propriety, within our limits. And not only so, were the scheme practicable, we would call on every periodical in the United States to follow our example, that its strong voice might be heard, and its influence felt, throughout the land. As it is, we must content ourselves, though we hope we shall rather excite than satisfy the interest of our readers, by extracting a single page. In comparing intemperance with slavery, in regard to the pain which it brings to the conscience, Dr. H. remarks,

"Whatever *bodily* torture the slave may be compelled to endure, he has a clear *conscience*. He did not sell himself. He never lacerated his own flesh, nor plucked the bread out of his own mouth. Poor and half naked, indeed he is, but not by his own fault. In bondage he must wear out his life, but he did not forge and rivet his own chains, nor thrust himself into the dungeon which conveyed him to market. If his parents died with grief after he left them, he was not the guilty cause of it. If his wife has sunk down by his side, with a broken heart, gladly would he have saved her if he could. If his children are as wretched and hopeless as himself, it is not through his voluntary agency. Of all this guilt he stands acquitted at the bar of conscience. He can lie down in his cabin and be at rest.

"But how is it with the bond-slave of intemperance? What tormentor was ever so fierce and relentless as a guilty conscience? I know it is possible to silence her voice for a season. But in most cases she maintains a long and desperate struggle in his bosom. She upbraids him with the guilt of wasting his property, sacrificing his health, blasting his character, destroying his usefulness, disgracing his friends, violating his connubial vows, entailing poverty and infamy upon his children, and ruining his own soul. When thus maddened by her whip of scorpions, he flies to his cups for relief, she but intermits her tortures, to renew them the first moment that returning reason brings him within her reach, and scourges him back again to the very brink of desperation. Again he plunges, deeper than ever, in the oblivious flood, and again emerges to feel the dreadful renewal of her stripes, and perhaps the next moment to rush into a burning eternity. 'The spirit of a man will sustain his infirmity; but a wounded spirit who can bear?'

"Rarely indeed, I believe, does the drunkard, with all his pains, free himself entirely from the compunctious visitings of his conscience. She knows how to make her terrible voice heard even in the midst of his revelry. She enters before him into his sick chamber, with her thorns for his pillow—takes her stand by his bed-side, on purpose to terrify him with her awful forebodings and rebukes; and when the king of terrors comes, she anticipates his entrance into the dark valley, that she may there haunt his soul with undying horrors. Now what, I pray you, is African slavery in its most terrific forms, compared with this? The mere sting of an insect, compared with the fangs of a tiger—the slight inconvenience of a ligature, contrasted with the live and crushing folds of the Boa Constrictor. Drag me bound and bleeding, if you will, from my blazing habitation—thrust me half dead into the fetid hold of any slave-ship—

sell me to any foreign master—doom me to labor in any burning climate—set over me any iron-hearted driver—load me with any chains, and compel me to toil night and day in any sugar-house ;—but deliver me not over to the retributions of a conscience, exasperated by the guilt of intemperance! O bind me not to a rack where I can neither live nor die under the torture!" pp. 20—22.

5. *The Christian Almanac, for New England; for the year of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, 1829.* Boston, Lincoln & Edmands. pp. 36.

We notice thus early this little manual, that we may apprise our readers of its existence, and assure them that it contains its usual quantity and variety of instructive, interesting, and profitable matter. There is not a page of it, which does not contain some useful information, and not a sentiment expressed in it, to which the most conscientious friend of God and man would not willingly subscribe. How different this from some of the Almanacs in common use! And how desirable that the circulation of this truly religious manual, which is already very great, should be extended more and more!

Near the close of it there is an article, entitled, "The Cost of Intemperance," prepared by Mr. Sidney E. Morse of New York. After discussing the subject under several particulars, Mr. Morse sums up the result of his investigations in the following appalling bill of charge, which, with a very little alteration, we lay before our readers.

<i>" The People of the United States to Intemperance,</i>	Dr.
To 56,000,000 gallons of spirit at 50 cts. per gall. - - -	28,000,000
To 1,344,000,000 hours of time wasted by drunkards, at 4 cts. per hour, - - -	53,760,000
To the support of 150,000 paupers, made so by intemperance, -	7,500,000
To losses by depravity of 45,000 criminals, do. <i>unknown, but immense.</i>	
To the disgrace and misery of 1,000,000 persons, (relatives of drunkards,) - - -	<i>incalculable.</i>
To the ruin of at least 30,000 and probably 48,000 souls annually, - - -	<i>infinite! unspeakable!</i>
To loss by the premature death of 30,000 persons in the prime of life, - - -	30,000,000
To losses from the carelessness and mismanagement of intemperate seamen, agents, &c. &c. - - -	<i>unknown, but very great.</i>
Certain pecuniary loss, (in round numbers,) - - -	\$120,000,000
Losses which cannot be estimated, - - -	<i>infinite! eternal!</i>

Thus it appears that, independently of items which cannot be estimated, our country pays or loses at the rate of *One Hundred and Twenty Millions of dollars per annum, by Intemperance!* This sum is five times as large as the revenue of the United States' government—it would pay off our national debt in six months—it would build twelve such canals as the Grand Erie and Hudson Canal, *every year*—it would support a navy four times as large as that of Great Britain—it is sixty times as much as the aggregate income of all the principal religious charitable societies in Europe and America—it would supply every family on earth with a Bible in eight months—it would support a missionary or teacher among every two thousand souls on the globe!—How prosperous might this country be,—what blessings might it confer upon the world, if it were only relieved from the curse of Intemperance!"



## MISCELLANEOUS DEPARTMENT.

### DORCHESTER.

"No ordinary emotions" of "indignation" have lately been excited in the minds of some of the members of "the first parish" in Dorchester (Dr. Harris'), —"emotions" too strong, it seems, to be suppressed; and, consequently, vent has been given to them in one of the public papers of this city. A communication, signed "Dorchester," purporting to be the voice of "the first parish," appeared in the Patriot of Sept. 18. Another, in a similar strain, has appeared since. Although our pages cannot be often occupied with extracts from the daily papers, still, owing to the importance and general interest of the subject, we are induced to give the first of these communications entire, with such few passing comments as the case may seem to demand.

"The inhabitants of the ancient town of Dorchester, particularly of the first parish, have been remarkable for retaining the primitive simplicity and piety, the institutions and manners of the Puritan Settlers, and are undoubtedly to be ranked among the most orderly observers of their religious principles and practices."

The reader will understand, from what we have said above, that it is the *members of this first parish themselves*, who are represented as saying this. A fine specimen of their modesty!

"It was therefore with no ordinary emotions, that the congregation heard the letter of Mr. —, who, it is understood, is a settled clergyman in a neighboring town, read by their reverend pastor, Dr. Harris, on the last Sabbath, addressed by the former to the latter, requesting him to inform his people that he purposed, as the Agent of the Norfolk Bible Society, to visit the several families for the purpose of ascertaining which were destitute of a Bible, and to supply such deficiency by donation or sale."

It seems the Norfolk Bible Society is imitating the worthy example of numerous other similar associations, in different parts of our country, in the attempt to supply their population with Bibles.

"That the Agent will be courteously received is very questionable, for it is believed that the people of the first parish will not submit quietly to his impertinent intermeddling with their concerns."

Very impertinent, certainly, for a clergyman to come to their doors, and ask them if they wish to purchase or receive a Bible!

"If there are any destitute of Bibles, they will be readily supplied by those who are honestly interested in their welfare."

And is not the Bible Society of their own County "honestly interested in their welfare"?

"The real object of this attempt upon the integrity of our united and flourishing congregation, cannot be mistaken."

"The *real* object" is to dispose of Bibles, without note or comment, to those who need them.

"It is a part of that destructive system which has been put in progress by a proselyting sect, which has sent its wolves in sheep's clothing to scatter the flocks that have long enjoyed the peace and harmony of well regulated and happy societies."

The circulation of the Bible "part of a *destructive* system"!! A sect "proselyting" by circulating the Bible! This, surely, must be a Bible sect. "Wolves in sheep's clothing" circulating the Bible!! We did not know before that "*wolves*" were so much attached to the Bible. "*Flocks*," too, "scattered" by means of the Bible!! Pray what sort of "*flocks*" are these?

"We would not urge harshness or severity on such an occasion."

How could you, unless opposed to the Bible?

"But we would not hesitate to express our decided disapprobation, nay, our indignation, at this unchristian and unmanly attempt to sow the seeds of discord among a people that have been united in fellowship and affection under their revered and venerated pastor, for at least thirty-four years. We have thus lived together, some the whole, and others a part of that term of time, without the aid of Ecclesiastical councils to settle our disputes, for nothing has intervened—nor has any root of bitterness sprung up to trouble us."

And will the circulation of the Bible "sow the seeds of discord" among so good a people as the first parish in Dorchester represent themselves to be? Or do any fear that the Bible will alienate their affections from "their revered and venerated pastor"? Or is it possible that, among such a peaceable people, the holy Bible can plant "roots of bitterness"?

"All we ask of these regenerators, these busy meddlers in other men's matters, is to mind their own concerns, and leave us the blessing of peace and quietness."

"Peace and quietness"—with the Bible, or without it.

"And we would gently admonish this reverend Agent to find some other scenes for his pious labors, than among those who will teach him and his coadjutors, that 'we ask no change, and least of all, such change as they would give us.'"

They would give you the Bible;—do you ask this 'least of all'?

COMMENTATOR.

#### UNITARIAN ADVOCATE.

The pages of the last Unitarian Advocate are nearly half occupied, partly by a correspondent, and partly by the Editor, in remarks upon the Spirit of the Pilgrims. After such marked attention, to make no reply would be deemed uncourteous; and yet we are restricted to little more than a page—space enough, however, for our present purpose.—As to the correspondent of the Advocate, although he evidently feels very bad now, we doubt whether he would be at all relieved, should we remark at length on his communication. As he gives us to understand that he has probably done with us, we shall content ourselves with saying as little as possible to trouble him.

The thing which vexes him most of all is, "the Testimony of a Unitarian Minister," published at the close of our seventh number. This is spoken of, not only in the Advocate, but in the Christian Register, as an *Orthodox misrepresentation*; and as a specimen of the manner in which evangelical Christians slander Unitarians. Now we have only to repeat, what we stated most explicitly in the remarks at the head of the article, (p. 391.) that *this letter is not from an Orthodox source*. It is, as the title prefixed to it imports, the *real testimony of an aged Unitarian minister*, now living in Massachusetts. It is the testimony of a man, who still avows himself a Unitarian, and who has acted with Unitarians, we believe uniformly, in the Massachusetts Convention of Congregational ministers. It is the testimony of a man who has had the most ample means of becoming and continuing acquainted with Unitarians, ever since their first open appearance in this country. Whether he has spoken the truth, or not, we pretend not to decide. The *sensation* which his testimony has excited, is strong presumptive evidence that it is the truth. There could hardly have been so much fluttering and smarting, if nobody had been hit.

The Editor of the Unitarian Advocate, in his number for April, denied that the Unitarian ministers of Boston had ever practised anything like *concealment*, in regard to their peculiar sentiments. "There was *no such concealment*." In our number for June, we adduced the most convincing evidence, from the lives and pens of Unitarians themselves, that such concealment *was* formerly practised. The Editor now admits the fact of concealment, or "that the Unitarian controversy was, at a certain period, kept out of the pulpits in our metropolis;" but alleges that this course was justifiable. On this point, we shall not dispute with him at all. The question of *fact* is all that we are concerned to settle. Whether or not it is the *duty* of a minister to declare to his people what he conceives to be the whole counsel of God, especially on subjects so vitally

interesting to the souls of men as those involved in "the Unitarian controversy," let every man's conscience—let a religious public—let the Judge of all decide.

The Editor of the Advocate, in the number above referred to, denied that Unitarians misrepresent the sentiments of the Orthodox. "Having for some years," says he, "habitually consulted every Orthodox publication which was thrown in our way, we confess we see no difference between what they say, and what Unitarians have said is Orthodoxy. *The very creed inserted in this Spirit of the Pilgrims expresses precisely what we find represented in works on the opposite side.*" In reply, we quoted a great number of sentences from a printed Sermon of this Editor, and called upon him to point out anything, in what he calls the creed of the Spirit of the Pilgrims, corresponding to the representations which he had made. In the communication before us, he passes over all these quotations except one, thinking it easier, we may presume, to leave them under the charge of misrepresentation, than to attempt finding anything like them in our creed or work. The single quotation which he takes up, and endeavors to defend, is that in which he charges us with holding, "that God brings men into life *incapable* of goodness." And in justification of this, he goes on to show what the Westminster Assembly, and the Synod of Dort, and Calvin, and Edwards, and several others have taught on the subject. But this, Mr. Editor, is not the point. What have *we* taught? In what part of the creed of the Spirit of the Pilgrims is it said, "that God brings men into life *incapable* of goodness"? *Show us the passage*, and then we will admit, that, in this particular, you have not misrepresented us—and that in denying the charge of misrepresentation, you have spoken the truth. But until you show us this passage, and others of similar import to those we previously quoted from your Sermon, we are bound to repeat the charge of misrepresentation against you, and to say that in denying it you have not spoken the truth. We have said in our creed, and we believe, "That, since the fall of Adam, men are, in their natural state, altogether destitute of holiness, and entirely depraved;" but we have not said in our creed, and we do not believe, "that God brings men into life *incapable* of goodness;" and in saying and repeating this against us, you misrepresent us, and do us an injury.

It is no uncommon thing for men, when caught and pinched so that they cannot escape, to complain of the "temper" and "language" of an opponent. Whether the complaint in your last sentence rests at all on this ground, an impartial public will decide.

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#### PROFESSOR STUART'S COMMENTARY ON THE EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS.

A late number of the London Evangelical Magazine contains a Review of the first volume of this Commentary. The writer does "not hesitate" to speak of the work "as the *most valuable philological help, ever published in the English Language*, for the critical study of that important, and in many respects difficult, book of the New Testament. In the volume before us," says he, "every topic relative to that Epistle is explored and discussed with *singular minuteness and accuracy.*" Speaking of the "comparison of the phraseology and diction of the Epistle to the Hebrews, and of Paul's acknowledged Epistles," he says, "This comparison exhibits one of the *most laborious and accurate collations, which it has ever fallen to our lot to peruse.* The labor, which this part of Professor Stuart's volume must have cost him, can only be duly appreciated by those who have been engaged in similar researches."

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#### SPIRIT OF THE PILGRIMS.

That our readers may understand in what estimation our work is held on the other side of the Atlantic, it may be proper just to observe, that two of our articles are re-published entire in the London Eclectic Review for July last; viz. the Review of the Evangelical Church Journal, in our number for January; and a Letter from Professor Stuart on the same subject, in our number for March. This event is the more remarkable, as the Eclectic reviewers, in their whole thirty volumes, have rarely selected and re-published anything. In giving the reason why they depart from their usual custom, in re-publishing our Review of the Church Journal, they say, "The tremendous interest of the topic, and the valuable contents of the article, render any apology superfluous."

THE  
SPIRIT OF THE PILGRIMS.

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COMMUNICATIONS.

ON CHRISTIAN EDUCATION.

THE subject of the following discussion is obviously one of pre-eminent importance. It is one in which every truly Christian parent will feel a most deep and solemn interest. God has given to him a family of children. They are the objects of his tender affection, and most earnest solicitude. He is concerned for their respectability, usefulness, and happiness in this world; but much more for their eternal well being. He knows what they are by nature, and what they must be by grace; and although he cannot himself bestow converting grace, still he believes there is much which he can do, for the promotion of their spiritual interests.

In discussing the important subject before us, the following method will be observed:

I. Describe the *natural state* of children; or that in which education finds them.

II. Bring into view the grand *object* to be aimed at, in their religious education.

III. Point out the *means* by which this object is to be promoted. And,

IV. Urge the *motives*, which should influence all, who have the care of children, to be faithful to their souls.

The natural state of children has commonly been mistaken by those who have written on this subject. It has been represented as a state of innocence and virtue. Their minds have no taint of corruption; their hearts no bias to evil; their characters are sinless, and their natures pure. Consequently, there is little for education to do, but to keep them from the contaminations of the world, and preserve them in the same state of innocence in which it finds them. Or, if anything further is to be attempted, it is but to improve upon their native good qualities, and lead them onward to higher attainments in virtue and piety. But the true Christian perceives, at once, that these views of education are radically de-

fective. They might answer for the inhabitants of some happier planet, but are not at all adapted to the character and circumstances of sinful men. The natural state of children is not a pure one. They do not come into the world, and become the subjects of education, with characters of innocence and virtue. They are conceived in sin, and "shapen in iniquity." They "are estranged from the womb," and begin to "go astray as soon as they are born." They "are by nature the children of wrath." These and similar representations of the book of God accord entirely with our own *observation* and *experience*. Have any of us ever seen a child, who, when he came to an age to develop his character, did not exhibit melancholy marks of depravity? Have we ever seen one, who did not early manifest that he was more or less the subject of selfishness, pride, anger, revenge, and indeed of all the various passions of a fallen nature? And when we look back upon our own childhood, as far as memory can trace, do we not distinctly recollect that our feelings were often, if not always, wrong? We were "lovers of our own selves," and thoughtless of God, and easily captivated with the sinful pleasures and amusements of the world. We have then all the evidence which the nature of the case admits, or we can reasonably desire, that the natural state of children, in which they become the subjects of education, is a depraved state. They are "alienated from the life of God," are strongly averse to that which is good, and as strongly inclined to that which is evil.

Such being the natural state of children, let us next consider the *object* to be aimed at, in their religious education. If they were natively pure, the principal object of their education should be to preserve them so. But this, we have seen, is not the case. Their hearts naturally are not good, but evil; so that, retaining the characters which they originally form, they will live, and die, "the children of wrath." What then is to be done? And what should be the *leading object*, in their religious education? Obviously, to *promote*, as early in life as possible, a *radical, saving CHANGE in the temper of their hearts*. What they need is, not so much to be amended and improved, as to be *renewed*—not so much to be kept from falling into sin, as to be *delivered from its reigning power*. And the *great object* to be promoted, in every part of their education, is their *renewal*—their *sanctification*—and consequent *salvation*.

Other objects, to be classed under the head of personal accomplishments, need not and should not be neglected. Parents may afford their children as many literary and other advantages, and may prepare them as thoroughly for respectability in the social state, as they are able. But the devoted Christian, when favoring his children with advantages of this sort, will hold up continually before them, that these are not the *main object*; and that, with



whatever success they may pursue their studies, and make those attainments which the world admire, still, *he* shall not be satisfied, and *they* must not be, until a greater point is gained—until their hearts are renewed by the Holy Spirit, and their peace is made with heaven. He seeks first and chiefly, not only for himself, but for his children, “the kingdom of God and his righteousness;” and he makes this manifest, in his daily intercourse with them, and in all he does for them.

The devoted Christian parent makes the conversion of his children a leading object in their education, for several reasons.

In the first place, this important change will best prepare them for the duties of *social life*. Without it, he knows, however promising they may appear in youth, that they are scarcely to be trusted. Their future conduct may be commendable, or it may not be. They may be kind neighbors, useful citizens, and valuable friends; or they may be sadly the reverse of this. Their hearts are wholly selfish and sinful; and though circumstances may for a time restrain them within the bounds of decency, and garnish over their internal corruptions, yet there is no telling what, in a change of circumstances, they may be left to do. But if the grand object at which he is aiming can be accomplished—if their hearts are renewed in early life; he will then view them as resting on a much surer foundation. The grace of God, which in this case they have received, will “be within them as a well of water, springing up unto life eternal.” The holy temper which they have imbibed will exhibit itself in the diligent performance of the various relative and social duties. Their external deportment will be amiable and exemplary, not from motives of mere selfishness, but from a regard to duty and the authority and glory of God. They will have fixed principles of holy action, which no change of circumstances will be likely to shake.

The Christian parent also seeks the conversion of his children, because he knows that, without it, they will render no acceptable service to the Redeemer, and will never be useful in his kingdom. He has devoted them to Christ, and desires that they may live to serve and enjoy him; but he is sure they will not live in this happy manner, unless renewed in the temper of their minds. They will serve themselves, and the world; but for the God who made them, and the Saviour who died for them, they will have no affectionate regard, and will perform no acceptable service.

Another reason, why he makes the conversion of his children a leading object is, that nothing short of this will fit them to die in peace, and to enter on the possession of eternal rest. He regards them as constantly exposed to death, and, if un sanctified, to perish. No mere external accomplishments will in his view avail anything towards their final acceptance with God. Until renewed by the Divine Spirit, they are every moment liable to be separated forever

from that holy heaven, which is the object of his most ardent aspirations, and to sink, through the gates of death, to the prisons of despair. And beholding them in such a state, he cannot be easy. He desires habitually and most earnestly their sanctification and salvation. He makes this the great and leading object of all his endeavors on their behalf, and is willing to perform any labor, which will have a tendency to accomplish it. But *what can he do?* What *means shall he use*, with a view to lead his children to the exercise of that holiness, without which they cannot see the Lord in peace?

This is our third general subject of inquiry; and in pursuing it, I wish to make the impression, first of all, that *means are necessary*. Many seem to labor under a mistake in regard to this point. They know that their children need converting grace, in order to prepare them for usefulness here and glory hereafter; but they infer, since this is the gift of God, that there is little or nothing for them to do. Means they regard as of doubtful efficacy, and feel under no particular obligations to employ them. They rather choose to commit their children to the mercy of God, and leave them, untutored, to the disposals of his will. But views such as these are wrong and ruinous. Why were means of grace instituted to be used in any case? The conversion of an adult is the work of God; yet it is effected, always, through the instrumentality of means. But if means are to be used for the conversion of adults, why not for the conversion of children? What reason can be given, why they are not as important in the one case, as in the other? Indeed, they should be regarded as indispensable, in both cases. The Christian parent may as well expect a harvest, where no seed has been sown; or that his children will become learned and wise, without the means of literary instruction; as he may expect them to become truly religious, without diligence and fidelity on his part, in the use of all likely means to promote their conversion and final salvation.

In ascertaining the means to be employed, it should be kept in mind, that children possess the same mental faculties as adults—they are, in fact, men and women in miniature—and consequently, the same general means are to be used to promote their conversion (making allowance for the difference in age, and other circumstances) as are used for the spiritual benefit of those in riper years. It is as true of them, as of others, that if they are ever sanctified, it must be through the truth. If they are ever regenerated, they will be “born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, which is the word of God.” The means to be used with them are the appointed means of grace, modified, to be sure, so as to be suited to their capacities, and to the peculiar circumstances in which they are placed. In particular,

1. Children should early be made the subjects of direct religious

*instruction.* Divine truth should be instilled into their minds, and made, if possible, to exert an influence upon their hearts. One of the first lessons to be imparted—when they have learned the existence and perfections of God, and the inspiration of the Scriptures—is that of their own sinfulness. \*And this is a subject on which they should be, not only silenced, but convinced. By explaining to them the requisitions of the divine law, and the nature of sin, they should be made, if possible, to see and feel that they are sinners, involved in guilt and ruin. When once sensible of this, it will be easy to direct them to a Saviour's blood, and to those precious offers of pardon and salvation which are proposed in the Gospel. It will be easy to urge these offers upon them, assuring them that, if they comply, their immortal interests will be secured; but if they persist in refusing compliance, they must inevitably perish.

The truths to be urged upon the minds of children are, not the abstrusities of religion, but the plainest and most important doctrines of the Gospel. These should be urged with the utmost simplicity, so that they may be understood; and with a degree of tenderness and affection, which can hardly fail to convince those to whom they are addressed, that they are intended for their benefit. They should be urged also in a way to engage the *attention* of children, and to interest their feelings. They should be made as little repulsive and wearisome as possible. But especially should the truths of religion be addressed to the minds of children with great *seriousness*. They must see, from the very first, in the serious aspect and manner of those about them, whenever religion is introduced, that this a great and solemn subject, in which they are deeply concerned, and with which they must never allow themselves to trifle. They should moreover be instructed, as they advance in religious knowledge, to *apply* it to their own case. They are not to learn divine truth, as they do the lessons given them at school, keeping it at a great distance, and regarding it in the light of mere speculation; but they are to consider it as truth which is directly and solemnly applicable to themselves. It proposes something for them to *do*, as well as to learn; and something which they *must* do, or they must finally perish. Religion, they should be taught too, is strictly *personal*. No one can possess it for them, or perform its duties in their stead; but each must be estimated according to his own character, and receive his own reward. Each must act and answer for himself.

It is important that correct religious impressions should begin to be made upon the minds of children, at a very early period. The making of them at this period will depend chiefly upon the example of parents. If parents are uniformly and consistently religious, manifesting in their whole appearance and deportment, their words and actions, that the soul is of more value than the body,

and the concerns of the soul of more consequence than the world; it will be scarcely possible that their little children should not early be led to cherish feelings of reverence and deep regard for religion. And as soon as such children come to know, that *they* are destitute of religion, and in this respect separated from those they most dearly love, they will have a source of uneasiness which will hardly be removed, till they come to a saving knowledge of the truth.

As children advance to years of understanding, they should be taught to engage in the services of religion with sincerity and devotion. They should be led to the house of God, to attend upon the public services of the sanctuary. They should be required to read the Scriptures, and other suitable religious books. They should be instructed in the duty and the benefits of prayer, and the importance of regularity and fervency in their own private devotions. And they should be frequently questioned, as to the correctness of their religious views, and the manner in which they perform religious duties.

Children should be taught to fulfil their social obligations, from a regard, not only to their own credit, and the comfort of those about them, but more especially to the authority and glory of God. And the instances in which they have violated these obligations, they should be led to regard, and to lament, as sins against God. It should be impressed on them, indeed, that, in all their performances, God looketh on the heart; and that it is incumbent on them to look there too. Their outward behavior may be much better than their hearts. They may so conduct themselves as to merit the esteem of their parents and friends; while their motives, their hearts, by which alone God estimates them, have been selfish and wrong.

2. In addition to direct religious instruction, the Christian parent should seize every favorable opportunity, every tender moment, to press upon his children the *motives* of the Gospel. He will not only endeavor to convince them of the truth and excellence of his religion, but will, if possible, *persuade* them to embrace it. With this view, he will urge the command and authority of God. He will urge the calls of duty, and of interest. He will contrast the pleasantness of wisdom's ways, with that way of transgressors which is hard. He will direct their minds to the most *moving* considerations—such as the unvarying goodness of God; the dying love of Jesus; the nearness and certainty of death; the solemnities of the Judgement; the world of glory; and the world of despair; and by all, will endeavor to draw them to Christ, and to the possession of that character, without which they cannot be saved. He will set before them the example of "those, who through faith and patience now inherit the promises;" and especially will he be concerned to allure them onward by his own

example. He will endeavor that this shall shine upon them at all times, to excite them to the possession of that religion which is so much his solace and support. Indeed, by every motive which reason and revelation furnish, he will endeavor, as he is able, to *persuade* his children to become the early friends and followers of Jesus.

3. Children should be the objects of unremitting spiritual *care* and *watchfulness*. They are as unqualified to have the charge of themselves in a religious view, as in a natural view. They are as unfit to be trusted with their spiritual interests, as with their temporal interests. They need the watchful care of their parents, to preserve them from error, from temptations, and from spiritual dangers and foes. They are liable, in many ways, to be deceived and ensnared. They are in danger from their intercourse with others. They are in danger from the deceitfulness of their own hearts. They are in danger from that subtle enemy, who "goeth about as a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour." They are in danger of imbibing corrupt principles, and of falling into sinful and ruinous practices. They are just entering upon a world that is full of temptation, and their way through it is beset with the determined enemies of their peace. In circumstances such as these, how much they need the watchful care of an experienced religious parent!—And this care, on the part of the parent, must be unremitting, untiring. It will lead him to seek and maintain the most intimate acquaintance with the plans, the pursuits, the companions, and the various temptations of his children, that so he may the better advise them, and secure them from surrounding dangers and evils. That the religious inspection of the parent may be exercised with the more ease and effect, he should secure the entire confidence of his children, and should encourage them to be perfectly frank and open in their intercourse with him. They should be led to regard him as their best and bosom friend, and should be accustomed to go to him for advice and direction, in all their difficulties and concerns.

4. Another means to be employed in a religious education is parental *authority* and *restraint*.—Universal observation and experience shew, that children need government. So strong are the evil propensities of their hearts, that neither instruction, persuasion, nor watchfulness, will in many cases avail. They must be directed and restrained by the prudent but vigorous exercise of parental authority. The wise parent will indeed exercise his authority as seldom as possible. He will prefer to sustain his influence rather by promises than threats—rather by rewards than punishments. But the cases are few, in which he can accomplish his whole object in this way. He will be compelled to resort often to direct restraints. If the child submit readily to the restraints imposed, it is very well, and very happy. But if he demur



or refuse, and no milder means of coercion will prevail, punishment must follow. In selecting the most proper mode of punishment, there is room for the exercise of much discretion. Corporal punishment, or that which is inflicted by blows and the rod, I should regard as the last resort—as that to which recourse must be had, only when all other means have failed.

It hardly need be observed, that in inflicting punishment, the parent should be perfectly calm and dispassionate, and should manifest, in every feature, the pain he feels, in being compelled to resort to such a measure. He should manifest that he punishes, not because he loves to punish, but because he *must*. In all ordinary cases, punishment should be continued till it produces submission; or till it accomplishes the end for which it was inflicted,—when it ought instantly to cease.

In every case, where resistance to parental authority results in the necessity of punishment, the child should be made sensible that he has sinned, not only against his parents, but much more against *God*; and that when he has submitted, and obtained his parents' forgiveness, the difficulty is not half settled. He must humble himself before God, and repent of his sin, and seek the forgiveness and favor of his heavenly Father.

5. I would only observe further, that all the means of religious education should be accompanied with fervent and persevering *prayer*, for the Divine direction, support, and blessing. In nothing, surely, do parents more need Divine direction, than in the religious education of their children. In nothing do they more need strength and support from heaven. In nothing are they more dependant on the blessing of their heavenly Father. For with him is the residue of the Spirit, and he alone is able to crown their labors with complete success. To him therefore should they go, in humble, persevering prayer. He has encouraged them to do this, with many promises. "If any man lack wisdom, let him ask it of God, who giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not, and *it shall be given him.*" "If ye, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much *more* shall your heavenly Father give good things to them that ask him." He hath never "said to the seed of Jacob, Seek ye me in vain."

The means of religious education should be used with children, with a steady, a consistent, a persevering hand. They should have line upon line, and precept upon precept, as they are able to bear it. There should be no wavering on the part of the parent, as to his grand object; and no relaxing of exertion, in order to accomplish it. He has his course marked out, and he must pursue it—with all mildness indeed, but yet with all firmness. He will meet with numerous difficulties and discouragements; but let him remember that his object is a great one—that interests not

less dear to him than his own, are involved—and that the most powerful *motives* impel him to persevere.

In presenting these *motives* to the consideration of parents, it should be observed, first of all, that fidelity to their children is strictly *required* of them in the holy Scriptures.—“These words which I command thee this day shall be in thine heart; and *thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children*; and shalt talk of them, when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.” “The Lord established a testimony in Jacob, and appointed a law in Israel, which *he commanded our fathers that they should make them known unto their children*, that the generation to come might know them, even the children that should be born, who should arise, and *declare them to their children*, that they might set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep his commandments.” “Fathers, provoke not your children to wrath, but *train them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.*” In view of these and similar Divine commands, the Christian parent will feel, that he is no longer at *liberty* to neglect the religious education of his children. He is bound, by all the authority of heaven, to care for their spiritual interests, and to be faithful to their souls.

2. Parents are not only bound by the commands of God, they are encouraged by his *promises* to be diligent and faithful in the religious education of their children.—“Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old, *he will not depart from it.*” “The *generation of the upright shall be blessed.*” “The just man *walketh in his integrity, and his children are blessed after him.*” “The Lord thy God is a faithful God, keeping covenant and mercy with them that *love him, to a thousand generations.*” “When thou shalt return unto the Lord thy God, and *shalt obey his voice*, according to all I command thee this day; the Lord thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the *heart of thy seed.*” “I know Abraham, that *he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgement.*” Promises such as these, with which the Scriptures abound, afford all the encouragement to pious, anxious parents, which they need. They are dependant on God, to be sure, for his blessing; but this blessing he has promised he will not withhold, if they are faithful. They have only to go forward, therefore, in obedience to the Divine command, and in imitation of the example of the wise and good in other ages; and the God, who has blessed others, will bless them. The promises are still to them and to their children; they are as good promises now as they ever were; and if they will be faithful to the souls of their children, they have abundant reason to believe they shall not labor in vain.

3. As an inducement to be faithful in the religious education of their children, those parents, who have publicly devoted them to God, should remember their *baptismal vows*. When you presented your children for baptism, you were regarded, not only as giving them up to God, but as promising to train them up for him. When your covenant respecting them was sealed in baptismal water, in the name of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, you were understood as binding yourselves, by the most solemn obligations, to make their conversion and final salvation a leading object of your lives. You will remember, therefore, that this is a subject, in regard to which you stand sacredly pledged. The vows of God are upon you, and you cannot go back. You are bound, not only by the Divine command, but by your own voluntary engagements, to be faithful to the souls of your children, and to do all in your power for their conversion and salvation. If you are in a good degree faithful, you may look up to God with humble confidence, and plead his promises with earnestness and effect. But if you are palpably, grossly unfaithful, the solemnities through which you have passed with your children, may be worse than of no avail, both to them and to you.

4. Christian parents have strong inducements to be faithful to their children, from the consideration that their example and intercourse *must* have a powerful effect upon them, one way or the other. You are daily, perhaps almost constantly, in the presence of your children, and under circumstances which lead them to look to you for instruction and example. And the example which you set before them, the aspect you assume, the manner in which you speak and act, and especially the manner in which you treat the subject of religion, you may depend on it is having its effect—is exerting a strong influence one way or the other. Impressions are “sinking deep into their yet soft and yielding nature; and habits are forming, which will take such a firm hold of that nature, as almost to become a part of it.” Their minds are receiving a bias of some sort, which they will never lose. Their characters are beginning to form, not for this life only, but for eternity. It is, then, for every parent to say, what kind of impression he will make upon his children; or what kind of influence he wishes to exert, in moulding and shaping their future characters. An influence he *must* exert, and a strong one too, of some kind or other,—this is inevitable. What, then, shall this influence be? Can any Christian parent think of contributing to confirm his children in habits of sin? Can he endure the thought of contributing to prepare them for a life of wickedness on earth, for a miserable death, and for a hopeless, joyless eternity? Can he endure to meet them, in the other world, and to be known there as their destroyer? If not, he must be faithful to the souls of his children now. He must set before them such an example, he must so instruct them, watch

over them, and pray for them ; he must be so much in earnest, and so persevering, in their religious education, that all the influence which he exerts upon his children, and all the impressions which they receive from him, shall be decidedly favorable to their spiritual interests.

5. Christian parents have further inducements to be faithful to their children, from the consideration that there is a *great work* needing to be done, and that this work is committed specially to them. Your children are naturally depraved creatures. The whole native bias of their minds is towards evil, rather than good. They need therefore to be changed, and to become new creatures, before they can see the kingdom of God. And the foundation of this great change needs to be laid in youth. Indeed, a thousand considerations are urging, that the change itself should be accomplished in youth. A great work then is to be done for them ; and *by whom*, Christian parents, if not by you ? To you are your children specially committed by the God of nature. To you are committed their souls, as well as their bodies—their spiritual, as well as their temporal interests. And who can be expected to care for their souls, if you do not ? Who will take them up, if you neglect them ? Who shall superintend their religious education, and “train them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord,” if you refuse ? The heart of that parent must be very hard, who, in view of considerations such as these, does not resolve, with Joshua, “As for me, and my house, *we will serve the Lord*.” Henceforth I will devote myself to the spiritual interests of my beloved offspring.”

6. I shall only urge further, as a motive to diligence in the religious education of children, the *strong affection* which parents feel for them. Your affection for your children, Christian parents, is so strong, that you cannot bear to see them in distress, even for an hour. How then can you endure the thought of their perishing forever in that miserable world, “where the worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched” ? And yet, have you no children, whom we are obliged to regard as exposed to the horrors of that dreadful place ? Have you none, who are already advanced, or are rapidly advancing, to an age, when they will discern between good and evil, and will begin to form a character for themselves ? You see them every hour exposed to death, and to be summoned away to their final account. Still, perhaps, they are not pious, and give not the least evidence of their being prepared to die in peace, and to enjoy the rest of heaven. How then can you be easy respecting them, at all ? Why do not your hearts yearn over them ? Why are not all your anxieties awakened for them ? Why do you not, as it were, lay hold of them, and endeavor to pluck them as brands from the burning ? You love your dear children so well, that you can scarcely bear to be *separated* from them here, at all.

And yet, if *you* are real Christians, and *they* are impenitent, you are aware that you are already separated from them in a most important sense. You are on one side of the line, and they on the other. And the separation here begun you know is continually widening. Things remaining as they now are, it will be fearfully, infinitely, unalterably wide, very soon. Soon, you will be on the right hand of the Judge, and they on the left. Soon, you will be in heaven, and—they in hell. But what Christian parent, who reads these pages, can think, for a moment, of a separation such as this? What Christian can endure the thought, that his dear children, whom he loves as himself, are to live, and die, and perish forever, among the enemies of God?—If you cannot, Christian reader, endure the thought of this separation at all; then, *how much*—let me affectionately ask—how much are you doing to prevent it? How much are you doing, from day to day, and from week to week, to promote the spiritual interests of your children, and to save them from the dreadful end and portion of the wicked? Are you setting before them a holy, consistent, and proper example? Are you instructing them in the truths and duties of religion? Are you watching over them with care and diligence, and dissuading and restraining them from everything, which will have a tendency to draw them away from God? Are you laboring with them, and praying for them, and doing all you have it in your power to do, to promote the salvation of their immortal souls? If this is indeed the case, you need not, I think, be over-anxious. God will bless you, and will grant you your heart's desire.—But if this is not, in some good degree, the case, then, are you not preparing trouble for yourselves in this life? Are you not preparing for a dreadful meeting with your dear children, in the day of judgement? Are you not preparing for an awful and final separation from them, in the eternal state?

O that every Christian parent, who turns over these pages, might yield to the force of the considerations here urged, and be excited to greater diligence and faithfulness, in the religious education of his children. It cannot be concealed, that this branch of education—the most important of all branches—is lamentably neglected. It is neglected much more than it was, in the days of our pilgrim Fathers; and much more than it will be, in the coming days of millennial glory. As we approach these future, happy days, may the millennial spirit be exhibited more and more, in the reviving of family religion, and in the strict spiritual education of those who are to stand in our places, when we are in the dust!

SENEC.



THE MEANING OF THE WORD Γέεννα, AS USED BY THE WRITERS  
OF THE NEW TESTAMENT.

The word Γέεννα has not unfrequently been a subject of controversy. In our common version of the New Testament it is translated "Hell." When it is connected with the words τοῦ πυρός, it is translated "*hell fire*," and is usually understood to signify "the place where the wicked are to be punished after death." Some writers, however, have affirmed, not only that this is not the meaning of the word, but that there is no place anywhere spoken of in the Scriptures in which the wicked are to be punished after death. As a mistake on this subject may lead to most dreadful disappointment, it is important to give the subject a candid investigation.

It is easy to ascertain the literal meaning of the word Γέεννα. Concerning this, I know of no serious controversy. It literally and properly signifies "the valley of Hinnom," which lies a little south of Jerusalem, well watered, and in ancient times, most verdant and delightfully shaded with trees. It was here that the idolatrous Israelites established the worship of Moloch, under the form of a brazen image, having the face of a bull. To this imaginary god, they offered up their own children, causing them to be consumed in a furnace of fire, into which they were dropped from the arms of the idol. After the captivity, the Jews, regarding this place with abhorrence, on account of these abominations, made it the depository of every species of filth, including the putrid carcasses of animals, and the dead bodies of malefactors. To prevent the pestilence which such a corrupt mass might occasion, if left to putrify, constant fires were maintained in the valley, in order to consume the whole. Hence the place acquired the appellation "Γέεννα τοῦ πυρός, a Gehenna of fire." By an easy metaphor, the Jews, whose notions of external purity naturally led them to regard such a place with the greatest abhorrence, transferred this name to the *infernal fires*, or to that part of Hades or Sheol, in which they supposed that demons, and the souls of wicked men were punished in eternal fire. *Hades*, they represented to themselves, as a vast subterranean cavern, divided into two apartments. Of these, one was the upper region of the place, and was called Paradise; the other was beneath, and constituted the abyss of Gehenna. This seems to be the Gehenna of which our Saviour not unfrequently speaks. That it must mean this, or the literal valley of Hinnom, is certain. That it does not mean the literal valley of Hinnom, I shall now endeavor to show, from the connexion in which the word Γέεννα is used.

We find this word first used in Matt. v. 22, "Ye have heard that it has been said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill, shall be in danger of the judgement, (i. e. of cndemnation,) But I say to you, whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause, shall be in danger of the judgement:—" Surely not the judgement of the Jewish court merely; for the Jews did not recognize anger as a crime, unless manifested by acts of violence. God alone is able to judge the feelings of the heart. The meaning then must be, '*exposed to the judgement of God.*' " But whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the Council, or Sanhedrim," i. e. of a still severer judgement from God. The Jewish Council, or Sanhedrim, inflicted the severest punishments which the laws permitted. "But whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of Γεέννα τοῦ πυρος, of the fire of *Gehenna.*" Not, surely, of being *literally* burnt in the valley of Hinnom; for the Jews inflicted no such punishment for speaking the word in question. We must conclude, therefore, that Gehenna here means the place where God will punish the wicked after death.

The next passage is in Mark ix. 43, 44, "It is better for thee to go into life maimed, than, having two hands, to go into Gehenna, into the fire that never shall be quenched; where the worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched." The word *life*, in this place, as well as in many others, plainly signifies a state or place of happiness. It signifies happiness in heaven—in the kingdom of God. The word *Gehenna*, is the opposite or antithesis of the word *life*. Hence, according to one of the acknowledged and most plain laws of interpreting language, if *life* signifies happiness after death, *Gehenna* must signify suffering after death. We may fairly conclude, then, that the Gehenna here spoken of is that of the infernal world. That it is so, is rendered doubly certain by the language in immediate connexion,—"*into the fire that never shall be quenched.*" The fire of the valley of Hinnom has long since been quenched. But Christ says that the fire, of which he speaks, shall *never* be quenched. "Their worm dieth not, and the fire *is not quenched.*"

Another conclusive argument for the meaning which we defend may be found in Luke xii. 4, 5, "I say unto you, my friends, be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do: But I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear: fear him, who after he has killed, has power to cast into Gehenna." Had not the persecutors of the disciples power, both to kill the body, and to cast into the valley of Hinnom? What then is that more dreadful place of punishment, into which the soul is to be cast, after the body is killed, if not the Gehenna of the infernal world?

But if any one is still disposed to doubt, the parallel passage in Matt. x. 28, is, if possible, even more conclusive. "Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the *soul*; but rather fear him who is able to destroy both soul and body in Gehenna." Surely, the soul is not to be destroyed in the literal valley of Hinnom! If this passage does not speak of a place, where the wicked are to be punished after death, then no dependence can be placed on language.

I know it is said, that this Gehenna has no existence, except in the imagination. But of this how can we be persuaded, after the consideration of such texts as have been cited? We know the language concerning the world of wo is figurative. The language describing the things of the invisible world is generally figurative, throughout the Scriptures. But shall we conclude from this, that none of the things described exist, except in the imagination? The language concerning heaven is highly figurative; but shall we from this decide, that there is no such place as heaven? The language concerning Jehovah himself is figurative; often highly so. For example, he is called "a rock," "a strong tower," "a consuming fire." But shall we on this account declare that Jehovah does not exist? When he is called, "a rock," or "a strong tower," we have no difficulty in understanding that he is the support and defence of those who trust in him. When he is called, "a consuming fire," we readily understand that he is terrible in judgement. Why then is it so difficult to understand the words of the Saviour, "Fear him who is able to destroy both soul and body in Gehenna, in the fire that never shall be quenched." Does not this speak of suffering after death, as dreadful as any that can exist in the imagination? Yet this is the language of inspiration. It has God for its author. And shall He be suspected of misrepresentation? "God is not a man that he should lie; nor the son of man that he should repent: Hath he said, and shall he not do it? Or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?" What then, if a man succeed in persuading himself that there is no bottomless pit, the smoke of which ascendeth up forever and ever; will this save him from eternal wo? No;—should all men affirm to the contrary, it still remains true—it will forever remain true—that to the wicked, "our God is a consuming fire." It will forever be true, that "it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God."

R.

## EXPOSITION.

Mark x. 14, 15. "Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not; for *of such is the kingdom of God*. Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God *as a little child*, he shall not enter therein."

Matt. xviii. 3. "Except ye be converted, and become *as little children*, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven."

It is well known that opposers to evangelical sentiments advocate the native purity of man, and wrest the Scriptures where they can, to support their erroneous views. Among the passages they pervert, are those of our Lord above quoted respecting infants and children. These, it is maintained, teach the native purity of the human heart, and its fitness for heaven, without the sanctifying influence of the Holy Spirit. So Unitarians are accustomed to quote them, and so their writers comment upon them.\*

My design in this paper will be to vindicate the passages above given against the abuse of them referred to.

"*Of such is the kingdom of God.*" The phrase 'kingdom of God' may signify, either the kingdom of glory, or the Christian church. The words, 'of such,' point out a resemblance, either natural or moral. Suppose the resemblance intended be *natural*, a resemblance in age, in circumstances, in literal infancy; and that by 'the kingdom of God,' we are to understand the kingdom of glory. According to this interpretation, literal infants are entitled to the kingdom of glory. Still, it does not follow that they are natively pure: for they may need, as a qualification for heaven, and dying in infancy they may experience, the sanctifying influence of the Holy Spirit, and sprinkling of the blood of Christ. Some, we know, have been sanctified from the womb, which proves that others may be, and need to be, if they are saved.

Or suppose, retaining the idea of a natural resemblance, the words 'kingdom of God' be understood to signify the Christian church; and consequently that infants have some connexion with the church. This sense restricts the application to the children of pious parents, and goes not a step towards proving the native purity of such children. For their connexion with the church, whatever it may be, is grounded, not at all on the consideration of their own personal character, but on the professed faith and piety of their parents. "Else were your children unclean, but *now are they holy.*"

\* See Kenrick's Reflections on Matt. xix. 14., Whitman's Sermon on Regeneration, p. 31, and Richardson's Sermon on Conversion.

Suppose again, that by the words 'of such,' a sort of moral, and not a natural resemblance, is intended. Suppose our Saviour designed to signify, that in humility, teachableness, affection, confidence—traits which children often exhibit towards their parents, and which the young of other animals about as often exhibit towards their dams—his true disciples, the members of his kingdom, must come to resemble little children. But neither does this supposition, more than the others, teach the native moral purity or holiness of children. For these amiable infantile qualities, which our Saviour may be supposed to set forth as emblems of the spiritual graces of his people, are regarded on all hands as mere natural properties, not at all of the nature of holiness. They are so regarded by Unitarians, who maintain that children are not accountable agents, and not capable of holiness or sin, till they come to years of understanding, and know the difference between good and evil. And in the same light, these qualities of children are regarded by the Orthodox. They are regarded as mere animal affections, not necessarily holy or sinful, and not at all inconsistent with that native moral depravity, which the Scriptures ascribe to our fallen race.

Matt. xviii. 3. "Except ye be converted, and become as *little children*, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven."

We have an expression of the Saviour's sentiments, or feelings, in relation to children, on at least two different occasions. The one, was that already considered, in which parents, or friends, brought little children to him for his blessing; the other, that now before us, in which he took a little child, providentially present, and employed him to illustrate an important lesson which he was inculcating on his disciples.

The case was this: On their way to Capernaum, the disciples had debated the subject, who should be the greatest in their Master's kingdom, supposing it to be a temporal one. Whether Jesus overheard them or not, he knew what was in their hearts, and on arriving with them at the house whither they went, he asked them the cause of their dispute. And now, having called the attention of the disciples to the subject of their debate, what, may we suppose, was his object in setting this little child before them? Was it to lecture on the moral state of the child by nature, as the physiologist lectures on the various physical properties and relations of the different animals, plants, and minerals which come under his examination? Was it to instruct them in the nature of Adam's sin, in relation to his posterity? Was it to prove that children are, or are not, affected by it? Was it to show that, though not guilty of his personal sin in eating the forbidden fruit, they are, nevertheless, in some way unclean? Or was it to show that all this is a libel on human nature, and that till we learn to sin by example, we are as holy as angels? Obviously nothing of all this, but rather to teach his



disciples a lesson of *humility*? And herein is the pertinency of what he said in relation to children, "Except ye be converted," &c. Little children are naturally docile, confident, and submissive. At least, where this is not the case, they are poor examples to adduce in proof of native purity and freedom from sin. How natural and forcible it was, then, for the Saviour to speak of this little child *as to natural character towards his earthly parent*, to teach the disciples what they ought to be *as to moral character towards their heavenly Parent*. And, instead of teaching native purity, considering what men are, and the great, very great, remove at which they are from feeling towards God, as a good little child does towards his parent, how great a change is here implied in order to true discipleship! How plainly in fact is here implied, not our native purity, but our native depravity! I submit it to the consciences of those who would derive the doctrine of native purity from this passage, whether, though it is not the main design of the passage to teach it, the doctrine of human depravity, or the original absence of all holy love, and the necessity of regeneration by the Holy Spirit, be not rather implied?

The sense of the passage last considered is very similar to that of Mark x. 15, "Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God *as a little child*, he shall not enter therein." How are we to "receive the kingdom of God, *as a little child*?"—To become "*as a little child*," in a natural sense, or literally, we cannot. We cannot dispossess ourselves of what we know; we cannot unclothe ourselves of all that has been gathering upon us in the progress of experience; we cannot contract ourselves to the dimensions of childhood and infancy. It is not possible in the nature of things—nor, if it were, would it be required. Still, we must receive the kingdom of God *as a little child*; that is, we must come to possess, in a *spiritual* sense, such feelings of teachableness, simplicity, confidence, submission, love, and gratitude towards God, in order to be connected with his kingdom, as the good little child, in a *natural* sense, exhibits towards its affectionate and loving earthly parent. This, it is believed, is the sense;—and so far as native purity or the contrary is concerned, Christ intended no other in all that he said of children.

In concluding these remarks, it ought to be remembered that the views we entertain on this subject lie at the foundation of all we are ever likely to feel or do in behalf of children and youth. If we regard them as innocent and pure, we never shall feel much, or make much exertion, for their conversion and sanctification: and it is a matter of great importance, therefore, that we have the mind of Christ. Whether parents and guardians, or instructors and ministers and Christians in general, we are to our babes and children principally what our views are as to their state and condition by nature. Our views influence us in the education we seek

for them—in our government over them, the mode, measure and means of it—in the books we furnish them—in the company we allow them to keep—in the business we provide for them—and in the alliances we encourage them to form in life. Indeed, whatever they may be, the influence of our sentiments on the native character of the human heart, follows down to eternity all those whose character we contribute to form; and an appalling responsibility gathers around us in deciding whether we will believe the truth, and be sanctified by its healing efficacy, or admit the poisonous distillation of error, and wither and die under its influence.

Let every one who thinks Christ taught the native purity of the human heart, examine again before he settles down in that conclusion. Let him pray for the Holy Spirit, whose office it was to guide apostles in the way of truth, to enlighten his mind, and incline him in the way he should go. Let him remember, that God cautions him not to lean to his own understanding; that the heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked; and that except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.

H.

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## REVIEWS.

TRACTS PUBLISHED BY THE AMERICAN UNITARIAN ASSOCIATION.

(Continued from p. 309.)

### No. 16. *On some Corruptions of Scripture.*

This tract consists of "conversations" between a Unitarian minister, and one of his parishioners. The minister has commenced "a course of lectures on the New Testament," and has thrown out expressions respecting alterations and mis-translations in the commonly received Bible, which are very alarming to his unlettered but honest hearted hearer. The hearer comes to him with great warmth, to state his objections, and urge his complaints. A conversation thus commences, which is continued, at intervals, to the end of the tract, in which the minister explains to him what is meant by the word "manuscript," and what by "various readings," and what by "interpolations," and what by "ancient versions;" and succeeds at length in satisfying him that his Bible, which he has held "so sacred," is in several parts of it wrong and unworthy of regard.

Though the minister states, that "the translation in common use in this country is not always faithful to the original," he cites no instances, and exhibits no evidence, of the truth of the assertion. His attention is occupied in pointing out certain alleged alterations which have taken place in the *text* of the New Testament, since

it was written. The passages on which he remarks are 1 John v. 7, 1 Tim. iii. 16, Acts xx. 28, Col. ii. 2, 3, and Rev. i. 11. Of these, in place of the common version, he adopts, and urges reasons to justify, the reading of Griesbach. It was our intention to have followed him, in his observations on these passages, with a view to correct misrepresentations, supply deficiencies, and present a fair and full exhibition of the case. But, considering the nature of such a discussion, and the length to which it must necessarily be drawn, we have concluded to defer it for a separate article.\* Without replying, therefore, at present, to all the statements in the tract, we shall pass it with some general remarks.

It is not true, as is here insinuated, because some two or three disputed passages are not often "quoted by learned Trinitarian writers at the present day," that they have rejected them as of no authority. In respect to these passages, Trinitarians have no interest, as we trust they have no desire, but to know the truth. The passages are not at all necessary for the support of their system. To be sure, if they are genuine, they may be thought to support it; but if they are not genuine, the evidence in favor of the Trinity, and the supreme Divinity of Jesus Christ, is not the less conclusive and irrefragible. Knowing this, as all learned Trinitarians do, they look at the evidence for and against these passages without bias; and according as it strikes different minds, they have arrived, in some instances, to different conclusions. In regard, for instance, to the disputed passage in Timothy, Dr. Knapp and Professor Stuart are clearly of opinion that the common version is correct; while Griesbach, whose learning and honesty are much extolled, was of the opinion, that the common reading of all these passages is not sufficiently supported. But did Griesbach, on this account, reject the Divinity of Christ? Did he so much as doubt or hesitate on the subject? Did he think the evidence in support of this doctrine materially weakened? By no means. "There are," says he, "SO MANY ARGUMENTS for the true Deity of Christ, that I see not how it can be called in question; the Divine authority of the Scripture being granted, and just rules of interpretation acknowledged. Particularly, the exordium of St. John's Gospel is so perspicuous, and above all exception, that it never can be overturned by the daring attacks of critics and interpreters."†

It is presumed, learned Trinitarians of the present day regard the authority of most of the passages examined in this tract as in a degree unsettled. They do not reject them, nor do they think it necessary, and with the evidence already existing they do not feel authorized, to determine positively respecting them, one way

\* Our readers may find a pretty full discussion of this subject in the Panoplist, vol. vi. pp. 503—515.

† See Preface to vol. ii. of his New Testament. Edit. 1775.

or the other. They do not often quote them in controversy with Unitarians, because, in the first place, they do not need them; because they suppose they will not be convincing to those who reject the Trinity; and because they do not wish to encumber an important subject with unnecessary embarrassments. Reasons such as these were expressly assigned, by Dr. Wardlaw in his controversy with Mr. Yates, and by Professor Stuart in his letters to Dr. Channing.

In the tract before us, the parishioner asks, "Why may not the alterations have been made by Unitarians?" And his minister answers, "There is no evidence whatever of any change having been made in the manuscripts of the New Testament to favor the Unitarian scheme." But the minister ought to have remembered, that this is an important point to be settled. There is a difference of reading in certain passages, and alterations are alleged to have been made, which have a bearing on the subject of the Trinity. But whether these have been made to favor Trinitarians or Unitarians, or, in other words, whether Trinitarians have added to the word of God to strengthen their cause, or Unitarians have taken from it to strengthen theirs, is the very question which remains to be determined. It is therefore a palpable begging of the question—a taking for granted what ought to be proved, to say that "no change has been made in the manuscripts of the New Testament to favor the Unitarian scheme."

It is commonly said by Unitarians, that the declaration, in 1 John v. 7, respecting the three heavenly witnesses, is an interpolation—that it has been added to the epistle, since it was written, by some designing but unknown transcriber. But it is contended by Mr. Gilman, a distinguished Unitarian now on the stage, that this is a strong Unitarian passage—that "its tendency, supposing it genuine, is far more Unitarian, than it is the reverse"—and that those Trinitarians, who have been for "expunging" it, "have had a consciousness of this fact."\* If Mr. Gilman is to be credited, this passage goes "to favor the Unitarian scheme;" and if Unitarians generally are to be credited, it is an interpolation. Putting the whole together, we have found *one* "change in the New Testament to favor the Unitarian scheme," Unitarians themselves being judges. Nor is it difficult, admitting the correctness of the text of Griesbach, to discover others. It seems to be generally admitted, but on what ground we know not, that the emendations of this distinguished critic are all against the Divinity of the Saviour. But the fact is otherwise; and this ought to be known. For the satisfaction of the reader, let us compare a few passages, as they stand in the common version, and in the text of Griesbach.

\* Sermon on the Introduction to the Gospel of St. John. Second Ed. p. 16.

*Common Version.*

"They assayed to go into Bythinia, but the Spirit suffered them not." Acts xvi. 7.

"Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God." Eph. v. 21.

"I shall come in the fulness of the blessing of the Gospel of Christ." Rom. xv. 29.

"Let the peace of God rule in your hearts." Col. iii. 15.

"Whom the Lord shall consume with the Spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming." 2 Thess. ii. 8.

*Griesbach.*

"They assayed to go into Bythinia, but the *Spirit of Jesus* suffered them not."

"Submitting yourselves one to another in the *fear of Christ.*"

"I shall come in the fulness of the *blessing of Christ.*"

"Let the peace of *Christ* rule in your hearts."

"Whom the *Lord Jesus* shall consume with the Spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming."

In the language of a foreign reviewer, "these texts form an addition to those numerous ones that attribute to our blessed Redeemer an exuberance of grace and goodness, a plenitude of authority, and an invincible universality of influence, which are totally incompatible with the powers of any other than the Infinite Being, the God of all grace."

Our principal objection to this tract is, not that it questions the authority of a few passages, which have been generally thought to favor the doctrine of the Trinity: for the evidence in support of this doctrine is as conclusive without these passages, as with them; but that its tendency is to unsettle the minds of common readers in regard to the authority of our version of the Scriptures, and indeed of revelation generally. We are aware that our common translation of the Bible, which has been appealed to by Christians of all denominations for more than two hundred years; which to the English reader possesses a sacredness and authority which no other translation can; which the London Quarterly reviewers have pronounced "unrivalled, as a faithful translation, conveying not merely the meaning of the sacred writers, but their very style, manner, and expression"; which the learned Selden declared was "the best translation in the world"—we are aware that it is regarded by Unitarians, and is even spoken of from the pulpit, as a great hindrance in the way of the propagation of their sentiments. And the publication of this tract we presume is one among a series of efforts, designed to prepare the public mind for a new translation, which shall be less at variance with their views of truth.\*

And we are much mistaken, if the natural tendency of this tract is not to unsettle the minds of common readers in regard to the divine authority, not merely of this or that version of the Scriptures, but of the Scriptures themselves. We know the intention to do this is disclaimed, and remarks are made, near the close, ostensibly for the purpose of preventing such an effect; but after all, the common reader, especially if his heart is not established with

\* The American Unitarian Association, in their last Annual Report, speak of "a new translation of the whole Bible" as "a most desirable result."



grace, will rise from the intelligence here communicated, respecting wrong translations, and various readings, and altered manuscripts, and corrupted texts, feeling that there is nothing certain respecting the Bible, and that he may as well not trouble himself further about it. This is one of those subjects which we think ought to be touched with great caution, if touched at all, in publications designed for general circulation: for it is a subject, on which it is easy to say enough to startle and perplex the unlearned reader; but on which it is not easy so to communicate the *whole truth*, as to remove his fears and confirm his faith.

It is comforting, however, to be told, on the authority of the American Unitarian Association, that of all the various readings which have been discovered "in examining the different manuscripts of the New Testament," "not one in a hundred affects the sense, and that the number is *very small indeed*, of those which affect the doctrines of Christianity." It is "satisfactory to know, that the five" passages noticed in this tract "are nearly *all* which in their view have a bearing on important doctrines," and that "there is *not one*, which seriously affects the moral precepts of the Gospel." We rejoice that a limit is thus set, on high Unitarian authority, to the work of altering and amending the Bible—that it is here brought within a narrow compass—and that the Christian may still hold the sacred volume, with unwavering confidence that it is indeed the book of God.

#### No. 17. *On Tests of true religion.*

This tract was first published in 'the Unitarian,' at New York. It is understood to have been written in consequence of a distinguished Unitarian in Boston having renounced his sentiments, and become a convert to the faith as it is in Jesus. This gentleman, in compliance with a request from one of the Unitarian ministers of Boston, addressed to him a letter, giving an account of the change he had experienced, and the reasons by which it had been induced. Unitarians had some reason to presume that this letter would be published; and the tract before us seems to have been prepared, as a virtual answer to it, in case it was published. For no sooner did the letter make its appearance, than it was announced in the Christian Register that "a complete answer, and a satisfactory one," entitled 'Tests of true Religion,' had been published in the Unitarian, at New York.—So much for the *origin* of the tract. Let us next proceed to examine its contents.

The author proposes for consideration the following very important question, 'What is true religion?' And in his endeavors to solve it, he first "notices some of those popular tests, which appear to him superficial and unsatisfactory;" and, secondly, "turns to the only true standard—the Scriptures."

Under the head of "superficial and unsatisfactory" tests, he first mentions "*seriousness* in religion." This is no test of true religion, because the votaries of "a false religion may be serious."—The next thing examined is, "great and unusual *feeling* in religion." This, it is insisted, is no test, because Pagans feel, and Mahometans feel, and as strong feeling may be excited by false systems of religion, as by the truth.—"In the third place, a zeal about the *ritual observances* of piety," such as "prayers, sabbaths, &c." is no test of true religion: for Pagans have been more zealous in such observances than the believers in Divine revelation; Jews have been more zealous for rites than Christians; Papists have been more zealous in this way than Protestants; and the Church of England more zealous than Presbyterians and Independents. Nobody can pretend, therefore, that a zeal for ritual observances in the professors of any religion, is a test of its truth. The writer observes again, that "extraordinary *sacrifices* and *enterprises* in religion" form no test of its truth; because, of all Christian denominations, the Jesuits have made the greatest sacrifices, and been the most enterprising. And even these have been surpassed in self-denial by Hindoo fakeers and devotees.

We wonder that our author, in his zeal for exposing "superficial and unsatisfactory" tests, should have stopped here, in the middle of his story. Why did he not proceed, as he manifestly might have done in a similar strain, almost indefinitely? He might have said, *alms-giving* is no test of true religion; because many of the Pharisees have given alms to be seen of men; and the apostle intimates, that a person may give *all his goods* to feed the poor, and yet be destitute of true religion.

Again; *external social virtues* are no test of true religion; since with thousands, who have practised these virtues, they have been merely external. This was the case with the young man who came to Christ, by whom, so far as the youth himself knew, and so far probably as men could see, all the commandments had been kept.

It is recorded of the Puritans, in the days of Queen Elizabeth, that, "while others were at plays and interludes, at revels, or walking in the fields, or at the diversions of bowling, fencing, &c. on the evening of the Sabbath, they, with their families, were employed in reading the Scriptures, singing psalms, catechising their children, repeating sermons, and prayers; that neither was this confined to the Lord's day, but they had their hours of family devotion on the week days, esteeming it their duty to take care of the souls as well as of the bodies of their servants; and that they were circumspect as to all the excesses of eating and drinking, apparel, and lawful diversions; being frugal in house-keeping, industrious in their particular callings, honest and exact in their dealings, and solicitous to give every man his own."\*

\* Neal's History of the Puritans, vol. i. chap. viii.

Now this external religious engagedness of the Puritans is no certain evidence of the truth of their religion; for they might have been hypocritical and Pharisaical in it; or if they were sincere, their ritual observances were far exceeded, in number and painfulness, by the self-inflictions and tortures of the Hindoo devotees.

The primitive Christians were directed to have their '*conversation honest among the Gentiles*, that they, beholding their good works, might be led to glorify God in the day of their visitation.' 1 Pet. ii. 12. But why did the apostle give them such a direction, for such a purpose? An honest conversation is no test of the truth of any system of religion. Doubtless there have been externally honest men, in all religions.

Our Saviour, speaking of false teachers, says, 'By their *fruits* ye shall know them.' But how can false teachers be known by their fruits? How can a teacher of false and delusive doctrine be detected by his conversation and manner of life? He may be as serious, and as prayerful, and as ardent in his feelings, and as devoted and diligent in promoting his cause (if we may believe the writer of this tract) as others are in the cause of truth. Good fruit, then, is no evidence of the goodness of the tree which bears it. And the teachers of false and of true religion can no longer be distinguished by their manner of life.

Unitarians have labored to establish the truth of their religion, by its excellent practical *tendency* and *effects*. Sermon after sermon has been preached, and book after book published, within the last few years, for this very purpose. But it follows from what has been said on the subject of tests, that all such efforts have been in vain. They ought not to have been made, and ought never to be repeated. For how can the truth or falsehood of any system of religion be established by its practical effects? Seriousness is no test; deep feeling and engagedness are no test; a life of prayer and strict religious observances is no test; indeed nothing external or visible can be a test: for there is nothing external pertaining to religion, which may not be assumed by the worst of men, and for the worst of purposes.

Perhaps our author may suspect, by this time, that his argument proves rather too much for his own purpose, and that if it can be made thus to sweep all before it and around it, far and wide, he may as well abandon it, as insist upon it further.

The fallacy of his reasoning consists in his not distinguishing between what is an *infallible test* of true religion, and what is the *natural fruit* and *evidence* of it; and in his concluding, because, some *one* thing (seriousness for instance) is not an infallible test, that *several* things of a kindred nature, all such as would naturally spring from true religion, do not collectively constitute any satisfactory evidence in its favor. Nobody ever pretended that habitual seriousness was an *infallible test* of the reality or truth of a

person's religion ; and yet every body knows that it is one of the *natural fruits* of religion ; and every unprejudiced mind will conclude, that of two persons of different religious sentiments, who are in other respects equal, the religion of the one who is the most sincerely and consistently serious, will be the most likely to be the truth. And the same may be said respecting each of those other things, whose claims to be regarded as tests are examined in the tract. Neither of them, taken singly, is an infallible test, and yet each of them is a natural fruit and exhibition of piety ; so that where they all meet and harmonize in the same character, and their light is not obscured by opposing traits, they afford strong and convincing evidence, that the subject of them is a believer and lover of the truth. And when a comparison is instituted between such a person, and another of different religious sentiments in whom these fruits of piety are wanting, no honest mind can help deciding, that the religion of the former is greatly to be preferred. In this way, we save the argument in favor of true religion arising from its practical *tendency* and *effects*, which the false reasoning of our author goes to destroy,—an argument insisted on by the defenders of truth in all past ages ; on which they are authorized to insist by Christ and his apostles ; and which, with the generality of candid minds, has probably more weight than every other.

The writer of this tract has made an implied concession, we might almost say confession, of which he probably was not aware. Why—the question will force itself upon every unbiassed reader—why does he labor so hard to make it appear, that seriousness, and prayerfulness, and engagedness in religious duties, and a strict observance of the Sabbath, and exertions and sacrifices to promote the cause of Christ, are not tests of true religion ? Why not satisfied that they should be regarded as tests, by which every denomination might try the validity of its claims ? Was he conscious, that brought to these tests—that weighed in this balance, his own denomination would be found *miserably wanting* ? Was he conscious, that the testimony of the “Gentleman in Boston,” in his “Letter to a Unitarian clergyman of that city,” setting forth the deficiencies of Unitarians, was the truth—truth which he could not and dare not deny—and consequently that some other method, aside from a direct denial, must be devised, to escape its force ? This undoubtedly is the interpretation which the religious community put upon the tract, and the writer must have been a blind man that he did not foresee it. This tract is itself a more convincing proof of the deficiencies of Unitarians, than the letter to which it was intended to be a reply ; or than any direct testimony from an Orthodox believer could be. For in this attempt at evasion on the part of Unitarians, conscious deficiency is unwittingly betrayed, and the nakedness of their spiritual land is exposed. They seem to know that they cannot compare with evangelical

Christians generally, in those fruits and evidences of piety which have been mentioned, and consequently they are obliged to deny that these things are evidences of true religion at all.

Having considered "the insufficiency of some of the popular tests of true religion," our author "turns to the only true standard, the *Scriptures*." Here, he very properly introduces, as our pattern, the character and example of Christ. Jesus Christ, he says, though not "cold or stern," was seldom or never excited. His mind was always "sober, reasonable, and calm." It is "impossible to conceive of a modern revival, as passing in his presence, or under his preaching." In short, he was not distinguished for any of those things, on which many have so much insisted, as tests of true religion.

We might pertinently inquire, Where did this writer learn the character and example of Jesus Christ? For it is hard to conceive that he can have learned it from the New Testament. Let us look into the New Testament, and examine the subject for ourselves. Was not the character of our Saviour *serious*—deeply, habitually, consistently serious? Was it not marked also by strong and ardent *feeling*? Was he not deeply in earnest in his work, and were not his warmest feelings enlisted for its accomplishment? Was he not eminently a person of *prayer*? How often did he retire, by himself, or with his disciples, and not unfrequently he spent whole nights in prayer. Can it be doubted, too, that our Saviour was a strict observer of the *Sabbath*, and of the various services of the Jewish *ritual*? His custom was to go into the synagogue every Sabbath day. And in *exertions* and *sacrifices* for the promotion of religion, who ever equalled—we might almost say *imitated* him? He spent his life, and poured out his blood, to advance the cause of human salvation. And when about to ascend up where he was before, he left it in solemn injunction to his followers to go forth, in face of difficulties and dangers, and fill an opposing world with his doctrine.

We see, therefore, that those traits, which the writer of the tract deprecates, as not only no tests of true religion, but "things questionable in themselves," are the very traits which shone most conspicuously in the character of the Saviour. They are, as we may say, the *ground work* of his character. They are that which constitute it what it is, and without which it would be radically defective.

The mind of the Saviour we know was *calm*; that is, it was not fretted or ruffled. It was also *sober*, in opposition to extravagance. But is it true that he was never the subject of strong excitement? When he looked round on the multitude "with anger, being grieved"—when he made a scourge and purged the temple—when he denounced woes upon the Scribes and Pharisees—when he wept at the tomb of Lazarus, and over Jerusalem—



when, in the garden, he "offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears," and in numerous other instances, was he not, in the common use of the word, *excited*?

And why cannot our author conceive it possible that "one of the scenes of a modern revival should pass in the presence, and under the preaching of Jesus Christ"? What are the scenes of a modern revival? People interested and engaged on the subject of religion—flocking to hear the word of God—listening to it with the deepest attention—inquiring, with the awakened multitude on the day of Pentecost, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?"—and praying with the broken hearted publican, "God be merciful to me a sinner;"—why cannot our author conceive it possible that a scene such as this should "pass in the presence, and under the preaching of Jesus Christ"? Does he believe in his heart that Jesus Christ is displeased with such scenes? Does it displease him to see persons interested and engaged on the subject of religion? Does it displease him to see them thronging his courts, and listening to his Gospel, and weeping over their sins, and pleading for mercy? Was he displeased with the multitudes who attended on his personal ministry? Was he displeased with the penitent sinner, who "washed his feet with her tears, and wiped them with the hairs of her head"? Was he displeased with those, who confided in his power and grace, and cried to him for delivering mercy? Was he displeased with the revival scenes on the day of Pentecost? O it is wounding and sickening to deal with a writer such as this, in his opposition to revivals of religion! Why is he offended at such revivals? Is it because he cannot have them himself? But why is he unwilling that people should be interested and awakened under the preaching of others, if they cannot be under his own? Why unwilling that they should flock to hear others, who preach the truth as it is in Jesus, if he cannot persuade them to come and hear him? Why unwilling that God should pour out his Spirit, and bless his *own word*, to the conviction and conversion of immortal souls, while he leaves those, who dispense another gospel, and teach for doctrines the inventions of men, to labor in vain, and spend their strength for naught?—But we have done. Those who oppose the friends and promoters of revivals would do well to recollect the sage advice of an ancient Jewish counsellor: "Refrain from these men, and let them alone; for if this counsel or this work, be of men, it will come to naught: but if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it, lest haply ye be found even to fight against God."

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## WORKS ON THE GEOGRAPHY OF PALESTINE.

1. **OUTLINES OF SCRIPTURE GEOGRAPHY**, with an *Atlas*. By *J. E. Worcester*. Boston: Hilliard, Gray, Little, and Wilkins, and Bowles and Dearborn, 1828. pp. 44.
2. **A MAP OF PALESTINE**, for the use of *Sabbath Schools and Bible Classes*. Published by the Massachusetts Sabbath School Union.
3. **AN HISTORICAL MAP OF PALESTINE, OR THE HOLY LAND**: exhibiting a correct and masterly delineation of the peculiar geographical features of the country, and of all places therein; interspersed with more than two hundred *Vignettes and Emblems*, illustrative of interesting events recorded in the Bible, introduced topographically, from the best authorities. Originally delineated by *Mr. J. T. Assheton*, London. Now greatly improved, and furnished with a complete *Geographical Index*, shewing the situation, latitude, and longitude, of every place, and containing explanatory references to all the vignettes, emblems, &c.; a sketch of the history and present state of the country, and its principal districts and cities; a *Calendar of Palestine*, &c. &c. By *Joseph W. Ingraham*. Boston: T. B. Wait and Joseph W. Ingraham. 1828.

In addition to considerations which shew the importance of geographical knowledge generally, there are special reasons why the geography of Palestine should be made familiar to every Christian. This was the residence of the ancient covenant people of God, and the theatre on which he was pleased to make the most glorious displays of his power and mercy. Here stood his temple and his altar. Here dwelt the *Shekinah*—the visible token of his presence. Here prophets were commissioned and inspired, miracles were wrought, and the Deity condescended to hold intercourse with men. Here, too, the angels of light accomplished their benevolent ministry, not imperceptibly as at present, but often in a visible form. But especially is Palestine remarkable and interesting, as the spot selected by our Lord Jesus Christ on which to make his appearance in our flesh and world. Here it was his pleasure to be born, to live, to labor, and to die. These are the regions, over which his eye wandered and his feet travelled—this the consecrated soil, which was bedewed with his tears, and stained with his blood. Here, too, he burst the tomb, rose triumphant from the dead, and visibly ascended to the throne of his glory. In short, here the Holy Bible was written, and here most of the great events it records actually took place. No wonder, then, that Palestine is a most interesting spot to the Christian. It

is to him the holy land, where every brook, and lake, and hill, and dale, and city, and hamlet, are fitted to excite devout recollections, and stand associated in his mind with ancient and sacred things.

But there is another reason why the Christian should be familiar with the geography of Palestine. This will add materially to his satisfaction and profit, in perusing the sacred volume. No inquisitive person can read the names of places recorded in the Bible, without wishing to know something of their situation and history. Hence, to be put in possession of this knowledge will afford him a reasonable gratification. It will afford him also important religious instruction. It will help him, in numerous instances, to understand his Bible, where the sense, before, was dark and confused. Every one knows that without a knowledge of general geography, profane history cannot be understood; and equally true and obvious is it, that without a knowledge of sacred geography, the sacred history must be, to some extent, unintelligible. We read of places, and persons, and events, but often understand little more about them, than though the account was given in an unknown tongue.

Considering the great importance of biblical geography, it is wonderful that so little has been done, in years past, to advance and perfect this branch of science. Both teachers and learners have long complained, and long have had reason to complain, of the inaccurate delineations, and often contradictory statements, which have been given in regard to this interesting subject. "Of thirty maps and descriptions of the Holy Land which," says Fuller in his book of the Holy War, "I have perused, I never met with two in all considerables alike. Some sink vallies where others raise mountains; yea, end rivers where others begin them; and sometimes, with a wanton dash of the pen, create a stream in land, and a creek in sea, more than nature ever owned." "One map designates a place as in the north of Palestine, while another finds it in the south. On one, some places are laid down with two or three different names; on others, these names are applied to as many different places; and from the description of some of them in the Bible, it is certain that different places were intended by the different names. Again, two places are laid down in different parts of the map; but on referring to the Scripture description, it is found that but one place was intended, which was known by both names." How evident it is, from these statements, that much which we find on some of the common maps of Palestine is the result of mere *conjecture*, rather than of certain and accurate information.

We are happy in the confidence that the grounds of complaint, which have so long existed on this subject, are now materially lessened, if not in a good degree removed. The three works, whose titles stand at the head of this article, shew what has been done in

the department of sacred geography, within the last few months, in our own city. We shall give to our readers a short account of each, in the order in which their titles are arranged.

The first mentioned, is from the pen of the very diligent and successful geographer, Mr. J. E. Worcester. It is divided into eight chapters, with the following titles: "Geography of the early ages, with explanatory remarks;—the region between Egypt and Canaan, and journeyings of the Israelites;—the Canaanites and neighboring nations;—Canaan divided among the tribes of Israel, with places of note in the history of the Old Testament;—physical geography of the Holy Land, or a description of the country;—Palestine, in the time of the New Testament history;—Judæa, Jerusalem, and its environs;—Samaria, Galilee, and Peræa;—travels of St. Paul and the other apostles." Each chapter is attended by a list of questions, and the whole is followed by a "Table, exhibiting the places where, and the times when, the books of the New Testament were written." Accompanying the geography is a small but neatly executed Atlas, with six maps; the first, entitled "The World, exhibiting the countries mentioned in the Old Testament;" the second, "Journeyings of the Israelites from Egypt to Canaan;" the third, "Judah and Israel, with the divisions of the twelve tribes;" the fourth, "Palestine, or the Holy Land;" the fifth, "ancient Jerusalem, with its environs;" and the sixth, "a Map illustrative of the travels of St. Paul."

We think this a very neat and useful little work. It is small in compass, but full of instruction. "The plan of it is simple; easy both to the instructor and the pupil; and well adapted to elementary instruction in schools and families."

The work next to be noticed is "a Map of Palestine, for the use of Sabbath Schools and Bible Classes; published by the Massachusetts Sabbath School Union." It is a large lithographic print, thirty-eight inches in length, and twenty-nine in breadth, noting only the principal places, and presenting very distinctly their relative situation, as well as the ancient divisions of the country. It has some inaccuracies, but is on the whole, well fitted to answer the end for which it was designed—the benefit of Sabbath schools. As it is sold for the very moderate price of one dollar the copy, we should think it would be introduced, without delay, into the Sabbath school libraries throughout the country.

We have in a previous number noticed Mr. Ingraham's Map of Palestine, and briefly expressed an opinion as to its merits. And we are now willing to repeat, what, after more full examination we feel authorized to do with increased confidence, that it is in every respect, so far as we have been able to discover, a complete, and accurate, and elegant Map. "The length of the engraving is forty inches, and its breadth twenty-seven, exclusive of the margin of two inches on each side." The included surface is closely

occupied with a geographical delineation of the Holy Land, exhibiting its cities and towns, its plains and vallies, its natural and civil divisions, its mountains, lakes, coasts, and rivers. It contains also more than two hundred vignettes and emblems, illustrative of events recorded in the sacred history. These we regard as giving great interest and value to the work. "Thus, on the top of Pisgah is seen the image of Moses, beholding in vision the land of promise; and on the the summit of Mount Tabor, is presented a view of the transfiguration." The study of sacred geography is in this way united with that of sacred history. And the influence of each is to give interest to the other, and, by associating an event with the place of its occurrence, to impress the united object of the different studies more deeply upon the memory.

This Map is in many respects decidedly superior to the English copy, from which it was originally intended and promised to be drawn. It is superior even to the second and latest edition of the English copy, containing more than double the number of vignettes and emblems, several important corrections, and many additional names of towns. It is offered to the public with the highest recommendations, and for aught that appears, it well deserves them.

"To the English edition of the Map was added a sheet of miscellaneous and explanatory matter; but very imperfect as a guide, and very inferior, when considered in comparison with the Map itself, besides being in many respects inaccurate." In place of this, the American editor has given us his "Geographical Index," a pamphlet of ninety-six pages, containing much valuable information respecting Palestine, and forming a compendious gazetteer of the Bible.

We might proceed to much greater length, in describing and commending this valuable publication, but, after what has been said of it in various periodical works, we think it needless to add more. The whole bears ample testimony to the industry and accuracy of Mr. Ingraham, and entitles him to the consideration and patronage of an enlightened public.

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## SELECTIONS.

### KENRICK'S EXPOSITION OF THE HISTORICAL BOOKS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT.

As this work has been recently published, in three octavo volumes, in this city, the following account of it, and its author, from the *Eclectic Review* for April 1809, may be seasonable and useful. A few sentences are also inserted, in relation to Mr. Kenrick, from a Review of his Sermons in the *Eclectic* for June 1806.

Mr. Kenrick was born in Denbighshire, Jan. 26, 1759, and received a classical education in a private school at Wrexham. Discovering a predilection for the office of the Christian ministry among



the dissenters, he was in his sixteenth year sent to the academy at Daventry, then under the care of Dr. Ashworth, and afterwards of Mr. Robins. He there pursued his studies with exemplary diligence; so that, before he had completed his course, he was chosen assistant tutor to Mr. Robins, and afterwards sustained the same office under his successor, Mr. Belsham.

On the resignation of the venerable Micajah Towgood, in 1782, Mr. K. was invited to succeed him in the pastorship of a dissenting society at Exeter: he accepted the charge, but was not ordained till the year 1785. In addition to the pastoral office, he undertook, in 1799, the work of a tutor; and instituted a small seminary, principally with the view of providing a succession of dissenting ministers. In these employments he persevered with unremitting ardor till his death.

In the summer of 1804, having paid a visit to his friends in Denbighshire, he returned from a short excursion to Chester and Liverpool, on the 22d of August, to Wrexham. Walking out in the evening to the fields which surround the town, he was observed suddenly to fall: medical aid was instantly procured, but with no avail. It was supposed to have been an apoplectic seizure, that in the midst of health and vigor put a period to his laborious life.

Mr. Kenrick was educated in the belief of evangelical principles, which, however, he seems not to have understood. For his biographer, speaking of him at an early period, observes,

“It was then the practice of Mr. Kenrick to regard God as the arbitrary sovereign of the human race, and not as their gracious Father: he was then perplexed as to the proper object of his worship, and had a constant fear of incurring the displeasure of one of the three persons in the Trinity, by presenting his addresses to another of them. At a subsequent period, he frequently contrasted with gratitude the doubts and the despondency of his former days, with the serenity and joy arising from his belief in the pure religion of the Gospel.”

For a person, who held such unscriptural notions, to renounce them, and adopt those of Socinianism, was scarcely to be regarded as a change for the worse.

From the time of Mr. Kenrick's removal to Exeter, his Rosinanté carried him with accelerated speed, till he had reached the utmost bounds of the Socinian region, and was close to the low wall which separates it from the wilds of infidelity. With Dr. Priestley, his adventurous leader, he thought that at death he should take ‘a long nap,’ till the morning of the resurrection, and for perhaps some thousand years have no more existence than his grandmother's cat. Of what choice materials, what finer clay, must the soul of Mr. Kenrick or his biographer be made, (for that it *is* composed of clay is well known to ‘rational’ Christians,) so as to be filled, by such an opinion as this, ‘with serenity and joy!’ There is nothing in evangelical religion, rightly understood, which will envelope the soul in so deep a gloom: we say, rightly understood; for, whether it be owing to wilful misrepresentation or ignorance, the fact cer-

tainly is, that scarcely in twenty years do we meet with one Socinian writer who fairly states its doctrines, or appears to understand them.

Exposition of the sacred Scriptures formed part of Mr. K.'s professional services at Exeter; and the proverb *Tam pastor quam ovis*\* was again verified; for his hearers were so much pleased with his expository labors, that they sent a respectful request to his widow to allow them to be published at their expence.

Each discourse in the three volumes contains an illustration of ten or twelve verses, with a few reflections at the close. A specimen or two will give a sufficient idea of the book.

“Matthew xx. 28. *Even as the son of man came to give his life a ransom for many.*

“To this purpose I devote my time and attention, while I live, and for promoting the same grand and useful design I shall also die, laying down my life as a ransom or deliverance, i. e. the means of deliverance for many: for my death, by affording a clear proof of my divine mission, and preparing the way for my resurrection from the dead, and ascension into heaven, will furnish men with the most powerful means for delivering them from subjection to sin, now, and from the fatal consequences of it in another world.

“Matthew xxviii. 19. *Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.*

“That is, baptize them, upon the profession of that religion which came from the Father as its author, which was communicated to the world by Jesus Christ, and confirmed by the miraculous gifts of the holy spirit: by this commissison the apostles were authorized to admit proselytes from all nations, from Gentiles as well as Jews.

“Luke xxiii. 43. *And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, to-day thou shalt be with me in paradise.*

“In answer to the request of the penitent malefactor, Christ promises that he shall be in the same state with himself on that day. In order, therefore, to determine where this man was to be, we have only to consider where Christ was. Now it is evident from the history that Christ died on that day, and was laid in the grave; yet he lay there under the smiles of heaven, and with the certainty of a resurrection. The meaning of Christ then, as illustrated by fact, could be no more than that he should go to the state of the righteous dead, to pious men of former ages, where he should lie in the hope of a resurrection. Agreeably to this notion it has been observed, that according to the opinion of the Jews, paradise was that part of the habitation of the dead which was assigned to righteous and good men. This Jesus might well promise to him, because he discerned in him some promising dispositions, and was convinced, from what he now observed, and from the miraculous knowledge which he had of his character, that the conduct for which he was suffering was to be ascribed rather to the erroneousness of his principles than to the depravity of his heart.

\* Like shepherd, like flock.

“John iii. 3. *Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.*”

“Except a man part with his errors and prejudices, particularly that error which leads so many of the Jews to suppose that the kingdom is to be of a temporal nature, he is not qualified to become my disciple: to see the kingdom of God, is the same thing as being admitted into it.”

The following extract from one of Mr. Kenrick's sermons presents his meaning of the phrase, ‘remission of sins.’

“The Gentiles are called sinners, both by Christ, and his apostles. The Children of Israel were selected from the rest of mankind, to enjoy the benefit of a divine revelation, and many religious institutions, in consequence of which they are called a holy nation, and saints. The rest of mankind must of course be denominated unholy and sinners; and he who brought them out of that state, might very properly, in correspondence with the above language, be said to remove their sins, or procure the remission of them. Christ, therefore, who died to establish the truth of the new covenant, which introduced Gentiles, the many, or the great body of mankind, into the state of privilege that the Jews before occupied, says of himself, ‘that he shed his blood for many for the remission of sins.’ By this covenant every heathen, who believed and embraced the Gospel was entitled to the benefits of divine worship and religious instruction, and what was of principal value, to the hope of eternal life; which were great advantages for moral improvement though they did not absolutely secure it. The moral guilt which he had before contracted was still imputed to him, and his sins, if not repented of and forsaken, would prove his ruin. All that he had acquired by faith in Christ was, the privileges of a Christian, which were no more than what has been just stated.—In Acts xxvi. 18, we have Christ commenting upon his own words, and explaining what he means by remission of sins in our text; not deliverance from the penal effects of sin in a future world, not an immediate qualification for the happiness of heaven, as many suppose; but a lot among the covenanted and privileged people of God, the believing Jews and Gentiles, or as it is here expressed, ‘an inheritance among those which are sanctified.’ This is all that the remission of sins, which is the consequence of faith, will procure for men!!

“From what has been said, I conceive it appears, that the death of Christ has no efficacy in removing moral guilt, but that whenever it is spoken of as producing the forgiveness of sin, it relates entirely to restoration to a sanctified or privileged state, which in the language of both the Old and the New Testament, on many occasions, is expressed by the forgiveness of sins. From this subject we may learn what little ground they have for their confidence, who trust entirely for the removal of their past sins, and for final acceptance with God, to the death of Christ; and how little reason for their censure of others, who have not the same dependance. They trust to a ground of sanctification which had no relation but to the first professors of Christianity, except indeed to the case of the apostates,

and to them only in a ceremonial, not in a moral sense. The real ground of forgiveness to Christians, ancient or modern, is repentance for sin, and reformation of conduct: and of acceptance with God, personal righteousness of heart and life. So that all we have to depend upon, is the degree of virtue we have in ourselves, and the mercy of God, who is pleased in his great goodness to accept of imperfect obedience to his laws from his frail creatures, when a more perfect obedience was due."

To every mind which has derived its sentiments of religion from the pure doctrine of Jesus Christ, this extract cannot fail to convey instruction, and to serve as an antidote against Socinianism. For certainly, if a person were to sit down with the express design to to contrive how he could explain away to nothing the invaluable blessings of the Gospel, and bring it into contempt; and how he could most flatly contradict the sacred Scriptures, and set up a system in direct opposition to them, he would follow the very course which Mr. K. has chosen.

It has been said by the friends of Mr. Kenrick that "he *did think for himself.*" The reader of these volumes will not doubt the truth of their assertion. He did indeed think for himself, and would not allow even God to think for him: for he might safely have adopted as a motto, 'My ways are not thy ways, nor my thoughts as thy thoughts.'

From what has been said, it will be seen, that this is a Socinian commentary, written by a sensible and well informed man, the necessities of whose creed, however, suggest such laws of interpretation as, if applied to the classics, would render them utterly unintelligible. The examples surely require no other remark, than that if such principles be the real doctrines of the Bible, it is the most obscure and ill contrived book in the world; it is calculated to convey, in almost every page, erroneous notions, and has in fact conveyed them wherever it has been read: it must therefore forfeit all claims to divine origin, and be considered as the disgrace of even human literature.

We should add, that the work is destitute of any merits that could render it serviceable to those who are satisfied with the plain meaning of Scripture, and have no wish to see it perverted into some kind of conformity with the Socinian creed.

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#### SKETCH OF THE LIFE AND CONVERSION OF THE LATE DR. GOOD.

A volume has lately been published in England, entitled "Memoirs of the Life, Writings, and Character, literary, professional, and religious, of the late John Mason Good, M. D. F. R. S. F. R. S. L. &c. &c. By Olinthus Gregory, LL. D., Professor of Mathematics in the Royal Military Academy." From a Review of this volume in the Eclectic for June last, we extract the following sketch of the life and conversion of Dr. Good.

"DR. GOOD occupied a prominent place among his literary and professional compeers. His works (extending to two quarto and

many octavo volumes) are singularly laborious and diversified; comprising, Medical Literature, Poetical Translation, Natural History, and Biblical Criticism and Philology. His leading faculty was that of acquisition, which he possessed in a remarkable measure. His diligence was as extraordinary as were his versatility of talent and his powers of retention. His philological attainments, if not profound, were singularly extensive. The exuberant stores of his knowledge were methodized and connected together in his mind by principles of philosophical arrangement. The range of his acquisitions, and his readiness in applying them, might entitle him to the denomination of a living cyclopaedia.

“With the mathematical sciences he was almost entirely unacquainted; but, making this exception, there was scarcely a region of human knowledge which he had not entered, and but few indeed into which he had not made considerable advances; and wherever he found an entrance, there he retained a permanent possession; for, to the last, he never forgot what he once knew.

“In short, had he published nothing but his Translation of Lucretius, he would have acquired a high character for free, varied, and elegant versification, for exalted acquisitions as a philosopher and as a linguist, and for singular felicity in the choice and exhibition of materials in a rich store of critical and tasteful illustration. Had he published nothing but his Translation of the Book of Job, he would have obtained an eminent station among Hebrew scholars and the promoters of biblical criticism. And, had he published nothing but his Study of Medicine, his name would, in the opinion of one of his ablest professional correspondents, have gone down to posterity, associated with the science of medicine itself, as one of its most skilful practitioners, and one of its most learned promoters. I know not how to name another individual who has arrived at equal eminence in three such totally distinct departments of mental application. Let this be duly weighed in connexion with the marked inadequacy of his early education (notwithstanding its peculiar advantages in some respects) to form either a scientific and skilful medical practitioner, or an excellent scholar; and there cannot but result a high estimate of the original powers with which he was endowed, and of the inextinguishable ardor with which, through life, he augmented their energy, and enlarged their sphere of action.”

Dr. Good has left behind him, a Translation of the Book of Psalms, with a Dissertation and critical Notes, and also of the Book of Proverbs.

“On comparing the Dissertation and Notes which accompany this Translation of the Psalms, with those which are published with Dr. Good’s Translation of the Book of Job, we perceive a great difference, not in point of talent, but in reference to the simple exhibition of devout sentiment. In the former (the last mentioned,) there is much learning, much research, and some display; in the latter also, the learning and research are equally evident; but they are evinced in the *results*, not in the effort of the author, whose intellect seems absorbed, while his devotion is enkindled by the holy inspira-



tion of the sublime compositions to which his best feelings were so long enchained. Hence, I think that it will be found, that though the fancy has predominated in sketching the *history* of the several psalms, yet, with regard to fixing the precise meaning of the text, a more uniform sobriety of interpretation prevails, than in any of our author's previous attempts as a sacred commentator."

Up to the year 1807, Mr. Good was connected with a Socinian congregation; he was, moreover, an avowed materialist, and had adopted the notion of the 'Universalists' respecting future punishment. In that year, however, he gave the first decided proof of a growing dissatisfaction with the doctrines of scepticism, by breaking off his connexion with the society. The reason he assigns for this step, in a letter to the minister of the chapel, will shew that it was not taken upon slight grounds. It appears that the reverend apostle of disbelief had, on the preceding Sunday, asserted in the pulpit, that it is impossible to demonstrate the existence and attributes of God; or had at least treated the *a priori* demonstration of the Divine existence as unsatisfactory and 'exploded,' without putting his audience in possession of any better method of proof. The following is part of Mr. Good's letter.

"I sincerely respect your talents and the indefatigable attention you have paid to biblical and theological subjects; I have the fullest conviction of your sincerity and desire to promote what you believe to be the great cause of truth and Christianity; but I feel severely that our minds are not constituted alike; and being totally incapable of entering into that spirit of scepticism which you deem it your duty to inculcate from the pulpit, I should be guilty of hypocrisy, if I were any longer to countenance, by a personal attendance on your ministry, a system which (even admitting it to be right in itself) is at least repugnant to my own heart and my own understanding."

This decisive step naturally led to a re-examination of the principles and notions which Mr. Good had long held in common with the congregation from which he now seceded; and the result was, a gradual surrender of all the distinguishing tenets of the Socinian creed. Still, the change was, as yet, only a revolution in his speculative opinions; an important and genial change, inasmuch as it involved an escape from the entanglement and delusion of fatal error and sophistry, and the removal of the most serious intellectual obstructions to the moral influence of divine truth. But his understanding was entirely convinced, long before his heart was transformed. It was a considerable time, we are told, before his more correct opinions 'assumed the character of principles of action, and issued, by God's blessing, in the transformation of his heart and affections.' For several years, subsequently to this period, he devoted a great portion of his Sunday mornings and evenings to the prosecution of his biblical studies, to which he always discovered a strong attachment. From 1808 to the beginning of 1812, these leisure hours were occupied with his translation of the Book of Job, and the notes which are appended to it. Within the whole compass of these notes, says his biographer,

"I am not aware that there is a specific reference to the plan of

the Gospel as a restorative dispensation, in which, by the atoning efficacy of a Saviour's blood, sin may be pardoned, and, by the purifying energy of the Holy Spirit, man may be raised to the dignity from which he has fallen, and again shine in the image of God. He did not appear, therefore, as yet, to regard this as entirely essential to true religion; in other words, to consider the evangelical system as the only solid basis of a rational hope of eternal felicity and glory."

Still, it was manifest to those who were most in his company and confidence, that there was a progression of sentiment, which evinced itself in the growing thoughtfulness of his habits, his increased anxiety to cultivate the acquaintance of pious men, and a certain mellowing of his character. In the summer of 1815, Mr. Good first distinctly announced to his biographer, to whom he must have known how gratifying would be the communication, his cordial persuasion, that the evangelical representation of the doctrines of Scripture, is that which alone accords with the system of revealed truth.

"He said, he had greatly hesitated as to the correctness of a proposition I had advanced a few years before, that there was no intermediate ground upon which a sound reasoner could make a fair stand, between that of pure deism, and that of moderate orthodoxy, as held by the evangelical classes, both of churchmen and dissenters; but that he now regarded that proposition as correct. At the same time, he detailed several of the Socinian and Arian interpretations of passages usually brought forward in these disputes, and, with his accustomed frankness, explained how he had come, by degrees, to consider them all as unsatisfactory, and, for an accountable being, *unsafe*."

Of this gradual modification of his sentiments, and of the decision which they at length attained, the manuscript notes in his Bible, and his private papers, present the most interesting evidence. Domestic anxieties and trials, the threatening illness of his daughter, and the death, in 1823, of his accomplished and excellent son-in-law, Rev. Cornelius Neale, appear to have had the happiest influence in confirming him in Christian principles, and inducing a greater degree of spirituality of mind. For the last seven or eight years of his life, Dr. Good was a zealous and active supporter of Bible and Missionary societies. To the concerns of the Church Missionary Society, more especially, he devoted himself with the utmost activity and ardor, as an able member of its committee. And during the few years immediately preceding the close of his life, his occasional papers exhibit a rapid advancement in meetness of character for the heavenly inheritance. Of these, we have several very impressive specimens: we select the first as being of convenient length.

*'And Enoch walked with God.'* Gen. v. 24.

"This is the only walk in which we can never go astray; and happy he who, amidst the innumerable paths by which he is surrounded, is led to the proper walk. To walk with God, we must take heed to every step of his providence and his grace; we must

have a holy fear of not keeping close to him ; though he will never leave us, if we do not leave him. We must maintain a sacred communion with him, and have our conversation in heaven, rather than on earth ; we must be perpetually receding from the world, and withdrawing from its attachments. We must feel our hearts glow with a greater degree of love to him, and, by the influence of his Holy Spirit upon our affections, become gradually more assimilated to the Divine nature. We must take his word for our directory, his promises for our food, and his blessed Son for our sole reliance, making the foot of the cross our only resting place. If we thus walk with God through the wilderness of life, he will walk with us when we reach the dark 'valley of the shadow of death ;' and though we cannot hope for the same translation as Enoch, still, like him, 'we shall not be, because God hath taken us.'"

As a specimen at once of Dr. Good's poetical talents, and of his religious sentiments and feelings at this period, we insert the following stanzas, written apparently after hearing a sermon on John i. 1.

"O WORD ! O WISDOM ! heaven's high theme !  
Where must the theme begin ?—  
Maker and Sufferer !—Lord supreme !  
Yet sacrifice for sin !

Now, Reason ! trim thy brightest lamp,  
Thy boldest powers excite,  
Must'ring thy doubts, a copious camp,—  
And arm thee for the fight.

View nature through,—and from the round  
Of things to sense reveal'd,  
Contend 'tis thine alike to sound  
Th' abyss of things conceal'd.

Hold, and affirm, that God must heed  
The sinner's contrite sighs,  
Though never victim were to bleed,  
Or frankincense to rise.

Prove, by the plummet, rule, and line,  
By logic's nicest plan,  
That man could ne'er be half divine,  
Nor aught divine be man :

That He who holds the worlds in awe,  
Whose fiat form'd the sky,  
Could ne'er be subjugate to law,  
Nor breathe, and groan, and die.

This prove, till all the learn'd submit :  
Here learning I despise,  
Or only own what Holy Writ  
To heavenly minds supplies.

O Word ! O Wisdom !—boundless theme  
Of rapture and of grief !—  
Lord, I believe the truth supreme,  
O, help my unbelief."

From the beginning of 1822, Dr. Good's health began to decline ; and a severe fit of gout, which was brought on, in his own opinion, by too much mental excitement in completing his *Study of Medicine*, seems to have been regarded by himself as a providential

warning of his approaching end. In a letter to his friend Dr. Drake, dated Dec. 11, 1824, after expressing his gratification that his correspondent should have thought so highly of his work, he adds:

“But I know the danger of even honorable reputation, and I fear the Circean cup. The richest pearl in the Christian’s crown of graces, is humility; and when I look back upon myself, and examine my own heart, and see how little progress I have made in that which it most imports us to study, I am sure there is no man breathing who has more cause, not only for humility, but for abasement, than myself: for how often have I neglected the cistern for the stream, and have been pursuing a bubble, instead of giving up all my feeble powers and possessions in purchase of ‘the pearl of great price.’ What a mercy not to have been allowed to persevere in that neglect!”

During the last three months of his life, his strength declined rapidly, exciting much solicitude in the minds of his family, but no alarm of immediate danger. His last illness was short, but exceedingly severe. From the 24th to the 28th of Dec. (1826,) he continued, with daily increasing difficulty, to be moved from his bed to a sofa; but, although he suffered much from the nature of his disorder, it was not till the 29th, that his life was supposed to be in danger. On the day following, his friend, the Rev. Mr. Russel, was sent for; and to him, in the presence of his assembled family, Dr Good thus delivered his solemn confession and testimony to the truth.

“I cannot say, I feel those triumphs which some Christians have experienced; but I have taken, what unfortunately the generality of Christians too much take,—I have taken the middle walk of Christianity. I have endeavored to live up to its duties and doctrines, but have lived below its privileges. I most firmly believe all the doctrines of Scripture, as declared by our church. I have endeavored to take God for my Father and my Savior; but I want more spirituality, more humility; I want to be humbled.”—Here he became much agitated, yet went on:—“I have resigned myself to the will of God. If I know myself, I neither despair nor presume; but my constitution is by nature sanguine in all things, so that I am afraid of trusting to myself.” Some remarks being made about the righteousness of Christ, Dr. Good replied: “No man living can be more sensible than I am, that there is nothing in ourselves; and of the absolute necessity of relying only upon the merits of Jesus Christ. I know there is a sense in which that expression of St. Paul’s, *Of whom I am chief*, is applicable to all; but there are some to whom it is peculiarly appropriate, and I fear I am one. I have not improved the opportunities given me. I have had large opportunities given me, and I have not improved them as I might. I have been led astray by the vanity of human learning and the love of human applause.”

On Monday, the 2d of January, his hearing had become greatly affected, and he was almost constantly convulsed. He uttered only one or two connected sentences.

“Mr. Russel called to him in a loud voice, ‘Jesus Christ, the Saviour:’—he was not insensible to *that* sound. His valued clerical friend then repeated to him in the same elevated tone, ‘Behold the Lamb of God:’ this roused him, and with energy, the energy of a dying believer, he terminated the sentence, ‘Which taketh away the sins of the world;’ which were the last words he intelligibly uttered, being about three hours before his death.”

When Dr. Good’s former Unitarian views are remembered, this touching account of his last moments will appear the more satisfactory and instructive. It serves, we think, to illustrate the remark that, in the case of the philosophic unbeliever, repentance will ordinarily be the result of faith, rather than conduct to it. It supplies us, too, with a striking proof of the vast importance of a mere change of opinion from false to true, in the matter of religion,—a simple rectification of the views, (although very far from answering to the Scriptural idea of conversion,) inasmuch as it involves the removal of a fatal barrier to the influence of truth upon the conscience and the heart. Because a change of opinions does not always issue in a change of character, some persons have, we think, underrated the value of the intellectual revolution. Neither Dr. Good himself nor his friends, ever confounded his embracing Orthodox opinions with that subsequent and essential change, the precise epoch of which was never known, we are told, even to his nearest relatives. “But its *reality* was indisputable; and they who had the most frequent opportunities of noticing it, deemed it another proof of that striking ‘diversity of operations’ with which the same Spirit worketh in all.”

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#### NOTICES OF RECENT PUBLICATIONS.

1. *Thoughts on Revivals.* By Rev. B. B. Smith, Rector of St. Stephen’s Church, Middlebury, Vt. Middlebury, 1828. pp. 23.

This little work, though unassuming in title and pretensions, is yet a very candid, temperate, judicious and able discussion of a most important subject. The author begins with defining a revival of religion.

“All experimental believers essentially agree in the opinion that a great—nay, an *entire* moral change must take place in the heart of every child of Adam before he can become a real Christian. This change, wrought through the word of God as the instrument, and by the Holy Ghost as the divine agent, is called *conversion*. The circumstances under which this effectual moral revolution is brought about, are admitted to be very various. In most cases, at least in ages past, this change has been comparatively solitary, silent, and as far as man could judge, progressive. But it is equally plain, that the change may be, as in many cases both in ancient and modern time it has most indisputably been, sudden, powerful, public, and in many persons nearly at the same time. This multiplication of individual conversions, is what, in correctness of speech and Christian charity, should be understood by REVIVALS OF RELIGION.

“By the foregoing definition, a broad distinction is intentionally taken between the real conversions which constitute revivals of religion, and the meetings, visits, conversations, sermons, and prayers which are connected with them. Many of these meetings may really be out of season, artificially contrived, and



imprudently conducted; visits may be unadvised or intrusive; conversations unguarded, impertinent, cruel; sermons too declamatory, exciting, passionate; prayers boisterous, irreverent, familiar;—in a word, a scene called a *revival*, may be very unworthy the name; and the scene even of A REAL REVIVAL may be marred and stained with many very deplorable instances of human frailty and passion."

To revivals, thus defined and distinguished from accompanying abuses, Mr. S. observes that he is aware of but one objection. It has been urged "that God, who abounds in mercy and loving kindness, is most kindly disposed, at all times, and in all places, to bestow his Holy Spirit on those who ask it—that he is no respecter of persons, but vouchsafes his grace to all alike, who need and seek his favor—and that his gracious presence fills alike all places, and the hearts of all who humbly wait on him." It is hence inferred, that "his *peculiar* presence cannot possibly be afforded to particular places or congregations." To this, it is justly replied, in the first place, that if the argument prove anything, it proves vastly too much; and, secondly, that it is refuted by innumerable *facts*; it being undeniably evident, "from Scripture, from history, and from living testimony, that the impartial grace of God is perfectly consistent with seasons of special religious seriousness, and frequent genuine conversions."

Having thus disposed of the objection, Mr. S. admits, that there may be, and have been, abuses and evils connected with revivals of religion—abuses and evils which he has no wish to conceal, and no disposition to palliate. But he insists, "All the evils of revivals are the faults of man. Their *benefits* are from God." These benefits he proceeds to enumerate; and, though the extract be somewhat long, our readers shall have his account of them in his own words.

"1. The very excitement attending revivals, serves to awaken attention to the most important, yet still the most forgotten and neglected of all subjects. Often it seems as if nothing else could break the fatal slumber, deeper and more awful than that of the dead, into which a formal, ill instructed, or irreligious community has fallen. By nothing less pungent than the most arousing sermons, prompted and pointed by the zeal of a revival, can stupified and hardened consciences be effectually awakened; and *never*, under the wisest and most powerful, even of this description of preaching, without the special and more abundant measure of divine grace then vouchsafed in answer to more fervent prayer. A season of revival seems to give a keener edge to 'the sword of the Spirit,' which is the word of God; so that the more desperately depraved are seldom awakened, except in times of special revivals.

"2. They certainly are instrumental, also, in enkindling the languid zeal of many of the children of God, cooled nearly to extinction by long years of comparative indifference and declension. They arouse them to their duties—constrain them to be fervent in prayer—more watchful over their hearts, and more anxious in the use of the appointed means of grace. They define and deepen the line of separation between the votaries of the world and the real children of God; and are often the means of establishing in private Christians for life, a staid and uniform character of exemplary piety. They are equally beneficial to the clergy—serving, in the most vivid manner to impress upon them the momentous nature of their exalted duties—the value and the danger of immortal souls—and the awful responsibility of their office—affording them the very best and most desirable opportunities of enforcing the efficacious doctrines of the cross—of conversing with individual members of their flocks, and pressing home the great duties of religion, and serving to cherish and confirm in them

that more exalted frame and habit of devotion, which is at once the highest ornament and richest reward of their profession.

"3. By the best and fairest rules of forming opinions on such subjects, revivals do most certainly promote the immediate local interests of religion. They certainly do swell, in a very remarkable manner, the items usually returned in reports on the state of the church. They multiply attendants on divine worship—fill the house of God—swell the number of communicants, and increase the pecuniary resources of religious institutions; and are often the means of procuring the permanent settlement of faithful ministers—of the building or enlargement of churches, and of adding to the external prosperity and strength of religious societies.

" Besides these immediate and local benefits of revivals, there are others of a more general, and even more momentous nature, not at all to be estimated by the mere amount of immediate good to the congregation particularly concerned. And, as the world is ransacked, to find out everything which revivals have touched and tainted with the malignant shades of their influence, so it is but fair that the incidental and collateral benefits of revivals should be as fully recounted.

" 1. They may justly be regarded as the nurseries of the church, furnishing an extraordinary proportion of ministers to the sanctuary, and maturing them in a remarkable manner for the faithful discharge of their important duties. In these latter days, the preposterous wickedness of training young persons for holy orders, in the same manner they are educated for the learned professions, is suitably abhorred, at least in countries where unendowed churches can present small inducement for the high offence. An infinitely more effectual method has been provided through the guardian care of the Great Head of the church, by arresting the attention of young men, in our colleges and seminaries of learning, or previous to their settling in any of the ordinary pursuits of life; and disposing them to consecrate their earliest and best powers to the sacred work of the ministry—constraining them by the exceeding love of Christ, to labor more abundantly than others, in word and doctrine. Of the beneficiaries of education societies, a surprising portion were early subjects of revivals of religion. And, certainly, many of our most influential and valuable clergymen, and not a few of our noble band of missionaries, have entered on their voluntary career of toil and suffering, under the sustained and glowing ardor of a season of revival. They needed and they received, for the arduous duties they undertook, the more powerful influence of holy zeal which is seldom imparted, except on such favored seasons.

" 2. This train of reflection naturally leads on the mind to the undoubted and blessed fact, that, since the more general and extensive revival of pure religion, the spirit of benevolence has been excited, which is carrying into triumphant operation the numerous Christian and charitable institutions which illustrate and exalt the present age. True, by the wise and gracious provision of the Author of all good, these holy institutions are alternately cause and effect. Revivals furnished the zealous agents by whom they were first put into operation; and Sunday Schools, Bible Classes, the distribution of the Holy Scriptures and of religious tracts, together with the labors of Missionaries—the influence of missionary and charitable celebrations, and especially the superior zeal and faithfulness of clergymen blessed with a missionary spirit, have spread very widely abroad those benign and awakening influences, by virtue of which, under the favoring dews of heavenly grace, such blessed multitudes have been added to the number of God's faithful people. These, in their turn, devote their newly inspired energies and zeal to the improvement and growth of the fostering institutions from which they first derived the light of life. Thus that blessed system has been matured and is still sustained, which has already renewed the face of Christendom, and transformed full many a desert into the garden of the Lord. Thus—and thus *only* can the missionary enterprise and the Bible cause be sustained and carried triumphantly onward, until the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ.

" 3. But the last benefit of revivals which shall be mentioned, far exceeds in weight and prominence, any that have hitherto been enumerated. They prove of the most vital and lasting importance to the church, by bringing forth the real fundamental doctrines of the Gospel in the boldest relief. They furnish a

sort of infallible test of every prevailing style of preaching; and become a practical commentary, known and read of all men, of the utter fallacy and fatuity of any preaching but the preaching of the cross. *It needeth not that any man should denounce unfaithful stewards*—a pure revival of religion instantly puts a brand upon their foreheads. Universalism, Formalism, Pelagianism, Unitarianism, stand forth, touched by this ithurial spear, in naked contrariety to the word and the Spirit of God. By the common sentiment of all experimental Christians, it is admitted, with a force of conviction utterly irresistible, that controversy, abstruse metaphysical niceties, and cold moral discourses, ought forever to be excluded from Christian pulpits; and Christ and his cross alone, faithfully preached—at once the wisdom and the power of God. This strong, spontaneous sentiment, is well grounded: for the *word* of God is the appointed instrument in the conversion of sinners. By whatever apparent means the conscience is first touched, still the *word* of God is the victorious sword of the Spirit. And no other instrument does he ever employ in the conversion of souls. Of course it is the *pure* word, which is thus honored. Not that word adulterated or perverted by human systems—not that word diluted, misapplied, annulled! But the *pure* word of God—the simple, genuine Gospel of Jesus Christ.

“Truly converted, experimental clergymen, when their zeal keeps them near a throne of grace, strongly feel this, as a kind of instinct of their new nature. And they preach the doctrines of grace with unction and love, because they are written on their hearts. But were it otherwise, their zeal would lead them to *try* various methods—all possible methods to touch, convince, and awaken unconverted souls. Thus experience would soon teach them that the doctrines of the Reformation—of man's utterly lost and sinful nature—of the exceeding aggravations of his actual offences—of his need of an entire moral transformation by the Holy Ghost—of the blessed atoning efficacy of the blood of Christ—of salvation by faith alone in the merits of his death, and of new obedience under the influence of faith and love, implanted and kept alive in renewed hearts by the Holy Ghost, are the only life-giving doctrines of the divine word. Without the preaching of these, no single soul of man can ever be awakened from spiritual death, and be made partaker of eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.”

On the subject of *means* to be employed for promoting a revival of religion, our author has the following excellent observations:

“The best means of promoting genuine piety in seasons of the strongest religious excitement, cannot be by devising new and strange methods of deepening human sympathies; but by using the *ordinary* means of grace with *extraordinary* diligence and faithfulness. Instead of devising new seasons of uncommon sacredness, the ordinances and sacraments appointed by Christ himself should studiously be exalted as highest in rank, and unrivalled in sanctity and interest: instead of striking out strange, preposterous, and extravagant doctrines—doctrines of revivals—of full assurance—of absolute perfection—of the prayer of faith, or whatever else might caricature or subvert the unsophisticated truth of God, the great cardinal doctrines of the Reformation should be preached with peculiar prominence, force, and feeling. Instead of numberless meetings, divided into endless variety of classes, and held at unseasonable hours, let the services of the sanctuary be exalted above all others; and let the necessary prayer meetings of the week be conducted with the same decorum and solemnity as the regular Lord's day exercises. In a word, if by the real and genuine operations of the Holy Ghost, a deeper tide of religious feeling has been set in motion, let it be the aim and effort of God's ministers and people, to turn it into scriptural channels, and wise and salutary directions. Let the serious attention He hath awakened be directed to revealed truth—to revealed duties;—let it be turned to Christ, and the glory of his pure unadulterated Gospel.

“Human fancies and dogmas, at such a season, can make a great noise, and do a vast deal of mischief. The truth of God alone can deepen conviction till it becomes true repentance; can touch the heart till it is formed anew; can exalt Christ till he is loved supremely; can elevate the sacraments till they are received reverently; can enforce the whole of experimental and practical

piety, until the apparent subjects of revivals shall become the followers of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."

The *duty* of Christians in regard to revivals of religion is, in conclusion, thus forcibly urged :

"It is the indispensable duty of the friends and ministers of the Lord Jesus Christ, to summon every energy, and strain every nerve, to promote the spirit, and increase the influence of *genuine revivals*.—How else can the end of their ministry be answered towards the church of Christ, which is his affianced spouse? How can they rest satisfied, even though the most abundant success in other respects attends their labor, unless all, *literally every one* of their hearers, are converted to the living God, and saved through Christ forever? Without the more general prevalence of revivals, how is the church in this growing country to be supplied with ministers—our benevolent societies with proper agents—our missionary stations with suitable laborers—and the treasury of the Lord, with resources for every good work? As far as the indications of Providence unfold the future purposes of God in connexion with the sure word of prophecy; it would seem that the effectual triumph of real religion in countries called Christian—the subversion of the Roman and Mahomedan powers—the universal dissemination of the word of God—the success of the missionary enterprise, and the consequent conversion of millions of idolaters, can only be accomplished by that more powerful, more sudden, more simultaneous, more triumphant effect of the word preached in the conversion of vast multitudes in what may truly be called *revivals of religion*:—whose happy subjects shall be endued with power from on high, to devise, sustain, and carry on the stupendous work of God, in giving to his Son the kingdoms of the earth to be His forever?"

It is believed the extracts here given fully justify the opinion, expressed in our first sentence, relative to the merits of this little work. With some slight improvements in point of style, giving it additional simplicity and directness, we wish it might be printed as a tract, and generally circulated. And we wish—O we *do* wish, that the spirit it breathes, and the views it inculcates, might *pervade* that respectable denomination of Christians, of which Mr. Smith is a member and an ornament. Could the whole Episcopal church be visited with a general revival of religion, in the sense here defined, it would confer upon her an unction and a glory, without which the most excellent formularies of faith and worship are little better than a shadow.

2. *A Sermon on the Prominent Trait in Teachers of False Religion.* By Joseph I Foot, Pastor of the first Church in Brookfield. Brookfield: E. & G. Merriam, 1828. pp. 16.

"There seems to be one point," says Mr. Foot, using the language of his text, "in which teachers of false religion are alike. 'They say unto them that despise the Lord, ye shall have peace; and they say unto every one that walketh after the imagination of his own heart, No evil shall come upon you.'—The text, therefore, suggests, that *to diminish in sinners the fear of Divine displeasure, and to remove the expectation of future misery, is a prominent trait in the character of teachers of false religion.*"

This proposition is supported "by considering, first, the influence which the station of religious teachers exerts on their minds;" secondly, "that the Scriptures never blame false teachers for exaggerating the claims of the Divine law, or the consequences of

violating it;" and, thirdly, "the descriptions which Jehovah has given of teachers of false religion." These topics are ingeniously illustrated, and made to bear on the very striking truth which lies at the foundation of the discourse.

There can be no doubt that Mr. F. has here hit upon "the prominent trait in teachers of false religion." They invert the solemn declaration of the Saviour, and virtually say to their deluded hearers, "There is no need of striving, in order to enter heaven's gate; for *wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth unto life, and many there be which go in thereat.* Nor is there the least need of caution, in order to escape the path to hell; because *strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth down thither, and few (if any) there be that find it.*" From the earliest times down to the present, false teachers have been engaged in allaying the fears of erring mortals, and quieting their guilty souls. They have been granting "indulgence to the corrupt tendencies of the human heart, and laboring to remove the anticipations of future misery. They have ever said to bold transgressors, 'The Lord hath said, ye shall have peace; and to those who walk after the imagination of their own hearts, No evil shall come upon you.'"

We think the subject of this discourse one of great interest; and while we tender to Mr. F. our sincere thanks for the manner in which he has brought it before the public, we must be allowed to say that, in our judgement, it deserves a more extended and elaborate discussion. We hope he, or some one else, may be induced to resume it, and pursue it with so much particularity and point, as to set a *mark* upon every false teacher throughout the land—that all, whose endeavor it is "diminish in sinners the fear of divine displeasure, and to remove the expectation of future misery," may be known and shunned, as the allies of those in former times who prophesied *peace when there was no peace*—as the followers of him who declared to our too credulous mother, 'Thou shalt not surely die.'

3. *A Grammar of the Hebrew Language.* By Moses Stuart, Associate Professor of Sacred Literature in the Theological Institution at Andover. Third Edition. Codman Press, Andover: Flagg and Gould, 1828. pp. 240.

This new edition of Professor Stuart's Grammar "has undergone numerous alterations, both in respect to matter and manner. The great features of the work remain substantially the same; but in the arrangement and minute specifications, many variations from the preceding editions may be found. Nearly the whole of it," the author assures us, "has been written entirely over, and some of it three, four, and a small part of it even seven and eight times."—It will be seen, by the number of pages, that the size of it is much diminished. This compression has been effected, in considerable part, by omitting "the Historical Sketch of the Hebrew language, which is prefixed to the former editions, and also the Praxis at the end." These omissions will be acquiesced in, when it is known, that the Hebrew Chrestomathy, now in a course of publication,



" will contain not only all that is valuable in the Praxis, but much more of a similar nature, and more complete in its kind ;" and that the learned author is hoping " at some future day, not far distant, to publish a history of the Hebrew language, in a form more enlarged, and better adapted to the present state of Oriental knowledge, and to the wants of students, than that contained in the former editions of his Grammar."

We think the size of this Grammar as much diminished now, as it well can be, without reducing it to a bare skeleton ; and against such a reduction of it, the following very satisfactory reasons are assigned :

" Experienced teachers, who have a thorough knowledge of the Hebrew, and who wish to communicate a radical knowledge of it to their pupils, will never employ a *skeleton* grammar. The testimony of such scholars as J. D. Michaelis, Vater, Gesenius, Hoffmann, and many others, against this practice, is sufficient to render it very doubtful ; and the nature of the case decides altogether against it. Whoever uses a skeleton grammar merely, must either remain ignorant of more than one half of the grammatical phenomena of a language, or he must consume his time in filling up, by means of his teacher or of other grammars, the skeleton which he uses. How much loss of time, and how much perplexity and discouragement, this would occasion, it is not difficult to foresee.

The typography of this work, and the mechanical execution generally, are excellent. " The labor of correcting the press," says the author, " has been nearly equal to that of preparing for it." In beautiful and accurate Hebrew printing, we doubt whether the Codman press at Andover is now exceeded by any in the world.

4. *The American Reader : Containing extracts suited to excite a love of Science and Literature, to refine the taste, and to improve the moral character. Designed for the use of Schools.* Brookfield : E. and G. Merriam. Boston : Peirce and Williams.

While in literary merit, this compilation is not inferior to most of its competitors, in point of moral and religious sentiment, it is in our judgement, *superior* to any recent similar publication which we have seen. More than half the selections are from American authors, many of them now living. The work is not, to be sure, of a sectarian character—that is, it is not designed or adapted to gratify exclusively any particular religious sect ; and yet the names of Dwight, and Griffin, and Humphrey, and Wayland, and Beecher, and Wilcox, and Fitch, and Hawes, and many others of similar character, on both sides of the Atlantic, from whom selections are made, afford sufficient security that the book contains nothing which a Christian teacher might not write, or which a Christian parent would be unwilling his children should read. We recommend the work to the early consideration of School Committees, and hope it may be extensively circulated.

5. *A Discourse concerning Meekness.* By Matthew Henry. Second American Edition. Plymouth, 1828. pp. 144.

This Discourse was first published just one hundred and thirty years ago ; and is now printed, for aught we know, for the hundredth

time. But of this we are confident—it has not been printed more frequently, or read more extensively, than it deserves. Its circulation, in the present state of excited feeling on the subject of religion, will be highly seasonable, and cannot fail to be useful.

6. *Lives of the twelve Apostles, with explanatory Notes.* By F. W. P. Greenwood, Junior Minister of King's Chapel, Boston. Boston: Hilliard, Gray, Little and Wilkins. 1828. pp. 148.

In reading this little volume, we were disappointed in two respects,—its style of composition, and its religious character. The composition of the volume did not afford the interest we expected; its negative character, as to religious sentiment and application, was not what we anticipated.

Our disappointment in the first particular, however, was chargeable upon the reader rather than the writer. We are aware, that from what we had heard of the author and his book, we sat down to the perusal of it with expectations unduly raised. We were disappointed. With an appetite set for honey, even sweet things were hardly acceptable to the taste. Our disappointment led us to read the book again; and in doing it we met a contrary disappointment, equal to the first. And we now express our sentiment when we say, that without the splendid and the imposing, which we expected, there is a simplicity, which wants not some of the finest touches of the beautiful. The style of composition is very happily adapted to the subject. It is biographical narrative. And the narration is enriched and rendered attractive by not a few choice specimens of taste and ease in writing. In specifying, for example, reasons why the Saviour should have a select company of personal attendants, the writer says;

“The twelve were brought into a close personal intimacy with the Saviour in order that they might study his example, borrow his spirit, and so receive the image of his life that they might reflect it in their own.—Like those flowers which are known to drink in the light of the sun while he remains above the horizon, and then give it out in mild flashes when the evening shades come on, so the disciples, while their Master sojourned with them, while the sun of righteousness shone upon them, absorbed the beaming excellence of his character, and then, when he left the earth, emitted it partially again amidst the moral darkness which surrounded them.”

We may add indeed, that this little volume, considered simply as a collection of biographical sketches, is an interesting and finely finished production.

We suppose, nevertheless, that a cold-blooded critic, in his punctilios of sensibility, might occasionally see cause at least to raise a question. In contemplating the change, which came over the fortunes of the fishermen of Galilee, when they were made apostles of Jesus Christ, our author seems a little inclined to indulge in the romantic. But when he does it, and when speaking of the disciples he refers us to “their native lake,” we hardly suppose he meant to imply that they were aquatic animals, or that they were any other than the illiterate, honest hearted men, he had been speaking of before.

We have now to speak of the second respect in which we were disappointed, and in which our disappointment was not at all diminished by a second perusal of the book. We did not expect a volume, on such a subject, so almost entirely negative as to religious sentiment and application. We did not expect this, even from a Unitarian. We did suppose that the day when Unitarianism was to be propagated by mere negatives, had gone by. Yet, the volume before us is, in this respect, what it might have been, had it been written twenty years ago,—when the plan of operation was to displace truth, not by attack and refutation, but by passing it untouched, and by silently presenting other things to take its place.

We noticed, indeed, in our author's introduction, that he speaks of Christ as "that holy prophet of God, for whom we feel a reverence only inferior to that which we entertain toward Him who sent him;"—forgetting, we suppose, the divine requisition 'that all men should honor the Son, even as they honor the Father.' We noticed also this reason, among others, why Christ should have bosom companions—"the qualification which it conferred on them for recording his deeds and words, and preserving to posterity the invaluable memorial;"—never once intimating that inspiration did, or could, qualify them for so important a service; or that without inspiration, however intimate their acquaintance with the Saviour, they would be in any degree unqualified for it. Indeed, we are told, "it was from having witnessed his miracles, from having been instructed in his religion, and been made intimately acquainted with his character, that the chosen companions of Jesus *were qualified in the best manner* to transmit to the latest ages, an indubitable standard of Christian truth." Really, if we might be allowed an apostrophe, we would exclaim, O Inspiration, stand by and stand back! A man might be full of the Holy Ghost, and yet, in comparison, be poorly qualified to give the world "an indubitable standard of Christian truth."

With the exception of a few expressions of this sort, the Unitarianism of the book before us is concealed beneath the attractions of elegant simplicity and taste; and thus it comes to us recommended by its dress and equipage, rather than by its own features. Its own true form is kept away in dusky vision, where light and shade commingle in a thousand images of imaginary beauty. Or if, perchance, some hapless touch brings it more prominently up, the elusive shape soon steals away, so that we see not what we seem to see, like one looking for a meteor, in its track of

"Shade unperceived, and softening into shade."

As we were disappointed in the negative aspect of the book as to sentiment, so were we at the almost entire absence of practical application to the heart and conscience. Where, we must be allowed to ask—where shall a man, and especially a man claiming to be a minister of the Gospel, find that which will lead him to address the hearts and consciences of those to whom he preaches and for whom he writes, if not in the lives of the apostles of Jesus Christ? Yet the writer can hold them up before us, and make us see how sublimely they "teach, and dare, and suffer, and do, and die," without

one thrilling appeal to our hearts, or one attempt to make us feel that we must soon stand, with consciences keenly alive, before the judgement seat of Christ. And it remains to be seen, whether a Unitarian may not write the history even of Christ himself, without being reminded by it that men have consciences, and are hastening on to the judgement of God.

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## MISCELLANEOUS DEPARTMENT.

### FIRST REVIVAL OF RELIGION IN BOSTON.

In the year 1633, the third after the settlement, what is now the city of Boston, was favored with a season of special attention and interest on the subject of religion. It immediately followed the coming of the celebrated Mr. Cotton, and the commencement of his labors here. The account of it is thus given by Winthrop and Hubbard:

"It pleased the Lord to give special testimony of his presence in the church of Boston, after Mr. Cotton was called to office there. More were converted, and added to that church, than to all the other churches in the bay.\* Divers profane and notorious evil persons came and confessed their sins, and were comfortably received into the bosom of the church. An eminent spirit of grace was poured into the lips of that famous preacher, and other eminent gifts did abound in private brethren of that church, which forwarded the edification and salvation of others. Also the Lord pleased greatly to bless the practice of *discipline*, wherein he gave the pastor, Mr. Wilson, and Mr. Leveret, an elder, a singular gift, to the great benefit of the church."

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### COTTON MATHER A DISTRIBUTOR OF TRACTS.

The name of *Cotton Mather* is known, wherever the history of New England is read. Many particulars respecting the Fathers of the country have been preserved from oblivion in his pages. And though it were greatly to be wished that dates and notices had been better regarded by him, and that he had been a more philosophic and statistic historian, admitting fewer speculations, and listening to fewer narratives of doubtful faith; and though his method of life may seem too artificial, and his rules of employment too embarrassing—yet no one who makes himself acquainted with his labors and example can, if truly ingenuous, fail to look on them with admiration. He was a great reader and a good scholar, a pious, devoted minister of CHRIST, loving his Master and his work, and a sincere friend to his country, exerting himself industriously and to the utmost in *doing good*. This character is duly appreciated at the present day, on both sides of the Atlantic. Nor is it practicable to ascertain how instrumental he was in bringing forward what we, too fondly perhaps, affect to call "the age of benevolence." At least, beside some account of his literary apparatus, the following extract from a manuscript of his, addressed to his son, will

\* It appears from the records that *thirty-seven* were added to the church in the space of three months—a great number truly, considering the population, and infancy of the settlement.

show us that the distribution of religious tracts is no novelty. He lived between 1663 and 1723.

"I had, from my childhood, employed at least a tenth of what money I got, in pious uses, and now I had a considerable quantity of money coming in, I employed much more than a tenth in such uses. My Son, do you always devote a tenth of your gains unto the special service of our great Melchisedeck, the Lord JESUS CHRIST, I earnestly exhort you, and advise you: and you shall be no loser by it, I assure you.

"But what I have here to note, is, that one of the first contrivances for the glorifying of the Lord, which I recorded, was, *to spend much in buying of good books to give away.*

"How many hundreds, yea, how many thousands of good books I have thus given away, I cannot reckon. I suppose I have given away near a *thousand* in one year.

"But I will observe two things unto you, my son, upon it.

"One observable is this. While I gave away *small books* unto others, God gave *great books* unto me. I mean that I had a secret and a wondrous blessing of God upon my Library. A good library was a thing I much desired and valued; and by the surprising providence of God, it came to pass, that my library, without my pillaging of your grandfather's, did, by cheap and strange accessions, grow to have, I know not how many more than *thirty hundred* books in it: and I lived so near your grandfather's, that *his*, which was not much less than mine, was also in a manner *mine*. This was much for a *Non-Conformist* minister.

"Another observable is this. While I was giving away good books written by other men, I had all along a secret persuasion that a time would come, when I should have many books written by myself, likewise to give away. And I have lived since to see this persuasion most remarkably accomplished. \* \* \* \* \* All I will say is, that no *Non-Conformist* minister now surviving in the nation hath had so many."

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DR. VANDERKEMP.

The following extract from a narrative of the religious exercises of the late Dr. Vanderkemp, missionary to South Africa, written by himself, shews the inefficacy of mere *suffering*, to melt the natural heart, and lead the hardened sinner to repentance.

"You desire to have an account of some particulars respecting the conversion of my soul to Christ.

"Christianity, to me, once appeared inconsistent with the dictates of reason—the Bible, a collection of incoherent opinions, tales, and prejudices. As to the person of Christ, I looked at first upon him as a man of sense and learning, but who, by his opposition to the established ecclesiastical and political maxims of the Jews, became the object of their hate, and the victim of his own system. I often celebrated the memory of his death, by partaking of the Lord's supper; but some time after, reflecting that he termed himself the Son of God, and pretended to do miracles, he lost all my former veneration!

"I then prayed that God would prepare me, by punishing my sins, for virtue and happiness, and I thanked him for every misfortune; but the first observation I made was, that though I was oftentimes severely chastised, it did not make me wiser or better. I therefore again prayed to God, that he would shew me, in every instance, the crime for which I was punished, that I might know and avoid it; but finding this vain, I feared that I should never perhaps be corrected in this life by punishment; still I hoped I might be delivered from moral evil after death in some kind of purgatory, by a severer punishment; yet reflecting that punishment had proved itself utterly ineffectual to produce even the lowest degree of virtue in my soul, I was constrained to acknowledge that my theory, though it seemed by *a priori* reasoning well grounded, was to-



tally refuted by experience, and I concluded it was entirely out of the reach of my reason to discover the true road to virtue and happiness. I confessed this my impotence and blindness to God, and owned myself as a blind man who had lost his way, and waited in hope that some benevolent man would pass by, and lead him in the right way. Thus I waited upon God, that he would take me by the hand, and lead me in the way everlasting.

"I could not entirely get rid of the idea of being corrected by means of punishment, and I still looked on the doctrines of Christ's deity and atonement as useless and blasphemous, though I carefully kept this my opinion secret.

"Such was the state of my mind, when on the 27th June, 1791, sailing in a boat, with my wife and daughter, for amusement, suddenly a water-spout overtook us, and turning the boat in an instant upside down, we were sunk before we apprehended any danger; both my dearest relations were drowned, and I was carried down the stream above a mile, and must soon have infallibly been lost also, as from the violence of the storm no person could attempt to approach the wreck, and it was supposed we must all have perished together: but now the Lord stretched forth his hand to deliver me; a stronger vessel lying in the port of Dort, was by the storm rent from its moorings, and blown out of the port towards me, till the men on board thought they discovered a person floating on the side of the wreck, and rescued me from the jaws of death.

"I considered this terrible event as the severest punishment that could be inflicted on me; and saw the next day as clear as the light, that it had no more power to correct me than all the former providences, and hence concluded my state to be desperate, and that God abandoned me as incurable by correction."

#### THE PENITENTIARY SYSTEM.

From the late Christian Magazine.

Much complaint has been made in regard to the construction and management of prisons, especially those intended for the reformation of convicts. Persons of different ages, circumstances, and characters, are not sufficiently distinguished and separated. Numbers, at night, are lodged in the same cells, and the prisoners are allowed too free an intercourse one with another. An opportunity is thus furnished and improved, for a mutual influence of the *worst* kind to be exerted. Practices the most detestable and abominable are shamelessly perpetrated. Those who are older and more experienced in wickedness, instruct the younger in the arts of crime; set before them examples of the utmost enormity; and allure them onward, by every method in their power, to greater degrees of hardihood and villany. In this way, prisons and penitentiaries become the receptacles and nurseries of vice rather than houses of correction and reformation.

I have introduced this subject merely for the purpose of illustrating another. There are those who regard the *prison of hell*, as a vast house of correction—a place, where the *penitentiary system* is pursued on a large scale. "All must be brought to repentance, sooner or later; and those, who are not humbled and reclaimed in the present world, must be punished in the fires of hell, till they are reclaimed." Waiving all other objections to this antisciptural doctrine; why—let it be seriously asked—why should any be sent to the *prison of hell*, in order to bring them to repentance? A more unfavorable situation for such an object cannot possibly be imagined. What is the *society* of hell? What are the *employments*? What is the *influence* there exerted by one being upon another? Who would think of placing a person, who was inclined to vicious practices in this world, in the company, and under the influence, of the notoriously vicious and abandoned, in order to reclaim him? Who would think of turning over a vicious *youth* to the instruction and example of those who are old and hardened in crime and sin, in order to bring him to repentance? Much less can it be believed, that God will ever send any of his creatures to *hell*—where every heart overflows with enmity, and every mouth is filled with cursing, and every breath of influence is adverse to the spiritual good of the soul

—in order to bring them to repentance;—that he will ever take any out of this world, because they cannot be reclaimed here, and place them in the society, and under the instruction and example of devils and damned spirits—the oldest and most flagrant transgressors in the universe—in order that they may be turned from their wicked ways, and brought to the exercise of holiness!—No, my dear reader, if you and I ever repent, we shall repent in this world. If we are ever brought to the knowledge of the truth, the work will be accomplished here. Hell is no place for the production of such a change; or indeed of any, that will at all better our condition. The progress of everything in that world, is downward. Every inhabitant is sinking, and is doomed, from the necessity of his condition to sink—in sin, in misery, and despair—forever.

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“ CONFESSIONS OF AN ARIAN MINISTER.”

In 1817, a pamphlet was published in England, entitled “Confessions of an Arian Minister, &c. in a letter to his Son; by the Rev. William Gellibrand.” From this pamphlet the following is extracted:

“At the age of sixteen—I was removed to Hoxton, and admitted upon the trust of Mr. Coward, with a view to receive that course of academical instruction, deemed essential by that class of liberal dissenters with which I was connected. Our tutors were men of distinguished eminence, for whom to this hour I feel sentiments of undiminished respect and regard. When I mention the names of the late Drs. Savage and Kippis, and the present Dr. Rees, you will not be surprised that I should thus feel and thus speak. The greatest possible attention was paid to our improvement in classical learning, in the knowledge of the *belles lettres*, and in every branch of mathematical science. The students in general were undoubtedly what the world would call respectable scholars: but for the great work of preaching the Gospel, they were *most inadequately prepared*.—There were two young men amongst us, whose sentiments had a tincture of Calvinism: but they were, on that account, the ridicule of all their companions, by whom the reception of such principles was considered as incompatible, not only with truth, but even with common sense.”—Having completed his five years’ course of academical preparation, Mr. G. succeeded Dr. Price as afternoon preacher at Newington-green. He afterwards removed to Ringwood, and from thence to Brentford.—“I was,” says he, “a determined Arian, advancing fast to what I then considered the pure and rational views of Christianity, as supported and recommended by Dr. Priestley.” Perhaps the author means that he was *determined* in his rejection of Trinitarianism, but not unlikely to make progress in the contrary direction.—“I had many valuable, respectable, and friendly people, who constantly attended my ministry, and honored me with their affection and regard. *But I felt little or no interest in the services of religion. The cold, the dry, the uninteresting scheme I had embraced, could not preserve alive in my soul the love of religion. The services of the sabbath were wearisome to me; and, if ever I felt the fervor of devotion or the warmth of affection for the souls of men, glowing in my bosom, I checked its growth and restrained its expansion, fearing I might be guilty of what reason would censure, or philosophy condemn.*”

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CHRISTIAN DISCIPLE.

In our last, we attributed to the Christian Disciple the sentiment, that the Orthodox “represent God as worse than the devil, more false, more cruel, more unjust.” For this we are censured in the Christian Register, on the ground that the above expression was not original in the Disciple, but quoted from a discourse of the late Mr. Wesley. But may not a writer, by adopting and applauding a favorite expression, make himself fairly responsible for it, though it be not originally his own?

To remove all complaint, however, on the part of Unitarians, and to satisfy the public as to the nature and measure of our alleged offence, we shall give the passage, in its connexion, just as it stands, in a Review of Southey's Life of Wesley, Christian Disciple, New Series, vol. ii. p. 450.

"We must make room," says the reviewer, "for the following extract, *the excellence of which we think will more than compensate for its length*. After *showing* that the doctrine of predestination makes all preaching vain, as needless to the elect, and useless to the reprobate; that it tends to produce spiritual pride in some, and absolute despair in others; he goes on to say, that it is full of blasphemy, representing the invitations of Christ as mere mockery, and *the God of all grace as more cruel, false, and unjust than the devil*."

Thus far the reviewer. Next follows a part of the extract, declared to be one of such distinguished "*excellence*."

"This is the blasphemy clearly contained in the horrible decree of predestination. And here I fix my foot. On this I join issue with every asserter of it. *You represent God as worse than the devil, more false, more cruel, more unjust*."

Thus writes Wesley. And thus are his vulgarities retailed and applauded in the Christian Disciple. We only add, that this last sentence of Wesley has been often quoted by Unitarian writers, and always, so far as we recollect, with marks of approbation.

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#### PROGRESS OF UNITARIAN REFORMATION.

The Rev. Dr. Sprague of West-Springfield, in a published letter, dated Manchester, (England,) April 7, 1828, writes as follows:

"There is in last Saturday's paper, published here, a curious extract of a Sermon, preached on the preceding Sabbath, by one of the Unitarian ministers of this town, *VINDICATING AN AMALGAMATION OF UNITARIANS AND DEISTS*, and *censuring*, as *illiberal* those who exclude a man from their charity, because he happens to differ from them on so small a point, as *the Divine authority of the Bible*. I am credibly informed that this fact is *quite in unison with the character of nearly ALL their congregations*; and that the question in respect to the Divine authority of revelation is regarded by most of them as an *unimportant matter*."

It is understood, that at a public lecture in this city, during the last month, the Rev. Dr. Lowell expressed his belief, that laymen are essentially qualified, and that in extreme cases it may be their duty, to administer the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's supper. We had previously heard the same sentiment from other Unitarian ministers, but were not quite prepared to expect it from Dr. Lowell.

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#### LETTERS OF CANONICUS.

We have just received a duodecimo of 156 pages, entitled "Letters to the Rev. William E. Channing, D. D., on the existence and agency of fallen spirits. By *Canonicus*." We have no space at present for a review of it, or even for such a notice as it deserves. It shall receive due attention in a future number. We can only say now, that the argument in proof of "the existence and agency of fallen spirits" is here conducted with great ability, bringing out prominently and triumphantly the plain testimony of the Bible on this important subject, and setting it high and dry above the sneers and cavils of sceptical critics, and 'the floods of ungodly men.'—In the notes, which constitute nearly half the volume, a variety of subjects are discussed, with spirit and earnestness, with acuteness and force.

The following extracts, taken promiscuously from the notes, will give our readers some idea of the style and spirit of the work.

"The philosophers of Germany are waiting, it is said, with an anxiety unusual to that meditative race, for a full development of Schelling's philosophical system. In this vicinity, a somewhat similar anxiety is felt by many, to know what course "rational" opinion is ultimately to take. The young divines are placed in a predicament, which they must, at times, feel to be awkward. To go back, they cannot; "*facilis descensus avernı; sed revocare,*" &c. : to stand still is impossible, amid the increasing light of an improving age; to go forward is perilous. Many eyes are upon them. Hitherto the wind has been what the sailors call *baffling*; whether, hereafter, we are to have "steady gales," setting from "the frozen zone of Christianity," on the icebergs of avowed rationalism or open infidelity, it were premature to say. Time will show."

From another of the notes, we give the following :

"When a Unitarian writer wishes to blunt an argument, or an orator desires to awaken a prejudice, there is a standing illustration always ready with which

"To point his moral and adorn his tale,"—

*Calvin burnt Servetus.* How it will follow from this, that Socinus was born without any taint of original corruption; or that Davidies was not in the right to withhold worship from a being whom he deemed a creature merely, the gentleman, who visited Geneva and "reported progress" of rational Christianity among those, who sit in Calvin's seat, did not inform the Unitarian Association.

"The conduct of Calvin in regard to Servetus, admits of no justification and scarcely of apology. But why Unitarians should bestow all their sympathies upon Servetus, and "remember to forget" Davidies, venting all their antipathies upon Calvin to the entire exclusion of Socinus and his friend Blandrata, is somewhat mysterious, if their object be, in so often producing this illustration, to express their *hatred of persecution*, and their love of liberal principles and free inquiry. *To awaken prejudice is not to injure principle.* Unitarian orators seem well aware of the fact, that most people reason with their ears. At least their arguments are built on this "auricular confession." If Unitarianism, whether in its larger or more limited sense, be true, it must be *proved so* by some better argument than "Calvin burnt Servetus." It is unworthy the taste of Dr. Channing and the learning of Mr. Palfrey, to harangue in this style of bar-room declamation."

"Toulmin, no friend of Calvin and no enemy to Socinus, in his *Life of the latter*, speaking of Cranmer, Luther, Calvin, and Socinus, says, "they all erred in regard to Toleration;" it should, however, "rather be ascribed to the times than the men, that they favored in one respect or another, intolerance or persecution." Let those who *possess*, as well as profess, liberality of sentiment, meditate upon this remark of the biographer of Socinus, and say, whether it is perfectly fair and just to the memory of the Genevan Reformer, without any reference to his merits, his attainments, or his efforts, thus to hold him up to perpetual scorn, while the circumstances of the age, and the feelings and conduct of his contemporaries, are *studiously concealed*? When the character of Socinus is drawn, is that trait of it, explained and modified by Toulmin, its leading, prominent feature? In what Unitarian imagination is not Calvin painted as only the gloomy, iron-hearted, relentless persecutor? Why, we ask again, and desire every Unitarian writer and declaimer, before penning another sentence, or rounding another period, to answer the question, *why is not Davidies entitled to as much commiseration in Boston, as Servetus*? I would not have dwelt so long upon a topic, in itself so unimportant, but that the frequent recurrence to it in Unitarian sermons, periodicals, pamphlets, speeches, &c., has made it necessary, both in justice to the illustrious reformer, and to those who are now called Calvinists."

On the whole, we pronounce this—a hasty decision indeed, but one which we have little fear of being compelled to revoke—we pronounce this a very clever book. The style is free and animated throughout, and the subjects handled are of great importance. If our friends do not procure and read it for themselves, they will fail of doing that, in which we are confident they will find themselves instructed and deeply interested.

THE  
**SPIRIT OF THE PILGRIMS.**

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**COMMUNICATIONS.**

**THE FAVORABLENESS OF THE PRESENT AGE FOR THE SUCCESS  
OF CHRISTIAN ENTERPRISE.**

At the first preaching of Christianity, it seemed good to the infinite Lord of the harvest to crown the labors of the apostles and their coadjutors with great success. But it was like staying the waters of Jordan, which, rolling backward and swelling upward, were only preparing, by the removal of the Almighty hand, to rush down their natural channel with a fearfully increased impetuosity. There was nothing in the general state of knowledge, or in the moral temperament of the world, calculated to secure a lasting perpetuity to that amazing reformation, which the apostles were the instruments of attaining. On the contrary, as soon as the immediate results of their labors, and prayers, and sufferings ceased, the heavens grew dark, and lowered with tempest, and spiritual night again settled upon the earth. There was much Christian virtue, indeed, which had taken deep root in human hearts, and which struggled and suffered long against the rude and warring elements of depravity. But all the moral tendencies of the world were at war with Christianity. And the church suffered, and agonized, and bled, till her vital energies were exhausted, and scarcely the breath of life remained.

We believe in the perpetuity of the church, though it is somewhat difficult to trace her pathway, after she was compelled to retire from under the gorgeous paraphernalia of the papal hierarchy, until she broke forth on the world again in the Reformation of the sixteenth century. For considerably more than a thousand years after the first establishment of Christianity, the state of knowledge, and the general structure of society, accorded well with the natural tendencies of human nature to deteriorate. From that lofty eminence to which the apostles raised the church of Christ, she descended, and descended, and descended,—merging herself in clouds, and darkness, and tempest, as she went down,—till at length her light was no longer visible, and her influence no longer felt.

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Such was the state of the world, and such the moral tendencies of things; it was impossible to arrest her in this downward career. Apostolic zeal could not do it. All the holy fire of the primitive Christians, burning with the love of souls and the hope of heaven, could not do it. The blood of martyrs, which flowed for ages and for centuries, could not do it. Never has there been so much Christian virtue, or so vigorous, in the bosoms of God's people, as in the ages immediately succeeding the apostles. But with all this purifying leaven, the world perpetually gained upon the church.

It was not till the revival of learning, that religion revived. The contemporaneous prosperity of these two prime interests of man, is sufficient proof of their reciprocal and happy influence. And by *learning*, in the present instance, I would not be understood to mean the mere knowledge of letters and the abstract sciences. I embrace everything in this term, which has enlarged the boundaries of useful knowledge, given impulse to intellect, increased the facilities of intellectual intercourse, and given man just ideas of civil liberty. New inventions, and improvements in the useful arts, is comprehended in this range;—especially the art of printing, which has been, and still is, multiplying the moral power of man, in a ratio, which no arithmetic can calculate.

From the period of the Reformation under Luther and his coadjutors, improvements in the state of society and of the world have been rapidly advancing. Nor did this great and sudden change take place, independent of a long train of antecedent causes. From the deepest decline of learning and religion, God was long time preparing the way for these important and interesting developments of truth. Ages before the Reformation, symptoms of better things began to show themselves. To specify these indications would require a particular analysis of the political history of the church of Rome, and of Europe, for the time being. Suffice it to say, that in the Reformation, we discover a maturity in the arrangements of Providence, for the opening of a new era in the history of our world. The time had now come, when the human mind, rising from its long oppressed and enslaved condition, began to think and act for itself. Hitherto all similar efforts were crushed. Now they began to create a public opinion, and public opinion to assume an importance, until it was seen and felt to be a power too formidable to be laid again under the foot of despotism. From that hour, when Luther lifted up his voice, and dared to repel the aggressions of Rome, began the march of intellectual and moral freedom. From that day, the rights of man and of conscience have been more and more appreciated. And just in proportion as the principles of the Reformation have been diffused and taken root, have the facilities of success in Christian enterprise been increased; and the state of the world has been gradually ripening for evangelical labors, till it seems to present almost one unbro-

ken field, white and ready for the harvest. As in the ages of religious decline, nothing could resist the moral tendencies to deteriorate, so in these ages of reformation, nothing generous and noble can be attempted in the cause of Christ, but its efficacious influences are multiplied beyond calculation.

The peculiar favorableness of the present age for the success of Christian enterprise is sufficiently illustrated in the history of Christianity for the last thirty or forty years—especially when that history is viewed in connexion with the probable results of the numerous benevolent enterprises, now in the incipient or more advanced stages of their career.

Look at the history and success of Christian missions within this period. Although the Moravians commenced earlier, and have evinced, as pioneers in modern missions, a high pattern of Christian faith, their happiest operations and best success stand recorded, since, by long experience and providential results, they have learned, that the preaching of the ruins of the fall, in connexion with the cross of Christ, is the first, the principal, and the last duty of the Christian missionary. The Baptist mission to India, in which Pearce and Carey led the way, the former acting at home, and the latter in the field, has achieved great and glorious things in the annals of Christian enterprise. And the amazing influence of their operations, although great and sufficiently encouraging in the past, is yet to be told on the unborn millions of an interesting but debased portion of the human family. They have treasured up a moral power, in exploring the languages, customs, and learning of that eastern world, and making translations of the Bible, which even now, with all it has accomplished, has scarcely begun to operate.

And the emulation which this example has provoked in the established church of Great Britain, has covered the plains of India with another host of devoted and enterprising Christian spirits, whose love of souls and zeal for Christ will not permit them to be outdone by their brethren of other sects. Even the East India Company has been compelled to patronise missions, as *they* intended for self-defence, but as God has overruled, for the advancement of his cause. Many private Christian enterprises in the east, of great importance to the present and future interests of the church, have grown out of the spirit of the age, such as Buchanan's, and Martyn's, and Morrison's,—who have acted under patronage, indeed, but executed their own schemes.

A history of the achievements of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, unfolds a scroll of Divine providence, the events of which are almost as rapid and brilliant, as the pages of Apocalyptic vision. And yet, it may safely be predicted, that this religious enginery has little more than *begun* to operate upon the world. Justly meriting public confidence, by the purity and simplicity of its organization, by the singleness of its object,

by the openness of all its operations, and by the well earned reputation of its leading patrons and official agents, it cannot fail to secure the prayers, the religious sympathies, and, as we doubt not, the prompt support of all good men. Who would not covet to be the millennial historian of this single instrument of God's providence and grace?—If its beginnings are so magnificent, in this age, when every success in Christian enterprise is only an incipient stage of some grand result, what will be the consummation of its history?

Look also at the history of Bible and Tract societies, of Home Missionary and Sunday school operations, of what is now doing for the Christian education of children and youth,—in a word, of all the benevolent enterprises of the age. These numerous and grand institutions, organized with the Christian spirit, moving onward in harmony, rising in importance, managed by system and by the rules of God's word, augmenting in energies as they advance, combining so much talent and influence, and with the *promised blessing of Almighty God upon them*,—were I a prophet, methinks my voice would be,—notwithstanding all the opposition perpetually starting up from men of worldly wisdom, of selfish interest, and of infidel passion—methinks my voice would be,—These shall usher in—not bring slowly—but *usher* in, the universal reign of the Messiah.

The uniform success of Christian enterprise, in modern times, of whatever form, or for whatever specific object, so long as the objects have corresponded with the grand purposes of Christianity, is demonstration of the favorable character and circumstances of the times. There is doubtless a something in the providence of God,—or rather there are *many* things, a combination of circumstances, a shape and contexture of society, a determination of the moral currents, as physicians say of the blood—all which, combined with other conspiring influences, seem to give a warrant of success to all well directed and persevering religious effort. And this seems to be a *fixed* character of human society—a character that has been forming for ages past, and is even *now* maturing for higher perfection in this particular, so that still greater facilities for Christian enterprise, I doubt not, are before the church. This, I apprehend, is not a *fever*, as some have been disposed to name it,—a transient and unnatural excitement, which is soon to pass away. It has already been of too long continuance to justify such a denomination. And not only so, but every year, every month, and every day, have given additional impulse to the feeling, multiplied its ramifications, spread out and deepened its channels, so that a man can now hardly walk the face of the earth, in Christian or in pagan lands, without crossing its currents, and feeling its influence, as he passes along. And in all this growth, every thing seems to be temperate and healthful, and rather too cool, than too much heated. The most deliberate deductions of intel-

lect, and that too of the mightiest spirits of the age, are carried along by the better and holier feelings of the heart.

And this character of the world, so favorable to the objects of Christianity, I regard as the special production of Divine providence, adapted, by infinite intelligence, to the ends designed to be accomplished. The time has now come, when Christians, girded with "the whole armor of the Lord," and conducting themselves with firmness, constancy, and faith, cannot attempt or expect too much, in the cause of their Divine Master. Everything they do, in this manner and with this spirit, individually or collectively, will tell with great effect on the present and future generations.

In view of considerations such as these, the responsibilities of parents, instructors of youth, the ministers of religion, and of all who contribute to form the character of the coming age, are infinitely enhanced—enhanced in proportion to the possibilities of good vested in their hands. Let every Christian parent feel, that in training up his son for God, in praying with and for him, in impressing upon his tender age the heart subduing and transforming motives of Christianity, not unlikely he is forming a character, which, with the zeal of a Brainerd and a Martyn, and by the increased facilities of action and of moral power, shall throw out an influence on the world, as sudden and as overpowering as that of the apostle to the Gentiles. And so let every instructor of youth feel, with regard to every talented pupil committed to his charge. And can the minister of religion, whose especial duty it is to regard such considerations, forget the importance of his influence over the hopeful and aspiring youth of his pastoral charge? Let all, who have influence in educating the rising generation, feel, that characters are now forming under their hands, which are to be the instruments of enlightening and converting the world.

I cannot forbear adverting in this place to the peculiar favorableness of the structure of society, in the United States of America, for the success of religious enterprise. Here, no rank or caste has reared its barriers, impenetrable to every influence that does not proceed from itself, or appear in its own garb. These distinctions, so formidable in other nations, and so impervious to moral influence, will, no doubt, in the providence of God, be ultimately melted away, so far as is necessary to the complete triumphs of Christianity. But it is impossible for those, who have not had opportunity of observation, to appreciate the high and formidable character of these walls of separation between the different orders of society, as they exist in most of the civilized, and in many of the semi-barbarous nations.

Most fortunately and most favorably, in the providence of God, the state of society in the United States has been left on such a level, upon such common ground, that nothing can create distinction and rank, but the ever fluctuating circumstances of wealth and

personal consideration. The highest may not impossibly, and he may soon, be reached by the lowest. Here, then, over such a state of society, which exists nowhere else on the face of the globe in such purity and perfection,—*here*, may a united and combined Christian enterprise exercise an instantaneous and an all-pervading influence. And we need not be accused of national pride, or of national self-complacency,—(I should be sorry and ashamed to cherish such a feeling in religious thought) when we predict, that the United States are destined, for reasons such as have just been advanced, to outstrip all other nations, and to take lead in the career of Christian philanthropy.

And not only is the state of things in the United States most favorable to the success of *combined* Christian enterprise, which contemplates the general and more extended objects of Christianity; it is also favorable to *individual* enterprise of a Christian character. A judicious, well directed, and constantly applied zeal, in the hands of gifted and qualified individuals, may accomplish wonders in the course of a man's life, in behalf of any of the separate objects of Christian benevolence. Let every Christian, therefore, whom the providence of God has made conspicuous and influential, by natural or adventitious endowments, wisely and judiciously select his calling, his specific object of pursuit, in the vineyard of the Lord, and to that let him consecrate all his powers, and bend all his energies. It is, perhaps, one of the greatest mistakes of the age, and in Christian enterprise, *that all are to work by the same rule*, without any regard to *individuality* of character. *General principles* are for all men, but the *mode of applying them* should be adapted to characters and circumstances. Let every man go forward in his own way, work in his own harness, and fight in his own armor. Let Christians undertake their own individual enterprises, and be directed by their own individuality of character. Let them ask, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?"—and when this question is decided, let them *do it*. "There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit; differences of administrations, but the same Lord; diversities of operations, but the same God, who worketh all in all."

It is grateful to remark, that *philosophy*, which long time allowed herself to be courted by infidelity, has become ashamed of such alliance, and is now associating herself with that science, which holds the same offices in relation to herself, as the eye to the body in the animal economy. Popery has become a disgusting imposition and an insupportable burden to all those parts of Christendom, on which her grasp had fastened. Germany, which holds no unimportant place in the map of the moral world—foremost in biblical science, and foremost in her apostacy from correct religious thinking (strange anomaly, and to be accounted for only as the effect of taking up the study of the Bible merely as a piece of literature,



without cultivating the spirit of piety)—*Germany* is becoming weary and sick of her self-styled *Rationalism*, sighs again for the consolations of a Christian hope, and is ready to return to the faith of her great Reformer. Poor and pitiable is that spirit on this side the Atlantic, which would bolster itself up on the religious derelictions of Germany,—resting upon a baseless and sinking cause, boasting of a worldly wisdom which God has made foolish, and perishing, unconscious, in the arms of a giant literature, which, like Nebuchadnezzar's image, is dissolving and tumbling to ruins, for want of amalgamation and consistency in its parts; and the very materials of which, when scattered by such dissolution, shall yet be worked, and are even now working, by the grace and providence of God, into the true and abiding temple of Messiah's kingdom. Islamism too,—spreading its arms over so many millions of the human family, occupying and blasting so long the fairest regions of our globe, trampling on the holy ground, deeded by oath of God to Abraham and his posterity, and embosoming the city of the holiest solemnities which earth ever witnessed—a city now profaned and desolate—the place of Messiah's birth and agonies,—violating the sepulchres of the holy dead, holding in its sacrilegious grasp the very tomb of Heaven's and man's atoning Priest, insulting God, insulting Christ, and butchering those who are called by his name,—*Islamism*—that proud, and mighty, and formidable engine of the Prince of darkness, which has wasted the earth so long, is even now, we hope, bending and falling before the retributive visitations of the Almighty. Every material corruption of Christianity, whether by detraction or superstition, is coming to be detected and exposed. Every form of paganism, which has been approached by pure Christianity, manifests a disposition to yield its claims over the human mind, and waits only for a well concerted and vigorous onset from the worshippers of the true God. Judaism too, so fearfully obstinate in unbelief, shows symptoms of self-distrust, and its veil, so long “untaken away,” is seen to be drawing aside by the hand of God. The purest forms of Christianity are growing more pure; reformation succeeds to reformation; and sound learning and Christianity have become the mutual assistants of each other,—a sure presage of the triumphs of both. And it may now be said, that “the whole world,” Christian as well as pagan, “groaneth and travaileth in pain together, expecting deliverance.” The world is tired of paganism, tired of infidelity, tired of the multiform corruptions of Christianity,—and nothing will avail to alleviate its uneasiness, but the pure religion of Jesus Christ. The field of Christian enterprise is the world, and that world is literally white for the harvest. With the present structure of society, and the prevailing moral temperament in all that portion of the world which is evidently destined to give character to the rest,—with the steady advancement of learning, which we think cannot

retrograde, but must go forward—Christians have only to rise in the strength of the Lord of hosts, and to press forward with the resistless energies of faith, *and the world is their's—the world is Christ's.*

The considerations which have been presented afford, surely, the highest encouragements to fervent prayer, and to vigorous action. Such, in the providence of God, is now the structure of society, and such are the workings of the moral world,—when everything good is striving to be better; when every particle of virtue becomes a purifying leaven, not only in the spirit of its own residence, but through that spirit, over others; when the human mind, after all the sad experience it has had of the workings of its own depravities, after long protracted and dismal cycles—cycles on cycles, of ignorance, depression, and slavery—having tried every method, but the only true one, of working out its own redemption—seems to have caught a glimpse of light from the heavens, in anticipation of a coming Jubilee, and now, as if by an inward consciousness of having passed the most dreadful periods of its own history, is rising in the majesty of hope and faith,—there seems to be a universal concert, that “the redemption of the world draweth nigh.” A Christian cannot now offer a prayer, if it be a prayer of faith, but it blesses the world; he cannot lift his hand, if it be in the strength and in the cause of his Redeemer, but it is sure to advance some one of the great interests of Christianity.

I know there are oppositions, and strifes, and “distress of nations;” that the manacles of superstition, and infidelity, and of the Prince of darkness, are yet strong in their hold on the human mind; that great and mighty is the struggle which awaits the moral world, before its complete emancipation. But strong and mighty is He, who has instituted this redeeming process. His plan is deep, his counsels unsearchable, and his ways everlasting. “If the thing which I purpose be marvellous in the eyes of the remnant of this people—in these days—should it also be marvellous in my eyes? saith the Lord of Hosts.”

ANTIPAS.

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INSPIRATION OF THE SCRIPTURES. NO. III.

*Mistakes to be avoided, and cautions to be observed.*

*Fifthly.* It is not to be admitted as any argument against the doctrine of inspiration, understood even in the highest sense, *that in writing the Scriptures, the sacred penmen evidently made use of their own faculties.*

It would seem very probable, from the nature of the case, that if God intended to communicate instruction to the world, he would

employ human beings as his instruments ; and that he would employ them, as *intelligent* instruments, and would use, or rather, would excite *them* to use, their *intellectual and moral powers* in making the communication. All that we have seen of the Divine conduct in other respects would lead us to expect this. And then, what possible objection can there be against it? A revelation from God, made in the manner here supposed, may be as *infallible*, and in all respects as *perfect*, as if made in any other way that can be conceived. For surely God can so guide and superintend the mental and bodily powers of men, as to produce, through them, just such a writing as he wishes to produce, and just such as he would produce, if he employed no agency but his own. For example : He could exert such an influence and control over the mind of Isaiah and Paul, that the commands and promises, given by them, should be as perfectly agreeable to his will, and clothed with as high an authority, as though he had written them himself on tables of stone, as he did the Decalogue.

This being the case, it follows, that the abundant evidence which the sacred volume everywhere contains, that the writers made a diligent use of their own mental and bodily powers, furnishes no argument against the position, that they wrote as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.

*Sixthly.* It is no objection against the inspiration of the Scriptures, that they contain many things which are, in themselves, of little or no consequence.

Things which are of small consequence, in themselves, may be of great consequence, when considered in all their relations. Great effects result from little causes. And these little causes acquire a relative importance, in proportion to the greatness of the effects resulting from them. A single thought, a dream, the motion of a finger, or a pebble, may occasion mighty events, and in a history of mighty events may deserve to be particularly mentioned. If small things are *visibly* connected with great, we perceive at once the propriety of their being distinctly noticed. And when they are not connected in any way which is at present visible to us ; still there may be a connexion ; and that connexion, which is always perfectly known to God, may ultimately become manifest to us. And those things which we are accustomed to consider as small, may be as important, as if their connexion with other things were now fully known to us ; and it may be as important that history should record them. Indeed, it may be that, without recording them, history could not have a perfect agreement with the truth.— This leads to another view of the subject.

Do not small things actually occur in the course of human affairs? Does not the life of man consist chiefly of actions and events, which, taken by themselves, might be considered as of little consequence, or even as trifles? Let any one survey his own life for

a day, or a week, and see if this is not the case. It is so with the people of God, and even with prophets and apostles, as well as with others. There never was a man, whose life, from day to day, and from hour to hour, was chiefly made up of great actions and great events. This being the case, no history of human life can perfectly answer to the reality, without recording many little things. The writers of common history generally make a selection of a few actions and events which are remarkable and splendid, and omit others; and thus they make a representation, which is indeed flattering to human pride, but which, as a whole, is not according to truth. In this respect, the writers of sacred history have a manifest superiority over all others. They take no pains to give a splendor which is not real, to human characters and events. They honestly relate the little things which occur in human life, as well as the great; the dishonorable, the vicious, and even the disgusting, as well as the honorable, and virtuous, and lovely. The picture which they draw is true, answering to the original.

Now the question is, whether the Scriptures shall, to a greater or less extent, contain a history of human life; and if it contains a history, whether it shall be a true history, or a fiction. If a history of any portion of human beings, or of any period of the world, is necessary to the good of the church; then the benevolence of God must incline him so to influence the writers of the Bible, that they will produce such a history. And if God chooses to have a history of human affairs contained in his word, we have every reason to believe he will so assist and guide his servants, that they shall write a history exactly conformed to truth. And if conformed to truth, it must record things which are neither great nor honorable.

The same remarks may be made on those parts of Scripture, which contain maxims or sentiments of small weight,—minute directions,—little developements of thought or feeling. These things are evidently of real use. There are many cases of duty or difficulty, to which they are directly adapted, and for which we should not be well prepared without them. They are therefore important, as making a part of that book, which is intended to be a directory of human conduct. And who can doubt the goodness of God in causing a book to be written so as fully to answer the wants of man? And who can with any propriety say, that the Bible contains things too small to be worthy of the notice of God, when, in fact, those small things are essential to the perfection and the highest usefulness of a revelation? With just as much propriety might we object to the world's being the work of God, because it contains many little things; and we might ask, who can suppose that God would ever exert an agency or have any concern in things of such a nature? But we know that God has in fact created and sustained the world and all that is in it; and hence we infer, that it is perfectly consistent with his infinite majesty, that he should create,

sustain, and constantly regard *little* things, as well as *great*. And if God may consistently have an agency in the production of little things in the natural world; why not, in the production of little things in the sacred writings?

But if, after all, any one shall assert, that there are things in the Bible which are of no possible use as to the great ends of a revelation from God, and, therefore, that it is inconsistent to suppose that those who wrote them had the guidance of the Holy Spirit; I would desire him first to specify the things referred to, and then to produce his proof, that they neither have been, nor can be of any use. Suppose he fixes upon a passage which has often been referred to as of no possible consequence; 2 Tim. iv. 13, in which Paul directs Timothy to bring the cloak that he left at Troas, with the books, especially the parchments. I would ask him, what reason he has to think, that the direction was unimportant either to the comfort and usefulness of Paul, or to the interests of the churches?

*Seventhly.* It is no objection to the inspiration of the Scriptures, that the real and full meaning of some passages was not known at the time they were written, or even that it remains unknown to the present time.

In this respect, the same is true of the Scriptures, as of the natural world. There are many things in the creation, the nature and design of which lay concealed for thousands of years, and many which are, even at the present day, but imperfectly understood, or not understood at all. Notwithstanding this, it is true that God created them, and preserves them; and it is doubtless true, that they are designed for some important end, and that they will ultimately accomplish that end. So, as to those things in Scripture which are not well understood; it may be that they will ultimately be understood, and that some special and additional good may result from them in consequence of their having been so long involved in obscurity. Even during the time they are not understood, they may be of use, in promoting among good men a humble sense of their limited knowledge, and in exciting them to diligent endeavors after higher acquisitions. And there is nothing inconsistent with the infinite wisdom of God in the supposition, that he should, by subsequent revelations, as well as by the course of his providence, and the well directed labors of his servants, explain that which was before left designedly obscure. This would evidently be analogous to the method of Divine instruction in other cases.

If, therefore, we find ever so many things in the Bible, which we do not understand; we are by no means to regard them as any objection to the inspiration of the writers. Our not understanding them may be owing to a faulty ignorance in us; an ignorance, which persevering diligence might have removed. Or they may lie beyond the reach of our present capacity, and the capacity and means



of information which any man now possesses, and may be reserved as subjects, on which the human mind is to exert its faculties successfully in future time. They may not be intended for our particular use, but for the use of some following age. So Peter suggests of some things which the prophets wrote, *that they ministered them not to themselves, or to their own use, but to those who should come after.* Now suppose it pleases God, by his Spirit, to influence his servants to write some things which cannot be well understood in their day, but which are intended to be understood, and to be of special use, in future ages. Is this any discredit to his wisdom, or his goodness? In fact, do not all our endeavors to arrive at a more perfect knowledge of the Scriptures imply, that hitherto they have been understood but imperfectly? And if we may consistently believe that men, who were divinely inspired, wrote what has hitherto been but *imperfectly* understood; why may we not believe that, in some instances, they wrote what for a time cannot be understood at all? What warrant have we to say, that if anything is written, under Divine influence, for the benefit of the church, it must be so written that all men in all ages shall understand it?

*Eighthly.* Instances of incorrectness in the present copies of the Scriptures, cannot be objected to the inspiration of the writers.

How can the fact, that God has not infallibly guided all who have *transcribed* his word, prove that he did not infallibly guide those who *originally wrote* it? We might as well say, that if those who first wrote the Bible were inspired; then all who have *received* and *read* it must have been inspired. Suppose men have committed mistakes, either intentional or unintentional, in making out copies of the Bible. Have they not made mistakes also in regard to every other work of God? But do the mistakes of men in regard to any work of God prove that it is not his work? Nothing can be more certain, than that the inadvertence, or ignorance, or wickedness of man has marred many things, both in the natural and in the moral world, the original formation of which was owing wholly to the agency of God, and was a clear manifestation of his wisdom and benevolence. And what grounds have we to think that this may not be the case, in regard to a book given by Divine inspiration, as well as in regard to any other Divine work?

*Ninthly.* Instances of apparent disagreement among different writers of the sacred volume, and of apparent contradiction in the same writers, are no valid objection against their inspiration.

This is evident, because we can satisfactorily account for an *appearance* of disagreement, where there is no disagreement in reality. We often find that an *appearance* of contradiction vanishes on inquiry; and that the agreement becomes more sensible and striking, than if there had never been any appearance of the contrary. This is the case with most of the apparent discrepancies found in the Scriptures. Thorough investigation has made it

manifest, that those passages, which appeared inconsistent, are perfectly reconcileable with each other. Now it is always regarded as a circumstance in favor of the credibility of witnesses, if their testimony at first appears in some respects contradictory, and yet is found, on careful inquiry, to be perfectly consistent. In such cases, the appearance of contradiction prevents any suspicion of concert.

But suppose there are some instances in which we are unable to remove all appearance of contradiction, and to discover a perfect consistency, among different parts of Scripture. Still we cannot with safety decide against the inspiration of the writers; because farther inquiry, more information, and a better method of interpreting the sacred writings, may help us to discover a consistency which at present does not appear. And if, in some instances, we find it necessary to admit, that in *the present copy* of the Scriptures there are *real* contradictions; even this cannot be relied on as a proof, that the original writers were not divinely inspired; because these contradictions may be owing to the mistakes of transcribers. And it is very well known, that the most remarkable instances of contradiction are found in those words or sentences, in which a mistake in copying might have been most easily made. And considering how the Scriptures abound with details of *names, numbers, facts, and minute circumstances*, it would seem to be a matter of wonder, that the copyists committed no more mistakes, rather than that they committed so many.

PASTOR.

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## REVIEWS.

A COMMENTARY ON THE EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS. In two volumes. *By Moses Stuart, Associate Professor of Sacred Literature in the Theol. Seminary at Andover*: Published by Mark Newman. Codman Press—Flagg and Gould. pp. 677.

We receive these volumes from Professor Stuart with unmingled pleasure. In reviewing them, it will not comport with our limits or our plan, to enter into a very critical examination of their contents. We shall content ourselves with offering several reasons why we rejoice at their appearance; in doing which, we shall extend or contract our remarks, as the occasion may seem most to require.

One reason why we are happy to receive these volumes, is, *they will satisfy intelligent and serious minds, that the most extended, liberal and various investigations at once authorize the received canon, and establish the evangelical interpretation of the Sacred Writings.*

Many conscientious Christians have entertained fears, as to the tendency and ultimate result of an intimate acquaintance with the German theological writers. These Christians have been influenced, we doubt not, by a most sincere regard to the best interests of man, and the glory of their Redeemer. But conscientious feeling often differs from an intelligent conscience, and a disposition to do well is not always sure to select the best means to accomplish its purpose. This feeling and this disposition, however, will ever receive from us that respectful deference which they most certainly deserve. Yet, as we not only use the name, but profess to inherit the spirit of the Pilgrims, who were among the first scholars of their age, distinguished with all the advantages and attainments of the celebrated seats of science in Britain, we cannot but think that their sons, who are set for the defence of their faith, and the faith of the Gospel, should also pursue those studies, and make those intellectual acquisitions, which the altered character and the exigencies of the times require.

Error is sometimes ingenious; in connexion with intelligence, it is too often plausible. To refute it requires something more than the child's reason, *cause*; to expose its fallacy, and present the claims of truth and holiness in their proper aspect and attitude, claim, and have often called forth, learning more various, and ingenuity more acute, than were ever yet volunteered in the cause of error and of evil. Pascal, Grotius, Butler, Campbell, Paley, Watson and Marsh, to mention no others, present an array of ingenious and learned defenders of Christianity, who, viewed either in relation to native talent, or acquired ability, far surpass Hume, acute as he was, Gibbon, with his various learning, Voltaire, with all his wit, and Paine, with his boundless scurrility.

When we leave the outposts of the Christian citadel, and enter within, we shall find that evangelical sentiments have ever had, not only open adherents, but intelligent advocates. We would by no means rest our own faith, or desire our readers to rest theirs, on the authority of names. Yet it should not be forgotten, that an Augustine was cotemporary with Pelagius; that an Edwards silenced a Taylor; that when Dr. Priestley, with the pretensions of knowledge and the confidence of ignorance, published "The History of the Corruptions of Christianity," a Horsley was at hand to sift those pretensions, and brand that ignorance with its appropriate mark;\* while a Magee and a Smith retain possession of the field,

\* As Dr. Priestley's book is in the hands of many, who may not be aware of its true character, the following quotation from Prof. Stuart's Letters to Dr. Miller, will not be out of place. By quoting it, some young minds may be preserved from that perversion to which they would otherwise be exposed. "It has often been said, that 'anything can be proved from the Fathers.' And this is really true, provided one may be permitted to use them in the way, which those have done who *wished* to prove *anything* from them. I could refer to Dr. Priestley's History of Corruptions, as a striking example. There can be nothing more certain, than that the great body of the Fathers never dreamed of defending sentiments such as those of Priestley. And yet, with a profound unacquaintance with

from which their most vigorous opponents have fled, dispirited by frequent defeats, and hopeless of ultimate success. The defenders of orthodoxy just named were men of great original strength and capacity of mind, possessed of various learning, and disciplined to deep, continued, vigorous thought. Their attainments were such as their age, their opponents, and the general condition of the church required.

Times have now altered, and in this vicinity threaten a still greater change, requiring defenders of the faith of similar intellectual vigor and piety, to the Edwardses and Bellamys of other days, but trained in a different school, and armed with weapons adapted to the conflict that awaits them. At the head of the metaphysical school of New England divinity, the names of the two Edwardses, father and son, and of Hopkins, have by common consent, for some years, been placed. Their efforts, their success, and their merit, were great. But a new school has risen, the school of philology, of criticism; the school, in short, of *scientific interpretation*. Professor Stuart, by his Letters to Dr. Channing, gave the first distinct evidence of its existence to the public, and proved himself in his proper place, as professor of sacred literature in the oldest theological institution in the Union. The present work (to say nothing of his other labors) shows that he has not been idle in the quiet retreat at Andover. We hardly dare trust ourselves to speak of it as we feel, and as we know it deserves. Some of our readers might think we were warped by party or personal considerations, were we to give full utterance to our sober and well pondered estimate of its worth. The tribunal of criticism should be that of inflexible justice. Those who occupy the bench should be blind to everything but law and evidence. With this conviction strongly impressed upon our minds, we have endeavored to judge of the work before us. In the opinion we have formed, and which we shall here express, we are confident that all, who are capable of examining the work, and have done it, will coincide.

This Commentary, we hesitate not to say, will hold the same place in the new school of theology, that Edwards on the Will holds in the old. It is a thoroughly critical performance, and presents irresistibly convincing evidence of the truth of various important questions, that may be considered the basis of the Orthodox or evangelical faith. It is not, however, a work of party disputa-

the nature and spirit of the times in which the Fathers lived, and of the exegesis which must be applied to them, he has contrived to make them say many things, which, he would fain have us believe, accord with his own views. I cannot do better justice to such an effort, than in the words of Dr. Muenscher, a consummate patristical scholar, and, at least, one whose testimony will not be thought to be warped by any attachment to orthodoxy. 'A late work,' says he, (*Dogmengeschichte*, Band. i. s. 80.) 'wherein the celebrated dissenter, J. Priestley, aimed to shew the corruptions of Christianity, has through the fame of its author, excited greater attention than its *superficial contents*, and its *ignorance* of the sources of history, which everywhere betrays itself, deserve.' So judges one of the best patristical scholars now living, from a mere sense of literary justice." p. 75.

tion, but of widely extended inquiry, of independent discussion. Its primary, original character is philological; its theology inferential. Erskine, the author of the work on "The Internal Evidence," has pronounced the *Essay on the Will*, by Edwards, the ablest theological treatise in the English language. We know of no work except, perhaps, Butler's Analogy, that can be compared with it. We doubt not that Mr. Erskine will now admit, that no *critical work* on any portion of the sacred writings has ever appeared in the English language, that will sustain a comparison with the volumes before us. This, at all events, is our opinion, which, though to some it may appear an expression of party prejudice or American partiality, is uttered with a perfect conviction of its truth, and after an acquaintance, somewhat extensive, with the best English and American theological writers.\*

The only work that can claim to be compared with it, is the Translation of Isaiah, by Bishop Lowth, a work of learning and merit most certainly, but the learning of which is by no means so extensive in its character, nor so critical and cautious in its use, nor is the merit of it so various and unquestionable, as that of these volumes. The merit of Bishop Lowth, who may be considered the parent and liberal patron of biblical science in England, is very great; greater in this respect than that of any other British theological writer, either before or since his day. The defects of his Translation resulted, no doubt, from the fact, that the principles, on which the sacred text was to be settled and interpreted, were not then fixed, as they are at the present time. Besides, his plan was by no means so extensive as that pursued in the volumes of Professor Stuart.†

The first of these volumes contains what is technically called an Introduction; in which the Professor examines the various questions, which have been started relative to the antiquity and canonical authority of the Epistle, its Pauline origin, the persons to whom, the time when, and the place from which, it was written. He also states fully the objections of Eichhorn, Bertholdt, Schulz, Seyfarth, De Wette, and Boehme, and fully shows their weakness, irrelevance, and absurdity. The second volume contains the translation of the Epistle, a general view of its contents, and a more extended analysis of its separate parts, followed by a critical exa-

\* Dr. John Pye Smith, who deservedly ranks among the first biblical, theological and classical scholars in Great Britain, writes to an American friend in New York thus: "I have felt it my duty to describe this work on the Hebrews, as the most important present to the cause of sound Bible interpretation that has ever been made in the English language." We introduce this remark to convince every reader, that our judgment has been formed independent of local considerations, party bias, or personal attachments, which are too apt to have influence even over minds designing to be impartial. The opinion of Dr. Smith is that of a scholar and critic, which, we doubt not, time and posterity will confirm.

† Bishop Lowth was a good Hebrew scholar, as well as a thorough master of the Latin and Greek, but with the exception of Hebrew, he seems to have been wholly deficient in the Shemitish languages.



mination of the original Greek, in all passages of doubtful import, or susceptible of various renderings. At the close of the second volume, the Professor has embodied, in the shape of an excursus, and after the manner of Heyne, various most important theological and philological disquisitions. The whole work is conducted according to the soundest critical canons, and in its execution the Professor has explored the different sources of information which the searching criticism, and the extensive various inquiries of continental scholarship, have recently brought to view. The Old Testament and the New, sacred history and profane, antiquities, climate, customs, and character; the languages and literature of Judea, Syria, Chaldea, and Arabia, friend and foe, the early fathers and the Jewish rabbins, the pious critics and critical sceptics of our own days, are all laid under contribution to illustrate, in one respect or another, the numerous questions he discusses. Yet we are happy to add, there is no mere parade or ostentatious display of learning. The work is designed for the highest class of critically investigating minds, and, to them, nothing which it contains will be superfluous.

After this general statement of the contents of these volumes, our readers will see the propriety of the remark already made, that we cannot enter into a very critical examination of them. Yet, considering the efforts now making in this vicinity to destroy the canonical authority of the epistle to the Hebrews, we deem it suitable, in this connexion, to present a summary view of the evidence, on which it still claims, and will forever claim, to be a part of the sacred writings, a part of the inspired Word of God. In expressing our sentiments, we shall adopt freely the language of others, especially of Professor Stuart. Yet as our limits require abridgement and occasional alteration, we alone must be considered responsible for the words we use, except where marks of quotation are given. We premise these remarks, both in justice to our author, and to avoid the charge of plagiarism.

From among the various inquiries instituted and answered by Professor Stuart, we propose the three following: When was this epistle written? How early and how extensively was it received as canonical? By whom was it written?

When was this epistle written? To answer this question, we apply, first, to the epistle itself. We consider it, now, simply as a literary relic, the production of an anonymous author, published in an age confessedly long past. Does it, then, contain within itself any traces of the time at, or about which, it was written? It is admitted on all hands that it does. We will quote only one passage, and that, as it stands in the common version; "For if he [Jesus] were on earth, he should not be a priest, seeing that *there are priests that offer gifts according to the law.*" Heb. viii. 4. This passage clearly implies that the *temple rites were performed,*

when this epistle was written. As the whole temple service ceased with the destruction of Jerusalem, A. D. 70, it is clear that this epistle must have been written before that period. Of course, it belongs to the apostolic age.

Another argument, tending to the same point, is, that the particular views, which this epistle throughout gives of temptation to apostasy, are grounded on the then existing rites of the Jewish temple-worship. The state of feeling among the Jews at large, (which resulted from strong attachment to these rites, and the zeal with which their views of these things were maintained,) and their extreme jealousy of everything which had a tendency to diminish the supposed importance of their ritual, together with the imposing splendor and magnificence of the Levitical ceremonies, as then practised, all concurred to tempt those Hebrews, who had embraced Christianity, and renounced the common views of their countrymen, to relapse into their former views and habits. The shape in which this whole subject presents itself, in the epistle to the Hebrews, manifestly implies that the Levitical institutions were then in full vigor. But this was the case only in the apostolic age. Of course, the epistle must have been written during that age.

It is also plain that it was written *late* in the apostolic age. Those whom it addresses are represented as having been Christians long enough to be qualified, had they been properly attentive to their duty in learning the principles of Christianity, to become teachers of it, v. 12. The former days, in which they were first enlightened, are spoken of by the writer, x. 32, in distinction from the time then current. They are addressed also as having witnessed the death of their first teachers, xiii. 7; and their then present teachers are commended to their affectionate regard, xiii. 17. All these circumstances imply, that some time must have passed away since the Gospel was first preached among them, and they had been converted to Christianity. In other words, the epistle must have been written in the latter part of the apostolic age. We have already seen that it could not have been written later than A. D. 70; so, probably, it was not written before A. D. 63. It is, we think, impossible to fix upon the precise year, between these two periods, in which it was written. Professor Stuart seems to think the most probable period about A. D. 66. We have then indubitable evidence of the great antiquity of this epistle, *that it belongs to the age of the Apostles*. On this point there is no dispute. Critics of very different creeds agree here. In the Improved Version, the editors speak thus: "This epistle, however, which contains many important observations, and many wholesome truths, mingled, indeed, with some far-fetched analogies and inaccurate reasonings, was probably written before the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple." p. 531. Am. Ed. We shall find additional evidence of this antiquity as we proceed.—But the fact that an

epistle was written in the age of the apostles, by no means proves that epistle to have been written by an apostle.

We proceed, then, to inquire, how early, and how extensively, this epistle was received as canonical? This, it will be seen, is an important question, on which much depends. Happily we have an intelligent witness, perfectly competent and unexceptionable, whose testimony is conclusive upon both points involved in the inquiry before us. The epistle of Clement of Rome, (commonly called his *first* epistle,)\* Professor Stuart says,

“Is the most considerable, certainly the most important and best authenticated relic of ecclesiastical antiquity, which belongs to the first century of the Christian era. According to the general voice of the ancients, the author of this epistle is the Clement, whom Paul mentions as one of his fellow laborers, and as having his name written in the book of life, Phil. iv. 3. He was the third bishop of Rome, according to Irenaeus, Eusebius, and Jerome.”

In the name of the church at Rome, and as their bishop, he addressed an epistle to the church at Corinth. This epistle, as all agree, must have been written within the first century. Professor Stuart is willing to adopt the latest period, assigned by any respectable critic, which is A. D. 96. This will bring us within thirty years after the epistle to the Hebrews was, as we have already seen, most probably written.

Professor Stuart enters into an extended and careful examination of the quotations by Clement from the epistle to the Hebrews. Our limits will not allow us to follow him, nor is it necessary.

“It is a singular circumstance,” says he, “that no book of the New Testament should have been so frequently quoted by Clement, as the epistle to the Hebrews. That such is the fact, any one may satisfy himself, who will take the pains to examine his quotations, as referred to in Wotton's edition of this author, or the detail of them as exhibited in Lardner.”

The Professor closes his examination thus :

“The fact that Clement appeals to our epistle more frequently than to any other part of the New Testament ; that he nowhere appeals (so far as we can discover) to any apocryphal writing of the New Testament ; above all, that he appeals to our epistle by quoting passages from it in order to confirm and impress the truths he is in-

\* “It is called *first*, because there is a *second*, which bears his name, and which has usually been printed in connexion with the first. The first was so greatly esteemed by the churches in the early ages, that it was read publicly to the Christian assemblies, in like manner as the books of the New Testament. It is very often cited with great encomiums by nearly all the Christian fathers. It has been assailed, indeed, by a few critics, in modern times ; and what relic of antiquity has not ? It doubtless, like most ancient books, has suffered somewhat in regard to the purity of its text, by frequent transcription and by negligence. But, on the whole, it is a venerable and a precious relic of the primitive age of Christianity ; and it is very generally admitted to be such.—The *second* epistle is quoted by none of the early fathers ; and it differs in style and method so much from the *first*, that there can scarcely be a doubt of its spuriousness.”

culcating, and appeals to it in the same way and for the same purposes as he appeals to the most acknowledged parts of Scripture; the fact, too, that Clement was the companion and fellow laborer of Paul, and was also bishop of the church at Rome, the metropolis of the world, that he wrote in the name of the church there to the church at Corinth, and that he addressed to them passages from the epistle to the Hebrews, in such a way as to imply that this epistle was already well known and familiar to them: these facts, taken all together, make on my own mind a strong impression, that the evidence is as clear and convincing, that in the age of Clement our epistle was considered a part of the sacred writings, as it is that any other book of the New Testament was considered as a part of them."

Here, then, we have external evidence, confirming the internal evidence already adduced, of the early existence of the epistle to the Hebrews. We have also advanced a step further, and shown by a witness,—the friend and companion of Paul,—the early bishop of Rome,—a witness, inferior only to an apostle, that this epistle was not only known to the church at Rome, but was received by them as Scripture. Still further: It is quoted as Scripture in a letter to the Corinthian Christians more frequently than any other book of the New Testament, and in a way that implies the knowledge and reception of it in the church at Corinth. The Christians, then, of Rome and of Greece, received this epistle as Scripture, before the close of the first century.

The epistle to the Hebrews, according to the uniform voice of antiquity, and the opinion of the most respectable modern critics, was directed to the Jewish Christians in Palestine. But the distance from Jerusalem or Cesarea to Rome was great. Facilities of intercourse were comparatively few. In the early ages of the church, the press was unknown. Thus situated, the early churches in different districts were scrupulously watchful in examining and receiving gospels or epistles as of sacred authority. Even those, which contained the names of the writers, were admitted, only on the fullest evidence of their genuineness. How, then, we ask, should Clement, and the church at Rome, and the church at Corinth, unite to receive an epistle as canonical, unless there was full evidence of this? Especially, how should they, who were thus inquisitive and scrupulous as to the origin of epistles containing the writers' names, unite to receive an *anonymous* epistle, sent to distant churches? It becomes those, who profess to be *rational* in their belief, to give a reason for so anomalous a procedure. Unless Clement, the companion and friend of Paul, the early bishop of Rome, whose name was written in the book of life, and with him, "the saints of the Lord," the churches at Rome and at Corinth, were guilty of a most presumptuous and unhallowed procedure, unless they conspired to deceive all coming ages, and palm upon the world a deception of man for the truth of God, we

must acknowledge the epistle to the Hebrews to be, what they accounted it, *canonical*.

We have already stated the fact, that Clement, in a letter from the Roman to the Corinthian church, made frequent quotations from the epistle to the Hebrews. Eusebius, who flourished about two centuries after Clement, and whose predilections were Arian, in speaking of monuments preserving apostolic doctrines, says, "We count also the epistle of Clement, acknowledged by all, which he wrote in behalf of the church at Rome to the church at Corinth, in which, exhibiting many of the sentiments of the epistle to the Hebrews, he makes use of some expressions taken from it in the very words of the epistle, by which he most clearly shows that this epistle is no recent composition; whence it seems likely, that it is to be reckoned among the other writings of the apostle." i.e. Paul. His. Ecc. iii. 38. Let us now take another view of this subject, and suppose, for a moment, that the first epistle of Clement, as we now have it, is a forgery. Will that affect the testimony of Clement? Very little. It is admitted on all hands that the epistle to the Hebrews existed in the time of Eusebius, as it now exists, that is, in all important, essential particulars. It has suffered as little alteration as any other book of the New Testament. It is also admitted that the testimony of Eusebius, above quoted, came really from the pen of that early and great ecclesiastical historian. Allowing, then, the present epistle of Clement to have been forged, and the epistle, really written by him, to have perished, still it remains a fact, attested by the intelligent and impartial Eusebius, that Clement, writing in behalf of the church at Rome to the church at Corinth, did make use of expressions, taken from the epistle to the Hebrews, such, so many, and in such ways, that Eusebius not only inferred the canonical authority of the epistle, but also that it seemed likely to him that this epistle was to be reckoned among the other writings of Paul. The main and only important fact would, then, still remain, even supposing the present epistle of Clement to be a forgery; to wit, that Clement, writing in the name of the early Christians at Rome to the Corinthian Christians, *appealed to this epistle as of sacred authority*.

It will be seen that we are arguing here on a concession, which we are neither disposed nor *at liberty* to make. The epistle of Clement remains, to speak for itself, as to the quotations it contains, and the method of these quotations. It is an authentic and invaluable relic of the primitive church.

It deserves to be more distinctly noticed, that the testimony of Clement is not that of *an individual merely*. In this latter view it would be highly important, considering his relation to the apostle Paul, his opportunities of acquiring information, his piety, general intelligence, and sobriety of character. A better witness, an apostle excepted, is not to be had. Yet the value of his testimony is



greatly enhanced, by the fact that in his epistle he wrote *officially*; and, as its accredited organ, expressed the general sentiment of the existing *Roman church*. This is no new thought. It is at least fifteen hundred years old. Eusebius is careful to inform us that this epistle was written by Clement, "in behalf of the *church at Rome to the church at Corinth*." Clement is himself also careful to inform us of this fact. His very first sentence points out this communication as an official and general epistle, and not as a private personal letter of the bishop himself. He begins thus: "*The church of God, dwelling at Rome, to the church at Corinth,*" &c. For ourselves we want no other, we need no better witness than this. We rest with perfect confidence on testimony thus early given, thus explicit in its import, thus authoritative in its character. What the fellow laborer and bosom friend of Paul, what the intelligent, cautious and pious primitive bishop of Rome, what those who received their instructions from the apostles, and from Luke and Timothy and other companions of the apostles, accounted as the word of God, will survive all the assaults of open enemies and professed friends; will reprove the wicked, instruct the ignorant and the inquiring, console the afflicted, and animate the desponding, when the learning and the ingenuity of its assailants shall have perished in the lapse of time.

The genuine remains of the writers generally known as "apostolical fathers," who flourished in the age immediately succeeding the apostles, are few and meagre. Barnabas, Hermas, Polycarp, and Ignatius afford passages that much resemble passages in this epistle. Professor Stuart, however, does not place much reliance upon them, thinking that these resemblances may be accidental. Multitudes of theory-mongers have constructed theories, and spent years in their defence, relying for support on passages less numerous and far more irrelevant and uncertain, than those which the Professor almost entirely disregards. Lardner, judicious as he is, allows them more weight. It should, however, be stated, that the searching examination of modern criticism has rejected, as spurious, some passages on which he relied. We think Professor Stuart has not made so much of the testimony of the apostolical fathers as he might have done, consistently with the soundest critical canons. But he shows the strength of his cause, by not relying at all on a questionable witness or an uncertain testimony. In the construction of his argument, he judged both as a logician and a critic.

The first considerable writer, after Clement of Rome, whose works have reached us, is Justin Martyr. He flourished in Samaria, about A. D. 140. In his Dialogue with Trypho, the Jew, this passage occurs; "This is he, who after the order of Melchizedek, is king of Salem, and eternal priest of the Most High." In another place, he says of Christ, "he is called both angel and apostle;" the latter of which terms, (apostle) is given him only in

the epistle to the Hebrews. From these two passages, without referring to any other, it is evident that Justin was familiar with our epistle, and accounted it Scripture. The works of Justin, which have reached us, were addressed to the enemies of our religion. Of course, they did not admit of so full or frequent an appeal to the Scriptures, as those which were addressed to friends,—as the epistle of Clement, for instance, or as his own work, *De monarchia Dei*, which unhappily, is not extant. Still his testimony is explicit to the canonical authority of our epistle.

The *Peshito*,\* or old Syriac version, made, according to the opinion of the most judicious and intelligent critics, in the second century, contains this epistle. The *Itala*, and old Latin versions, made during the same period, and, most probably, in the first half of the second century, also contain it. These versions were in common use and of great authority among the churches of the East and the West. It is not pretended that either of them, at this period, comprised any book, which is now known to be apocryphal. Undoubtedly they did not contain any that were then deemed apocryphal. Here then is palpable evidence; *that the epistle to the Hebrews was widely circulated among Christians, and received by them as a part of the inspired Word of God, a short time after the apostolic age.* We use the expression “inspired word of God” as synonymous with *canonical*. This we shall assume, till our rationalists deny it.

Professor Stuart sums up his argument thus: which is also the amount of what we have said.

“The sum of what has been shown, under the present head of discussion, is, that the epistle to the Hebrews was written before the destruction of Jerusalem, probably but a short time before this event; that in about thirty years, at most, it had acquired such currency and credit, that the church at Rome, the metropolis of the world, in a letter addressed by their bishop to the church at Corinth, made repeated appeals to it as a book of divine authority, and in such a way as to imply a knowledge and acknowledgment of it by the Corinthian church, similar to their own;—that Justin Martyr, about A. D. 140, has evidently appealed to its contents as sacred;—that about this time, or not long after, it was inserted among the canonical books of the New Testament, by the churches of the East and the West; and that, consequently, it must have had, at a period very little after the apostolic age, a currency and a credit not at all, or at most very little, inferior to that of other acknowledged

\*The *Peshito* means *exact* version. Michaelis, a very competent judge, calls it the best translation he was acquainted with. It comprises the four Gospels, the Acts, all the epistles of Paul, including that to the Hebrews, the first epistle of John, the first epistle of Peter, and the epistle of James. It would seem that this version was made before the other parts of the New Testament were universally known and received. The translators were evidently cautious in the works they admitted. Nothing of a doubtful or questionable character was circulated in the *Peshito* for the early Syrian Christians. It should be remembered that the epistle to the Hebrews was directed to the Eastern Christians. This version testifies to its early reception by them.

books of the New Testament. Better evidence than this of early and general reception by the churches, it would be difficult to find, in respect to a considerable number of books in the New Testament; with *less* than this we are obliged to content ourselves, respecting several of them."

If Clement of Rome, together with the church over which he presided, and the Corinthian church, received this epistle as canonical and of sacred authority, before the close of the first century, while many were living in both those cities, who had been converted from Paganism to Christianity under the preaching of Paul, it surely is not uncritical to argue that the churches of Palestine, to which this epistle was sent, *received it as such much earlier*. But what stronger evidence can we have or desire for the sacred authority of any portion of the New Testament than *that the first Christians in Palestine, in Greece, and in Rome, universally and unanimously received it as canonical?* Was there any apocryphal book ever thus received? NEVER.—Here then we might rest. We are under no necessity of starting or of heeding the question, *who wrote this epistle?* Still we do not shrink from such an inquiry. We believe, and we hold ourselves responsible to show, not only that the epistle to the Hebrews is canonical, but that it is apostolical, of *Pauline* origin and authority. This brings us to our *third* general inquiry.

After having argued the main and most important position at such length, viz. the *canonical authority* of this epistle, we are not disposed to go *very* fully into the question of its authorship. Our principal object, with reference to this epistle, has been to give a condensed view of the evidence on which our belief in its canonical, sacred, divine authority rests. We have only stated those positions which are fundamental, and adduced or referred to that evidence which is most pertinent and conclusive. It will be seen by the arguments already advanced, that, even if it could be proved that Paul did not write the epistle to the Hebrews, it would not follow that it is not of sacred authority. Yet those among us, who impugn the authority of this epistle, set out with the assumption, that if Paul did not write it, it can have no claim to be considered Scripture. This, in logical language, is a complete *non sequitur*. The conclusion is vastly broader than the premises. Suppose we admit that Luke wrote it. Is it to be rejected, at once? Do the biblical critics in this vicinity reject the Gospel and the Acts of the Apostles by Luke? If so, we have not been informed of it. If they do not reject those books, but allow that they are inspired and of divine authority, why can they not allow that an epistle written by "the beloved physician" is also inspired and of divine authority, especially since this was so admitted by the primitive Syrian, Roman, Corinthian, and Egyptian Christians, and has been admitted by the church universal for seventeen centuries?—We submit it to the

judgement of intelligent, reasoning minds, whether the arguments which prove the canonical authority and Divine inspiration of the Acts will not prove the same thing with reference to the epistle to the Hebrews, on the supposition that Luke wrote that epistle. At all events, we are not aware of any flaw in this argument. If there be any, we would thank any man to point it out.

We make these remarks not because we are apprehensive of any deficiency of necessary evidence to establish the fact, that Paul wrote our epistle, but to expose the hollowness of the assumption by which the attempt has recently been made, for the first time on the American continent by men calling themselves Christians, to wrest this epistle from its sacred connexions, and divest it of Divine authority.

We proceed now to give a succinct view of the evidence on which we found the claim of Paul to the authorship of this epistle. This evidence may be divided into external and internal. The external evidence may be summed up in this proposition: *the most intelligent, impartial and competent judges in the early Christian agree in ascribing this epistle to Paul.*

They agree in thus attributing it to that apostle, in view of all the objections and difficulties that had been raised upon the subject.—The three most learned and most distinguished of the ecclesiastical writers were, unquestionably, Origen, Eusebius, and Jerome. These men were separated from each other widely in space, in time, and in creeds; were independent thinkers, indefatigable students, and of acknowledged, unimpeachable integrity. An opinion, as to an important matter of fact, in which they unhesitatingly agree, after a full examination of the evidence of that fact, we may rest assured, is an opinion well supported.

Jerome, in his epistle to Dardanus, thus writes: "It should be remarked that this epistle, which is inscribed to the Hebrews, is received, not only by the churches of the East, but by all preceding ecclesiastical writers in the Greek language, as the apostle Paul's; although most (i. e. of the Latins) think it a production of Barnabas or Clement." And farther on, "*We*, (i. e. Jerome himself) *receive it*, by no means following the custom of the present time, but the authority of the ancient writers."\* We have aimed to give as literal a version of Jerome's words as the idiom of the languages will admit. It will be seen from his testimony, that in his time the Oriental churches received this epistle as from the pen of Paul, that all ecclesiastical Greek writers had so received it, that Jerome himself so received it, uninfluenced by an opinion, which

\* "Illud nostris dicendum est, hanc epistolam, quae inscribitur ad Hebræos, non solum ab ecclesiis Orientalis, sed ab omnibus retro ecclesiasticis Græci sermonis scriptoribus, quasi Pauli apostoli suscipi, licet plerique eam vel Barnabæ, vel Clementis arbitrantur."

"Nos eam suscipimus nequaquam hujus temporis consuetudinem, sed veterum scriptorum auctoritatem sequentes."

had sprung up in the Roman church that it was the production of Barnabas or Clement. Jerome does not content himself by saying *non sequentes*; but uses a stronger expression, *nequaquam, by no means*. In this negative, we have an indication of the *feeling* of Jerome in regard to the practice of his cotemporaries. He felt assured, after a thorough examination, that those, who denied Paul to be the author of this epistle, were by no means to be imitated. Why? Evidently because they did not imitate those, who knew best; to wit, the ancient writers, the churches of the East to which this epistle was written, and all the Greek ecclesiastical writers of preceding times. An examination of these sources of evidence convinced Jerome that the epistle to the Hebrews was written by the apostle Paul. In addition to the passages already adduced from Jerome, we will quote one other, for the purpose of showing the general opinion of his times. In his epistle to Evagrius, speaking of our epistle he says, "Quam epistolam ad Hebræos, omnes Græci recipiunt, et nonnulli Latinorum;" i. e. "which epistle to the Hebrews all the Greeks receive, and some of the Latins." Jerome flourished near the close of the fourth century.

At the commencement of this century lived the ecclesiastical historian, Eusebius of Cesarea.\* He is the first writer, at least of those whose works have reached us, who has made out a full and regular catalogue of the books of the New Testament. His intelligence, his fidelity to truth, his impartiality, and his opportunities of acquiring information, were such as eminently qualified him for his important office, as historian of the primitive Christian church. His opinion is not that of the individual only, but of his most judicious and trustworthy cotemporaries and predecessors; formed, not hastily, but after the most extensive inquiry, after the most mature deliberation. Eusebius says, Book III. c. 3. "Fourteen epistles are clearly and certainly Paul's; although it is proper to be known, that some have rejected that which is written to the Hebrews, alleging, with the church at Rome, that it is spoken against, as not belonging to Paul." He elsewhere says that "it is not without reason that the epistle to the Hebrews is ascribed to Paul."

"These declarations Eusebius makes with a full view of the objections urged against this epistle by some. It is clear, then, that he did not consider those objections as respectable enough, or sufficiently extensive, or well grounded, to raise any serious doubts in his own mind about this matter, or to weigh at all against the current and general opinion of the church on this subject. Consequently, nothing can be more directly to the purpose, for demon-

\* Eusebius, surnamed Pamphilus, from his friend, the martyr of that name, was born at Cesarea in Palestine about A. D. 270.

He flourished during the reigns of Constantius and Constantine. Jerome describes him thus: "He was a man most studious in the divine Scriptures, was very diligent in making a large collection of the writings of Christian authors, and published innumerable volumes." He was made bishop of Cesarea about A. D. 315, and died in 339 or 340.



strating the strength and generality of the opinion in the church, at the time of Eusebius, that Paul wrote the epistle to the Hebrews, than this testimony. For as Eusebius has been careful, even when asserting that the epistle is 'clearly and certainly Paul's,' to note that there are some, who dissent from this opinion, and also to collect, in various instances, accounts of disagreement in respect to it, it may be regarded as quite certain, that he viewed opposition to it as neither well founded, nor extensive enough to raise any serious doubts, about the correctness of the common opinion of the churches."

Eusebius in his theological opinions leaned to Arianism. The controversy on this subject was rife in his time. The following remark, quoted by Storr from some unnamed writer, in this view of his testimony, is highly important. "The fact, that the Arians were the first in the Greek churches, whom history taxes with denying Paul to be the author of this epistle, adds no ordinary degree of weight to the declarations of Eusebius; and recommends his character, as a historian whom no predilection for a party could betray into a departure from historical truth." As a historian, Eusebius seems to have kept himself aloof from party and from prejudice; at least as much so, as the nature of the human mind will admit. The principle, happily expressed by Pliny in one of his epistles, Eusebius very successfully reduced to practice. *Historia, non ostentationi, sed fidei, veritatique componitur.* The explicit testimony of such an historian,—which makes against the party whose theological opinions his predilections led him to support, is deservedly of great weight.

As Eusebius flourished a century before Jerome, we now introduce another witness, who preceded Eusebius by a century. This witness is Origen\*, who is universally allowed to have excelled all the fathers in various and general learning, and to have yielded to none, except Jerome, as a critic. It will be readily seen, that the testimony of such a witness to a matter of fact is highly important. Origen repeatedly appeals to our epistle as, without doubt or question, of Pauline origin. The following quotations and references are made by Professor Stuart.

"Comm. on John ii., p. 18. ed. Huet: 'According to this the apostle says,' and then quotes Heb v. 12. That by this apostle he meant Paul, other passages in the same commentary clearly show. E. g. 'In the epistle to the Hebrews, the same Paul says,' p. 56; again, 'Paul in the epistle to the Hebrews,' p. 162. In his book against Celsus, he says, 'For it is written by Paul, in his letter to the Corinthians . . . and the same apostle says;' and then he quotes

\*Origen was the son of Leonidas, an early martyr; was born in Egypt, A. D 184 or 185; was early distinguished for his intellectual abilities and attainments; succeeded Clement in the school at Alexandria; was subsequently banished from that city; and spent the last twenty years of his life at Cesarea. Jerome says of him, "he wrote more than any other man could read." After suffering much during the Decian persecution, he died in the 70th year of his age.

Hebrews v. 12. *Contra Cels.* p. 482. ed. Bened. In his treatise on prayer, he quotes the epistle to the Hebrews, as an epistle of the same apostle who wrote the epistle to the Ephesians, *De Oratione* i, p. 250. ed. Bened. In a homily preserved in a Latin translation he says, 'Paul himself, the greatest of the apostles, writing to the Hebrews says;' then he quotes Heb. xii. 18, 22, 23. He also appeals to this epistle as *authoritative*, in establishing any position. e. g. *Comm. on John* ii. 57, 58. ed. Huet." vol. i. p. 110.

We omit the passage, preserved by Eusebius, taken from a homily by Origen on the epistle to the Hebrews. This passage has occasioned much discussion, and for a full view of the subject we must refer to the work of Professor Stuart, vol. i. p. 104. It is however, proper to add, that Origen's opinion relative to the epistle to the Hebrews was, that Paul was the author of the thoughts, the sentiments of the epistle, but who wrote it down, who *penned it*, he does not pretend to decide. He seems to have thought that Paul employed an amanuensis for this purpose, who, though he related strictly the apostle's ideas, clothed them in his own language. Yet, as we have already seen, he considered the epistle authoritatively canonical, as indisputably Pauline. The reason why Origen entertained this opinion as to an amanuensis seems to have been, that this epistle was thought to be purer Greek, than the other epistles of Paul, an idea which does not appear to be well founded. Origen says distinctly, in the passage preserved by Eusebius, "*If any church hold this to be an epistle of Paul, let it receive commendation on account of this; for it is not without reason that the ancients have handed it down as being of Paul.*"

As Origen was the successor, so he was also the pupil of Clement of Alexandria. Clement travelled in Italy, Greece, the East, and Egypt, in quest of knowledge, and employed masters in all those countries. He was, then, well qualified to judge what was the general usage and tradition of the churches, in respect to the canon of Scripture, as he had traversed a great part of the regions where churches were planted. In a passage, extracted and preserved by Eusebius, from a work of Clement now lost, entitled *Sketches*, the historian says, "Clement affirms that Paul is the author of the epistle to the Hebrews." Clement presided over the celebrated theological school at Alexandria. He flourished towards the close of the second century. His predecessor, Pantaeus, he describes as his last teacher in time, though first in merit. He compares him to the Sicilian bee, that had gathered flowers from the prophetic and apostolic meadows; and represents him as filling the minds of his hearers with pure knowledge. Pantaeus flourished about A. D. 180, and was at that time head of the Christian school at Alexandria. The testimony of this learned father and early teacher of Christianity is preserved by Eusebius in an extract from Clement. It is in these words. Clement,

after giving his own opinion relative to the authorship of the epistle to the Hebrews, which he ascribes, as before observed, to Paul, writes thus: "As our worthy presbyter" (so he usually calls Pantaenus) "has already said, Since the Lord himself was sent by the Almighty as an apostle to the Hebrews, Paul, being an apostle to the Gentiles, on account of modesty does not subscribe himself as the apostle to the Hebrews, both out of reverence for his Lord, and because, being a preacher and an apostle to the Gentiles, by a kind of supererogation he wrote to the Hebrews."

The reason Pantaenus here gives why Paul did not subscribe his name to the epistle is one that has deservedly little weight with critics. But the fact that Pantaenus ascribed it to Paul, as the author, is not at all affected by the futility of the reason he assigns why Paul withheld his name. The reason assigned by Clement is much more probable, that, as the epistle was designed for a circular among the Jews, Paul did not wish to awaken prejudice by the appearance of his name.

"Pantaenus considered it an established point, that Paul was the author of this epistle. He speaks of it as being certainly his. Now whence did Pantaenus derive such a conviction? Pantaenus, who was at the head of the first Christian school in the world; who resided near Palestine, and where constant communication was all the time kept up with that country; Pantaenus, who lived within a century after the apostolic age. It cannot be shown, nor in any way rendered probable, that he had any favorite or peculiar sentiment to be supported by the epistle to the Hebrews, which was the reason why he defended its apostolic origin. I am aware of the allegation made by some, that the epistle to the Hebrews was already received in the churches, as one of the sacred books; and that, as some doubted respecting it because it wanted an apostle's name to sanction it, Pantaenus, in order to save its credit, and defend the custom of the churches in receiving it as canonical, assigned the reasons produced above, why Paul did not subscribe his name to it. But is not this, after all, conceding the very point which it is meant to deny? The epistle to the Hebrews was already received by the churches; therefore Pantaenus defends it. Indeed? and how came it to be received? Whence this general credit already obtained? A credit so strong, a custom of reception so general, as to inspire Pantaenus with entire confidence in its canonical authority, and raise him above all the objections which had been suggested. And how comes it, that no epistles should have made their way into the canon, amid all the conflicting opinions, and various apocryphal and supposititious writings of the early ages of the church, but those which either bear an apostle's name, or were by *general consent* assigned to an apostle? This is a fundamental question, in respect to the great subject of the authority of our New Testament canon. It is an *articulus stantis vel cadentis auctoritatis* in respect to it. And the answer to this question plainly is, that the catholic church in the primi-

tive age, taken as a body, were governed by the maxim, that no book or epistle could be regarded as canonical, except such as was either written or revised by an apostle, and generally believed to be so. Such being the fact, we may ask, and we ought to ask, How came the epistle to the Hebrews into the canon, so that Clement of Rome in the very first century, and Pantaenus in the next, refer to it as Scripture? Why, plainly, because an apostolic origin was attributed to it. Pantaenus regards this as certainty; and Pantaenus says, that the apostle who wrote it was *Paul*."

Thus writes Professor Stuart, and we deem his argument perfectly conclusive.

We have thus traced back the opinion of the church from the time of Jerome through the intermediate ages of Eusebius, Origen, and Clement of Alexandria, to the days of Pantaenus, who flourished within less than a century after the apostolic age, 'when tradition' as Bertholdt says, 'might be easily traced back to its origin.' Does not, then, the testimony of Pantaenus, (whom Photius represents to have been not only a hearer of those who had seen the apostles, but of some of the apostles themselves,) supported as it is by the facts, that Clement of Rome had already, addressing the Corinthian church in the name of the church at Rome, appealed to this epistle as Scripture, that Justin Martyr had also appealed to it in the same way, and that it was at this time received into the canon of the churches in the East and the West, amount to satisfactory evidence, in regard to general ecclesiastical tradition, at the time in which this father lived? This tradition, according to Pantaenus, ascribed the epistle to Paul. Better and more conclusive evidence for an anonymous epistle we can hardly conceive; we do not desire.

(To be continued.)

PROVINCIAL LETTERS, CONTAINING AN EXPOSURE OF THE REASONINGS AND MORALS OF THE JESUITS; *By Blaise Pascal.* Originally published under the name of *Louis de Montalte.* Translated from the French. To which is added, a *View of the History of Jesuits, and the late Bull for the revival of the Order in Europe.* New York: J. Leavitt. Boston: Crocker and Brewster. 1828. pp. 319.

These letters were chiefly written in the year 1656. The subjects of which they treat, as indicated by the title, are some of the points, at that time in dispute in most Catholic countries, between the Jansenists and Jesuits.\*

\* The Jesuits, or Society of Jesus, were a famous religious order of the Romish church, founded by Ignatius Loyola, a Spanish knight, in 1540. "The Jesuits are taught to consider themselves as formed for action, in opposition to the monastic orders, who retire from the concerns of the world; and engaging in all civil and commercial transactions,

“The author was originally induced to compose and publish them by a very casual circumstance. Accustomed frequently to visit a sister, who had taken the veil in the monastery of Port Royal, he was introduced to the society of some celebrated Jansenists, particularly to M. Arnauld, who had recently been engaged in a dispute with the doctors of the Sorbonne. The subjects of difference related chiefly to those points of faith which have continually divided Arminians and Calvinists in the Protestant community; the Jesuits being allied in sentiment to the former, and the Jansenists to the latter. The Jesuits had selected five propositions from a posthumous work of Jansen or Jansenius, bishop of Ypres, which his adherents believed to contain the doctrine of the Scriptures and the Fathers on the litigated articles of faith, and procured their condemnation by the Faculty of Theology at Paris, and by Pope Innocent X. Arnauld published a letter in 1655, in which he declared that the condemned propositions were not to be found in the book of Jansenius, and then proceeded to controvert the Jesuitical notion of efficacious grace. Being at this time a member of the Sorbonne, violent altercations arose; and as his adversaries were in power, they procured his expulsion from the Faculty of Theology, by a decree, in January 1656. The defence which he made was not in itself very satisfactorily written, and some of his friends intimated their wish to M. Pascal, with whom they had become recently acquainted, and of whose talents they had formed a very just idea,

insinuating themselves into the friendship of persons of rank, studying the disposition of all classes, with a view of obtaining an influence over them, and undertaking missions to distant nations; it is an essential principle of their policy, by every means to extend the Catholic faith. No labor is spared, no intrigue omitted, that may prove conducive to this purpose. The constitution of this society is monarchical. A General is chosen for life by deputies from the several provinces, whose power is supreme and universal.

“Before the conclusion of the sixteenth century, the Jesuits had obtained the chief direction of the youthful mind in every Catholic country in Europe. They had become the confessors of almost all its monarchs, and the spiritual guides of nearly every person distinguished for rank or influence. At different periods, they obtained the direction of the most considerable courts, and took part in every intrigue and revolution.

“Notwithstanding their vow of poverty, they accumulated, upon various pretences, immense wealth. By obtaining a special license from the court of Rome to *trade* with the nations whom they professed to convert, they carried on a lucrative commerce in the East and West Indies, formed settlements in different countries, and acquired possession of a large province in South America, where they reigned as sovereigns over some hundred thousand subjects.”

“The Jesuits have been notorious for attempting the lives of princes. The reign of Queen Elizabeth presents a succession of plots. In her proclamation, dated Nov. 15, 1602, she says, that ‘the Jesuits had fomented the plots against her person, excited her subjects to revolt, provoked foreign princes to compass her death, engaged in all affairs of state, and by their language and writings, had undertaken to dispose of her crown.’ Lucius enumerates five conspiracies of the Jesuits against James I. before he had reigned a year. They contrived the gunpowder plot.” “Henry III. of France was assassinated by Clement, a Jesuit, in 1589. The Jesuits murdered William, Prince of Orange, in 1584. They attempted the life of Louis XV. for imposing silence on the polemics of their order, besides innumerable other atrocities.

“The pernicious spirit and constitution of this order, rendered it early detested by the principal powers of Europe; and while Pascal, by his ‘Provincial Letters,’ exposed the morality of the Society, and thus overthrew their influence over the multitude, different potentates concurred, from time to time, to destroy or prevent its establishments. Charles V. opposed the order in his dominions: it was expelled in England, by the proclamation of James I. in 1607; in Venice, in 1606; in Portugal, in 1759; in France, in 1764; in Spain and Sicily, in 1767, and suppressed and abolished by pope Clement XIV. in 1775.” In 1814, the order was re-established by a Popish edict, in all its former powers and privileges.



that he would write something upon the subject. This occasioned his first letter, which being much admired, was soon succeeded by others, under the fictitious name of Louis de Montalte; the consequence was, the Jesuits became the objects of ridicule and contempt to all Europe." pp. iii., iv.

A circumstance worthy of notice respecting these letters, is the high praise which has been awarded to them at different periods, and by persons of very different sentiments and characters. "The Bishop of Meaux, being asked what work he would covet most to be the author of, supposing his own performances set aside, answered, *the Provincial Letters*." In the recorded judgement of Voltaire, "Moliere's best comedies do not excel these letters in wit, nor the compositions of Bossuet in sublimity." "Gibbon is said to have possessed so enthusiastic an admiration for this book, that he was accustomed to read it through once every year." D'Alembert, speaking of the *Provincial Letters*, says, "This masterpiece of pleasantry and eloquence diverted and moved the indignation of all Europe, at their (the Jesuits) expense."

These letters properly divide themselves into two parts, the first ten being occupied in exposing the frivolous distinctions, dishonest arts, and immoral principles and practices of the Jesuits; and the last eight, with the author's defence of himself against the attacks which his previous letters had provoked. One of the most difficult things which Pascal had to accomplish was to discuss the subjects which lay directly before him—the idle distinctions of a scholastic theology respecting *next power*, and *sufficient* and *actual grace*, and *probable opinions*, &c. &c. in such manner, as to interest people of wit and fashion, and make them laugh at the expense of his adversaries. But in this he succeeded, to the utmost of his wishes. "Every body knew the *Provincial Letters* by heart, while the answers to them, ill written, and full of gall," were scarcely read, and still less regarded.

The most amusing part of this book, if not too shocking to amuse, is that in which the writer exposes the Jesuitical morality.

A few extracts will be interesting to our readers. The first exhibits the views of the Jesuits, relative to the love of God.

"Is a person obliged to cherish a real affection for God? Suarez says, 'it is sufficient to love him a little previous to the moment of death,' without fixing the precise time:—Vasquez, 'that it is enough to love him in the very moment of dying:'—others, 'at Baptism;' others again, 'at seasons of contrition;' and some, 'upon festival days:' but our Father Castro Palao opposes all these opinions and with good reason—*merito*. Hurtado de Mendoza states, that 'we are under an obligation to love God once in a year, and that we are kindly treated in not being obliged to it more frequently:' but Father Coninck, that we are under an obligation to do so 'once in three or four years'—Henriquez, 'every five years;' and Filiutius says, 'it

is probable that we are not rigorously obliged to it every five years.' St. Thomas says, we are under obligation to love God 'as soon as we acquire the use of reason;' but that is a little too soon. Scotus mentions every Sunday; but on what authority? Others, in seasons of grievous temptation: *right*, in case this is the only way of avoiding temptation. Sotus states, that when some great benefit has been conferred by God, it is well to thank him for it. Others speak of the hour of death: that is too little. Nor do I believe it to be necessary on every sacramental occasion: attrition will suffice with confession, if it be convenient. Suarez says that we are obliged to love God some time: but at what time? You are to be the judge of that; he professes to know nothing about it. But if such a doctor as this does not know, I am at a loss to conceive who does. And he concludes at last, that, in strict propriety, we are only obliged to observe the other commandments, without cherishing any affection to God, and without having any inclination of mind towards him, provided we do not hate him." "You may judge of the value of this dispensation by the price it cost, the price of the blood of Jesus Christ. The very crown and perfection of this doctrine, is its releasing from the *troublesome* obligation of loving God, which is the privilege of the evangelical as distinguished from the Jewish law." pp. 154, 156.

The following promiscuous extracts will shew how these self-styled 'holy Fathers' contrived to release their disciples and followers from the most sacred obligations, not only of religion, but of morality and decency, and to encourage and embolden them in the worst of crimes.

"If a person give a temporal for a spiritual possession, that is, money for a living, and give the money as the price of the benefice, it is a manifest simony; but if it be given as the motive to induce the patron to confer it, it is not simony, though he who confers it have the pecuniary consideration alone in view." "By this means we prevent an infinity of simoniacal transactions: for who would be so wicked, when he offers his money for a benefice, to do it as the *price*, and not as the motive to influence its bestowment? No one surely, can act so criminally." p. 88.

"It is no simony to procure a benefice, by promising money which you really never intended to pay, because it is only a mock simony, which is no more real, than a counterfeit guinea is a genuine one." p. 186.

"May servants who complain of their wages, add to them, by swindling from their master's property, as much as they deem necessary to recompense their services? They may do it *sometimes*, as when they are so poor in looking out for a situation, that they have been obliged to accept whatever offer was made them, whilst other servants of the same class gain more elsewhere." p. 92. "They are allowed to commit theft not only in cases of extreme necessity, but when their afflictions, though heavy, are not extreme." p. 118.

“A warrior may instantly pursue a wounded enemy, not indeed with the intention of rendering evil for evil, but to maintain his own honor.” “He who receives a blow must not indulge a spirit of revenge, but he may cherish a wish to avoid disgrace, and for this purpose repel the assault even with his sword.” p. 98.

“An incumbent may, without being guilty of a mortal crime, wish for the death of the person who is a pensioner upon his benefice; and a son for that of his father, and rejoice in it whenever it happens, provided that it is only on account of the property that accrues to him, not from any personal hatred.” p. 99.

“It is perfectly reasonable to say, that a man may fight a duel to save his life, his honor, or his goods, if there be any considerable quantity of them, when it is apparent that his adversary has an evil design unjustly to rob him of them by suits at law and chicanery; and there is no other way of preserving them. Navarrus well says in such a case, he may accept or send a challenge—*licet acceptare et offerre duellum*. A person may also kill an enemy secretly, and when this can be done, so as to get clear out of the affair, it is far better than fighting a duel; because by this means he avoids every evil consequence; on the one hand, the exposure of his own life to hazard, and on the other, partaking of the crime of his enemy, which he must do in a duel.” pp. 100, 101. “It is lawful to kill any one who says *you lie*, if he can be stopped by no other means; and the sentiment of our Fathers is, that you may kill a person in the same manner for *slander*.” p. 104.

“A priest or monk is allowed to kill a calumniator who *threatens* to publish scandalous crimes of their society or themselves, if there exist no other means of prevention; as when just ready to propagate his malignities, if he be not instantly killed. For in such a case, as it would be lawful for a monk to kill the person who was desirous of taking away his life, so is it to kill him who wishes to take away his honor, or that of his fraternity, in the same manner as it is for the people of the world in general.” “A priest not only *may*, on certain occasions, kill a calumniator, but there are cases when he ought to do it.” pp. 107, 108.

“May a judge, in a question of right, decide according to one *probable opinion*, and abandon another which is *more probable*? Yes; though it be contrary to his own sentiments.” p. 112. “Judges may receive presents from parties, when they are given either from friendship or from gratitude, in consideration of the justice which has been rendered them, or in order to induce them to render it, or to excite them to pay particular attention to their business, or to engage them to expedite it.” p. 113.

“A person desires a soldier to beat his neighbor, or burn the barn of a man who has given him some offence. The question is, whether in case the soldier absconds, the person who employed him to commit these injuries ought to make reparation for the damage that has ensued. My opinion is, that he ought not: for no one is bound to make restitution, if he have not violated justice; and pray,

where is any such violation in requesting another to do one a favor?" p. 118.

"Our most celebrated casuists formally decide, that what a judge takes from parties whom he has favored by an unjust sentence, what a soldier receives for having killed another, and what any one obtains for the most infamous crimes, may be lawfully retained." p. 120. "A judge is under an obligation to restore whatever he may have received for doing *justice*, unless it were given him purely from a motive of liberality; but he is not at all obliged to return what he has received of a man in whose favor he has passed an *unjust sentence*." pp. 122, 123.

"It is lawful to use ambiguous terms, to give the impression a different sense from that which you understand yourself." "A person may take an oath that he has not done such a thing, though in fact he has, by saying to himself, it was not done on a certain specified day, or before he was born, or by concealing any other similar circumstance, which gives another meaning to the statement. This is in numberless instances extremely convenient, and is always very just, when it is necessary to your health, honor, or property." p. 135.

"It is only a venial sin to calumniate and ruin the credit of such as speak evil of you, by accusing them of false crimes." p. 238. "Calumny, when made use of against a calumniator, though it be a lie, yet is not a mortal sin, nor contrary to justice or charity." p. 239.

Not only did the Jesuits, as we here see, allow the commission of all manner of crimes, they dispensed with everything which had the appearance of repentance.

"When those who have often relapsed into sin without manifesting any signs of amendment, shall present themselves before a confessor, and tell him that they repent of what they have done and resolve to be better in future, he ought to believe their declaration, though it be presumed that such resolutions only proceeded from the lips and not the heart; and though afterwards such persons plunge into the same excesses, and even with greater licentiousness, they may, notwithstanding, in my opinion, receive absolution." p. 147. "Absolution ought neither to be refused nor delayed to such as are in the habit of sinning against the laws of God, of nature, and of the church, though no one can see any hope of amendment." p. 148.

Respecting the principles of the Jesuits, as here disclosed, there can be but one opinion and feeling—a feeling of *detestation* and *abhorrence*. But it will be said, notwithstanding the late reestablishment of this order, we can be in no immediate danger of their interference and influence, at least in this portion of the United States. Consequently, the publication of these letters, and the notice here taken of them, are unseasonable and unnecessary.—In

reply to this, it should be observed, that we may be in more danger of the interference and the intrigues of Jesuits than we are fully aware. Great efforts, we know, are at this moment making, and large sums of money have been bestowed, for the purpose of spreading the Catholic religion in the United States.—It should be remembered, too, that there are other important purposes which the volume before us is fitted to answer, besides the refutation of literal Jesuits. The arts of those who corrupt the word of God, and who diminish the claims and remove the restraints of religion, have ever been, in many respects, the same. This remark has repeatedly forced itself upon us, in perusing these letters of Pascal.

Persons now, and in every age, who would take away “the offence of the cross,” and make religion popular with worldly men, are obliged to detract from its holy requirements, and conform it to the wishes and habits of the people. Instead of erecting the standard of the Gospel, and endeavoring to raise their fellow men to it, they are disposed to bring down the claims and sanctions of the Gospel, till it meets the convenience of those to whom it is addressed. So it was with the Jesuits.

“Our chief design,” say they, “was to authorize no other maxims than those of the Gospel in their utmost strictness: and it is sufficiently evident by the regulation of our own conduct, that if we allow of any remissness in others, it is rather attributable to our condescension, than to our plan. We are in fact compelled to it: mankind are now so corrupt, that being unable to bring them to our principles, we must bring our principles to them. They would otherwise leave us, nay worse, they would become totally abandoned. Our casuists have therefore found it necessary to consider to what vices they are most inclined in every condition, that they might prescribe such agreeable rules, without offending against truth, as to render the compromise perfectly easy.” p. 87.

The methods by which the Jesuits freed themselves from opposing declarations of Scripture were the same with those practised by triflers now. One of these they called “the *interpretative system*.” It consisted in giving their own false interpretation to a principal term. We have it fully illustrated in the following example:

“We are exhorted in the Gospel, ‘to give alms out of our abundance;’ but many casuists have discovered a mode of exonerating even the most opulent persons from the obligation of alms-giving. This will, perhaps, appear to you a contradiction; but it is easy to reconcile it, by an interpretation of the term *abundance* or *superfluity*, so that it can scarcely ever be shown that a person possesses it. The learned Vasquez has done this in his treatise on alms-giving, c. 4. “That which is accumulated for the purpose of aggrandizing our own condition, or that of relatives, is not called *superfluity*; for which reason, people can seldom be said to possess superfluity, not even kings themselves.” pp. 83, 84.



How many plain and important declarations of Scripture are dispensed with now, by the adoption of this 'interpretative system.' 'The Word was *God*;' but God here means nothing more than a Divinely commissioned messenger. 'Ye must be *born again*;' but 'born again' signifies only a gradual amendment. 'Except ye *repent*, ye shall all likewise *perish*;' but repent here does not mean-repent, nor does perish mean perish.

Another method, by which the Jesuits escaped the force of Divine declarations, was to *deny their application to the then existing age*. 'They were intended only for the primitive times, and the early Christians.' "The Fathers were good authority for the morals of *their age*, but they lived at too remote a period for us." p. 79. Commenting upon 1 Tim. ii. 9, where the apostle gives directions respecting the dress of Christian females, the Jesuit Lessius remarks, "Those precepts of Scripture regarded only the ladies of *that age*, who were required to furnish an edifying example of modesty to the heathen." p. 138.—Instances of similar management are so common in our own times, that we hardly need refer to them. "Jesus assured his apostles that 'the world would hate them;' that they 'should have tribulation in the world.' And he declares to them, 'Ye are not of the world.' We very well know," says the Christian Register, "that this language grew out of the circumstances in which Christianity necessarily placed its adherents at *that time*, when the preaching of it had extended to but few places, and the great mass of society, Jewish and Pagan, was wholly unaffected by its influence." "But this state of things, and the causes which produced it, have utterly disappeared. *It is not now true* to the letter concerning Christians, that the world hateth them." Sept. 16, 1826. By parity of reasoning, it must be said respecting passages such as the following, 'The whole world lieth in wickedness;' 'Be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind:' 'Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world:' 'The friendship of the world is enmity with God; whosoever, therefore, will be a friend of the world, is the enemy of God,'—that these are applicable only to the primitive age, and in the present improved state of society, are not true.

Another remark has suggested itself, in connexion with the work before us, and with this we close: In religious controversy, when persons find themselves unable to meet the statements and arguments of an opponent, they will be sure to complain most grievously of his *spirit*. 'Oh! what bitterness! What malignity! What an unchristian spirit! Surely, it cannot be tolerated in a Christian land.' This representation was fully exemplified in the case of Pascal and the Jesuits. They could not deny his state-

ments; they could not refute his reasonings; nor could they endure the keenness of his invective, or the force of his appeals, or the weight of that public odium which he was drawing down upon them;—and they had no resource left, but to cry out upon his *spirit*. ‘Such levity—such profaneness—such ridicule of sacred things!’ The holy fathers were petrified, horror-struck with it! It was too insufferable for pious ears! And in the gentleness of their own spirit, they lavished upon poor Pascal “the epithets of impious, buffoon, ignoramus, merry andrew, impostor, calumniator, knave, heretic, disguised Calvinist, disciple of du Moulin, possessed with a legion of devils,” &c. &c., till he felt himself ‘honored overmuch’ by the number and measure of their reproaches.

Now these Jesuits acted, in this instance, as all professed religionists of a proud and selfish spirit will be likely to act, in similar circumstances. If such men can deny the statements of an opponent, or refute his reasonings, they have no occasion to be vexed. They will refute and silence him, and let him go. But when they find themselves unable to do this, and still are too proud to retreat from a bad cause, they can only do as the Jesuits did—complain most grievously of his *spirit*—while they exhibit, with seeming unconsciousness, a tenfold more exasperated spirit themselves.

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## SELECTIONS.

### THE CLOSING YEAR.

It has been often remarked, and I fear with great reason, that mankind in general live under the influence of two grand delusions. They conduct themselves, for the most part, as if this life were never to have an end; and regard the next, as if it were never to have a beginning. Yet, surely, “of man’s miraculous mistakes, this bears the palm.” For it seems to be impossible for a reflecting person to look around him, without being continually reminded of his own mortality, and the short-lived duration of all terrestrial things. The trees of the forest rise up in majestic grandeur, only to wither, and scatter their leafy honors around them. The flower that opens to the light of the morning, is chilled by the blast of evening. The river rolls onward until it is lost in the ocean. The child grows up to florid youth, exults awhile in the vigor of manhood, and soon sinks into the decrepitude and imbecility of old age. Nations and kingdoms flourish and decay, in perpetual succession. “Babylon is become a possession for the bittern, and pools of water; and her towers and palaces are laid low, and swept with the besom of destruction.” Everything within us and about us is mutable. Our friends forsake us or die; our hopes sicken, our opinions change. We feel, that we have no abiding city here; we see that the fashion of this world passeth away. The seasons, with restless activity, are continually

altering the face of nature. Day succeeds to day, and year to year; and on every object of creation, the characters of brevity and instability are engraved by the finger of God.

Reflections of this nature are, at all times, salutary, and can hardly fail to convey an important lesson of wisdom to every serious mind: But they come with greater force, at those stated periods, which mark distinctly the unceasing progress of time. On these points of our existence, we naturally rest awhile, like travellers at some stage of their journey, to recall the scenes we have already witnessed; to survey the place to which we have arrived; and to gain some information of the countries through which we have yet to pass. Such pauses as these are eminently calculated to banish that levity, which is the bane of true wisdom; and to promote that thoughtfulness and serious consideration, which are so highly favorable to growth in grace.

The present year has nearly performed its destined course, it is about to be "numbered with the years beyond the flood;" its glimmering light trembles in the socket, and will soon be extinguished forever. Such, my friends, is our fate. The termination of our time is, also, near at hand; and, at no distant period, we too, like the year which we contemplate, must resign our stations, and give place to a new generation. Let us, then, dedicate its last hours to a serious retrospect of the past, to a careful examination of our present state, and to unfeigned vows of amendment for the future. Thus shall the new year look back with pleasure on the old; and the new generation honor our memories, when our bodies sleep in the grave.

And who is there, that can, without strong and various emotions, review the events of but one year? Has the messenger of death entered your dwelling; has your loved partner been torn from your arms; some valued friend taken from your bosom; some dear child severed from your fond embrace? I do not wish you abruptly to check your tears. Jesus wept at the grave of the friend whom he loved. Time, with lenient hand, will close your wounds, and religion will consecrate your moderated sorrow. But listen to the admonitions of the great teacher, Death. You have leaned on the world, and the broken reed has pierced you to the heart. You have chased a shadow, and your hands have grasped the air. Turn, then, your thoughts to those mansions, where friends shall never die, where children will never leave you, and where those, whom God has joined, shall never more be put asunder.

But some of you have passed the year in health, and peace and comfort: your friends and families smiling around you; your characters and fortunes rising in the world; and your prospects brightening on every side. And does not this enviable, unmerited exemption from the common lot, teach you a lesson of gratitude to that Being, who has thus anointed you with the oil of gladness above your fellows? Ah, thoughtless, unthankful man! Well might Isaiah say, "The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib; but Israel doth not know; my people do not consider."

But, independently of all temporal concerns, who is there, that

can lay his hand on his heart, and say, that during the present year, he has committed no actions which his conscience reproves, and omitted no duty, which reason and religion required him to perform? Who has so bridled his tongue, as to let no expression of anger exasperate his enemy, or too severe a reproach agonize an offending friend? And, more than all, who has so kept his thoughts and heart as not to offend that Being, who cannot look, without displeasure, on impurity? Alas! my friends, here the best of us must plead guilty. Here are motives of contrition, of humility, and of amendment, for us all.

But, while we thus bring our thoughts to a serious review of the past, and examination of the present state of our hearts, how naturally and anxiously do they press forward to the unknown scenes of futurity! Imagination takes wing, and hope paints the days to come in all the gay colors of delight. But let us not trust to this smiling delusion. Here, let us once more recur to experience; and as age delivers his counsels to youth, let the old year teach a lesson of prudence and moderation to the new.

Life, my friends, let hope flatter as she may, will still be a checkered scene of good and evil. In vain you anticipate that unmixed portion of happiness, which Heaven has denied to the lot of man. You cannot have the rose without its thorn. Winter will continue to deform the beauties of the year, and flowers will not spring up, spontaneously, to decorate your path. Be sober then and modest in your expectations. Such as past times have been, such in general, as to the distribution of joys and sorrows, of hopes and disappointments, will the future be: And all that you have to wish and strive for is this, that affliction may be endured, in future, with more patience, and prosperity enjoyed with more thankfulness and greater moderation.

And tell me, my readers, of the scenes in which the present year has seen you engaged, of the actions which it has enabled you to perform, what scene does memory most delight to recall, what actions confer most honor upon your characters, and leave the best impression on your minds? Are they not those, in which you consulted the dictates of conscience, the purity of your own hearts, and the welfare of your fellow men? And, as only your past deeds of virtue now make you happy, be assured that virtue alone will constitute your happiness to the end of life. Secure, then, while it is in your power, a retrospect so delightful; and let your conduct be so regulated, throughout the approaching year, that when it, also, shall have come to its last hour, its memory may leave no sting behind.

With such reflections as these, let us bid adieu to all the hopes and fears, the cares and anxieties, the restless activity, and busy enterprise of the year, that is now hastening to its close: And with renewed strength, and holy resolution, let us enter on the year to come. And may God enable us so to fill it up with duty and usefulness, that should death meet us in its course, he may find us waiting; and should eternity unfold its great realities, we may find them to us forever glorious.

## EXPOSITION.

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him, and without him was not anything made that was made. In him was life, and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not." John i. 1—5.

The following exposition of these words is from the Rev. Dr. J. P. Smith's "Scripture Testimony to the Messiah," a work which we take the liberty to recommend as, on the whole, the most learned, candid and satisfactory discussion concerning the person of Christ, and concerning the connected topics generally, which we remember to have seen in the English language.

The Gospel of John is distinguished, by very observable characters, from the compositions of the other evangelists. It has much less of narrative, and is more largely occupied with the doctrines and discourses of the Lord Jesus. The topics also of the discourses possess a marked character, indicating that they have been selected with an especial view to the presenting of what, during his earthly ministry, Jesus himself had taught, concerning his own person, and the spiritual and never dying blessings which he confers upon those who believe on his name.

The Introduction which the apostle prefixes to his work has always been an object of peculiar attention, on the part both of friends and of enemies, for its beauty and sublimity, and for its evidently presenting a crowning epitome of the principal doctrines delivered in the whole. To arrive at a satisfactory interpretation of this important passage, I shall attempt a careful investigation of the terms which it employs, and of the force and intention of each phrase and proposition that has a relation to the subject of our inquiry.

I. "The Logos," or *Word*. That this term cannot with propriety be expressed by *Wisdom*, *Reason*, *Speech*, or any other abstract word; but that it must refer to a personal subsistence; is manifest from the attributives of intelligence and active power connected with it, in the sequel of the passage. This is, also, admitted by Mr. Cappe and Mr. Belsham.

The ready manner, without any notice or explanation, in which the evangelist introduces the term, is a strong ground of presumption that it was familiar to the persons for whom his work was primarily intended. They were, most probably, the Christians of Ephesus and the coasts and islands of Asiatic and European Greece.

II. "The beginning." The word used by the evangelist very often denotes *principality* in order or dignity: and when it is applied to time, we can ascertain from nothing but the connexion and sense of the passage, whether it refers to the beginning of the created universe, or to the commencement of any other period or series of things. It occurs in the New Testament with a considerable diversity of reference: as, to the outset of a man's life, to the first in a series of events, and to the beginning of a narrative. Frequently it denotes the commencement of the Gospel annunciation, whether by



the ministry of Christ, or that of his apostles. It also frequently signifies the beginning of the works of God, in the formation and government of the dependant universe, or any principal part of that universe.

The question to be determined is, whether the term in this passage was intended to denote the beginning of time, or the beginning of the Gospel dispensation. This can be ascertained only from the sense and scope of the connexion, or from the comparison of other passages. With a view to this end, the following observations are submitted.

1. There seems to be a designed conformity of phraseology with the first sentence of the book of Genesis. The apostle writes, "In the beginning was the Word;" instead of the more natural order, "The Word was in the beginning."

2. In all the passages where the expression refers to the commencement of the Gospel dispensation, or of any other order of things, such signification is clearly marked by the circumstances of the connexion. But there is nothing here to suggest the inferior application. On the contrary, the fair and obvious construction, especially to the evangelist and his countrymen, whose minds were familiar with the Mosaic language just referred to, plainly leads to no other object than the *beginning of all time and nature*. Had it been the sacred writer's intention to lay his epoch in the opening of the Gospel dispensation, it is next to impossible to conceive that he would not have coupled his expression with some adjunct that should clearly define his meaning.

3. Upon the hypothesis referred to, the sense of the clause is singularly jejune and nugatory, not to say absurd. "The Messiah existed at the commencement of his own ministry." It cannot be supposed that the apostle, or any writer of sound judgement, would introduce such a trifling proposition with an air so solemn and emphatic.

These reasons appear to me satisfactorily to establish, that the designed signification of the expression is, *at the commencement of the created universe*. Thus it coincides with the well known sense of the Hebrew phrase; and indeed, so plain and obvious is the phrase to convey the sense of the first point of time, that we find it to have been in use with the purest classical authors. It is self-evident that what existed at the actual commencement of creation, must have existed before the creation; and whatever was before the creation, must have been from eternity.

III. "The Word was with God." The expression denotes an intimate union of presence, society, and enjoyment. It frequently occurs in relation to different kinds of social conjunction. From it alone, therefore, no certain conclusion can be drawn; but the connexion suggests that, to be in intimate society and union with the Deity "at the beginning," at the time when the created universe had its commencement, cannot reasonably be understood of any created nature. It may, then, be most justly considered as coinciding with the meaning of our Lord, in his declarations, "I am in the Father, and the Father is in me.—The glory which I had, with Thee

before the world was." The fair interpretation, therefore, of *being with God*, in the time and circumstances pointed out by the connexion, is that the Word existed in the eternal period before all creation, naturally and essentially ONE BEING with the Deity, yet possessing some species of relative distinction.

IV. "The Word was God." The order of the clauses, and the Hebrew manner of concatenating propositions, suggest a connexion of this with the preceding; thus, "The Word was with God, *in such a manner that, in fact, the Word was God.*"

Samuel Crellius, feeling as it would seem the pressure of this text to be intolerable, upon the Unitarian hypothesis, boldly resolved to cut down the difficulty. In the face of all the proper evidence of the case, he proposed to alter  $\Theta\epsilon\omicron\varsigma$  to  $\Theta\epsilon\omicron\upsilon$ , so that the meaning should be, *The Word belonged to God*. For this licentious conjecture he was so rebuked, that no one is likely hereafter to take up the cause. Yet Mr. Belsham looks wistfully after it, and lauds it as "ingenious and not improbable;" while he is obliged to confess that it is "unauthorized" and "inadmissible."

Mr. Cappe, apparently not aware that he was violating a rule of Greek construction, translates the clause, "God was the Word;" and paraphrases it thus: Jesus Christ "was so fully instructed and qualified and authorized for the errand upon which God sent him, that it was not so properly he that spake to men, as God that spake to them by him."

The translation being vicious, the paraphrase, upon the writer's own principles, is rendered untenable. But it may, also, be remarked that, admitting the translation, the sense of this paraphrase could never be drawn out of the words, by any process of honest grammatical interpretation. A fair paraphrase is an expansion and explication of a meaning, which is first shewn to be in the sentence paraphrased: but here a meaning is arbitrarily put upon the words, a meaning not deduced from any construction of the words themselves, but drawn from the writer's previous hypothesis.

Mr. Belsham prefers the rendering, "The Word was a god;" taking the predicate in the inferior and accommodated signification. On this interpretation, I submit two or three remarks:

1. On a comparison of the instances of an inferior application of the word *God*, as given to magistrates and divine messengers, with the one before us, every one must perceive a palpable difference. In all of them, either by a strong antithesis in the connexion, or by some other equally marked circumstance, the figurative application is so very manifest, that the most careless or perverse reader cannot fail to be impressed with it. It should also be remarked, that the instances are extremely few. Their rarity, as well as their marked limitation, puts the expression far out of the range of the habitual phraseology of the Jews.

2. This use of the word is evidently declined by the writers of the New Testament. The few places in which an apparent instance occurs, have either a reference to the passages in the Old Testament, or they allude to heathen opinions.

3. It appears incredible that the apostle John should place, in the

very front of his work, a declaration which might have been conveyed in plain and safe expressions, but which, upon the hypothesis, is couched in terms peculiarly obnoxious to dangerous misapprehension. The declaration is supposed to be, in sense and substance, this: "Jesus was a prophet of the highest order, to whom the Divine will was fully revealed, who was endowed in a superior degree with miraculous powers, and who was appointed Lord and King, in that new dispensation which he was authorized to introduce to supersede the Mosaic covenant." And this sense the apostle conveys, by saying, "The Word was a god;" combining it also with another expression so closely resembling the opening clause of the books of Moses, that we can scarcely suppose the coincidence not to have been intended. The first sentence in the Pentateuch was a testimony against heathenism: but, if the opening sentence of the Gospel declared that "in the beginning" was an inferior god, it must have been most seriously offensive to the Jew; and to the Gentile it would appear as plainly harmonizing with his accustomed polytheism.

If the sense of these clauses were nothing more than the feeble truism, that Christ existed and received Divine communications, at the commencement of his course as an inspired teacher, it would further seem unaccountable that the evangelist should instantly repeat the declaration, a declaration than which nothing could be more self-evident, or less necessary to be reiterated. But he does so repeat it; and thus he gives a proof that he was propounding a doctrine of the most important and exalted kind, a doctrine which demanded to be attentively and constantly kept in view. "This [Word] was in the beginning with God:" as if he said, 'Let it be ever recollected as a truth of the first importance, that this Divine Logos existed, at the very commencement of all things, in a state of perfect union with the Divine nature.'

V. "All things were made by him, and without him was not anything made that was made."

The expressing of the proposition first in the affirmative form and then in the negative, is one of the Hebrew modes of making the sentence strongly emphatic, and it is used by the apostle John with remarkable frequency. Thus the very manner of utterance excites the expectation of something great, and out of the range of common things. The questions to be considered are the reference of the term "all things," the use of the preposition, and the sense of the verb.

1. With regard to the meaning of the universal expression, it is to be ascertained whether, with the generality of Christians, we are to understand it as referring to the created universe, both material and intellectual; or, with the Unitarians, as merely denoting all the arrangements of the new dispensation, whether done by Christ himself, or under his direction, by his apostles. To assist the determination on this point, I submit these remarks:

1. The usual and proper signification of the term, when, as here, put absolutely and without any limitation suggested by the connexion, is the total of all created things. For example, "Thou hast

created all things, and through thy will, they were, and have been created. One God, the Father, of whom are all things: one Lord Jesus Christ, through whom are all things. Thou hast put all things under his feet. On account of whom are all things, and through whom are all things. Of him, and through him, and to him are all things."

2. Whenever in Scripture the moral effects of the Gospel are spoken of, under the metaphor of a creation, either the epithet *new* is added, or other qualifying language is employed, so that the figurative meaning is put out of all doubt.

3. In a following sentence the same clause occurs, but, instead of "all things," the evangelist employs the common term to express the created universe, or the human race as a principal part of it: "THE WORLD was made by him." It is fair, therefore, to explain the one by the other.

4. The most eminent grammatical interpreters, and those who are most distinguished for free-thinking habits, speak decisively in favor of the common interpretation, and with no little contempt of the other. "That the term *all things*," says M. Leclerc, "must be understood of the universe, it is needless to prove; for, though the phrase may be applied to different objects, yet here it cannot be understood otherwise." Semler contends that the reference to the new moral state, supposed in the Socinian and the modern Unitarian interpretation, could never have been intended by the apostle, for it would have been perfectly unintelligible to his readers. Michaelis, without the smallest hesitation, interprets the passage; "The Word was the Creator of all things:" and he adds this remark; "The assertion that the Word was the Creator of the world, is equivalent to the assertion that he was God in the highest possible sense." Morus thinks it perfectly needless to explain the words, since no language could more plainly express a proper creation. "The *all things*," says Rosenmüller, "must unquestionably be understood of the actual Universe: it is putting force upon both the words and the context, to interpret the phrase of the new creation." Paulus remarks, "The third verse, speaks of the making of the world." Kuinzel comments upon the sentence thus: "*All things*, all that have been created, the universality of things: the opinion is wholly untenable, that these words refer to the moral creation, the instruction and reformation of mankind."

II. Recourse is had to another mode of helping the Unitarian interpretations, which, with so much pains and difficulty, are attempted to be forced upon this text. It is affirmed that *δι' αὐτοῦ*, by or through him, does not here, and in verse 10, retain its proper signification, that of a principal and efficient cause; but that it has the same sense as if it had been put in the accusative, *δι' αὐτόν*. So that the meaning is, *on account of him, or for his sake*. On this assertion, let the following considerations be attended to:

1. Not one of the scriptural instances which are alleged by Mr. Cappe, of *δι'* with a genitive signifying the final cause or motive, appears to me satisfactory. Scarcely any of the passages seem to admit that sense, and none of them to require it.

2. The proper field of investigation, to determine the question, is the usage of the apostle John. Now, I take upon me to affirm that in all his writings, not a single passage can be found to countenance Mr. Cappe's doctrine; and that, on the contrary, every instance of *δὲ* with a genitive is decisively against him.

3. If the reader will, by the help of a Greek concordance, examine all the instances of the two constructions in the New Testament, he will find the distinction observed clearly, accurately, and, I think I may say, invariably.

III. On the meaning of the verb, Mr. Belsham expresses himself with peculiar positiveness and complacency, as if he had made a notable discovery; "*ἔνομας* never signifies *to create*." Did this writer really intend to convey to his readers, that any critic, translator, or interpreter had taken this verb in the active signification, *to create*? Or was it his wish to insinuate, that the interpretation which he opposes is founded upon such an assumption? It is scarcely conceivable that he could believe either of these implications: yet, if not, I know not how we can acquit his argument of a gross violation of candor and integrity. If, however, he mean to assert, that this word never signifies *TO BE created*, we are at issue with him. Its true and proper signification is, *to be brought into existence*, whether that be the first and original being of the subject, or any subsequent state or manner of existence. In all the variety of its applications, and by whatever different terms, according to its connexion, it may be translated in other languages, it always retains its essential idea, that of *passiveness to a preceding cause*.

A fragment has been preserved by Eusebius, from the lost writings of Amelius, a Platonist, of the third century, which shews, in a very satisfactory manner, how a classical philosopher, a heathen, understood the language of the evangelist. The passage begins abruptly, and we have no means of knowing its connexion: but this does not diminish the decisive character of its evidence. "And this indeed was the Word, by which, since it exists forever, created things were produced; as Heraclitus himself would decide: and most certainly it is the same which that foreign writer lays down, as constituted in the order and dignity of the beginning, to be with God, and to be God; that by it absolutely all things were produced; that in it, whatever was produced, living, and life, and existing, possesses its natural properties; that it descended into bodily forms, and having put on a clothing of flesh, appeared as a human being, with which nevertheless it still shewed the majesty of its nature; and that at last, being dismissed [from the body], it again assumed its deity, and is God, the same as it was before it was brought down to the body and the flesh and the human being."

It cannot be questioned to what writer this heathen philosopher refers: and, though he comments upon the passage in his own way, nothing can be clearer than that he understood the words of the evangelist, as predicating of the Logos a proper deity, a real agency in the physical creation, an assumption of human nature from a pre-existent state, and a resuming of the glory which had for a season been veiled.



VI. "In him was LIFE." The coherence of this with the preceding sentence, appears to be the position of a cause adequate to the effect. So that the argument is: the production of all things is fitly attributed to the Word, because he possesses conscious and active existence in such a manner that he is able to impart existence: he is the Former of all things, because he possesses essential and infinite life, and has the power of communicating life, that is, of bringing animated beings into existence. In many places of the Old Testament, Jehovah is called *the Living God*, or *the God of life*: in opposition to the lifeless and imaginary beings which the heathen worshipped; and to show that he is the only underived existence, and the Author of existence to all other beings: "With Thee is the FOUNTAIN OF LIFE." The resemblance of this phraseology to the language of the evangelist, is very evident. Both the connexion and the terms, therefore, bind us, in all reason, to understand the clause as it has been explained.

VII. "And the Life was the Light of men." The Messiah was predicted by the prophets, and described by himself, as the Light of Israel, the Light to illuminate all nations, the Light of men, and the Light of the world. In the passage before us, it is therefore with just coherence that he, who is the Author of existence, is further represented as the Author of all that constitutes the good of existence: deliverance from error, sin, and misery, all of which are, by the frequent scriptural metaphor, called darkness. This exalted idea of the Divine Redeemer coincides with all the passages which describe him as the immediate Bestower of all spiritual blessings on the children of men.

The reader will permit the request, that he would, with the closest attention, review this portion of the divine word, and the observations which have been submitted to him upon it; that he would scrutinize every term and expression; that he would rigorously but impartially sift every argument; and that he would compare the separate parts of the passage with each other, and with the apparent scope and design of the whole.

I would in particular, with the most respectful earnestness, solicit any intelligent and candid Unitarian, when he has risen from the serious perusal of the evangelist's Introduction, to form the supposition that he himself was about to write a narrative of the actions, or a compendium of the discourses, of Jesus Christ; and the further supposition that his mind was entirely free from acquaintance with any controversies on this question. Let him then ask his own mind and conscience, "Is this the way in which I should open my subject? Are these, or anything equivalent to these, the terms and expressions which I should naturally and readily take up?—Rather, am I not conscious of the reverse? Do I not feel that, if it were possible for them to be suggested to me, all my principles would rise against them, and I should reject them with the strongest disapprobation?—And, dropping the visionary supposition, am I not inwardly sensible that, in my attempts to frame an interpretation of this paragraph, which may wear at all the semblance of consistency, I am rowing against the stream; I am putting language to the tor-

ture; I am affixing significations to words and phrases which all my efforts can scarcely keep me from exclaiming, that they could never have been in the contemplation of the original writer? — Have I not, then, awakening reasons for the suspicion, that I have not formed my opinions with that close and faithful investigation which the solemn greatness of the case requires? And am I not bound to review the whole subject, in the sight of the all-seeing God, and under the sense of my accountableness to HIM as the Author and Revealer of truth?"

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NOTICES OF RECENT PUBLICATIONS.

I. *Concio ad Clerum. A Sermon delivered in the Chapel of Yale College, Sept. 10, 1828.* By NATHANIEL W. TAYLOR. New Haven: Hezekiah Howe. pp. 38.

We have here an able and satisfactory discussion of the natural and entire depravity of man, founded on Eph. ii. 3, "And were by nature the children of wrath, even as others." The plan of the preacher is to show, first, in what the moral depravity of man consists; and, secondly, that this depravity is by nature.—In discussing the first of these propositions, Dr. T. observes, that the depravity of men "does not consist in any essential attribute or property of the soul," nor in their being guilty of Adam's sin; nor "in any constitutional propensities of their nature;" nor "in any degree of excitement in these propensities not resulting in choice;" nor "in any disposition or tendency to sin, which is the cause of all sin;" but in "*man's own act, consisting in a free choice of some object rather than God, as his chief good;—or in a free preference of the world, and of worldly good, to the will and glory of God.*" This view of the subject he endeavors to support, and we think does support, by "the testimony of some of the ablest divines, of the apostles, and of common sense."

In explaining the proposition that the depravity of men is by nature, the author observes, "that *such is their nature, that they will sin, and only sin, in all the appropriate circumstances of their being.* They sin, not only in one situation, and under the influence of particular circumstances, but in all situations, and in all circumstances, —which makes it proper to say, in the common and legitimate use of the term, that they sin by nature. The proposition, thus explained, is established, by an appeal to the Scriptures, to human consciousness, and to facts.

The discussion is concluded with the following remarks:

1. "It is consistent with the doctrine of this discourse, that infants should be saved through *the redemption of Christ.* They belong to a race who, by nature, and in all the appropriate circumstances of their being, *will sin.*" "When made meet, therefore, for the celestial paradise, and admitted there, *their song may tell of the grace that brought them to its glories.*"

2. "That sin or guilt pertains exclusively to voluntary action, is the true principle of Orthodoxy." The old Orthodox divines held that men *sinned in Adam*, and thus became depraved. We hold that they sin by nature—sin in *in themselves and for themselves*, and thus render themselves depraved.

3. "The view of sin, or moral depravity, maintained in this discourse, cannot be justly ascribed to mental perversion, or to any sinister or selfish design."—We know not on what grounds the theological Professors at New Haven have been charged with a dereliction of Orthodox principles, in their views on this subject. We see no reason at all for such a charge. So far as the *nature of sin*\* is concerned, their views are substantially the same with those of Hopkins, and Spring, and Dwight, and Emmons, and of the Orthodox clergy of New England generally. If, indeed, there is any perceptible difference, we are satisfied it is chiefly verbal.

4. "The universal depravity of mankind is not inconsistent with the moral perfection of God."

5. "The view of man's depravity here given is of great importance "in its bearing on the preaching of the Gospel."

"Does God charge on men, as that which deserves his endless indignation, what Himself does? Does God summon men to repentance with commands and entreaties, and at the same time tell them, that all efforts at compliance are as useless, as the muscular motions of a corpse to get life again. Does this book of God's inspiration, shock and appal the world, with the revelation of such things, respecting God and respecting man? Will the charge of *such sin* on man, touch the secret place of tears? Will the exhibition of such a God, allure the guilty to confide in his mercy? If so, preach it out—preach it consistently, preach nothing to contradict it,—dwell on your message, that God creates men sinners and damns them for being so.—Tell them such is *their* nature and such the *mode* of his interposition, that there is no more hope from acting on the part of the sinner than from not acting; tell them they may as well sleep on, and sleep away these hours of mercy, as attempt anything in the work of their salvation; that all is as hopeless with effort as without it. Spread over this world such a curtain of sackcloth, such a midnight of terror, and how, as the appropriate effect, would each accountable immortal, either sit down in the sullenness of inaction, or take his solitary way to hell in the frenzy of despair!

"But such is not the message of wrath and of mercy, by which a revolted world is to be awed and allured back to its Maker. The message we are to deliver to men is a message of wrath, because they are the perpetrators of the deed that deserves wrath.—It is a message of mercy to men who, by acting, are to comply with the terms of it, and who can never hope to comply even through God's agency, without putting themselves to the doing of *the very thing* commanded of God." pp. 36, 37.

"The preacher concludes with remarking "on the fearful condition and prospects of the sinner."

"His sin is his own. He yields himself, by his own free act, by his own choice, to those propensities of his nature, which under the weight of God's authority he *ought to govern*. The gratification of these he makes his chief good, immortal as he is. For this he lives and acts—this he puts in the place of God—and for this, and for nothing better, he tramples on God's authority and incurs his wrath. Glad would he be, to escape the guilt of it. Oh—could he persuade himself that the fault is not his own,—this would wake up peace in his guilty bosom. Could he believe that God is bound to convert and save him;

\* The difficult subject presented in a note (pp. 29—34) we have not space or time here to discuss. And without opportunity for discussion, we prefer not to hazard an opinion respecting it.

or even that he could make it certain that God will do it,—this would allay his fears,—this would stamp a bow on the cloud that thickens, and darkens, and thunders damnation on his guilty path. But his guilt is all his own, and a just God may leave him to his choice. He is going on to a wretched eternity, the self-made victim of its woes. Amid sabbaths and bibles, the intercessions of saints, the songs of angels, the entreaties of God's ambassadors, the accents of redeeming love, and the blood that speaketh peace, he presses on to death. God beseeching with tenderness and terror—Jesus telling him he died once, and could die again, to save him—mercy weeping over him day and night—heaven lifting up its everlasting gates—hell burning, and sending up its smoke of torment, and the weeping and the wailing and the gnashing of teeth, within his hearing,—and onward still he goes.—See the infatuated immortal!—Fellow sinner,—IT IS YOU.

“Bowels of divine compassion—length, breadth, height, depth of Jesus' love Spirit of all grace,—save him—Oh save him—or he dies forever.” p. 38.

2. *The Character, Trials, and Security of the Church. A Sermon preached at the Dedication of the Meeting House of the Evangelical Society in South Brookfield, August 13th, 1829.* By MICHAEL STONE, Pastor of the Church. Brookfield: E. and G. Merriam. pp. 31.

We have read this discourse with great satisfaction, knowing as we do the various afflictions through which its estimable author, and his beloved church and people have recently been called to pass. The bush with them has indeed been burning, but we rejoice to know that it has not been consumed.\* We rejoice that it still lives, full of vigor, of hope, and of promise, a monument of the faithfulness of its covenant Head and Redeemer. We congratulate the members of this suffering flock, in the so speedy accomplishment of their wishes and endeavors in regard to a temple for the public worship of their God, and would devoutly implore for them the presence of Him ‘who walketh in the midst of his golden candlesticks’ to fulfil in them all those *benefits* of affliction which are suggested in this excellent discourse. May the scenes through which they have passed be so sanctified to them, as to increase their faith, promote their knowledge, give importunity and fervency to their prayers, inspire them with “a tender sympathy for each other,” and purge out from among them all those who are not ‘buildd on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone.’

3. *A Discourse delivered at the Ordination of the Rev. Frederick A. Farley, as Pastor of the Westminster Congregational Society in Providence, Rhode Island, Sept. 10, 1828.* By WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING. Boston: Bowles and Dearborn. pp. 36.

There are parts of this discourse which we cordially approve; others, which we cordially disapprove; and others which, after several readings, we cannot be sure that we understand. The author clothes himself often in a mysticism of expression, through which the sense is but dimly seen, and not unfrequently the reader is left in doubt whether it is seen at all. The admirers of Dr. C.

\* An allusion to Mr. Stone's text, Ex. iii. 2.

will, of course, attribute this to his superior refinement; but such a reason, if admitted, does not furnish an apology: For, however refined a public teacher may be, and however sublimated his conceptions, if he deign at all to come down, and discourse with men of ordinary minds, he ought to adapt himself to their capacities—he ought to discourse in such a way that the sense may be easily and certainly apprehended.

The discourse is founded on Eph. v. 1, "Be ye followers of God, as dear children." This exhortation is addressed by the apostle to *true believers in Christ*—who are spoken of in the immediate connexion as "saints"—whom "God, for Christ's sake, hath forgiven"—and who "are sealed by the Holy Spirit of God unto the day of redemption." Dr. C., however, by a gross perversion, applies it without distinction to the whole human race, supposing all of every character to be exhorted, as the "*dear children*" of God, to be followers of him.

That the author would deny the doctrine of human depravity was, of course, to be expected; but he does more than this. He uses expressions in regard to the *nature of man*, such as we have never before heard from a professed minister of the New Testament. Mankind are here represented as enjoying "a participation of the Divine nature"—as having a "like nature to God," and a "kindred nature to God"—as having "a Divine likeness," "a heavenly treasure within them." pp. 9, 17, 22, 34. "God does not sustain a figurative resemblance to man. It is the resemblance of a parent to a child, the likeness of a *kindred nature*." p. 10. "We discern the impress of God's attributes in the universe by *accordance of nature*, and enjoy them through *sympathy*." p. 13. "What is it to be a *Father*? It is to communicate one's *own nature*, to give life to *kindred beings*." "This name belongs to God, because he frames spirits *like himself*, and delights to give them what is *most glorious and blessed in his own nature*." p. 18. "I cannot but pity the man, who recognizes nothing *godlike in his own nature*." p. 26. Dr. C. repeatedly speaks of "*reverencing human nature*." "I *reverence human nature too much* to do it violence. I see *too much divinity in its ordinary operations*, to urge on it a forced and vehement virtue." p. 22. "I do and I must *reverence human nature*. Neither the sneers of a worldly scepticism, nor the groans of a gloomy theology, disturb my faith in its *godlike powers and tendencies*." p. 27. "I conclude with saying, let the minister cherish a *reverence for his own nature*." p. 34.\*

If, by such variety of expression, our author had intended no more than this, that men naturally have noble faculties, and precious, immortal souls, we could cheerfully have accorded to the sentiment, however much we might dislike his mode of expressing it. But he does mean more than this. He means, not only that men have godlike faculties and powers, but that they naturally employ them in a godlike manner. He believes that we inherit, by nature, the *moral*

\* A new duty this for ministers of the Gospel—one to which, we venture to say, they never were exhorted before.



as well as the natural image of God. Speaking of the goodness of God, he asks, "How do we understand this, but by the *principle of love implanted in the human breast?*" p. 11. "I bless it (our nature) for its *kind affections*, for its *strong and tender love*. I honor it for its struggles against oppression,"\* &c. "and still more for its examples of heroic and *saintly virtue*." p. 27. "The Divinity is stirring within the human breast, and demanding a culture and a liberty worthy of the *child of God*." p. 30.

An English Unitarian reviewer, in the Monthly Review for June, 1820, speaking of Rammohun Roy, says, "His plan for reforming the religion of Hindoostan bears a close resemblance to that which Philo imagined for the reformation of the Jewish religion. The system of both of these writers consists in adopting *Unitarianism* or *Pantheism* for their radical theology." "In the Evangelic German church," says he in another place, "*Pantheism* is already becoming the favorite theology, and is believed to be that of the Christian Scriptures by very eminent and very learned commentators." pp. 174, 176. Pantheism regards God as the *soul of the universe*, and everything else so connected with him, as to be reckoned in some sense a part of God. Now we do not charge Dr. C. with advocating this wild theory of religion; for, as we said, we do not know that we understand him. He may have written rather *poetically*. The sense he intended to convey may be wrapped up in a mist of verbiage, through which it is not easy for the eye to penetrate. But possibly the extracts already made, taken in their obvious sense, will lead our readers to suspect him of leaning, (it may be unconsciously to himself,) towards the theory above named. And possibly the extracts we are about to make may serve to confirm them in these suspicions. "Its (religion's) noblest influence consists in making us more and more *partakers of the Divinity*." p. 4. "In ourselves are the *elements of the Divinity*." p. 10. "What then is religion? I answer; it is not the adoration of a God, with whom we have *no common properties*; of a *distinct, foreign, separate Being*; but of an *all-communicating Parent*." pp. 18, 19. Our author speaks of some, "in whom the *Divine nature* is overwhelmed by the passions;" and of others, in whom "the Divinity is growing." pp. 35, 25. "Beneath the sweat of the laborer, beneath the rags and ignorance of the poor, beneath the *vices of the sensual and selfish*," there is to be discerned, says he, "in the depths of the soul, a *Divine principle*, a *ray of the Infinite Light*, which may yet break forth and shine, as the sun, in the kingdom of God." p. 34.

One of the greatest apparent difficulties in the way of Unitarians is to determine what to make of the Holy Spirit. One says, "The Spirit of God is God himself;" another calls it an attribute of God; another, an emanation from God; and still another, a Divine energy. Dr. C. defines it "a *Divine assistance*" or "*aid*."

"Scripture and experience concur in teaching, that by the Holy Spirit, we are to understand a Divine assistance adapted to our moral freedom, and accord-

\* By whom has human nature been so grievously oppressed? By wild beasts—or demons—or by the possessors of this same godlike human nature?

ant with the fundamental truth, that virtue is the mind's own work. By the Holy Spirit, I understand an aid, which must be gained and made effectual by our own activity; an aid, which no more interferes with our faculties, than the assistance which we receive from our fellow beings; an aid, which silently mingles and conspires with all other helps and means of goodness; an aid by which we unfold our natural powers in a natural order, and by which we are strengthened to understand and apply the resources derived from our munificent Creator. This aid we cannot pursue too much, or pray for too earnestly." pp. 23, 24.

Did our limits permit, we might take the definition here given of the Holy Spirit, and carry it through the Bible, applying it to all passages in which the phrase, Holy Spirit, is used. But our readers are requested to do this for themselves. In place of the words, Holy Spirit, Spirit of God, &c., wherever they occur, substitute the words, *Divine aid*, and see whether, by such a process, the sense of the sacred writings is improved. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Divine aid of God." "Ye are not in the flesh, but in the Divine aid." "Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Divine aid."

We think it cannot be longer doubted, if hitherto it has been, that Dr. C. is a teacher of *universal salvation*. In the discourse before us, this doctrine is expressed 'with an explicitness which need not be misunderstood.' "How far the Supreme Being may communicate his attributes to his intelligent offspring, I stop not to inquire. But *that his Almighty goodness will impart to them powers and glories, of which the material universe is but a faint emblem, I cannot doubt.*" p. 17. "This name (Father) belongs to God, because he frames spirits like himself, and *delights to give them what is most glorious and blessed in his own nature.*" p. 18. God "looks on us with parental interest, and" his "*great design it is to communicate to us forever, and in freer and fuller streams, his own power, goodness, and joy.*" p. 19. Speaking of certain alleged exhibitions of human nature in the general, our author says, "These are marks of a Divine origin, and *the pledges of a CELESTIAL INHERITANCE*; and I thank God that *my own lot is bound up in that of the HUMAN RACE.*" p. 27.

After what has been said, it cannot be needed or desired, that we should undertake a formal refutation of the errors of this discourse. It is enough that we have exposed some of them. We should not have done even this, had we not been impelled to it by an imperious sense of duty. It is not that we have pleasure in finding fault, but it is that we witness a man of Dr. Channing's literary distinction—a man, who has many admirers, and in whose steps numbers will think it safe to follow, holding forth opinions on the greatest of all subjects, which in our consciences we regard as subversive of the Gospel, and ruinous to souls,—it is for this reason that we have felt constrained to notice the discourse before us in the manner we have. We have felt that this was the least we could do. The public must now form a judgement of it for themselves.

We have said, there are parts of this discourse which we cordially approve. There are indeed passages, to which, if separated from their connexion, and interpreted according to the usual acceptation

of terms, we could most heartily subscribe. We give the following as an example.

“To a man who is growing in the likeness of God, faith begins even here to change into vision. He carries within himself a proof of a Deity, which can only be understood by experience. He more than believes, he feels the Divine presence; and gradually rises to an intercourse with his Maker, to which it is not irreverent to apply the name of friendship and intimacy. The apostle John intended to express this truth, when he tells us that he, in whom a principle of Divine charity or benevolence has become a habit and life, ‘dwells in God and God in him.’” p. 6.

4. *The Day of Doom; or a Poetical Description of the Great and Last Judgement; with a short Discourse about Eternity.* By MICHAEL WIGGLESWORTH, A. M. Teacher of the Church at Malden, in N. E. From the sixth Edition, 1715. Boston: Charles Ewer, 1828. pp. 96.

We are utterly unable to assign a motive for the republication of these old scraps of ‘ryme and meeter’ at the present time. Their author was a pious and useful minister of a former age, who, no doubt from the best of motives, filled up the intervals of a protracted confinement in writing what then passed here for poetry. But why drag out his performance from under the ashes of more than a century, and offer it for present circulation? Is it to go with the Token, the Souvenir, &c., as a Christmas present? Or is it to burlesque Evangelical religion, and bring a most serious and awful subject into profane ridicule and contempt? This latter is the impression which first forced itself upon us; but considering the character and standing of the publisher, we would not indulge it, and we do not.

But whatever motive may have led to the publication of this book, we have no doubt as to the use that will be made of it. It will be referred to as demonstration strong that the Orthodox of New England do now hold to certain modifications of doctrine here set forth, particularly the damnation of infants, their own most solemn convictions and repeated asseverations to the contrary, notwithstanding. We should not be surprised if the Christian Examiner should find matter here for a whole chapter, and should even insist upon our being responsible for that in poetry, which we deny in prose.

## MISCELLANEOUS DEPARTMENT.

### REMARKS ON A “LETTER TO THE REV. PARSONS COOKE.”

The Christian Examiner for July and August (published in November) contains a letter addressed to the Rev. Parsons Cooke, remarking on his Sermon, entitled, “Unitarianism an Exclusive System.” For the contents of this sermon, we are in no shape responsible, having never expressed an opinion respecting it, one way or the other. Its author is of age, and will doubtless answer for himself. If any of his assertions are too sweeping, or have been made without necessary qualification, he will, we presume, modify or retract them. Or if they are capable of being supported, he is able to support them. Hence, if

the letter to Mr. Cooke had respected him only, we should have left it exclusively to him, and taken no public notice of it whatever.

But this letter does not respect Mr. Cooke only. It takes a wider range. Repeated mention is made in it of Mr. Cooke's "party." Reference is had to those in close alliance with Mr. Cooke, "who would *overthrow the institutions by which the state is upheld*, in order to erect on their ruins a power, which by them may be deemed a blessing, though in all ages it has been found a curse." Indeed, all the flagitious designs attributed to Mr. Cooke are virtually charged upon 'his party'—'who set him on, or uphold him,' but 'who are not yet prepared for battle,' and 'had rather he had not come out, at least so soon'—fearing 'that the victory may be lost, by the too eager and premature onsets of some of their inexperienced subalterns.'

Who then are Mr. Cooke's party—on whose heads this alleged criminality rests? No reader of the letter can doubt, for a moment, who the *writer of it intends to stigmatize*, as constituting this hated party. They are the *Orthodox of Massachusetts*. "It cannot but be amusing," says the writer, "to remark your wailing for the *persecuted sect* to WHICH YOU BELONG. What! the *proud orthodox minister . . . belong to a persecuted sect!*" "How strange that all the world should conspire against so meek and humble a spirit as *Orthodoxy!*" "Is the *whole system of morals discarded* from the *Orthodox theology?*" "Is abuse of public agents, seditious appeals to the people against the government, open reviling of the law, sanctioned by the *Calvinistic creed?*"—It is then the Evangelical or Orthodox Christians of this commonwealth, who are charged with 'setting on or upholding' Mr. Cooke, and "who would overthrow the institutions by which the state is upheld." It is the Orthodox religious community, from whose "theology" it is more than hinted that "the *whole system of morals is discarded*;" and by whose creed, "abuse of public agents, seditious appeals to the people against the government, and reviling of law," are said to be "sanctioned."

Now if this letter, filled as it is with false charges and groundless insinuations against a very considerable portion of our religious community, had come out in the ordinary course of publication in the *Christian Examiner*, we should not have bestowed on it any *particular* attention. For we have become so much accustomed to reproaches from that quarter, that they are regarded as a thing of course—we scarcely feel them—they pass by us as the idle wind. But this letter is no ordinary communication, in the periodical which contains it. A very high degree of importance evidently attaches to it. It purports to be from the pen of a magistrate, and the common declaration among Unitarians, who may be expected to know, attributes it to one in an elevated station. We shall not name its reputed author; for, out of regard to the credit of our institutions and government, we are unwilling to name him in this connexion.

In refutation of his charges against the Orthodox of this community, we shall, of course, say nothing. If the lives and conversation of our ministerial and Christian brethren and friends will not shield them from the imputation of designing to overthrow the institutions of their country,—come this imputation from what source it may;—if their *example* does not furnish a sufficient reply to the interrogation, "Is the *whole system of morals discarded* from the *Orthodox theology?*"—then nothing we could say would avail to remove or relieve the difficulty. Instead of stopping to refute insinuations and aspersions like those here cast upon us, it becomes us rather to demand the *evidence* on which they are alleged. And this evidence we do demand. And until it is

furnished, we will hold the writer of this letter, be he high or low, as a false accuser of our brethren.

In what a pitiable light is the writer of this letter dragged forth, and made to present himself before the public, by the insertion of his performance in the *Christian Examiner*? If he wished to write a letter of reproof to Mr. Cooke, why not write it, and send it, and say no more about it? If Unitarians cannot support their cause without enlisting in it, as *heated religious partizans*, some of the highest public functionaries of the state and nation—those whose official duties require that they should be raised, beyond all others, above bias and party feeling of every kind, and enjoy the confidence, as they do the support, of the whole community—we repeat it, if the Unitarians cannot sustain their cause without enlisting such men, as declaimers at their public meetings, and writers in their periodicals, to accuse and denounce those who differ from them in sentiment, but who have the same right as they, to think, and speak, and act for themselves;—then *let Unitarianism go down*. Yes, really, we think it *had better go down*. And if it cannot be supported but by such means, we hazard nothing in predicting, *it will go down*. The good sense of this community cannot, will not, long sustain it. We see not with what face the reputed writer of this letter to Mr. Cooke can proceed another step in the performance of his professional duty. For no man of information and piety can look on him, go where he may, without thinking—and without blushing for his country while he thinks,—‘This is the magistrate who rails at Orthodoxy! This is he who imputes to the Orthodox the design of overthrowing the institutions of their country! This is he who has said, in so many words, Is the whole system of morals discarded from the Orthodox theology? This is he, who has the effrontery to claim the confidence of Evangelical Christians, while he does not hesitate to slander and abuse them in the most public manner!’

In speaking of the writer of this letter, we have called no names. In our inquiries after him, we have heard but one name mentioned. We would do no one the injustice of ascribing it to him wrongfully; and if any individual, after reading our remarks, shall think himself implicated as its author, and shall wish to wash his hands of it, we pledge ourselves, to afford him the earliest opportunity in our power.

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#### UNITARIAN IMPATIENCE.

It has been intimated that Unitarians are waiting with *impatience* to hear what Dr. Beecher will reply to remarks in the *Christian Examiner* relative to his Letters on the damnation of Infants. We presume, from all circumstances, that their patience cannot yet have been very sorely tried; and lest it should be, we take the liberty to say, that Dr. Beecher is waiting, we hope patiently, for the *tardy Examiner* to finish what it may have to offer, that he may have an opportunity of speaking, once more, in behalf of God and truth.

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#### CHRISTIAN SPECTATOR.

The conductors of the *Christian Spectator* inform us, on the cover of their last number, that they propose, after the present year, to publish their work as a *religious quarterly*, continuing the present title, and each number containing at least as many pages as three of the monthly numbers. We cordially approve the contemplated change, and wish them abundant success in their important undertaking.



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