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WHAT IS ORTHODOXY?

Orthodoxy literally signifies *correct opinions*. The word is commonly used to denote a particular system of doctrines, or a connected series of *facts*, on the subject of religion. The following summary, extracted from the introductory article in the first volume of the Spirit of the Pilgrims, contains the more material parts of the Orthodox faith. Those who embrace this system believe,

"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."

Since the reformation from Popery, those who profess to admit these doctrines, and others necessarily connected with them and forming a part of the same system, have been denominated Orthodox; while to those who openly reject them, or any considerable part of them, this appellation has been denied.

It is not to be inferred, however, that the Orthodox have been, or are, entirely *unanimous* on the subject of religion. In matters comparatively unessential, and in their modes of stating, explaining, and establishing essential truths, there has always been more or less a diversity. Thus, persons may disagree as to the form of church government, or as to the mode of administering ordinances, and yet have an equal claim to be entitled orthodox. Or persons may disagree in their interpretation of particular passages of scripture, and as to the manner in which these bear on the doctrines of religion, without forfeiting their title to the same honorable appellation. For instance, one person may regard a particular passage as proof conclusive of the Divinity of Christ; while another may be in doubt respecting it, or may apply it differently; and yet both be firm believers in the Divinity of Christ. Many passages which the old writers quoted as proof-texts have, in the progress of critical science, been differently interpreted; and yet the evidence in support of the Orthodox system, so far from being weakened in this way, has been constantly gaining strength.

Again ; persons may disagree, to a certain extent at least, in their statements and explanations of the most essential doctrines, and yet be properly and equally orthodox. In illustration of this remark, several examples will be given.

All orthodox Christians believe in the full inspiration of the sacred scriptures ; or that the holy men, through whose instrumentality the world originally received these scriptures, spake and wrote "as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." They believe in this as a *fact* of the utmost importance. But there have been various modes of stating, explaining and illustrating this fact. Some, for instance, have spoken of two or three kinds of inspiration ; others have insisted that there can be but one kind ; while others have thought it better to state the subject in general terms, without attempting very minutely to define or explain them.

All orthodox Christians believe in the doctrine of the Trinity ; or that the one God exists in a three fold distinction, commonly called persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. They believe this as a revealed fact, and as an essential part of the Christian doctrine. But how differently has this fact been stated by different individuals ? What different explanations have been put upon it ? While not a few have preferred to leave the subject—as God seems to have left it—altogether unexplained.

All orthodox Christians believe in the universality of God's eternal purposes, in the certainty of their execution, and that they are so executed as not to obstruct or impair the free-agency of man. But respecting the *manner* of God's executing his purposes—whether by the instrumentality of motives, or by a direct efficiency—persons having equal claims to the appellation of orthodox have not been agreed.*

All the orthodox believe in the natural and entire depravity of man ; or that, in consequence of the sin of his first progenitors and previous to regeneration, every thing within him, going to constitute moral character, is sinful. But how many theories have been framed to account for the connexion of our sin with that of Adam ? And how many explanations have been put upon the doctrine of entire depravity ? Some have made this depravity to extend to all the powers of the soul ; others have restricted it to our voluntary exercises and actions ; while others have confined it chiefly to a moral taste, disposition, or instinct,

* The former seems to have been the opinion of the first President Edwards ; while the latter opinion has been adopted by several succeeding theological writers. The question of orthodoxy in regard to this point relates to the *fact* of God's universal purposes, and the *certainty* of their execution, rather than to the *manner* in which they are executed.

which is regarded as back of our voluntary exercises, and the source of them.

All the orthodox believe in the doctrine of atonement; but all do not state or explain this important doctrine after the same manner. Some suppose the atonement of Christ to consist wholly in his obedience; others, wholly in his sufferings; and others, in both his obedience and sufferings. Some hold that Christ suffered the penalty of the law for sinners; and others that he only opened a way in which, on condition of repentance, this penalty may be remitted. Some think the atonement made only for the elect; while others regard it as the propitiation for the sins of the whole world.

The doctrine of instantaneous regeneration by the special operations of the Holy Spirit is believed by all, who have any claim to be called orthodox. But this doctrine, like the others mentioned, is variously stated and explained. Some consider man as entirely active in regeneration; others as entirely passive; and others as not entirely the one or the other. Some believe there is a holy principle implanted in regeneration, which ever afterwards remains in the heart of the subject; while others believe the change to consist in the commencement of holy exercises, which may be subsequently interrupted, though not finally lost. As to the manner in which the Spirit operates in regeneration, there is also a difference of opinion; some holding that he changes the heart by a direct efficiency, and others that this is done by the more powerful presentation and impression of motives.

Another doctrine of the orthodox system is that of justification by faith in Christ. But this, also, has been differently stated and explained. Some think the believer justified by Christ's righteousness, others by the influence of his sufferings and death, and others by the joint efficacy of both his obedience and sufferings. Some believe justification to be the same as forgiveness; while others regard it as implying, not only forgiveness, but also a title to eternal life.

It is evident from the examples here given, that although Orthodoxy denotes a general system of important doctrines or facts on the subject of religion, it is not to be inferred, either by friends or foes, that orthodox Christians are tied up to precisely the same views of subjects, or that there exists no diversity of sentiment among them. There is, and always has been, a diversity of sentiment, in regard, not only to modes and forms, but to the statement, proofs and explanations of the most important doctrines. Many of these differences have been hinted at above. Some of them, to be sure, are little more than verbal; but oth-

ers are *real*, are fitted to excite interest, and are entitled to very serious consideration. Still, as they are all held in avowed consistency with that great series of facts which goes to constitute the Orthodox system, they should not be regarded as placing their advocates beyond the proper limits of Orthodoxy. They constitute a wide field of important discussion, over which those who agree in holding the Head—in holding the great doctrines of redemption by the blood of Christ, and of sanctification by the Holy Spirit—may freely and fraternally traverse. Modes and forms, the interpretation of passages, and explanations of particular doctrines (so long as essential doctrines are not discarded) may be discussed, without the interruption of brotherly affection, and without the imputation and reproach of heresy. One person may hold that all scripture is given by the inspiration of *suggestion*; and another, that, while some parts are the fruit of immediate suggestion, others may more properly be attributed to the inspiration of *superintendence*; and neither should charge the other with denying the inspiration of the scriptures, or with being a heretic, or an infidel. One person may insist that the passage, in 1 John v. 7, is authentic scripture, and strong proof of the doctrine of the Trinity; and another may doubt this, or deny it altogether; and neither should be charged with intentionally corrupting the scriptures, or with being a Unitarian. One person may hold that God executes his immutable and eternal decrees by a direct efficiency, and another that he does it by the intervention of motives; and yet one be no more an Arminian than the other.

In relation to this subject, the great Orthodox community are in danger on either hand. They are in danger of suffering their system, or some part of it, to run down into palpable heresy. No professed friend of truth ever became a finished heretic at a single leap. The approaches of error are insidious. Its beginnings, like those of strife, are 'as when one letteth out water.' It is easy for speculative and presumptuous men to make 'shipwreck of the faith.' So they did in the Apostles' times; so they have done in all periods since; so they are in danger of doing now. And there is danger that, in the wreck, others less criminal than themselves will be involved and ruined. He who can see no such dangers in the times on which we have fallen, is asleep. He who does not vigilantly guard against them, cannot be a faithful watchman.

On the other hand, there is danger of a degree of suspicion and jealousy in regard to this subject, which will go to check inquiry and discussion, interrupt Christian feeling, lead to mutual censures and reproaches, and needlessly break up the ortho-

dox community into divisions and sects. To divide and weaken us after this manner is the desire and labor of our enemies—in both worlds. We have all seen how eager they are to seize upon our differences, how ready to magnify them, and how intent to blow the kindling sparks of contention into a flame. We have no need to be ignorant of their devices. And we shall be without excuse, if we neglect to watch and guard against them.—It may help to secure us against the danger here spoken of, to settle in the mind what Orthodoxy is, and what it implies—what are the limits, between which we may differ, and may discuss our differences as Christian brethren, and where the confines of heresy begin. It is hoped that the remarks which have been made may serve to throw some light on this difficult but important subject.

It follows from what has been said, that Orthodoxy is essentially different from Arminianism, as this latter term is now commonly understood. Arminianism, as contained in the published works of Arminius, is a very different thing from what it afterwards became, in the hands of Whitby, Taylor, and many others, who have been accounted his followers. Adopting these later writers as the standard of Arminianism, it is obvious that between this system and orthodoxy there is a wide and essential difference.—All orthodox persons believe in the universality of God's eternal purposes, as giving certainty to all events, and as executed in a manner entirely consistent with the free-agency of creatures. But Arminians regard this whole representation as absurd, insisting that there must be what has been termed a "liberty of contingency," and that if the actions of men are certain from eternity, they cannot be free.—All orthodox persons hold to the doctrine of personal election, a doctrine which Arminians universally reject. They teach that the election spoken of in scripture is an election of churches and nations, and not of individuals, and "that it imports rather an election to enjoy the means of grace, than a certainty of salvation by those means."—All orthodox persons hold to the natural and entire depravity of man. But Arminians believe "that mankind are not totally depraved, and that depravity does not come upon them by virtue of Adam's being their public head; but that mortality and natural evil only are the direct consequences of his sin to his posterity†."—All the orthodox hold to instantaneous regenera-

* See Whitby on the Five Points, Disc. i. chap. 3.

† See Adams's View of Religions. Article, Arminians.—Some Arminians hold that mankind are so disabled by the fall as not to be *capable* of doing their duty; but that, in consequence of the atonement, a "sufficient grace" is imparted to all, to enable them to work out their own salvation. This is supposed to be the doctrine of the Methodists. I need not say that it differs widely from the statements of orthodoxy.

tion, by the special influences of the Holy Spirit. But those Arminians who deny total depravity deny, of course, instantaneous regeneration. They represent a change of heart, so far as it needs changing, as a gradual process, and that men become good as they become wise.—The orthodox consider the moral law as immutable and inviolable. It is as really in force, and is as binding now, as it was before the fall of our first parents. But Arminians think the moral law superseded by what they call "the new law of grace," and that *sincere*, not *perfect*, obedience is all that is now required of us.—Again; all the orthodox hold to the doctrine of saints' perseverance;—a doctrine which Arminians universally reject.—From the comparison here made, which might be even more extended were it necessary, it will appear to every candid mind that there is a wide and essential difference between Orthodoxy and Arminianism; and consequently, to charge those, who have not departed from the principles of Orthodoxy, with being Arminians, is to do them great injustice.

And if there is a wide difference between Orthodoxy and Arminianism, still more wide and important is the distinction between Orthodoxy and Unitarianism. Indeed, by the advocates of these two systems of religion, there is scarcely any thing held in common. The one regards the Supreme Being as existing in three persons, the other as in one person. The one believes all Scripture to have been given by inspiration of God, the other denies it. The one believes in the Divinity and atonement of Christ, in the Divinity and personality of the Holy Spirit, in the natural and entire depravity of man, in the necessity of regeneration by a special Divine influence, in justification by faith, in the perseverance of saints, in a general judgement, and in the endless punishment of the wicked; but by the most liberalized Unitarians of the present day, all these doctrines are rejected.—Unitarians sometimes pretend that they do not differ more from the Orthodox, than the Orthodox do from one another. Our readers will know how to estimate such assertions. They certainly are the result, either of great ignorance, or of something worse.

Surrounded as they are by dangers and enemies, Orthodox Christians have the strongest inducements to cultivate union among themselves. They are united in a great and glorious system of Divine truth—the same which once occupied the minds of Apostles, and into which the angels desire to look; and notwithstanding their differences of opinion upon minor points, they have common ground enough on which to stand, and where they may co-operate, in every work of faith and labor of

love. They worship the same God, trust in the same Saviour, have been sanctified by the same Spirit, are travelling the same road, and looking forward to the same eternal home ;—and why should they fall out by the way ? Why should local prejudices, and sectional jealousies, and denominational pride, and party zeal, and differences of opinion in smaller matters, be permitted to sunder the bonds of Christian love, and array them one against another ? Did they consider how such contentions will look to them in heaven,—and how they tend to grieve the Holy Spirit of God, obstruct the progress of truth, and spread joy among the malignant spirits of darkness ;—did they remember the last prayer of the Saviour with his disciples, “ That they all may be *one*, as thou Father art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us,—that the world may believe that thou hast sent me ;”^{*}—they surely would be more diligent, and more successful, in their endeavors to ‘keep the unity of the Spirit in the bonds of peace.’

INQUIRY INTO THE MEANING OF ROMANS VIII. 19—22.

MR. EDITOR—

You have doubtless seen, in the second number of the Biblical Repository, an interpretation of Rom. viii. 18—25, by Prof. Stuart. About the time of the publication of that number, I was engaged in examining that difficult passage, with the hope of satisfying my own mind, at least, as to its meaning. I was then strongly inclined to the opinion, that the term *κρίστους*, which creates the chief difficulty in the passage, means *Christians*, or rather Christians in the present state, with a frail corporeal nature. But when I read the critical and learned exposition of Prof. Stuart, my confidence in my own opinion was shaken. Subsequently, another examination was entered into, of which the following

* The venerable Philip Henry remarks on this passage, as follows :—“ Notwithstanding the many sub-divisions that are in the church, yet all the saints, as far as they are sanctified, are *one* : one in relation, one flock, one family, one building, one body, one bread, one by representation, one in image and likeness, of one inclination and disposition, one in their aims, one in their askings, one in amity and friendship, one in interest, and one in their inheritance ; nay, they are one in judgement and opinion ; for though in some things they differ, yet those things in which they are agreed are many more, and much more considerable, than those in which they differ. They are all of a mind concerning sin, that it is the worst thing in the world ; concerning Christ, that he is All in all ; concerning the favor of God, that it is better than life ; concerning the world, that it is vanity ; concerning the word of God, that it is very precious.” &c.

See *Matthew Henry's Life of Philip Henry*, p. 241.

is the result. Should you think the view I have taken of the passage deserving of notice, it is at your disposal.

Prof. Stuart, has, in my view, triumphantly refuted the various, and many of them absurd, interpretations which have been given of the passage; except that which gives to *κτισις* the meaning, *Christians*, or Christians in their present corporeal state. The question then is, *does the controverted term κτισις mean MEN, THE HUMAN RACE IN GENERAL, or does it mean CHRISTIAN MEN, Christians, with a body which clogs the exercises of the soul, and from which they long for deliverance?*

To decide this question, let us, first, look at the passage, rendered according to the different meanings of the controverted term:

18. For I consider the sufferings of the present time as nothing, in comparison with the glory which is to be revealed to us.

19. For the longing desire of the Christian in his present state, is for the manifestation [of the glory] of the sons of God.

20. For the Christian, as to his corporeal nature, was subjected to frailty, not voluntarily, but according to the arrangement of God; yet in hope

21. That this very corporeal nature of the Christian shall be delivered from the bondage of its frail and perishing condition into the glorious liberty of the children of God.

22. For we know that all Christians in the body, do groan and suffer anguish together until the present time.

23. Not only Christians generally, but we who have the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves, [Apostles and others of distinguished gifts who might be considered as exempt] do groan inwardly, waiting for the blessing of our sonship; to wit, the redemption of our body.

24. For in hope we wait for this complete deliverance: of course, the object of our hope is yet future; for how can a man be said to hope for that which is present?

18. Moreover, I count not the sufferings of the present time as worthy of comparison with the glory which is to be revealed to us.

19. For the earnest expectation of the human race is waiting for the manifestation [of this glory] of the children of God.

20. For the human race was made subject to frailty, (not of its own choice, but by him who put it in subjection) in hope

21. That that same race may be freed from the bondage of a perishing state, and (brought) into the glorious liberty of the children of God.

22. For we know that all mankind sigh together and are in anguish, even to the present time.

23. And not only so, but we who have the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves do groan within ourselves, waiting for our adoption as children, the redemption of our bodies.

24. For we are saved [only] in hope. Now hope which is seen, is not hope; for what a man seeth, how doth he still hope for it?

25. But the object of our hope being future, we do patiently wait for it.

25. But if we hope for that which we do not see, we patiently wait for it.

1. In assigning reasons for giving to *κτίσις* the meaning which I have done, I admit that the term has not precisely the *same shade* of meaning in any other passage. It is used with considerable latitude in the New Testament, and in each case takes its peculiar *phase* or signification from its connexion. Beyond doubt, in Mark 16: 15, 'Preach the Gospel to *πάσῃ τῇ κτίσει*, and Col. 1: 23, *ἐν πάσῃ τῇ κτίσει*, it means mankind in general. Equally clear is it that, in 2 Cor. 5: 17, and Gal. 6: 15, it denotes, with the adjective *καινῆ*, one brought into a right state of feeling and acting; that is, a Christian. But in 1 Pet. 2: 13, *πᾶσα ἀνθρώπινη κτίσει*, I agree with the translators of our version that it means "ordinance"—every human institution, viz. of government. While in Rom. 1: 20, 25. 8: 39. Heb 4: 13. Mark 10: 6. 13: 19. 2 Pet. 3: 4. Col. 1: 15. Rev. 3: 14, it means the act of creating, the thing created, the universe, different orders of intelligent beings. And in Heb. 9: 11, it seems to mean the visible material creation, in distinction from that which is invisible.

Let not the meaning which I have given to the term *κτίσις*; be discarded, on the ground that it is not supported by the *usus loquendi*. If asked why I use the word out of its usual signification, or differently from its use in any other instance, the answer is, *the exigency of the passage demands it*. Why do we say that in Mark 16: 15, "preach the Gospel to every creature," *πάσῃ τῇ κτίσει*, the word means mankind, or the whole human family; and not the act of creating, as in Rom. 1: 20, or the visible material creation, as in Heb. 9: 11? and why render Heb. 9: 11, *ταύτης τῆς κτίσεως*, this visible material creation? Has the word precisely such a meaning in any other passage? Why not render it mankind, as in Mark 16: 15, or "ordinance," as in 1 Pet. 2: 13? Would such a meaning be incongruous with the connexion? would it convey a foolish or absurd sense? and would this be an adequate reason for not giving such a meaning to the term? So in the passage in debate, the scope and connexion, *exigentia loci*, seem to demand this meaning, and to admit of no other. As to the *usus loquendi* of *κτίσις*, who shall determine it, amid such a variety of significations? or who shall say it cannot have the meaning which I assign to it in this passage, because it has not precisely the same in any other? After all, there is no great departure from the more common signification of the term. Its prevailing meaning is a *created thing*; sometimes

men, sometimes the *whole universe, or a part*; as used with *καὶνή*, it means *Christians*. But in the passage under examination, it means *Christian men, as possessed of a frail, corporeal nature*. So that the term in this place combines the various significations of it in other passages, rather than assumes one entirely new.

2. But in proof that the exigency of the passage requires the meaning which I have given to *κρίσις*, let us attend to the logical argument of it; or to the design and object which the apostle had in view. On this point, I concur with Prof. Stuart, that the apostle's theme is contained in verse 18: 'I count not the sufferings of the present time, as worthy of comparison with the glory which is to be revealed to us;' i. e. I regard the present sufferings of Christians as hardly deserving of notice, because of the unspeakable glory to which they are coming, and which will be heightened by their present trials." Verse 25, "contains the practical conclusion deduced from the whole," which is, "that Christians in the midst of sufferings and trials ought not to faint or be discouraged," but patiently wait for the glory which is to be revealed.

Now to see the bearing of the intermediate verses, 19—24, upon the premises and conclusion, we must mark the emphasis laid on "the *sufferings of the present time*," sufferings in the body, v. 18, which is so forcibly contrasted with "the redemption of the body," v. 23. The logical argument runs thus: 'Our present sufferings are nothing in comparison with the glory which we shall enjoy hereafter. For this frail and perishing body in which we suffer now, is waiting for a great and glorious deliverance. God has appointed our lot; but we are cheered with hope that we shall be delivered from all the trials and sorrows to which we are subject;—yea, the groanings and anguish of all believers will come to an end, when that period arrives, which is called the "manifestation of the sons of God," "the adoption," even the "redemption of the body." Be not therefore disheartened, but amid all "the sufferings of the present time," rejoice in hope of the glory which is to come.'

The logic of the passage, viewed in the light here presented, is clear and convincing. But if *κρίσις* means mankind in general, and verses 19—24 are an "illustration and confirmation of the truth that there is a world of rich and everlasting enjoyment" to Christians, then I must confess that, to me, the apostle's logic is weak and inconclusive. For how could the *desire of immortality in mankind* illustrate and confirm the *Christian's hope of "the manifestation of the sons of God, or their "filiation—the redemption of the body?"* Especially, as the desire of immor-

tality, which is said to characterize the human race, does in fact amount to no more than a desire of continued existence, or a dread of annihilation? It is wholly unlike the Christian's hope of future glory;—how then can it confirm that hope? Besides, considering the opinions which prevailed respecting the immortality of the soul, at the time when the apostle wrote, is it probable that he would introduce such a topic, to confirm Christians in their belief of a "world of rich and everlasting enjoyment?" Did he not know that the whole sect of Sadducees believed that the soul died with the body, and that there is no future state,—'neither angel nor spirit;' that the doctrine of metempsychosis, or transmigration of souls, was the prevalent belief among philosophers, and the common people too, so far as they had any belief; and that this belief prevailed to some extent among the Jews also? See John 9: 1—4. Matt. 16: 14. Luke 9: 19. Considering how vague and inconsistent the opinions of both Jews and Gentiles were on this subject, can it be considered sound logic in the apostle thence to argue the *certainty* of the Christian's hope of glory?

3. But further, *what is predicated of κτισεις, is true of Christians only, and can in no just sense be applied to mankind in general.* In support of this position I shall go at once into an examination of these predicates.

(1.) *Την αποκάλυψιν των υιων του θεου*, the manifestation of the children of God, *v. 19*, evidently correspond with *την μελλουσαν δόξαν αποκαλυφθηναι v. 18*, the glory which is to be revealed to us. This manifestation is to be made at the period when Christ shall appear to judge the world, and to bestow eternal rewards upon his followers. 1Cor. 1: 7. 2Thess. 1: 7, 10. 1Pet. 1: 7, 13. 4: 13. 5: 1, 4. "Waiting for the coming *την αποκάλυψιν*, of our Lord Jesus Christ, who shall confirm you unto the end, blameless, in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ." "Rest—when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven *εν τη αποκάλυψει* with his mighty angels—to be glorified in his saints and to be admired in all them that believe." "That the trial of your faith, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing *εν αποκάλυψει* of Jesus Christ." "Hope to the end, for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the appearing *εν αποκάλυψει* of Jesus Christ." "Rejoice—that when his glory shall be revealed, *εν τη αποκάλυψει της δόξης*, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy." "A partaker of the glory that shall be revealed" *αποκαλυπτεσθαι*; "when the Chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away."

Clearly, from the foregoing passages, "the manifestation of the sons of God" is, when Christ shall come in glory to bestow end-

less rewards upon his followers. Then they shall be manifested to the intelligent universe in all the excellence of their character; "shall be rewarded openly;" and "shall shine forth in the kingdom of their Father." Then shall the declaration of the apostle John be fulfilled: "It doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that when he shall appear we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is." 1 John 3: 2. Also, that of Paul, "when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory." Col. 3: 4.

(2.) "In hope, that the ἀντιῆ κτισίς shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption, into the glorious liberty of the children of God," v. 21. "The bondage of corruption" δουλεία της φθοράς evidently corresponds with the "vanity," τη ματαιότητι to which the κτισίς was made subject, v. 20. It is the bondage of a frail and perishing state, which belongs to our corporeal nature. The apostle seems to have the same thought in view, when he speaks of "our vile body," Phil. 3: 21, and of the body being "sown in corruption." 1 Cor. 15: 42.

"The glorious liberty of the children of God," εἰς τὴν ἐλευθερίαν τῆς δόξης, into which the κτισίς shall be brought, is the antithesis of "the bondage of corruption," and the meaning of it is already explained by what has been said of the "manifestation of the glory of the children of God," v. 19; and if possible, is still more clearly elucidated by verse 23, "waiting for our adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body." On this point, no exposition can be more lucid and satisfactory than that given by Prof. Stuart. The κτισίς shall be freed from its frail and perishing condition, and be introduced into the liberty of the glory of God's children at the period of "the redemption of the body." Then, groaning and anguish and all the sufferings of the present time will come to an end. This frail and corruptible "body will be made like unto Christ's glorious body." "This mortal will put on immortality." "The children of God," exulting in their 'glorious liberty,' will be made "like unto the angels—being children of the resurrection." Phil. 3: 21. 1 Cor. 15: 53. Luke 20: 36.

Such being the predicates of κτισίς, I ask, are these things true of mankind at large? Is there an "earnest expectation" on their part of "the manifestation of (that glory which Christ will bestow upon) the children of God?" Though true, that mankind, in general, are subjected to frailty and suffering; is it true that they 'shall be delivered from their bondage, and be brought into the glorious liberty of God's sons?' Do they in fact "hope" for this, in any such sense as the term ἐπελπίδι v. 20, means? For though Prof. Stuart has given it the lowest meaning possible, so as to make it somewhat agree with fact; yet manifestly it has

the same force in this passage, as in verse 24, and is equivalent to the *ἀποκαραδοκία* *earnest expectation* in verse 19. On this point I may turn the language of Prof. Stuart to my advantage. "It has even been a matter of difficulty to my mind, to know how the apostle could speak of [mankind in general] as earnestly expecting or looking for *the revelation of the sons of God*, or as looking to be freed from [their] state of bondage, and brought to enjoy the glorious liberty of the children of God." And I must confess that, as it seems to me, nothing which he has said, at all removes this difficulty.

For, first, such a sentiment has no parallel in any part of the Scriptures. It is a perfect anomaly in Scripture doctrine, not having, as I can find, or as any expositor that I am acquainted with has attempted to show, a shadow of support in any other passage in the Bible. Even the rhetorical exclamation of Cicero does not warrant such a sentiment. "O præclarum diem, cum ad illum divinorum animorum concilium cœtumque proficiscar, cumque ex hac turba et colluvione discedam!" Or if this warrants the sentiment; let Cicero, not Paul, have the honor of it!

Not only has this doctrine no support in Scripture; it is directly contrary to it. For mankind in general, including of course the unconverted, who probably constitute the greater part, are represented as hating the children of God; having no fellowship with them; not knowing them; having no hope; without God in the world. They are averse to holiness, and have no relish for that spiritual happiness which the children of God will forever enjoy. At the revelation of Jesus Christ, they "shall wail because of him;" shall "come forth to shame and everlasting contempt;" and "shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his power." See John 15: 18, 19. 1 John 3: 1. 1 Cor. 2: 14. Eph. 2: 1—3, 12. Rom. 8: 5, 7, 8. 2 Thess. 1: 6—10. John 5: 29. Rev. 1: 7, et passim. How these things, which are true of mankind in general, certainly of all the unconverted, can be consistent with their earnest expectation of the glory which is to be revealed to the regenerate children of God, or how they can be said "to hope" for the glorious liberty of God's sons, I am at a loss to determine.

But further, what is predicated of *κρίσις* is preeminently true of Christians—of Christians with respect to their corporeal part, which is subjected to frailty and death. So evident is this, that every Christian heart spontaneously responds to the language, when thus interpreted; and the difficulty of appropriating it to others is so palpable, that no reasoning can remove it. "I acknowledge," says Prof. Stuart, "that if one insists on construing

the revelation of the sons of God, and the glorious liberty of the children of God, as being so specific, that they cannot be predicated of the hopes of the world at large, he may make difficulty with the exegesis which I am defending." On such a construction I do insist, for the plain reason that they cannot, without violence to Scripture and to fact, be predicated of mankind in general.

Observe how exactly this passage, from verse 18 to verse 23, accords with other passages in the writings of Paul. "For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal. For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this we groan, στεναζομεν, (the same word as in Rom. 8: 22, 23) earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven." That is, 'our afflictions we regard as light and momentary; for faith enables us to anticipate the eternal glory in prospect. We are assured that when the frail tenement, the body, in which we now dwell is taken down, we shall occupy a mansion which will never decay.' 2 Cor. 4: 17, 18. 5: 1, 2. comp. v. 3, 4; also 2 Cor. 4: 7—10. Precisely similar is 1 Cor. 15: 19, "If in this life only we have hope, we are of all men most miserable," comp. verses 52—58. Christ foretold the sufferings of his disciples in the present life, or in the body; but cheered them with hopes of future felicity. "In the world ye shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." John 16: 33; also, 1 Pet. 5: 9, 10.

4. But it is said, "this interpretation is pressed with insuperable difficulties; it makes no distinction between *κτισεις* and *υιοι* or *τεκνα* Θεου, in verses 19, 20; and it understands those 'having the first fruits of the Spirit,' of only the apostles, or such Christians as were endowed with miraculous gifts."

As to the first of these difficulties, the interpretation does make a clear distinction between *κτισεις* and *τεκνα* Θεου. What distinction can be plainer? I say *κτισεις* means Christians in their present corporeal state; and being subjected to sufferings, they earnestly desire or hope for the manifestation of the glory of the sons of God, or for their "adoption," to wit, "the redemption of the body." In v. 21, the antithesis lies between Christians now held in bondage, and the liberty of the sons of God; i. e., as before, "the redemption of their body" from frailty and suffering. This distinction is palpable.

But I turn this objection. The interpretation maintained by Prof. Stuart confounds the distinction between Christians and mankind in general, in verses 19, 22, and 23; and it gives a different meaning to the word "hope" ἐπ' ἐλπίδι v. 20, and the same word, verse 24. It represents mankind as longing for that which is peculiar to Christians, v. 19, and as groaning and sorrowing, in the same sense that Christians do, verses, 22, 23. The "hope" in verse 20, is made to mean simply "not despair"—a bare hope that mankind may be freed (not shall be ἐλευθερωθήσεται) from its present frail and dying state. Whereas hope, ἐλπίς, as used in v. 24, and elsewhere in reference to a future state, (see Rom. 5: 2, 4, 5. 12: 12. Titus 1: 7.) means much more. It is "good hope," "full assurance of hope," "hope which we have as an anchor of the soul," and which leads him who possesses it "to purify himself." 2 Thess. 2: 16. Heb. 6: 11, 19. 1 John 3: 3. When the apostle says "we are saved only in hope," he does not mean that the attainment of final salvation is doubtful, that he barely hopes it may be gained; but he means, as in verse 19, that we are anticipating, have not yet fully reached it. But the certainty of its ultimate attainment, v. 21, is a reason why we should "patiently wait for it," verse 25.

As to the other "insuperable" difficulty, viz. that "we who have the first fruits of the spirit," means apostles, or such as were endowed with miraculous gifts," I reply;—that the apostle meant to include himself, particularly, among the number who had the first fruits of the Spirit, is certain. In verse 22, he said, what was well known to be true, 'Christians generally, in every part of the world, πᾶσα ἡ κτίσις, are at present in a suffering condition.' Comp. 1 Pet. 5: 9. Yea, not only so, but we also, even we ourselves, whom you may have considered exempt, share in the common lot.' Now surely there is a broad distinction between Christians, common Christians through the world, and those who were eminently endowed with gifts, or had "the first fruits of the Spirit." But however this particular phrase be construed, whether as Prof. Stuart contends, as meaning "earnest, pledge, foretaste of joys to come," or as relating to special, eminent, supernatural gifts, yet I insist upon it that verse 23 compels us to include in the signification the apostle himself and other eminent ones like him—"even we ourselves:" so that the distinction does not lie between mankind in general, and Christians; but between Christians in general, and those who "had the first fruits of the Spirit," and who might be supposed to be exempted from the trials which were the common lot of others. The propriety of the apostle's making this distinction may appear, if we consider,

that he was writing to Christians at Rome, far distant from himself; who, while suffering themselves, were ignorant that others were subjected to similar trials, and who might very naturally suppose, that those who were so eminent as the apostles would be exempted. As to the exact meaning of ἀπαρχή, rendered, 'first fruits,' I confess it is somewhat surprising that Prof. Stuart, after admitting that he "finds but one meaning of it throughout the New Testament, and that is, *that which is first of its kind, or that which is first in order of time*, Rom. 16: 5. I Cor. 16: 15. James 1: 18. Rev. 14: 5. I Cor. 15: 20, should instantly abandon that uniform meaning, and follow the "Greek fathers" in rendering it *pledge, foretaste, earnest* of future glory. Is the *usus loquendi* so important in other cases, but useless in this? Are the "Greek fathers" of greater authority than the New Testament? In regard to the term κτίσις, which is used very variously throughout the New Testament, it is said that the *usus loquendi* hardly admits of its being rendered Christians; yet in the face of uniform usage, ἀπαρχή is rendered as synonymous with ἀρχαῖων, and that because the "Greek fathers" so rendered it. I am content to adopt the New Testament meaning of the term, either *as that which is first in kind, or first in time*. If *first in kind*, then it means here, the apostles and others who were eminently endowed with gifts, in distinction from common Christians. If it means, *first in time*, then the distinction lies between the apostles or early Christians, and the later converts at Rome and other places. The former meaning, however, is decidedly preferable; because, in regard to sufferings, the earlier and the later converts were alike exposed. But it was perfectly natural for common Christians, when thinking of the apostles, and others eminently gifted, to suppose them exempted from such sufferings as they themselves experienced.

To conclude—I cannot but express the conviction, that the view which has now been given of the passage renders it consistent and eminently practical. It agrees with facts, with other parts of Scripture, and finds a correspondence in the experience of Christians. Let them appropriate the sentiments to themselves, and rejoice in hope of the glory which is to be revealed. Let them lift up their heads with exultation, amid all the sufferings of their present state, for their redemption draweth nigh.

CLERICUS.

REVIEWS.

MEMOIRS OF THE REV. JOHN TOWNSEND, *Founder of the Asylum for the Deaf and Dumb, and of the Congregational School. First American Edition.* Boston: Crocker & Brewster. 1831. 12 mo. pp. 244.

‘Have you any knowledge of a Dissenting minister of London of the name of John Townsend, that was concerned in several of the benevolent societies of the present day, the seat of whose operations is in that city?’

Having been in possession of an English copy of the work whose title stands at the head of this article nearly two years before its publication in this country, we frequently proposed the above question to ministers and laymen deeply interested in benevolent institutions, and of the most extensive information in regard to their history. And, without a solitary exception, the question was always answered in the *negative*. Yet the Rev. John Townsend, late Pastor of the Independent Church in Jamaica Row, Bermondsey, in the vicinity of London, was the founder of “the Asylum” in England “for the Deaf and Dumb children of the poor”—the first institution ever established for the charitable education of this unfortunate class of our fellow beings,—and of “the Congregational School”—an institution for the gratuitous education of the children of Independent ministers in England, needing such assistance; and he was permitted to leave in his private journal the following record: “It having been widely circulated, and as generally believed, that the Religious Tract Society originated in the Bible Society, I will here leave for my children a statement of the true and legitimate descent of the most important institutions of these times.

1st. The London Missionary Society.

2ndly. The Religious Tract Society.

3rdly. The British and Foreign Bible Society.

From the London Missionary Society also sprang,

1st. The Hibernian Society.

2ndly. The Irish Evangelical Society.

3rdly. The Society for the Conversion of the Jews.

4thly. The Church Missionary Society.

“Unworthy as I am of being so distinguished, may I never cease to be grateful to God that I have had the honor and felicity of taking part in the origin, progress, and final success of these

great and prosperous Institutions.* Their utility and prosperity are the subjects of admiration and praise, even to those who have censured agents in them, for devoting themselves too much to public Societies. O that my children, and my children's children, may ever befriend the cause of missions! God greatly honored your grandfather, by permitting him to be one of the nine ministers who first met to form the London Missionary Society, and may none of his descendants forsake or slight it! When I look at my numerous grandchildren, and think how variously they may be situated in life, the prayer of the Psalmist for the youth of Israel is mine for them: *That our sons may be as plants grown up in their youth; that our daughters may be as corner stones polished after the similitude of a palace.* I wish them to know and remember this, when I am laid in the silent grave,—may they become sincere Christians, that we may meet in our Father's house above!"

Is it inquired, how could it have happened that the name of such a man should remain in such obscurity? The historian of the British and Foreign Bible Society has furnished the answer. "Those," he says, "who prepared the draught of this Institution [of whom Mr. Townsend was one,] avoided any thing which could be construed into an exhibition of themselves, and an assertion of that influence to which they might have advanced unquestionable pretensions. Resigning the foreground of the Society to those whom they thought most likely to advance its general interests, they contentedly occupied less conspicuous stations; and seemed to think themselves sufficiently honored by the privilege of laboring in its service, and recompensed by the satisfaction of witnessing its success." And the same was their conduct in regard to the other institutions named in the former quotation. Truly noble, and disinterested men! How uncommon an exhibition of resemblance to Him, who sought not his own glory, but his glory that sent him! And they had their reward in "witnessing," while they lived, a "success" they never anticipated of the benevolent institutions they thus founded in diffidence and in faith. They are having it far more abundantly now in the full enjoyment of the approbation of their God, and in listening to the praises of the rapidly increasing multitudes coming to the Zion above, for the grace which employed for their salvation the instrumentality of those institutions. How vastly more honorable to have been an obscure founder of the London Missionary Society, the Religious Tract Society, the British and Foreign Bible Society, than of Nineveh, of Babylon, of Rome!

* The Church Missionary Society excepted.

The following quotations from the Memoir before us ought not to be omitted in this notice, and may best be introduced here.

"In his ministerial relation, Mr. Townsend became acquainted with a lady, whose son was deaf and dumb, and who had been a pupil of Mr. Braidwood's almost ten years. The youth evinced an intellectual capacity which caused delight and surprise to the good pastor, who was astonished at the facility and accuracy, with which ideas were received and communicated. Mrs. C., the lady referred to, sympathizing with those mothers whose circumstances precluded their incurring the expense of £1500, (which was the sum paid by herself,) pleaded the cause of those afflicted and destitute outcasts of society, until Mr. T. entered into her feelings of commiseration, and decided with her on the *necessity and practicability* of having a charitable Institution for the deaf and dumb children of the poor."

"On the Sabbath day, June 1st, 1792, were commenced the subscriptions, which were to receive additions little calculated on, by the small band who gave their first offering to induce their excellent pastor to begin the noble work of mercy. Three friends contributed one guinea each; Mr. Townsend gave the fourth. This was, apparently, a feeble foundation on which to commence an undertaking which, even on the most contracted scale, required hundreds; but energy and perseverance can accomplish much, when the heart is under the influence of Him who said, *Be merciful as your Father in heaven is merciful.*" Through his persevering exertions, and those of his associate in the benevolent work, the Rev. Henry Cox Mason, "eight years had scarcely elapsed, before the infant institution was recognised as a great national charity; legacies, generous private contributions, subscriptions, all marked the support of a Christian and generous people." pp. 36, 37, 39. This society was "first projected and established" in 1792.

"When Dr. Bogue [who more than any other man deserves the title of the Father of the London Missionary Society] met with the subject of our present memoir, he found an ardent co-operator in his missionary plans. The former invited him to meet a few ministers at Baker's Coffee House, November 5, 1794, to consult measures for the formation of a Missionary Society, to be composed of episcopalians and non-conformists. Those present were the Rev. Dr. Bogue, Rev. M. Wilks, Rev. John Eyre, Rev. J. Stevens, Rev. J. Love, Rev. J. Reynolds, Rev. J. Brooksbank, and the Rev. J. Townsend. The principle of the Society was agreed upon, and it was resolved to invite the co-operation of the country ministers and churches, by inserting an outline of its plans in the *Evangelical Magazine.*" pp. 49, 50.

"It was in May, 1799, that, at a general meeting of the London Missionary Society, some of its members formed the plan of the Religious Tract Society. Mr. T. had no immediate share in its formation, but he soon fell into the ranks of its supporters, and was introduced into the Committee. He assisted in reading and preparing tracts for publication, and several were written by himself." p. 52.

"The year 1804 was marked by the origination of that Society, which, from a small and humble commencement, was destined to include within its ranks the most revered of our bishops, the most honored of our nobility, the most distinguished of our philanthropists. The seed planted has sprung up to a mighty tree, which has overshadowed the earth, and whose leaves are for the healing of the nations." "Among the honored band who first founded this benign Institution was John Townsend. As one of the Committee of the Tract Society,* he was present when the Rev. Mr. Charles, of Bala, made

* This committee were accustomed to hold their meetings at Mr. Hardcastle's counting-house. In a note prefixed to the address delivered at Mr. H.'s interment, Mr. Townsend writes:—"I scarcely ever pass over London Bridge, without glancing my eyes towards those highly favored rooms appertaining to our departed friend, and feeling a glow of pleasure at the recollection, that there the *London Missionary Society*,

application for Welsh Testaments to supply the wants of the Principality. Discussion on this request, elicited the fact, that many parts of England were destitute of the Bible. Mr. Hughes then proposed an address to the public, requesting aid in the general dispersion of the scriptures. This receiving unanimous assent, a circular address was issued, with the following title:—"The importance of a further distribution of Bibles." The issue was the formation of the British and Foreign Bible Society. pp. 57, 58.

"Being very anxious that an Auxiliary Bible Society should be formed in Westminster, he pointed out the duty of such an effort to an individual resident there, who afterwards, acting on his suggestions, interested those in its favor, who gave form and consistency to the object. The first public meeting was held in Willis's Rooms, on the 17th of December, 1812, when Mr. Townsend spoke as follows:

"In rising to address this large and respectable assembly, I feel myself oppressed by a great contrariety of feelings. I recollect that I am surrounded by peers of the realm—by those whose thundering eloquence has made the Commons House of Parliament even ring with admiration and applause; I recollect the pleasing and interesting manner in which these honorable persons have held forth entertainment and instruction to this assembly, and feel anxious in rising to address you after them, because what they have offered to your acceptance at this mental feast, they have presented in golden cups, embossed and enamelled with the finest tints of human eloquence. But on the other hand, I am relieved and comforted with the thought that those plain men who cannot enchant by eloquent or fine and sublime figures of allusion, may be equally zealous in the cause, and as anxious and successful in their endeavors to promote and extend it.

"I have the privilege of saying, that I was one of those who stood among the small circle that witnessed the opening of the spring head of this Institution, but it yielded only drops; we all felt anxiety lest it should never become a stream; but lo! it has become a broad, a deep, and a rapid river; it not only rolls on with majestic force, but is divided into a thousand, yea, into ten thousand rivulets, of which it may be truly said, *the wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them, and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose. It shall blossom abundantly; and rejoice even with joy and singing.* But great as is its prosperity, yet it must not be expected that it will meet with no resistance. I hold in my hand a translation of an edict of the emperor of China, aiming to interdict the introduction of that sacred volume into his dominions, and making the penalty of such an attempt no less than death itself. How vast the contrast between the policy and the judgement of those who there stand at the head of empire, and of those wise and enlightened men whom we behold assembled among us to-day, to befriend the world by the diffusion of sacred light.

"My worthy friend who sits near me, (and I feel honor and pleasure in being permitted to call him so,) you will know him best as the LIBERATOR OF AFRICA—he has, with great elegance and propriety, compared the circulation of the sacred scriptures to the diffusion of light. And is there that emperor in the world who shall lift up his hand before the rising sun, and say, 'thy light shall not extend over my dominions?' It may be so, but it is not possible that such opposition should succeed. The *Star* has already arisen in the east, and not long hence, peradventure, the *Sun* of righteousness shall arise in all its meridian glory. I do not possess, and I would not profess to have, the least particle of the spirit of prophecy; yet I do not hesitate to say, I cherish the hope that the time will come, when the sacred scriptures

the *Religious Tract Society*, the *Hibernian Society*, &c. formed those plans of Christian benevolence on which Divine Providence has so signally smiled. This pleasure is greatly heightened, when I also recollect, that in those favored rooms was brought forth that gigantic agent of moral and spiritual good—the *British and Foreign Bible Society*. These rooms, in my judgement, are second to none but that in which the disciples met after their Master's ascension, and from whence they went forth to enlighten and to bless a dark and guilty world."

shall not only penetrate into the empire of China, but also when Peking itself, the capital of that vast and populous empire, shall have a Bible Society, and some future emperor become its patron. I do not speak merely upon hypothesis, I reason from facts." pp. 58—60.

"On the first of January, 1807, the London Female Penitentiary was founded. To this institution Mr. T. became a decided friend and warm advocate. Many facts coming to his knowledge of the demoralized state of the metropolis, he published a letter to the Bishop of London, entreating his lordship's attention to the state of the public and populous streets of London, where scenes of unblushing vice were exhibited that would disgrace a continental city." p. 63.

In 1810 he commenced his efforts for the establishment of the Congregational School, and of a fund for the relief of aged ministers; the former of which he saw accomplished in 1811, and the latter in 1818.—Sept. 17, 1818, he recorded in his journal, "Attended a meeting this evening for the formation of a society to be called the Continental Society for spreading the Gospel over the dark places of the Continent. Mr. Drummoud read some letters from Switzerland, Geneva, France, &c., soliciting pecuniary assistance for the employment of some evangelical teachers, and for the diffusion of the Bible and religious tracts. O that a blessing from the Almighty may rest upon our feeble endeavors." In 1822, he made a journey to Ireland in behalf of the Irish Evangelical Society, and at other times travelled in England preaching and soliciting in behalf of various benevolent institutions. Of his ordinary labors in this department he has left numerous records like the following.

1819. Feb. 13. "Attended the Missionary Society at eleven—the Bible Society at twelve—Missionary Society again at four—went to see the wife of Capt. —, who was ill, and returned to meet the Bermondsey and Rotherhithe Bible Society."—1821. April 16. "This day has been passed in London. Went to the Missionary Society at eleven; to the Audit of the Deaf and Dumb at one; and to the Committee of the Congregational School at five. Returned at seven, and visited some members of the church. Much pain in the side, and general debility: am strongly admonished of the approach of the last enemy; the whole tabernacle totters to its foundation, and is hastening to the decay exhibited in the 12th chapter of Ecclesiastes. I long to think, feel, and act as one just stepping into eternity."—Oct. 30. "Scarcely able to walk, from debility and oppression in the chest. Attended the printing committee of the Bible Society, and the committee of the Missionary Society; also the committee of the Protestant Society, to consider the principles and provisions of Mr. Brougham's Education Bill."—1825. January 17. "Preached three times yesterday: a tranquil night enabled me to meet the duty and pleasure of attending the Bible Committee this morning. At four o'clock went to the Missionary Committee of tours, to express my desire of being released from an engagement to visit Plymouth, Cornwall, &c.; pleading the bad state of my health: at five attended the meeting of the directors; went from thence, at six, to the committee of the Congregational School." pp. 97, 98, 116, 118, 127.

Well may his biographer say,

"Mr. Townsend has been aptly styled 'the apostle of charity;' such in

very truth he was. The sphere of his philanthropy was so large, and embraced so great a variety of objects, that the relation would be tedious. He had not only commenced and reared two lasting monuments of his benevolence and perseverance, but he belonged to almost every society that embraced either religious, moral, or physical relief to his fellow men. There are, however, some acts of beneficence, to be related only by those who knew him in his more private habits. With a limited income, he allowed aged persons a small stipend to assist them in the winter, at which season he distributed coals; giving not merely to those of his own congregation, but extending his liberality to the poor of his neighborhood. So early as the year 1786, he had established a society for visiting the sick; and the love and respect shown him by the miserable and destitute of his own vicinity, equalled the tribute of admiration which he was ever receiving from the noble and the wealthy. He was sometimes honored by being appointed almoner; but this never superseded the usual draft upon his own funds, which was extended with every increase of income."

But it is time to give some account of his early history, and of his personal, domestic, social, and pastoral character.

Mr. Townsend was born, not of noble or of rich, but of respectable and pious parentage, March 24, 1757. Like a multitude who have gone before him of the truly great and good, he testifies, "I owe much to the love and care of an affectionate mother, not only for her regard to my personal safety, but also for her instruction and admonitions. Well do I remember standing at her knees to repeat Dr. Watts' hymns, and kneeling to say my prayers." After receiving the first rudiments of his education from "a good old lady, for whom he always entertained a strong recollection of esteem," he was put successively to two boys schools, where he made but little progress; and then, by means of one of his father's more wealthy brothers, was procured for him a presentation to Christ's Hospital, where he continued five years, making good proficiency in study. "The moment now arrived for another conflict between worldly interest and conscientious scruples. Mr. T.'s uncles wished him to remain at Christ's school, that he might be sent to college on the foundation; but his father, seeing in the son no indications of that fitness which is required in ambassadors from God to men, decided against the plan. An offer was then made to place him in a public office, but that also was declined by his excellent parent, who feared his child might not resist the ensnaring temptations of the world.* Thus, apparently destined for obscurity, the future philanthropist and useful minister was placed as an apprentice to his father."

Before he entered Christ's school, he had had some "convictions of the evil of sin." Some interesting and rather remarkable circumstances detailed in the Memoirs had revived these

* Let parents notice this instance of preferring the spiritual good of a child to the promise of worldly advantage, and let them carefully note the result.

feelings, while a member of that institution. After his leaving it, they were renewed at intervals, till, in 1774, they hopefully issued in his conversion; and, after waiting a suitable time to obtain settled evidence of a Christian hope, he joined the church of Christ, in connexion with the Whitefieldian Methodists, connecting himself with "the Tabernacle near Moorfields," of which his parents were members.

Of his introduction to the sacred office he says, "I had no wish to intrude into the ministry: had I consulted my own family, I should probably have been discouraged, as they had no idea that I possessed talents for so important a station. Providence effected it in a gradual and silent manner, most congenial to my own feelings and habits." After his conversion, he devoted much of his time to reading theological works, and the sermons he heard were carefully treasured in his memory, and afterwards committed to writing. In the Tabernacle, regular meetings were held for prayer and conversation, and "at these, some of the young men attempted to expound a passage of scripture, that their knowledge might be increased, and a facility of speaking acquired." Mr. T. soon began to take a part, successfully, in these exercises. Through his older brother, the Rev. George Townsend, who had entered the ministry under the patronage of the Countess of Huntingdon, Mr. T. became acquainted with Mr. Beck, a minister in the same connexion. With this gentleman he formed a strong friendship. He "frequently accompanied Mr. B. to the various places round London, where he was accustomed to preach. On one of these occasions, Mr. B. being indisposed declined the afternoon service, and requested Mr. T. to take his place. After enduring much distress and anxiety of mind, and fearing to disappoint the people, he consented, and gave an exhortation, urging the necessity of religion to promote the happiness of man, whether in this world or the next." The subsequent incidents are thus narrated by himself.

"I continued my visits to Mitcham, praying and occasionally exhorting in the little chapel, when owing to a sudden indisposition, Mr. B. insisted on my preaching." In the most candid manner I expressed dislike, urging my insufficiency and unpreparedness, which would increase my diffidence and fear. It seemed impossible to enter the pulpit before I had obtained a more full and accurate acquaintance with divinity, and till I had studied at some college. My friend now endeavored to convince me, that the various exhortations I had given had afforded considerable satisfaction, and that whatever was my ultimate destination, I ought to exercise my "talent" till some arrangement could be made, as proofs had already been given of my acceptance and usefulness. The conversation was closed by an assurance, that as illness pre-

* Among the Dissenters in England, of different classes, young men destined for the ministry make trial of their preaching talents, in pulpits and on the Sabbath, without being previously licensed.

vented his preaching, I must be responsible for the disappointment of the people. This threw my mind into a state of much perplexity and agitation; its reasonings and fears were beyond any thing I can describe; a sense of duty decided me to overcome my reluctance, and as some hours intervened, I prepared the skeleton of a sermon; selecting that easy and familiar text, from Luke xii. 32—"Fear not, little flock," &c.

"My distress of mind on riding to Mitcham was so great, that I thought I must have returned; on my arrival, anxious to find an apology to the manager of the chapel for my apparent intrusion, I said,—*It is a week-night, and an emergency.* My fear and trembling were great, but I looked to God for strength and assistance, and found them; yet such was my terror that the pulpit shook beneath me. I had made rather a long plan, and if ever I cried to the Lord for help, it was at this time. When I had read the text, my fear so far subsided that I was enabled to forget every thing but my subject, and I found tolerable ease of expression. After the lapse of an hour, finding I had not proceeded more than half through my subject, I left off abruptly. On entering the vestry, many individuals came forward to express approbation and pleasure. Among the number were a lady and gentleman, the sight of whom had increased my distress, as I knew they were accustomed to hear Mr. Romaine, and Mr. Foster. The lady, who on first seeing me had objected to my youth, said this young man would be acceptable for one Sabbath at Kingston. The gentleman, Mr. Whitver, of the Ordnance Office, now pressed my consent to this; but I refused, on which he replied, God has given you talents, and you must use them. I returned home with very different feelings. "*The Lord, (as it were,) turned my captivity, and I was like them that dream.*" It was a night long to be remembered. To this hour, when I look back to it, and review all the circumstances of the case, my reluctance to engage, and my fear and agitation, I think it was obvious to the people that I was oppressed in spirit; and *this*, under the divine blessing, disarmed them of their prejudices, created their sympathy, and constrained them to pray for me; and their prayer seemed to return into their own bosoms; for they not only came to me and expressed kindness and good wishes, but they seemed to have sat under the shadow of the tree of life, and *found its fruit sweet to their taste.* Oh, how wonderful that the feeble efforts of an instrument so weak and insignificant should be effectual, in the hand of the Most High, of good to souls; but I recollect where it is said, *We have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.* 2 Cor. iv. 7. Still I have often looked back with feelings of anxiety and regret, and feared lest I did wrong. I have not only felt, but mourned the want of those advantages which I might have had, if I had resolutely persevered in my first intention of going to some academical institution before I commenced preaching; for it will be seen that this first sermon led to the abandonment of the plan of going to college, and became the step to all that series of services which followed, and to that chain of connections into which I have been insensibly conducted. On the other hand, when I call to mind the goodness and mercy which have accompanied me in my progress, how much acceptance and success have attended my ministerial labors, I am overwhelmed with surprise, and hope I feel both humility and gratitude."

With great difficulty he was prevailed upon, by a letter from Mr. Whitver and by the urgency of his friend Mr. Beck, to go to Kingston the next Sabbath; where he preached twice, and, "after the services of the day were concluded, many thanks were offered, with an expression of general approbation, and a request that the visit might be renewed. This was promised, and he preached a second Sabbath at Kingston. Arrangements were now made, with the consent of the managers of the Tabernacle, for his preaching at various places in the vicinity of Lon-

don. Shortly after he was sent six weeks to Lewes." He continued there eight months, preaching twice on the Sabbath, and once in the week, and occasionally in the surrounding villages, attending as he had opportunity the preaching of Mr. Cecil, which, being expository, was very profitable to him, and pursuing with diligence theological studies. He was then summoned to London, and found himself appointed to the station at Kingston, where "many of the leading persons had been delighted with his plain and unadorned sermons." In 1781 he received a call to settle with that people, which he accepted, on the condition that the church and congregation should be re-organized on the Independent model, which was done. In the same month in which he was ordained, June 1781, he married Miss Cordelia Cahusac; concerning whom he thus writes in his diary several years after. "Her person, her piety, her prudence, her industry, her economy, have been all that a Christian could expect or desire. She has been a help-meet in reality. In our lives we have been pleasant to each other; and our parting will be painful. But, oh! the blessedness of a good hope through grace. Our friendship will be renewed and perfected, and will become unfolding in the kingdom of glory."

Being thus settled in life, he gave himself wholly to his work. "Conscious" of his deficiency of preparation for the ministry, and "of the necessity of extraordinary diligence, he seized every opportunity of increasing his limited knowledge of scriptural and experimental theology, in the study of which he passed fourteen, and sometimes sixteen hours in a day." He took particular pains in preparing his sermons, which were not usually written, but preached from extended notes; "aiming, not to shine as a speaker, but to preach useful and instructive discourses." He was also diligent in the performance of pastoral duties. But "Kingston was a barren and unpromising soil: religion was much neglected. Like Gallio of old, the higher classes cared for none of these things, and the lower were so irreligious and brutal that they sometimes assaulted those who attended the meeting." And, worse than all, "the vile and detestable heresy of Antinomianism began now to spread through the whole vicinity of Kingston," at that time the residence of William Huntington, S. S., the too successful champion of Antinomianism, at that period, in London. "Every effort was made by the party that could be devised, to inoculate the whole church and congregation" of Mr. Townsend "with their unscriptural sentiments, and with their more mischievous temper." The result was, "the most uncandid and illiberal construction was put upon every sermon" Mr. T. preached; "the most eminent of his hearers

in seriousness of spirit and holiness of life were maligned as Arminians and enemies of the gospel," and church discipline became impracticable. Mr. T. now became convinced that it was his "duty to resign his charge, and communicated his intention to some of his friends in London," through whom it was made known to "the congregation in Jamaica Row, Bermondsey," who extended to him an invitation to become their minister, which he accepted, and commenced his stated labors among them "on the Sabbath after Midsummer Day, 1784." In this congregation he labored, with exemplary fidelity and happy success, forty-two years, till his death.

In 1792 began his abundant labors, already described, in various departments of public charity. These were so multiplied and so diligently attended that, it may be supposed, his ministerial duties were henceforth in a considerable degree remitted. Far otherwise. He usually preached three times on the Sabbath, and once during the week, to his own congregation; often attended the prayer meetings of his church, visited much among his people, preached "four sermons in a month at Orange Street Chapel," and occasional lectures in various other places.—How, is it asked, did he perform such an immense amount of labor? He accomplished it by system, punctuality, and unceasing diligence. He was never idle, and every duty had its place and time, which were most scrupulously observed. Rarely has a man been found who more nearly conformed to the divine injunction, *Diligent in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord*. And the results, in amount of labor and in the good effected, were great and blessed. In reference to his varied and pressing engagements, he thus writes in his journal in 1820.

"These delightful occupations, in which I have been for so many years engaged, will soon cease; my study has attractions so powerful, that I should spend my time there, did not a sense of duty render my personal attendance necessary, where I must assist in the extension of the Gospel, the dispersion of the Bible, and the education of children. How gladly would I renounce my connection with the committees, and devote my days to study; but the words of our Lord are imperative, *This ought ye to have done, and not to have left the other undone*. Lord Jesus, give me grace and wisdom to serve Thee more fully; may I aim at nothing but Thy glory, and the salvation of my fellow men. Time becomes every day more precious; two must be made out of one, and, to secure hours for more study and writing, I must rise earlier, sit up later, and improve every moment. Never let me forget my dear brother's motto, that 'this is the world for employment,—heaven for enjoyment.' But this is anticipation; I may not live till the summer, for my feebleness tells me that I am mortal."

"Mr. Townsend," says his biographer, "possessed a clear and vigorous understanding. His conceptions were neither striking nor imaginative, but he had great originality and accuracy of

thought. His intellectual endowments were not numerous ; but he had a mind well informed on all subjects connected with the general interests of the world and of the church. Prudence was a prominent feature in his character ; and to this valuable gift, with his extraordinary energy and perseverance, may be attributed much that he effected." " He had a singular power of abstracting himself from external objects, and could summon at will materials for the composition of a sermon, a tract, or an essay, not only in the crowded streets of a city, but in committee rooms, when, probably, his attention would be immediately called to discuss an intricate question. At such times he would rise, and, after apparent inattention to all that had passed, would make a luminous speech, aptly and immediately bearing on the subject under discussion. His power of embracing objects so multifarious arose, not merely from energy, and a determination to accomplish what he had undertaken, but he had that valuable art, too commonly neglected, of securing every fragment of time ; not a minute was lost, either at home, or in society ; no useless conversation was allowed to intrude on hours sacred to usefulness. He knew no relaxation, but that which arose from the variety of his pursuits." " There was an universal confidence in his judgement. Churches and families submitted to him their most private affairs ; and his character as a peace-maker was beautifully blended with his sense of justice, which never allowed him to condemn any man but upon clear evidence of guilt."

" In his domestic character, Mr. Townsend was constitutionally amiable—he needed not that self-control which many Christians find necessary—gentleness and tenderness were his characteristics ; there was nothing selfish, nothing contracted. As a husband, he was affectionate and considerate." " As a father, his great anxiety was, that he might see his children devoted to the service of God." " As a Christian, he was remarkable for heavenly-mindedness and humility. Prayer was his element ; every distinct act of the day was consecrated by the blessing implored on it before he left his study. It was his weapon of defence to secure him from all that might injure him in his commerce with the world. Never would he enter on sacred duty without devoting a season to holding communion with his God. He rose frequently at six, sometimes earlier, to secure this privilege ; esteeming it the only way to ensure tranquillity of mind, and purity in the affections. His humility was of an extraordinary character, and marked every action, every sermon, every conversation." " Neither envy nor jealousy entered his soul." " A strict adherence to truth marked his conversation : he dreaded giving an unintentional gloss which might mislead those who lis-

tened." "Christian principles were the basis of his character. Nature had given him much that was bright and excellent, and she might have made him a philanthropist; but it was religion that sanctified the high and noble purposes of his soul, giving, as a motive, the heavenly consideration, that he was not his own, but had been *bought with a price*, which no duty, no sacrifice could ever cancel. This was the operative principle of his benevolence—the centre, from which diverged every line of exertion. His list of duties was well arranged, and the arrangement acted on—all had a due proportion—nothing turned his well directed mind from its plans. Duty to God, duty to man, forbade any personal indulgence, any love of self—the will and the affections were imbued with that spirit, which turns to gold all it touches. He gave diligence to add to his faith virtue; to virtue knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness, charity; and can we doubt that the promised entrance was ministered to him abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of his Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ?"

Such was his truly excellent and devoted minister of Christ. Our notice of his Memoir is more extended than would ordinarily be expected from the method we have pursued. And possibly the reader may imagine that we have presented the substance of most that is interesting in the volume. But this is far, very far, from being the fact. We have given only a specimen. Much of equal, of superior interest has been passed over, especially numerous delightful extracts from Mr. Townsend's journals and letters. We know not when we have read a more interesting and profitable biography; and we are satisfied that all our readers, who will obtain and peruse it, will concur in this testimony.

THE CHRISTIAN PREACHER'S COMMISSION: *A Sermon delivered before the General Association of Connecticut, at Saybrook, June 22, 1831.* BY JEREMIAH DAY, D. D. *President of Yale College.* New Haven: Hezekiah Howe. pp. 20.

The various names applied to ministers in the New Testament all exhibit them as holding subordinate stations, and as directly responsible to a superior power. The very name *minister*, or *servant*, implies that they have a master, in whose business they are occupied, and to whom they must give an account. Are

they *stewards*? They are entrusted, not with their own affairs, but with the mysteries of God, 'and it is required of stewards, that a man be found faithful.' Are they *watchmen*? They are required to 'hear the word at the mouth of God, and to give his people warning from him.' Are they *ambassadors*? They have derived their commission from the court of Heaven, and to the instructions given them they must pertinaciously adhere. Are they *preachers* and *teachers*? Both the message which they are to proclaim, and the doctrine they are to teach, they have received of the Lord, and they must faithfully dispense them, whether men will hear, or whether they will forbear.

Such being the obvious and acknowledged situation of ministers of the gospel, it is strange that there should ever have been the least hesitation with them as to the source of the truths they are to deliver, or as to the nature and character of these truths. They are in the employ of Christ, to whom they are directly responsible; his infallible word is in their hands; and his command to them is, 'Go not beyond this, less or more—teach and preach all things whatsoever I have commanded you—diminish not a word.' Thus situated, thus instructed, how strange that any should dare to neglect or trifle with the sacred word—should dare to modify it by their own wishes, prejudices, speculations, or supposed interests—should dare to substitute, in place of it, the teachings of a proud philosophy, or the reveries of an unbridled fancy. He who should hold up a rush-light to the sun might be a wise and a prudent guide, in comparison with him, who should think to improve or interpret the scriptures by the light of his own unaided powers. "Can he be less than mad," says Bolingbroke (and the remark is worth repeating) "who boasts a revelation superadded to reason to supply its defects, and who, at the same time, superadds reason to revelation to supply the defects of this?"

We have been led into these reflections, by reading the highly appropriate and excellent discourse now lying before us. The plan of the preacher is to show, in the first place, that the gospel minister "is to resort *directly to the scriptures* to learn what the will of God is." He is to do this, because God *commands* it; because the Bible is "the word of a Being of *boundless knowledge* and *eternal truth*;" because the word of God is "*exactly adapted* to the design of his ministry;" and because "the treasures of religious truth contained in the scriptures are abundantly *sufficient* for the great purpose of his ministry."

"Perhaps it will be said that philosophical knowledge is necessary, to enable us to *interpret* the scriptures; to learn from the written word, what is the mind of the Spirit. That kind of learning, which explains the language

of the Bible, which shows the design, the views, and the situation of the writers, which places us in the condition of the persons addressed, which makes a skilful application of the correct rules of interpretation, is of the highest importance in directing our inquiries after the true meaning of scripture. But it is not a sound principle of interpretation, to determine before hand, what doctrines *ought* to be found, or are probably to be found, in the Bible ; and therefore to make it speak a language in conformity with our preconceived opinions. Of the truths contained in the scriptures, there are some which are evident, or probable, from the light of nature. There are others which, till they were revealed, the mind of man had not even thought of. There are others again, which natural reason would have pronounced to be improbable. "God revealeth deep and secret things." "He doeth great things, which we cannot comprehend." The scriptural evidence, therefore, in favor of any doctrine, is wholly independent of the probability furnished by reasoning alone, without the aid of revelation. This evidence is the simple testimony of God. It is neither weakened nor strengthened by any previous opinion which we had formed on the subject revealed.—Philosophical speculation, therefore, has nothing to do in ascertaining the meaning of scripture, except by explaining and applying the common principles upon which language is to be interpreted. The *doctrines* of metaphysical philosophy ought to have no influence in determining the doctrines of the Bible. If the language of scripture is to be so explained, as to conform invariably to probabilities suggested by reason, then it is no revelation. It makes known to us no new truths. It can decide no controverted point. For each contending party will give the passages referred to as proofs, the meaning which accords with its own opinions. This is the great reason why the various denominations of Christians make, ordinarily, no approaches towards agreement in doctrine, by discussions, which, professedly, refer to the scriptures as a common rule of faith. In truth, each party, instead of making the scriptures, the only standard of belief, makes his own opinions, to some extent at least, the *standard of scripture*. If the book of God is to be interpreted according to preconceived philosophical opinions, it will not be *one bible*, but *many*. It will be made to contain as many different systems of doctrines, as there are different schemes of philosophy brought forward to give a construction to its contents. Its meaning must vary, as one plan of speculation becomes unfashionable, and gives place to another."

Having shown from what source the preacher of the gospel is to derive his instructions, viz. from the *scriptures*, President Day proceeds to urge, that 'the truths which he has derived from this source he is bound to make the subject of his communications to his hearers. Nothing else will accomplish the design of his ministry.'

"The preacher may entertain his hearers with fine speculations on the powers and operations of the human mind. He may trace, with the hand of a master, the connection between motives and actions. He may gain their admiration, by exhibitions of his own powers of invention and reasoning. Every link in the chain of his logical deductions, may be rightly placed ; and firmly connected with its antecedent and its consequent. His philosophical theology may be wrought into a finely proportioned and compacted *system*. But all this will not be effectual to salvation. And why not ? Because human philosophy is not the truth of God. It is "the wisdom of this world."

"We have no sufficient ground for expecting that renewing grace will accompany the speculations of philosophy. "Thus saith the Lord of hosts, Harken not unto the words of the prophets, that prophesy unto you ; they make you vain, they speak a vision out of their own heart, and not out of the mouth of the Lord. They shall not profit this people at all. But if they had stood in *my counsel*, and had caused the people to hear *my words*, then they

should have turned them from their evil way. Is not my word like a fire, saith the Lord; and like a hammer, that breaketh the rock in pieces?"

If metaphysical philosophy is not allowed to lay the foundation of our religion, or to interpret, modify, or add to, the revelations of God; the question arises, whether the preacher has no occasion for the cultivation of his logical powers? no use for the science of mental philosophy? Is the time devoted to this portion of a liberal education to be regarded as lost?

"By no means," says President Day "There is a purpose, to which, with due caution, acquisitions and skill of this nature may be very properly applied;—meeting the cavils of those who *pervert* the scriptures, or who *reject* them altogether. One of these classes accommodate the meaning of the bible to their own pre-conceived and erroneous opinions. The other set aside the whole book of God, because it contains some things which do not accord with their own philosophy. Both are to be met, principally by presenting the direct evidence of the truth; but partly by showing the fallacy of their own reasonings. "The fool is to be answered according to his folly, lest he be wise in his own conceit." The caviller is to be taken on his own ground, and driven from the positions in which he is attempting to fortify himself.

"Let the preacher, then, be furnished with philosophical weapons, to ward off the attacks of philosophical opposers. Let him be versed in mental science, that the enemies of the truth may not triumph over him, on the ground of their boasted superiority in this respect. Let him study it *early*; that it may not first come upon him, with a fascinating and bewildering influence, in the midst of his parochial ministrations. Let him study it *deeply*; that he may understand its proper use, its limits, and its perplexities. On no subject, perhaps, is a little learning more dangerous, than on this. The deleterious qualities of metaphysics, lie mostly on the surface."

While we subscribe most cordially to the justice of these remarks, it may well be doubted, whether the *full* benefit of mental philosophy or a thorough acquaintance with the principles of the human mind to the gospel minister, is here exhibited. It must be remembered, that this man sustains, in the spiritual world, the office, not only of apothecary, but physician; (*medicamentarius et medicus.*) Consequently, he must not only understand the nature of the remedy entrusted to him, but he must take it with him into the world, and vigorously and skilfully apply it. He must go out among the spiritually diseased, and inquire into their state, and judge of symptoms, and 'rightly divide the word of truth, distributing to each his portion in due season.' But in every part of this important work, he comes directly in contact with *minds*—minds variously influenced and affected;—and how shall he proceed intelligently and successfully, without some correct knowledge of the structure and principles of the human mind? We admit, indeed, that the knowledge which he will find of the greatest advantage will ordinarily be the result of experience; but then he cannot have experience till he has acquired it, and previous study is important, that the full benefit of experience may be gained.

Another reason offered by President Day why the preacher should make the truth of scripture the burden of his communications to his people, is, that in this way he will be *easily understood*.

"But how is a plain man to arrive at a knowledge of religious truth, by the refinements of metaphysical reasoning? Suppose he make the attempt. He has a new science to learn; a science abounding in nice distinctions; requiring an analysis of the faculties and operations of the mind: and embracing a knowledge of the relations of cause and effect, powers and susceptibilities, motives and actions. When examining a particular proposition, he finds that this is dependent on another, that other on a third; and that he is to follow out a chain of dependencies and logical deductions. To establish a single truth, he must show its connection with a whole system of truths.

"If he looks to the pulpit for instruction on these subjects, he is involved in the mysteries of metaphysical phraseology. His minister speaks to him in an unknown tongue. He finds that he has not only a new science, but a new *language* to learn. The language of common life, and common business, has not the philosophical precision which is requisite for nice metaphysical investigation. Here again a new difficulty is presented. The language of metaphysics is far from being settled. In some sciences, the peculiar precision which is required, is in a good degree attained, by a general agreement in the use of terms. But this is by no means the case in metaphysical theology. Even the classification of the powers of the mind is not agreed upon, by writers on mental philosophy; some enumerating many original faculties, others reducing them to a very small number. This must of course lead to a great want of precision, in the application and use of terms. Such indistinctness, where the language ought, if possible, to be settled with mathematical exactness, is a source of endless misapprehension. It always furnishes to a disingenuous disputant an opportunity of retreating, under the cover of indefinite phraseology. Metaphysical controversies become interminable, except from the weariness of the contending parties, or of their readers. There is reason to believe that another generation, at least, must pass off, before the language of mental philosophy will become settled. In this chaotic state of metaphysical phraseology, how are the common people to establish their religious opinions, by a course of philosophical investigation."

The preacher is bound to make the scriptures his guide, not only in the doctrines which he teaches, but in the *practical exhortations* which he gives to his people.

"The Scriptures are the only safe guide, in giving directions to *impenitent sinners*; particularly when their attention is excited to the great interests of salvation. This is no time for hazarding experiments upon the conflicting emotions of the trembling inquirer; no time for trying the efficacy of favorite philosophical theories. When the question appears to be on the point of being decided, whether the sinner shall turn and live forever, or harden himself in a hopeless continuance in transgression, the spiritual guide who has any just sense of the worth of the soul, will deeply feel his own need of assistance and direction from on high. Who would venture, in such a situation, to substitute the suggestions of refined speculation, for the counsels of infinite wisdom? God only knows the hearts of all. He only knows the means of turning them, as the rivers of water are turned. He knows the truths which will most frequently be accompanied with the sanctifying influence of the Spirit. We may safely adopt the directions which we find in his word, whether we are able or not to determine their proper place, in a system of speculative theology."

In the leading sentiment of this discourse, viz. that 'the gospel minister is to learn the will of God directly from the scriptures, and make it the subject of his communications to his people,' all evangelical ministers will agree. The great difficulty seems to be, *to settle and define the principles* according to which the scriptures are to be interpreted. It is certain, on the one hand, that reason is not to sit in judgement on the book of revelation, and decide what it *ought* to be and to teach; and it is equally certain, on the other, that in interpreting this book, the plain dictates of reason and common-sense are not to be disregarded. Inspiration can never demand our assent to what is intuitively or demonstratively false. Hence, passages which seem to demand such an assent* must necessarily receive a modified interpretation, or the doctrine of inspiration must be given up. In general, however, passages of this description are not of a nature to occasion much difficulty. The necessary modifications are, for the most part, obvious, and by honest minds will be easily made.

The discourse before us concludes with three inferences, from the second of which the following extract is taken. It will be found to coincide entirely with the views expressed in the first article in the present number†—views which we hope and trust are becoming more common among the friends of evangelical truth.

"2. Another inference which may be drawn from the subject is, that *ministers and Christians who are agreed in their belief of the great truths of revelation, ought not to be alienated from each other on account of their different philosophical explanations of Scriptural doctrines.* The differences of opinion which occasion such animated controversies among the numerous divisions and subdivisions of parties in the Christian world, are frequently nothing more than different modes of *accounting* for doctrines in which most of the combatants are agreed. Shall I then denounce a man as a heretic, because we have adopted different metaphysical theories, in explanation of Scriptural truths which we both receive?—If he who differs from me, claims that his speculations are essential to salvation, that they are necessary additions to revealed truth, that without them the word of God cannot be supported or believed; then let him be admonished for his presumption. But the great danger to the cause of religion is, not so much that this or that unfounded theory may be advanced, as that *any* metaphysical theory, whether true or false, should be relied upon, as the foundation of our faith. It is the *dependence* upon philosophical speculations which opens the flood-gates of error. Points of metaphysical theology may be amicably discussed, if they are not allowed to usurp the place which belongs exclusively to revealed truth. But we so elevate their importance, and so fiercely contend for them, that a doubt respecting a speculative theory as certainly draws upon a man the imputation of heresy, as a rejection of the faith once delivered to the saints. Is it proper, that the peace of the churches, and the harmony among faithful ministers, should be violated, by contests for victory, between systems of curious speculation? If these points of ardent contention are *Scriptural* truths, they can be supported by Scriptural evidence. If they are not doctrines of Scripture, let them have their proper rank among other in-

* For instance, Matt. xxvi. 26, and John vi. 53.

† On the question 'What is Orthodoxy?'

ventions of philosophy. Is it right, that the simple truths of the gospel should be so interwoven with questions of doubtful disputation, that plain Christians cannot separate the one from the other. Let us have the river of the water of life, as it comes to us, *pure* from the eternal fountain, unadulterated by mixtures of human philosophy."

THE DIVINE AUTHORITY AND PERPETUAL OBLIGATION OF THE LORD'S DAY, asserted in seven Sermons, delivered at the Parish Church of St. Mary, Islington, in the months of July and August, 1830. BY DANIEL WILSON, M. A., Author of *Lectures on the Evidences of Christianity, &c.* First American Edition, with a *Recommendatory Preface*, by Rev. L. WOODS, D. D. Boston : Crocker & Brewster. 1831. pp. 212.

We are all bound to worship God, and attend to our spiritual and everlasting interests. But can these objects be secured, without devoting to them some definite portion of our time? Creatures of sense, drawn by a thousand allurements away from things unseen and eternal, how can the gospel, without a Sabbath, exert its full power on our own hearts, and diffuse its redeeming influences through the world? Will God be worshipped as he ought, or man prepare by repentance and faith for the joys of heaven, without a day expressly consecrated to these holy and exalted purposes?

Here then we perceive the grand design of the Sabbath. It does indeed furnish an indispensable season of rest for man and beast; but it was mainly intended to provide stated and sufficient opportunities for accomplishing the great purposes of religion. It arrests the current of worldly affairs, and hushes the din of business, and the revelry of pleasure, that in the stillness of its hallowed hours, the voice of God may be distinctly heard, and properly heeded. It spreads around us an air of sacredness and solemnity well fitted to prepare our minds for the worship of our Maker, and for meditation on the truths of the gospel. It recalls to our memory the wonders of creation, providence and grace. It calls us to the study of God's word, to the examination of our own hearts, and the varied devotions of the closet and the family, of the social circle and the sanctuary. It turns our attention awhile from time to eternity; it lifts our thoughts from earth to heaven, and bids us secure an everlasting inheritance there, by a timely acceptance of that gospel which promises pardon and salvation only to the penitent believer in Christ.

These remarks suggest *the nature of the Sabbath*. Its *essential principle* is that of devoting a definite part of our time to rest and devotion. The institution itself is quite distinct from the day on which it is observed. It must, indeed, be observed on some day; but the institution itself is one thing, and the day of its observance is another. The exact portion of time, or the particular day of the week, may not, in itself, be indispensable; but it is necessary that the portion of time should be fixed, and the same day be observed by all. Should one man devote to religious purposes one day in seven, and another one day in five or ten; or should one keep the first day of the week, another the fourth, and a third the sixth; how could there be any concert for the public worship of God, or for the ordinary concerns of life? One man's business would interfere with another man's devotion; the uproar of worldly pursuits and pleasures would disturb the quiet, solemn services of religion; and thus might society be thrown into such confusion as would threaten, ere long, to banish the peaceful spirit of piety from the world.

But who shall determine what portion of our time, and what day of the week, ought to be set apart for rest and devotion? There are obvious and urgent reasons why God, instead of leaving men to their own choice, should himself institute and enjoin the Sabbath. Jehovah is wiser than the blind, erring creatures of yesterday, and knows far better than we what portion of time, and what day of the week, will be most likely to meet the actual wants of mankind. The Maker of our bodies and the Father of our spirits, who built this fair and beauteous world for our residence, and spread over us the broad, blue canopy of heaven;—does not He know what Sabbath is demanded by our physical, moral, and religious necessities?

Only a *divine* lawgiver has authority sufficient to enforce a religious observance of one day instead of another. Had the day been selected by man, its expediency might have been called in question; its authority would have been resisted by many, as an encroachment on the rights of conscience; its character would have been divested of its sacredness, and its best influences entirely neutralized; every man would have felt at liberty either to keep no day at all, or to choose one for himself; as different persons would probably have observed different days, every day of the week might have been a Sabbath to some part of the same community; and thus would the wildest disorder have been introduced into all the concerns of business and religion. The very nature of the case, then, demands a *divinely* appointed day. No views of expediency, no civil legislation, no ecclesiastical de-

cree, no voluntary agreement among men, would be sufficient to bind their consciences, and control their conduct. Who generally disregard the Sabbath? Those who acknowledge its expediency, but deny its divine origin and authority. Who perform its duties the most faithfully, and secure the largest share of its spiritual benefits? Those who revere it as an appointment of heaven for all mankind. Moral suasion and human enactments can procure for the Sabbath no deep devout reverence. God must speak himself, before men will hear and obey. His authority, and his only, is paramount and universal. His sanctions invest the Sabbath with a sacred character, with a power and ubiquity of influence, that follow its violator into his darkest lurking-place, and clench its obligations on his conscience too strongly ever to be shaken off by any effort short of an entire, everlasting renunciation of his allegiance to the King of kings, and Lord of lords. God's decision settles the point of duty forever, and binds all men alike to keep holy that portion of time, and that day of the week, which he has set apart for the high and sacred purposes of religion.

Here turns the whole question. If God has *not* appointed a Sabbath, we have none that deserves the name—only a holiday of pleasure and dissipation; but if he *has* appointed one, then it is binding alike on every member of the human family. This is the real, the only essential point in dispute on this subject, between the friends of God, and the motley multitude of errorists, who strive so hard to throw off the restraints of the Sabbath, by denying its divine authority and its broad and holy demands. Their sophistry here is too generally a mere subterfuge of guilt—one of the Protean forms which depravity so often assumes to evade the claims of God. For who are these assailants of the Sabbath? Those who breathe most of His spirit; who 'know no sin, neither is guile found in their mouth;' who are 'holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners?' No; such men are, with very few exceptions, firm believers in its divine authority; and *all* of them are its strict and conscientious observers, and its stedfast friends. Who, then, are its angry assailants? The Sceptic, the Infidel, the Universalist, the irreligious worldling, the unprincipled demagogue, the lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, the whole herd of profligates and villains; and we deeply regret to find *some* lax, temporising professors of a better faith, ranging themselves (perhaps unwittingly, yet really) under the banners of this unholy and ominous warfare against the Sabbath.

But who is to decide the point in dispute? For ourselves we acknowledge but one tribunal of ultimate appeal on this subject;—

and of "the law and the testimony" we would reverently inquire, *whether God has actually ordained a Sabbath for all mankind?*

I. Look, then, at ITS ORIGINAL APPOINTMENT. It was instituted in paradise, and the progressive work of creation was so arranged, as to enforce its observance by the example of our Maker himself. "On the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made. And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it, because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made."*

Is it possible to mistake the import of a passage so perfectly plain? The sacred historian, after relating what had been done on each preceding day of the week, closes his simple account by informing us, that God rested on the seventh from all his works; and for this reason blessed the seventh day, and consecrated it (for this is the meaning of the original word) to the holy purposes of religion. Now, if we construe one part of this narrative literally, we must construe it all in the same way; if we suspect the literal truth of one part, we may with equal propriety suspect that of the whole; and thus might we venture to deny, or explain away, the entire account which Moses has given of the creation. Nay; we know not a single passage of sacred history which is likely to pass un hurt through the ordeal of that rash and reckless criticism, which dares to deny the literal truth of a statement so unequivocal respecting the original institution of the Sabbath in paradise.

How strange, then, the supposition, that the Sabbath was instituted by Moses in the wilderness, nearly three thousand years after the creation, and that this same Moses recorded it in the second chapter of Genesis merely by way of anticipation! By way of anticipation!! As well might we suppose, so far as the historical veracity of Moses is concerned, that the whole history of our race, previous to the departure of the Israelites from Egypt, was written by anticipation, and that Abraham was born, Adam created, and the world itself made in the wilderness!

What confidence could we repose in *such* a historian? This language naturally conveys the idea, and it has actually led nearly all his readers to suppose, that the Sabbath was instituted immediately after the creation. Did not Moses *perceive* the natural import of his own language? If not, he was utterly incompetent to write any history, and still more the earliest annals of our world. But *did* he mean just what he says? Then, if the

* Gen. ii. 2, 3.

Sabbath was not appointed in paradise, he was guilty of intentional deception ; and, according to certain critics, the man whom God inspired to write the early history of our race, actually told a deliberate falsehood, to enforce on his countrymen the observance of the Sabbath !

Are any of our readers surprized to find that there is little or no mention of this sacred day from Adam to Moses ? The reason is obvious. The narrative is extremely brief ; the history of centuries is often condensed into a single page ; and consequently many very important events are necessarily omitted. Does this omission prove that no such events occurred ? Can a similar silence respecting the Sabbath justify the supposition that no Sabbath had ever been appointed ? From Joshua to David, no mention is made of the Sabbath, even in the fuller and far more circumstantial history of that period ; but can we, from such an omission, infer that the Sabbath did not then exist, and was entirely unknown to all the pious Judges of Israel ? From Moses to Jeremiah, a period of more than eight hundred years, the rite of circumcision is nowhere expressly mentioned ; but did prophets, and pious kings, and the whole Jewish nation neglect, for eight centuries, this seal of their covenant with God ? If not, then the silence of Moses respecting the Sabbath, during the Patriarchal age, does not furnish a shadow of proof, that no Sabbath had been given to the parents of our race.

But how can this supposition be reconciled with the fact, that nearly all the nations of antiquity were acquainted with the weekly division of time ? The oldest pagan poets speak of this division ;* the Phenicians regarded one day in seven as holy ; and we are informed by Josephus, that “ no city of Greeks or Barbarians could be found, which did not acknowledge a seventh day’s rest from labor ;” and by Philo, that “ the Sabbath was a festival, not peculiar to any one people or country, but so common to all mankind, that it might be called a public and general feast of the nativity of the world.” We might adduce a great variety of similar testimonies ; but every student of ancient history must have met with abundant evidence, that the pagan nations of antiquity were familiar with the Jewish division of time into weeks. How shall we account for this ? If the Sabbath was instituted at the close of creation, we can easily see how this division of time might have been handed down by tradition to *all* the descendants of Adam ; but if the Sabbath was not known till the time of Moses, it would be impossible to account for so

* Hesiod, Homer, Callimachus, Linus, Lucian, &c.

early and so general an acquaintance with that weekly division of time to which it gave rise.

But the very manner in which Moses describes the revival of this institution in the wilderness, implies that it had long been in existence. The account is just such as we should expect on supposition that the Sabbath had been given to the parents of our race, but greatly neglected during the long and grievous bondage of the Israelites in Egypt. The people recollected it well enough to prepare for its return, by gathering on the sixth day a double portion of manna; "and all the rulers of the congregation came and told Moses. And he said unto them, this is that which the Lord hath said; to-morrow is the rest of the holy Sabbath unto the Lord. Bake that which ye will bake to-day, and seethe that ye will seethe; and that which remaineth over, lay up for you, to be kept until the morning. And they laid it up till the morning, as Moses bade; and it did not stink, neither was there any worm therein. And Moses said, eat that to-day; for to-day is a Sabbath unto the Lord; to-day ye shall not find it in the field. Six days shall ye gather it; but on the seventh day, which is the Sabbath, in it there shall be none. And it came to pass, that there went out some of the people on the seventh day to gather, and they found none. And the Lord said unto Moses, how long refuse ye to keep my commandments and my laws? See, for that the Lord hath given you the Sabbath, therefore he giveth you, on the sixth day, the bread of two days."*

Does this account look like the original institution of the Sabbath? The very first allusion to it is obviously founded on the supposition of its being already known to the children of Israel: "The people shall go out and gather a certain rate of manna every day, that I may prove them, whether they will walk in my law."† *What law?* The Sabbath had not yet been mentioned; but the following verse shows that the writer referred to that sacred day. "And it shall come to pass, that on the sixth day they shall prepare that which they bring in; and it shall be twice as much as they gather daily."‡ Can any one suppose, that God prescribed the duties of the Sabbath before he had appointed it? Nothing more than this had been said to the people respecting it; and yet they anticipated its return, and its sacred duties, by gathering on the sixth day a double portion of manna. The rulers report their conduct to Moses, and he answers them, in a way which tallies exactly with the supposition, that the Sabbath was an old and neglected, but not entirely forgotten institution. He expressly reminds them of its having been previously ap-

* Exodus xvi. 22—29.

† Ibid. xvi. 4.

‡ Ibid. xvi. 5.

pointed,—*this is that which the Lord hath said*; and then proceeds to repeat and enforce some of its duties; *bake that which ye will bake to-day, and seethe that ye will seethe*. The rebuke, *how long refuse ye to keep my commandments and my laws?* implies the previous appointment of the Sabbath; and the positive assertion, *the Lord hath given you the Sabbath*, must settle the question in any mind disposed to understand the sacred historian. How can we account for all these references to the Sabbath? How came the people to anticipate its return? Why does Moses employ the language of a historian, *to-morrow is the Sabbath*, and not the language of a lawgiver, *to-morrow SHALL BE the Sabbath?*

These brief considerations will be sufficient to satisfy the sincere, implicit believer in the Bible, that the Sabbath was instituted, as Moses expressly informs us, at the close of the creation, and given to our first parents as the natural representatives of all their descendants, in paradise. Was it, then, intended for them alone, or for a mere fraction of their distant posterity? Does the record intimate or imply anything like this? Does not every one of the reasons originally assigned for its appointment, apply alike to all mankind? Are not all equally bound to imitate the example of their Maker in resting on the Sabbath, to commemorate the works of his hand, and consecrate one day in seven to his worship? Is there, in considerations like these, anything which restricts their application to Adam and the Israelites?

It is impossible to evade this argument by saying, that the Sabbath was particularly enjoined on the Jews. Very true; and so were all the other precepts of the moral law. But because the Jews were expressly required to abstain from theft and murder, are we permitted to commit these crimes? Had nine precepts of the decalogue, like the law of the Sabbath, been expressly enjoined on Adam, but so grossly neglected by his posterity, or deemed of such paramount importance, that God saw fit to renew them on Mount Sinai, and enforce them on his chosen people by the most powerful sanctions; would this circumstance have left all the rest of mankind at liberty to trample on those precepts with impunity? No; such a repetition would obviously have enforced them still more strongly on every descendant of Adam; and the fact that the Sabbath was thus solemnly enjoined anew on the Israelites, so far from relaxing or restricting its claims, lays the whole human family under increased obligations to observe it.

II. Another argument, then, for the moral obligation of the Sabbath, may be drawn from *the fact of its having been incor-*

porated with the Decalogue. Amid the glories of Sinai, God spake as the lawgiver, not of the Jews merely, but of the whole human race; and there gave, in the Ten Commandments, a brief yet lucid summary of duties which all men, in every age and country, owe to him and to one another. But the same voice which there proclaimed, *Thou shalt have no other gods before me;—thou shalt not steal;—thou shalt not kill;—thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor;—that very voice uttered at the same time the command, Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labor and do ALL thy work; but the seventh is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God. In it thou shalt not do ANY work; thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy man-servant, nor thy maid-servant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates; for in six days the Lord made heaven, and earth, and sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day. Wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath-day, and hallowed it.*"

It is readily admitted that nine precepts of the decalogue are obligatory on all mankind; and what voice of authority has told us that the other is not equally binding? God enshrined the fourth command among the other imperishable, unchanging principles of his moral law; and who has authorized us to erase it from those tables of stone on which he himself inscribed it? Shall we venture thus to tamper with the statutes of Jehovah?

It is in vain to think of resisting this argument, by the supposition that the Sabbath was a part of the Mosaic ritual. It existed *before* that ritual; it was proclaimed by God himself from the summit of burning Sinai; it was graven with his own finger on tables of stone, along with the other precepts of the decalogue; it was incorporated, not with a perishable ritual, but with that moral law whose principles are all binding alike on every son and daughter of Adam. Did Christ come to destroy *that* law? No; he came, as he expressly informs us, not to repeal it, but to *enforce* it by all the sanctions of his own gospel.*

Nor can we set aside the Sabbath by calling it a *positive* institution. What if it *be* so? Has not the Almighty Lawgiver authority sufficient to enforce whatever he may see fit to enjoin? Because the command to abstain from the tree of knowledge was merely a positive one, could our first parents disobey it with impunity? Let the miseries of a world, for time and eternity, answer. What creates or determines our duty in any case? The simple will of God, in whatever way expressed,—whether revealed in his word, inferred from his works, or written on the heart

* Matt. v. 17, 18.

and conscience. The fourth command, then, even if it were altogether of a positive nature, would be as really binding on mankind as any other part of the decalogue.

But is the Sabbath in *all* respects a positive institution? True, the day of its observance, a point not essential to the institution itself, is necessarily a matter of positive injunction; but are not all its other features stamped with a moral impress? Do they not exhibit all the characteristics of a moral precept? What gives such a precept its moral nature? Its origin, its duties, its purposes, its reasons? Then is the Sabbath of a moral nature; for its origin is the bosom of Jehovah; its main duties are moral; its grand purposes are spiritual; and all its reasons are applicable alike to mankind in every age and clime.

It is still more irrelevant to say, that violations of the Sabbath were punished by the Jews with peculiar rigor.* What if the Sabbath breaker was put to death? So was the adulterer; † so was the disobedient child; ‡ so was the worshipper of idols. § But are we at liberty to trample the whole decalogue under our feet, simply because the government under which we live does not punish the violation of its precepts with the same severity that the civil law of the Jews did? May we indulge in idolatry and covetousness, or commit perjury and murder? What has the Sabbath, instituted in paradise, and renewed amid the glories of Sinai, to do with the civil policy of the Jews? Its incidental and temporary connexion with their penal code did not affect its nature or obligations, as a part of that moral law which God intended for all mankind; and unless he repeals the fourth commandment himself, one jot or tittle of it can never fail of being obligatory on every descendant of Adam.

III. These arguments, drawn from the original institution of the Sabbath, and its subsequent renewal, are both confirmed by *the manner in which it is treated throughout the Bible*. It is enjoined almost if not quite as frequently as any other precept of the decalogue. "Ye shall keep the Sabbath; for it is holy unto you. Six days *may* work be done;"—a simple permission, not a command, to work six days in seven—"but in the seventh is the Sabbath of rest, holy to the Lord. Wherefore the children of Israel shall keep the Sabbath, to observe the Sabbath throughout their generations for a perpetual covenant." "Six days shall work be done; but on the seventh day there shall be to you a holy day, a Sabbath of rest to the Lord."|| We need not mul-

* Exodus xxxi. 14, 15. xxxv. 2, etc.

† Lev. xx. 10, 11.

‡ Lev. xx. 9. Deut. xxi. 18—21.

§ Deut. xiii. 6—11. xvii. 2—7.

|| Exodus xxxi. 14, 16. xxxv. 2. xxiii. 12. Lev. xxiii. 3. Deut. v. 14. Jer. xvii. 20—26.

tiply quotations. Our readers, if they should examine the Scriptures on this point, would probably be surprised to find with what frequency and earnestness the Sabbath is enjoined.

Mark also the promises annexed to a proper observance of this sacred day. "Blessed is the man that doeth this, and the son of man that layeth hold on it; that keepeth the Sabbath from polluting it, and keepeth his hand from doing any evil. For thus saith the Lord unto the eunuchs that keep my Sabbaths, and choose the things that please me, and take hold of my covenant; even unto them will I give in mine house, and within my walls, a place and a name better than of sons and of daughters; I will give them an everlasting name that shall not be cut off. Also the sons of the stranger that join themselves to the Lord to serve him, and to love the name of the Lord, to be his servants; every one that keepeth the Sabbath from polluting it, and taketh hold of my covenant; even them will I bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in mine house of prayer."* "If thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day, and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honorable, and shall honor him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words; then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord; and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob."† Should we expect that obedience to a merely ceremonial law would have been enforced by the promise of such rewards?

But observe the threatenings denounced against the Sabbath breaker. "Every one that defileth the Sabbath shall surely be put to death." "Take heed to yourselves, and bear no burden on the Sabbath-day, nor bring it in by the gates of Jerusalem, neither carry forth a burden out of your houses on the Sabbath day, neither do ye any work; but hallow ye the Sabbath-day, as I commanded your fathers. But if ye will not hearken unto me, and hallow the Sabbath-day, then will I kindle a fire in the gates of Jerusalem, and it shall devour the palaces thereof, and it shall not be quenched."‡

Remember also with what judgements the great Lawgiver of the Sabbath actually punished its violations. "Because the priests have violated my law, and hid their eyes from my Sabbaths, therefore have I poured out mine indignation upon them; I have consumed them with the fire of my wrath." "What evil thing," said the fearless Nehemiah to the nobles of Ju-

* Isa. xlvi. 2, 4-7.

† Isa. lviii. 13, 14.

‡ Exodus xxxi. 14, 15. Num. xv. 35. Jer. xvii. 21, 22, 27.

dah, "is this that ye do, and profane the Sabbath-day? Did not your fathers thus, and did not our God bring all this evil upon us, and upon this city? Yet ye bring more wrath upon Israel by profaning the Sabbath."* "I gave them my Sabbath to be a sign between me and them, that they might know that I am the Lord that sanctify them. But the house of Israel rebelled against me; my Sabbaths they greatly polluted. Then I said, I will pour out my fury upon them in the wilderness to consume them. I would not bring my people into the land which I had given them, because they walked not in my statutes, but polluted my Sabbaths."*

With what feelings, then, did the saints of old regard the Sabbath? Enjoined so emphatically in the moral law, and enforced by such promises and threatenings, did they not esteem it peculiarly sacred, and yield it a strict observance? Our limits will not permit us to trace the history of their conduct in reference to the Sabbath. It will be sufficient to say, what every one familiar with the Bible knows, that the pious Jews kept the fourth commandment as scrupulously as any other precept of the decalogue. Our Saviour himself recognized the Sabbath as a Divine institution, explained its duties, and enforced its observance by his own example. We cannot go into an examination of the passages found in the gospels on this subject;† but a cursory glance must satisfy every sincere inquirer after truth, that he paid this sacred day the deference due only to a part of the moral law, and neither said nor did anything inconsistent with its real design, its divine authority, and permanent obligation. The Apostles followed in his footsteps, devoted one day in seven to the public worship of God, and thus practically enforced on all mankind the duty of remembering the Sabbath to keep it holy.

The example of ancient saints, of Christ and his apostles, is a most unequivocal commentary on the law of the Sabbath. It shows us how they understood the fourth commandment; and their interpretation must put its meaning beyond all reasonable doubt. Is not the Sabbath, then, binding on all mankind? Yes; if *unrepealed*, we can no more shake off its obligations, than we can the duty of faith in Christ, or love to God. But what authority is competent to repeal the Sabbath? Obviously none but that of the Divine lawgiver; and the act of repeal must be, if not as public, yet as certain, as that which first enjoined the duty of consecrating one day in seven to his worship.

IV. But *the Sabbath has never been thus repealed*. True,

* Ezek. xx. 12, 13, 15, 16. xxii. 26, 31. Neh. xiii. 17, 18.

† Luke iv. 16-22, 31-41. vi. 1-5. xiii. 10-17. xiv. 1-6. Mark vi. 1-6. Matt. xii. 9-21. John v. 5-47. vii. 21-53. ix. 1-41.

the ritual of Moses has been superseded by Christianity ; but the Sabbath belonged, not to the ritual of Moses, but to that moral law, which is obligatory alike on all the descendants of Adam. It is equally irrelevant to say, that Christians were never required to observe the Jewish Sabbath ; for we readily admit, that the Sabbath has been transferred from the seventh to the first day of the week.

The passages, so often quoted to prove an implicit repeal of the Sabbath* may easily be understood, by a reference to the standing controversies between Jewish and Gentile converts. The former very naturally retained a strong attachment to the ritual of Moses, and even endeavored to enforce it on their Gentile brethren. Hence arose a variety of disputes, which the Apostles were called upon to adjust and settle. Considering the points in controversy, or many of them, as matters of indifference in themselves, they permitted both parties to indulge their respective predilections, and only exhorted them to treat each other with Christian candor, forbearance and charity. Each was left to follow the dictates of his own conscience. The Jew might practice, and the Gentile neglect, the ceremonies of an antiquated ritual ; but they were both required, as brethren in Christ, to obey the law of fraternal love, to be fully persuaded in their own minds respecting the propriety of the course they pursued, and to act, even in these matters of indifference, from a sincere desire to please and glorify God.

Wite such views, Paul exhorts his brethren to treat kindly those who are "weak in faith." "One believeth that he may eat all things ; another, who is weak, eateth herbs"—that is, one *conscientiously* disregards, and another *as conscientiously* observes, the distinction made by the Mosaic ritual between different kinds of food. What does Paul require them to do ? Simply to treat each other as brethren in Christ. "Let not him that eateth"—the Christian who has no scruples in eating *all* kinds of food—"despise him that eateth not"—the brother who feels himself bound to abstain from those meats and drinks which are prohibited in the law of Moses ;—"and let not him who eateth not, judge him that eateth ; for God hath received him."

From the Jewish distinction of meats and drinks, the Apostle proceeds to the festivals enjoined in the Mosaic ritual, which many of the converts from Judaism thought it their duty still to observe. "One man esteemeth one day above another ; another esteemeth every day alike"—pays no re-

* Rom. xiv. 1—23, especially 5, 13. Col. ii. 16, 17.

gard to the days appropriated by the Jews to religious rites. "Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind"—every one is required in this case merely to follow the dictates of his own conscience; because "to him that esteemeth anything to be unclean, to him it is unclean;" and "whatsoever is not of faith,"—according to a man's conviction of duty,—“is sin.” "He that regardeth the day, regardeth it unto the Lord; and he that regardeth not the day, to the Lord, he doth not regard it"—both he that neglects, and he that observes, this part of the Jewish ritual, act from a sincere, conscientious regard to what each supposes to be the will of God. What then is Paul's decision? Simply that each should follow his own conscience, and let his brother do the same, without any interruption of mutual love and harmony. "Let us not, therefore, judge one another any more; but judge this rather, that no man put a stumbling block, or an occasion to fall, in his brother's way. For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost."

Is there any allusion here to the Sabbath? No; Paul refers solely to the meats, and drinks, and festivals, prescribed in the ritual of Moses, respecting which he merely requires "every man to be fully persuaded in his own mind," and to follow the best dictates of his conscience. There is no allusion to the *Lord's day*; for no controversy ever arose respecting it among the primitive disciples. There is no reference to the *Jewish Sabbath*; though an express mention of this, as a subject on which good men might innocently differ in opinion and practice, would only have proved, what is cheerfully conceded, that Christians were released from all obligation to observe *that day* of the week, which saints of old had, by divine command, consecrated to the worship of God.

These remarks are applicable, in all their force, to the only other passage that has ever been supposed to repeal the Sabbath. To guard his brethren against those who wished to impose on them the burdensome ceremonies of an obsolete ritual, Paul says to the Colossians—"Let no man judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holy day, or of a new moon, or of the Sabbath-days, which are a shadow of good things to come, but the body is of Christ." It has been supposed, and the supposition is not altogether improbable, that Paul is here speaking of those festivals among the Jews, which were often called Sabbaths. Was the ancient Sabbath ever considered "a shadow of good things to come?" To the Christian Sabbath he surely cannot allude; and if he refers to the Jewish Sab-

bath, the passage in this case would prove, not that the grand principle of the Sabbath is annulled, but merely that the time of its observance is changed, and that Christians are left at liberty, either to observe or neglect that day of the week which the Jews had kept as a season of rest and devotion.

V. But does such a transfer of the Sabbath, from the seventh to the first day of the week, destroy the institution itself? No; so far from sweeping away the grand principle of the Sabbath, it tends to enforce the duty of consecrating one day in seven to the worship of God.

Is it not possible thus to change the time of its observance, without annihilating the Sabbath itself? Should a literary society agree, at first, to meet on the last Monday in every month, but afterwards conclude to meet on the first instead of the last Monday; would such a change in the day of its meeting destroy the society? The time for the session of our Legislature has recently been altered; but have the people of Massachusetts dreamed that such a change amounts to a virtual abolition of the Legislature itself? The Fourth of July has long been celebrated as the birth day of our liberties; but would this festival of freedom be destroyed, by changing the day of its observance? Let it come on any day whatever, should we not still commemorate the same events, and accomplish the same purposes? On this point there is no room for doubt. But is it not equally possible to change the day of the Sabbath, without annihilating the institution itself, or frustrating its main design? Had it been appointed on any other day of the week, would not its fundamental principle of consecrating one seventh part of our time to the worship of God have remained the same, and all its purposes of rest and devotion been accomplished with equal certainty? It is possible, then, to change the day of the Sabbath, without touching its grand and only essential principle.

But are there not strong, decisive reasons for such a change? We recur to a former example. The Fourth of July now commemorates the achievement of our own liberties only; but should the liberties of the whole human race be brought into danger; should all the monarchies on the globe league in unholy alliance against all the republics; should the tocsin of this final conflict for the rights of man send its summons from continent to continent, from one end of the world to the other, and gather all the friends and all the foes of freedom on some bloodier battle-field than earth ever yet saw, to decide the destinies of all future generations; should there arise, at this momentous crisis, a more than

* When the fourth of July comes on the Sabbath, the day of the celebration has usually been changed.

second Washington, and throw himself into this last Thermopylæ of liberty, nor sheath his sword till every minion of despotism was bleeding or cowering at his feet; would it not be proper for our posterity to unite with men of every kindred and clime, in celebrating the day that emancipated the world?

But there are far stronger reasons for transferring the Sabbath from the seventh to the first day of the week. It was designed at first to commemorate the work of creation; and in its progress from age to age, it gathered up all the glorious recollections of providence and grace that occurred from that time to the close of the Mosaic dispensation. But there has since occurred an event far more worthy of commemoration, than the release of the Israelites from Egyptian bondage, or even the creation of a world; an event that made a more important and illustrious display of the divine character; an event that awakened a wider and deeper sympathy among the intelligent creatures of Jehovah; an event on which were suspended, not merely the interests of earth and time, but the far higher interests of the universe through eternity. When He who was 'the brightness of the Father's glory, the express image of his person, God over all blessed forever,' after having stooped from heaven to the manger, the garden, and the cross, rose on this hallowed morning from the grave, triumphant over the powers of darkness, and re-ascended his heavenly throne, there to be head over all things to his church; was not this an event that ought to be had in everlasting remembrance? It *will* be had in everlasting remembrance, by the ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands, who shall come from every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation, to join the general assembly and church of the First Born, in ascribing power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing, unto the Lamb that was slain to redeem them by his own blood.

Is it not, then, highly desirable for the Christian to commemorate such a day of wonder and glory? In preferring the first to the seventh day of the week, he does not forget the work of creation, nor overlook any of God's merciful dealings with mankind; but condenses into the Lord's day all the grand and grateful recollections that can be gathered from the whole history of creation, providence and grace. But may he not—should he not cling with a still fonder attachment to the day which saw his Saviour finish the work of redemption, and open for a lost world a pathway to mansions of eternal blessedness? Here, then, are obvious and sufficient reasons for transferring the Sabbath from the seventh to the first day of the week.

But has such a change of the day been *actually made*, by divine

authority, to commemorate the resurrection of our Saviour? True, we find no express command for such a change; and do we need it? Does not the example of Christ and his Apostles express the will of God as clearly and decisively, as would a recorded command of him who claimed to be "the Lord of the Sabbath?" If the Apostles acted, as well as spake and wrote, in the name of him who inspired them, is not their example clothed with the same authority as their oral or written instructions? Do not actions often speak as plainly as words? We find in the New Testament no express command to worship God in the sanctuary; but is not the duty of social and public devotion sufficiently enforced by the conduct of Christ and his Apostles? Is not their example here as binding as their explicit and repeated injunctions would have been? The New Testament does not *expressly* permit pious females to enjoy the privileges of Christian communion; but is not the example of the Apostles, in admitting them to all the ordinances of the church, as decisive, as their positive instructions could have been?

On a similar foundation rests the authority of the Christian Sabbath. The New Testament does not, indeed, *expressly* require Christians to observe the first day of the week, instead of the seventh; but does not the conduct of Christ and his Apostles, obviously intended as a pattern for our imitation, speak on this subject in language sufficiently plain, and altogether decisive? Has not their example actually transferred the Sabbath from the last to the first day of the week, and thus given to the Lord's day all the authority of an institution expressly enjoined by Jehovah himself?

Look for a moment at the proof of this position. Our Saviour himself began to introduce the change by his own example; for it was on the first day of the week that he seems, in nearly every instance, to have met his disciples after his resurrection. "On the first day of the week came Mary, when it was yet dark, unto the sepulchre," when she witnessed his first manifestation.* He appeared on the same day to the three women;† and also made himself "known in the breaking of bread" to the two disciples whom he accompanied to Emmaus.‡ "The same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus, and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you."|| Eight days after his resurrection, Christ appeared again to his disciples, when assembled on the first day of the week for purposes of devotion;§ and in several instances did he, on the

* John xx. 1. † Matt. xxviii. 9—11. ‡ Luke xxiv. 13—31. ¶ John xx. 19.

§ John xx. 26.

same day of the week, repeat those visits of condescension and kindness.

Mark also the descent of the Holy Ghost at the feast of Pentecost on *the first day of the week*. Why was that day rather than any other selected for such a display of divine grace and power in the conversion of men? Because God wished his people to recognize it as "the Lord's day," and consecrate it in all coming ages to the memory of redeeming grace.

The Apostles and primitive Christians *uniformly* met on the first day of the week for public worship. "Upon *the first day of the week*, when the disciples at Troas came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow."^{*} To his brethren at Corinth he says, "As I have given order to the churches of Galatia, so do ye. Upon *the first day of the week*, let every one of you lay by him in store as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come."[†] This passage clearly proves, that *the first day of the week* was, in the time of Paul, observed by the churches generally as a season for social and public worship. When John wrote the Apocalypse, the first day of the week was called, by way of eminence, **THE LORD'S DAY** ;[‡] and from that time to the present, has the first instead of the seventh day been observed by the great mass of Christians, in every country, as their Sabbath.

On this point the early history of the church is full, explicit, and decisive. From almost every one of the Fathers we might gather direct or indirect testimony to the fact, that the Lord's day was religiously observed by Christians, instead of the Jewish Sabbath. Barnabas, one of the Apostolic Fathers, asserts that they "observed the eighth day, on which Jesus, having arisen from the dead, ascended up to heaven." Ignatius, a companion of the Apostles, exhorts his brethren, "Let us no more Sabbathize; but let us keep the Lord's day, on which our life arose. Let every Christian keep the Lord's day, the resurrection day, the queen, the chief of all days." Irenæus, a disciple of Polycarp, who had been familiar with John, says, "On the Lord's day, every one of us Christians keeps the Sabbath, meditating on the law." Tertullian, at the close of the second century, calls "every eighth day the Christian's festival—the holy day of Christian assemblies, and holy worship." Athanasius asserts, "formerly, among the ancients, the Sabbath was honorable; but *the Lord transferred the Sabbath to the Lord's day*." The evidence on this point, found in the New Testament and the early Fathers, compels even the Rationalists of Germany to ac-

* Acts xx. 7. † 1 Cor. xvi. 1, 2.

‡ Rev. i. 10. It is so called by all the Fathers; rarely, if ever, *the Sabbath*.

knowledge, that "the first day of the week was appointed, in place of the Jewish Sabbath, by the Founder of the New Covenant, and 'Lord of the Sabbath.'"*

We might quote here, *instar omnium*, a passage from Eusebius, which seems to have escaped the notice of all who have collected the testimonies of the Fathers respecting the Sabbath. We cannot copy his remarks entire; for they cover several quarto pages, and constitute a pretty full discussion of the whole subject. He asserts the original institution of the Sabbath in paradise, and explains its design, and the kind of duties prescribed under the Mosaic dispensation. He says it was to be observed, by ceasing from all worldly pursuits, by meditating on the law of God, and engaging in various acts of devotion. He refers to the holy, delightful, everlasting rest of the saints in heaven, as conveying the best idea he could give of the manner in which the Sabbath ought to be kept; and we doubt whether the strictest of the Puritans, however much reproached for their devout and scrupulous observance of the Lord's day, ever entertained higher views on this subject.† He denies the claim of the Jews that they alone had a Sabbath, and asserts that the Sabbath, being transferred to a new and nobler dispensation, is to be observed in a *more* spiritual manner than the law of Moses required. He expressly declares, that "the Word did transfer the Sabbath, under the new dispensation, to that day on which the Saviour of the world, having finished all his labors on earth, gained the victory over death, and entered the gates of heaven, accomplished a greater work than even the six days' creation, and then received from the Father a Sabbath of blessed rest, worthy of a God. On that day, Christians, in all parts of the world, are wont, after every interval of six days, to keep a holy, spiritual Sabbath, and to perform in a spiritual manner those things which the law required of the priests on the day of the ancient Sabbath." He proceeds to specify, very particularly, the duties of the Christian Sabbath, and to relate the strict and sacred manner in which it was observed by all the churches. After stating *why* the Sabbath was thus transferred to the first day of the week, he adds, that Christians were required, by tradition

* Augusti, &c. quoted in the Bib. Rep. and Theol. Rev. Vol. iii. No. 1. p. 122. An abundance of references may be found in Bingham's Antiquities, Vol. ix. pp. 13—56. B. xx. Ch. ii. Vol. vii. B. xvi. Ch. viii.

† We regret to find Dr. Channing reviling our forefathers for what he calls their "*gloomy Sabbath*," and deprecating a return of "the Puritan Sabbath"—the very Sabbath that has done more than almost any thing else to make New England what it is. We wish, ourselves, to see "the Sabbath a delight;" but we cannot join in thus reproaching those principles and habits which have given to the descendants of the Pilgrims nearly all that is excellent in their present character. Chr. Examiner, Vol. vii. p. 137.

from the Apostles, to assemble on that day for public worship, and engage in certain acts of devotion which he describes at length. He is, in short, so full and explicit that, were there no other testimony on the subject, we should deem this passage alone sufficient to satisfy any mind open to conviction, that the early Christians considered the Sabbath as transferred to the first day of the week, and themselves as bound, by the example of Christ, and the traditionary instructions of his Apostles, to observe the Lord's day, quite as strictly as the Jews had been required to keep the ancient Sabbath.*

What further proof can any man desire? Is there in the whole range of ancient history a fact more fully attested, than the custom, prevalent among all the primitive churches, of setting apart the Lord's day as a season of rest and devotion? The fact is altogether unquestionable. But how can we account for this early and universal transfer of the Sabbath from the last to the first day of the week? It *must* have been made by the example, if not the express instructions, of Christ and his Apostles.†

This position is not at all shaken by the fact, that the Apostles were accustomed to preach in the Jewish synagogues,‡ and most of the primitive churches to attend some religious services, on the seventh day of the week.¶ The Apostles proclaimed the gospel whenever and wherever they could; and finding the Jews assembled for public worship on Saturday, they gladly embraced the opportunity of preaching Christ crucified to their brethren according to the flesh. The early churches retained a high regard for the Jewish Sabbath; but they made a wide distinction between that and the Lord's day, by requiring Christians to work on the former, and abstain on the latter from all worldly pursuits and pleasures.

But, do any of our readers, after all, feel dissatisfied with this mode of inferring the transfer of the Sabbath to the first day of the week, from the example of Christ and the practice of the Apostles and primitive Christians? Do you object to such a gradual, tacit substitution? But consider their circumstances, and see whether a wiser or more effectual method of introducing

* Eusebii Com. in Psal. xci.

† Yet we find Dr. Channing roundly asserting—"this institution is not enjoined in the New Testament by the faintest hint or implication"—"the Christian world have in practice disowned the Sabbath"—"the first Christians knew nothing of this substitution," i. e. change of the day—"a Jewish rigor is not to be imposed on Christians"—"cases may occur [that of harvesting a crop is mentioned as an example] which justify severe toil on this day"—"all days are equally set apart to religion," &c. &c.—Chr. Examiner, Vol. vii. pp. 133, 135, 137.

‡ Acts, passim.

¶ Bingham's Antiq. Vol. v. pp. 286-9. B. xiii. Ch. ix. Sec. 3.

such a change could have been adopted. Most of the first disciples, being converts from Judaism, were strongly attached to the Jewish Sabbath; and would it have been expedient for the Apostles to prohibit its observance, and *expressly require* them to keep *only* the Lord's day? Such a change must, from the very nature of the case, have been gradual. If the Apostles were able to abolish the ritual of Moses only by slow degrees, and thought best, or found it necessary, to indulge the Jewish converts for a time in the observance of its ceremonies; was it not still more necessary for them to adopt the same cautious method of transferring the Sabbath from the seventh to the first day of the week? Could we, indeed, have expected any other evidence of such a transfer, than that which is furnished by the example of the Apostles and primitive Christians?

But God has fully sanctioned this change, by crowning the Christian Sabbath with the rich and constant smiles of his grace. These blessings began in the wonderful effusions of his Spirit on the day of Pentecost; and from that time to the present has he poured upon our world nearly all his spiritual favors, through the medium of the Lord's day. Never has he ceased to distinguish it thus; but in all places has he been wont, on this sacred day, peculiarly to visit his people in the closet, around the domestic altar, in the circle of social devotion, and still more amid the solemnities of his own sanctuary. On this day, the wonders of redemption have been commemorated with gratitude and joy, millions have been born again of the Spirit, and Christians have obtained strength to go forward in their spiritual warfare, and press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. God has obviously transferred his favor from the Jewish to the Christian Sabbath, and made it the principal means of sustaining his moral government over our world, and redeeming mankind from the power and penalties of sin.

But can we suppose that God has forsaken his own Sabbath, and bestowed all his regards upon an institution devised by man? If the Sabbath had not been transferred by his own authority to the first day of the week, would he on this very day have showered upon the Apostles, the early Christians, and his people in every age and country, such a profusion of spiritual blessings, calculated to encourage them in disobeying his oft-repeated command to remember and sanctify the Sabbath? No; the Lord's day is itself the Sabbath—God's ancient Sabbath conformed to the Christian dispensation. He has taken it into special favor as his own; and he who keeps it rightly, yields acceptable obedience to that command of the decalogue, which bids him "remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy."

[To be continued.]

MISCELLANEOUS.

WARDLAW ON THE NATURE AND USES OF INFANT BAPTISM.

At the close of our number for September last, were inserted two Questions, respecting the relation of baptised children to the Church of Christ. It is our intention, ere long, to examine this subject, and we have already made some preparation for the purpose. Meanwhile, we feel a pleasure in presenting to our readers the views of the Rev. Ralph Wardlaw, D. D. of Glasgow, in regard to the same point. They are taken from his "Dissertation on the Scriptural Authority, Nature, and Uses of Infant Baptism"—a work at present scarcely known in America, but which we are happy to say is now in press in this city.

"Of baptism, as administered to infants, we are at no loss to point out uses, which we conceive to be of no trivial magnitude. We shall endeavor to show these, by considering it in the two following lights:—1. *As a memorial of fundamental truths*:—2. *As a remembrancer of important duties, and an encouragement to their performance*.

1. "In considering infant-baptism in the former of these views, as a *memorial of fundamental truths*, it becomes necessary to take some notice of the general signification of the rite itself.

"Baptism, whether administered to infants or to adults, is a permanent remembrancer of guilt and pollution,—of the consequent necessity of cleansing from both,—and of the means provided for such cleansing, the blood and Spirit of Christ. But, on these general views of the import of the ordinance, it is not needful for me to dwell. There are additional truths brought to mind, by the *administration of the ordinance to children*, which it is more to my present purpose to notice.

1. Infant baptism contains a constant memorial of *original sin*,—of the *corruption of our nature* being not merely contracted but *inherent*. Every time it is administered to an infant, it emblematically reminds all who witness it of the truth expressed by the Psalmist, "Behold I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me." And this doctrine of original corruption, of which infant baptism is a standing practical recognition, is one of fundamental importance; one, I am satisfied, to inadequate conceptions and impressions of which may be traced all the principal perversions of the gospel. In proportion to its relative importance in the system of Divine truth, is it of consequence that it should not be allowed to slip out of mind. The baptism of every child brings it to view, and impresses it. If in any case it should be otherwise, the fault is not in the ordinance, but in the

power of custom, and in the stupidity and carelessness of spectators, of parents, of ministers.

2. Whilst infant baptism reminds us of the humbling doctrine of original depravity, it brings before our minds a truth of a different kind,—eminently cheering and encouraging,—namely, that little children are not incapable of being subjects of the spiritual kingdom of Jesus Christ and participating in its blessings.

I am strongly inclined to agree with those, who regard the children of believers in the light of *disciples*. If their parents do their duty, they surely are such. It is quite impossible for us to say, how soon the Holy Spirit may begin his secret operations in the soul of a child, under spiritual training, and the subject of believing prayer. And until the principles which are instilled into the child's mind by early tuition, recommended by a godly example, and impressed by affectionate and faithful admonition, are either avowedly rejected, or are shown to be professed without influence on the heart and life,—how can we be entitled to say, that they are *not* disciples? They are *learners*; and, as far as we can judge, lambs of the flock of the "*good shepherd*." Indications of the contrary may present themselves, sometimes earlier, and sometimes later; but in forming our estimate, we must make allowances for the peculiarities of childhood; and not foolishly look for the same manifestation of the power of the truth in a babe, which we expect in a full-grown man.

On the question, Are the baptized children of believers *church members*?—various opinions have been entertained. I shall state, with diffidence, my own.

In the first place:—Baptism, it seems evident from the New Testament, is not to be regarded as a *social* or *church ordinance*. It did not, when administered to adults, introduce the persons baptized to connection with any particular church, or society of Christians. They were simply baptized into the faith of Christ, and the general fellowship of the gospel. We have one clear and decisive exemplification of this, in the case of the eunuch of Ethiopia. He was baptised by Philip in the desert, when on a journey, where there was, of course, no church; nor was there any where the eunuch was going. His baptism, therefore, merely recognized him as a professed disciple of Jesus, without constituting him a member of any particular Christian church. And so it was with others. The converts, when baptized, "*joined themselves*," wherever they had opportunity, to the disciples; but their baptism was administered to them, simply on a profession of their faith; it was previous to such union, and formed no part of the services of the church with which they might subsequently unite.

Secondly: This being the case, I am disposed to regard the children of believers as disciples, in a situation somewhat analogous to the one described. They have been baptized; they have become the subjects of spiritual instruction,—of "*the nurture and admonition of the Lord*;" and they are in training for the full fel-

lowship of the people of God, in all the ordinances of his house.—If, on growing up, they do not hold the truth, in the knowledge of which they have been instructed, and on the principles of which they have been “nurtured and admonished;”—they must be treated accordingly;—they cannot be admitted to the communion of the church. If, on the contrary, they “abide in the truth,” “holding fast the faithful word as they have been taught,” then they are at liberty to unite in fellowship, wherever their judgement and conscience, on examination of the word of God, may direct them.—I do not go so far as to speak of their being *separated from the church* at any particular age, by a formal *sentence of exclusion*, when they do not give evidence of the reception and influence of the gospel, for the reason just assigned, that their baptism has not constituted them properly members of a particular society, but only disciples of Christ, under training for the duties and enjoyments of his kingdom.—I feel confirmed in this view of the case, by the consideration, that, when the Apostle Paul, in any of his epistles, addresses himself to the *children* of the believers,—whilst by so doing he recognizes them as sustaining a relation to the Christian community, he yet does not commit the instruction and training of them to the church, or to the pastors of the church, but enjoins it upon *the parents*, as a matter as yet of private and domestic concern.

3. Before proceeding to the *duties* which this ordinance brings to mind and enforces, there is one other highly important doctrine, which it is beautifully calculated to impress.—When our blessed Redeemer took the little children in his arms and said, “Of such is the kingdom of heaven,”—he added solemnly to his disciples, “Verily I say unto you, whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God *as a little child*, he shall not enter therein.”—When an infant receives the blessings of the kingdom, it is *gratuitously*; not as the reward of works of righteousness; not in the exercise of high-minded self-confidence. So must it be with *you*, says the Saviour, the Lord of the kingdom. You must be “justified freely by the grace of God;” you must own yourselves undeserving, and receive all as a gift; whatever you have done, you must come for the blessings of my kingdom as if you had done nothing, and receive them as little children. This was levelled at the spiritual pride and self-righteousness of the Pharisees, against which he, on other occasions also, warns his disciples.—The *man* who receives the kingdom, must receive it on the same terms as the *child*;—not for a life of virtue,—not for his faith, his repentance, his obedience, as if these could merit any thing from God. He must, as to his *title* to its blessings, be divested of every thing.—Now this is one of the essential articles of gospel truth; one of the immutable laws of the kingdom; one of the indispensable characters of its genuine subjects. And this truth is constantly exhibited, and affectingly impressed, in infant baptism. Every time the ordinance is administered to a child, all who witness it

may be considered as having the words of Christ symbolically repeated in their hearing—"Verily I say unto you, whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of heaven as a little child, he shall not enter therein." It is not the fault of the ordinance, but of its administrator and witnesses, if such impressions are not made.

II. Having considered infant baptism as a memorial of fundamental truths, let me now proceed to view it as a *remembrancer of important duties, and an encouragement to their performance.*

I shall, on this part of my subject, offer a few brief remarks on the duties of *parents, of children, and of churches.*

1. The ordinance is inseparably connected, and all Christian parents ought so to regard it, with the incumbent duty of "bringing up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." If this connection is lost sight of,—if it is not contemplated at the time, and is practically disregarded afterwards, the ordinance becomes nothing better than a useless ceremony, and an idle and profane mockery of its Divine author. It is evident, that the pouring of a little water on an infant's face, can, in itself, do it no good; and as little would the immersion of its whole body. The mere external recognition of its connection with the Christian community can be of no benefit, except as associated with subsequent *training*, for the performance of the duties, and the enjoyment of the blessings, of that community. The profit to the child must be through the medium of the parent: and it has long appeared to me, that it is to the parent, rather than to the child, that infant baptism is, in the first instance, to be reckoned a privilege. It is an ordinance, in which there is brought before the minds of pious parents a pleasing and animating recognition of the covenant promises of God to them and to their offspring, which form so great an encouragement to them in the discharge of duty, and in looking, by prayer, for the divine blessing upon the objects of their tender love.

Christian parents,—the charge intrusted to you is one, the most momentous and interesting that can be imagined by the human mind. It is the charge of immortal souls. Every child, when born into the world, enters upon an existence that is never to terminate,—upon a short and precarious life on earth, which must be succeeded by eternal blessedness, or eternal woe. How solemn the consideration!—And with regard to your own children, to you is committed the sacred trust of imparting to them that knowledge, which, through the blessing of God, shall make them "wise unto salvation." These lights, lighted for eternity, it is yours to feed with holy oil from the sanctuary of God, that they may burn, with pure and lovely radiance, before the throne above. These never-dying plants, it is yours to rear and to cherish, bringing down upon them, by your prayers, the dews and rains of heaven, that so they may flourish and bear fruit forever, in the paradise of God.—The language of the "Heavenly Father" to every Christian parent, is that of Pharaoh's daughter to the moth-

er of Moses, "Take this child, and nurse it for me." O forget not the sacred obligation! Let it be engraven on your hearts, "as with a pen of iron and the point of a diamond."

2. To the children of godly parents, I would briefly but affectionately say:—You enjoy, or you have enjoyed, a most precious privilege,—a blessing for which you cannot be sufficiently thankful. But the privilege may, like every other, be abused or neglected, and the blessing, by this means, converted to a curse. Every favor of heaven heightens the responsibility of those on whom it is conferred, and, through the perversity of the human heart, exposes to the danger of augmented guilt; responsibility being according to privilege. If your parents considered aright what they were doing, when they presented you to the Lord in the ordinance of baptism, it was not, with them, a season of thoughtless merriment, on the giving of a name to their child; but a time of tender feeling, of serious reflection, of solicitous anticipation, of solemn prayer. They brought you in faith to Jesus. They implored his blessing upon you. They felt the weight of the sacred trust. They placed believing reliance on the divine promises. They resolved that you should be trained in the fear of the Lord,—in his "nurture and admonition;" and they looked, with earnest desire, for the grace of God, to enable them to fulfil their resolution.

Have you then, my young friends, improved and profited by your connection with your parents, and the privileges thence arising? Have you entered into their desires?—have you valued the promises and blessings of God's covenant?—have you sought, that the emblematic import of your baptism may be realized in your experience?—and that your names may be found, with those of your parents, in the Lamb's book of life?—O, beware of "forsaking the guide of your youth, and forgetting the covenant of your God," else, to use his own expression, "you shall know his breach of promise," and "bring upon yourselves a curse, and not a blessing."

3. With regard to the duty of *churches* in reference to the children of the members, there is little said in the scriptures, and I shall not therefore enlarge. That they ought to feel an interest in the rising generation, cannot be questioned. The interest ought to be lively and tender. But the different ways in which this interest should practically express itself, are not authoritatively prescribed, but, like some other matters, left to discretion.

When the Apostle, in his epistles, addressing himself to the churches, introduces the subject of the instruction and spiritual care of children, it is evident that he devolves the important charge, not upon the associated body of believers, but on the parents amongst them to whom the children belonged. The very address, it is true, *to children*, as connected with the community of God's people, testifies the interest felt in them by the Apostle himself, and contains a virtual admonition to the churches, to take

care that they were not neglected. By connecting this with the immediately subjoined charge to parents, we are naturally led to the conclusion, that the principal way in which the care of the churches for the spiritual interests of the children connected with them ought to show itself, is their seeing to it that the parents discharge their duty faithfully. The parents have, by apostolic authority, as well as by the dictate of nature, the immediate charge of the children; and the church, by the same Divine authority, has the immediate oversight of the parents. The discipline of the churches ought certainly to be considered as extending to every description of sin. The violation or neglect of the parental trust is a sin, of which cognizance ought to be taken, as well as of others. If parents, who are members of a church, are allowed to go on in such violation and neglect, the church is chargeable with an omission of duty. "Bring up your children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord," is as plain and explicit a command, as "Thou shalt not steal," or "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain." The violation of the one may not be of so easy detection, as that of the others. There may even, in certain cases, be circumstances of delicacy and difficulty, that require any cognizance of parental conduct to be gone about with great prudence, and cautious discrimination. But the *principle* of discipline is, in both cases, the same. We must not allow sin to be committed, and persisted in, without endeavoring, by scriptural means, to bring the offender to repentance. And, surely, there is no sin which it is of more consequence to have corrected by repentance, than one which affects the best interests of the rising generation, and thus tends deeply to injure the prosperity of the church, and the cause and glory of Christ. I am verily persuaded, there is "utterly a fault amongst us," upon this subject. The pastors of the churches ought to feel it their duty, in public and in private, to press upon parents the fulfilment of their trust, and upon children the improvement of their privileges;—to ascertain, by domiciliary visits, the state of domestic instruction, and, with affectionate fidelity, to commend or admonish accordingly;—and, by occasional or stated meetings of a more public kind,—of the children, for example, in different districts of local residence, to stimulate both children and parents, and provoke the one and the other, respectively, to a holy emulation. And, in the use of all such means, the deacons and members of churches should show all possible countenance to the pastors, aid them to the full extent of their power, and "by love serve one another."

QUESTIONS.

Has the visible church been the *same*, under both dispensations? Or was the Jewish church abolished, and a new one instituted, at the coming of Christ?

THE
SPIRIT OF THE PILGRIMS.

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NO. 2.

COMMUNICATIONS.

MEMOIR OF THE REV. DANIEL CHAPLIN, D. D. LATE OF
GROTON.*

The first minister of Groton was the Rev. Samuel Willard, a graduate of Harvard College in 1659, who was ordained in 1663. After he had labored here for thirteen years, the meeting house was burnt, and both shepherd and flock driven away by the Indians. Two years afterwards, he was installed over the Old South church in Boston, and became one of the most distinguished men of his day. His mind was of the first order, clear, glowing, profound and powerful. He was a scholar of the first attainments, and eloquent to an uncommon degree. In nothing, perhaps, did he show his strong judgement more, than in vigorously opposing the infatuation of the community, at the time when they were persecuting for witchcraft. In 1701, he was called to the superintendency of Harvard College, and continued to perform the duties of that office till his death, in 1707. His writings are voluminous; the most important production of his pen is a system of divinity—the first folio volume ever printed in America. It consists of a series of Lectures on the shorter Catechism, which excited great attention at the time of their delivery. Mr. Willard was eminently a pious man, evangelical in his sentiments, and the effects of his labors in this town were felt, long after he ceased from among the living.

The second minister was the Rev. Gershom Hobart, who was ordained in 1678, and continued in the ministry till 1704 or 5, when he was dismissed. Of his character, but little is

* Written by the Rev. J. Todd, Pastor of the original church in Groton.

known, and that little is not altogether favorable to his memory. But as he continued in the ministry 26 or 7 years, it is to be hoped he had redeeming qualities which have not been handed down to posterity.

The third minister was the Rev. Dudley Bradstreet, who was ordained in 1706, and continued the minister of this people six years, when he was dismissed, as it would seem from very general dissatisfaction. He went directly to England, received episcopal ordination, and died just as he returned to his native shores.

The fourth minister was the Rev. Caleb Trowbridge, ordained in 1714, and died 1760, aged 69, after having been 46 years the minister of this people. But one character has ever been given of Mr. Trowbridge. He was sober, discreet, laborious, devoted, and died highly esteemed and universally lamented.

The fifth minister, and the immediate predecessor of the subject of this memoir, was the Rev. Samuel Dana, who was ordained in 1761, and continued the pastor of this flock 13 years. The sentiments of Mr. Dana were Arminian. In mentioning this, I do not mean any reproach to his memory. Those who hold to a lax system of theology will consider it as a proof of enlightened views, and of greatness of mind. For myself, I cannot but consider the settlement of a man of such sentiments as the first step towards a long declension in vital religion. Such a ministry pours a deep sleep over a people, which will be felt for many generations. This first letting out of waters is but the beginning of that flood which bears down and sweeps away the stakes of Zion. Prayer-meetings are unknown, the distinctive marks of the church are obliterated, and the form of godliness is substituted for its power.

For more than 60 years, the state of religion (till within three or four years past,) has been exceedingly low in Groton. Some will assign one cause, and some another. I shall have occasion to refer to these causes in another connexion; but at the head of them I should place the fact, that a decidedly Arminian minister was called and settled. It is not to be wondered at, that Arminianism should take root here at that time. The life-giving energy of the Holy Spirit was withholden from most of the churches in New England. The valley was full of dry bones, but there was no voice, and no breath of the Almighty breathing upon them. The spirit of Edwards and of Whitefield seemed to slumber with their dust, and the bright light which had been kindled up in these churches during their ministry, which was seen far across the waters, and which gladdened

thousands there, was quenched in an awful night of deep darkness. I hope to show that these remarks are not irrelevant.

About the year 1638 or 9, eighteen years after the landing of the Pilgrims at Plymouth, a number of people came from Rowley, England, and settled in Rowley, Essex county, Mass. At the head of these was the famous Ezekiel Rogers, who had been their pastor for twenty years before they crossed the waters. Hence we have reason to believe, that most of this little colony were pious people. Among them was a young man by the name of Hugh Chaplin. And although the family of Chaplins have been in this country 190 years, the subject of this memoir was only the *third* generation from the first who came to America.

The Rev. Daniel Chaplin was born at Rowley, December 30, 1743. His parents were Jonathan Chaplin and Sarah Boynton, the former of whom died January 1, 1794 in his 88th year, and the latter February 19, 1784. The father is thus described by his son. "He was small in stature, and at no period of his life robust. Temperance and regularity contributed much to his enjoying an uncommon degree of health, comfort and longevity. He was remarkable for modesty of spirit, for calmness and constancy. As a Christian, he never made high professions, but was always steady and persevering in the practice of what he believed to be his duty. He was punctual and devout in attending on all the external duties of religion. It plainly appeared to be a fixed principle in his mind, that no one can be a real disciple of Christ without doing what he hath commanded. *To the best of my recollection I never knew him set down to a regular meal in his family, or in the field, or wherever he labored and ate abroad, though there were but one present to eat with him, without asking a blessing and returning thanks.* He was very industrious and economical; brought up his children with great care and tenderness; gave them many lessons of wisdom, virtue, and piety; and always added a good example to his precepts. As he lived, so he died, with serenity, entertaining a good hope of salvation by Christ.

The mother of the late Dr. Chaplin seems also to have been an uncommonly discreet, judicious and devoted Christian. By these parents he was dedicated to Christ in baptism, in infancy. I have not been able to ascertain the manner of his youth, nor even the time when Dr. Chaplin became the subject of renewing grace. He seems to have spent the early part of his life with his father, probably at manual labor. And from some hints among his writings, I should judge he had no thoughts

of obtaining a collegiate education till after his conversion, and when he wanted an education as an instrument of usefulness. Nor can I ascertain to a certainty when he made a public profession of religion. In March preceding the time of entering college, he drew up and signed a very remarkable prayer, or rather covenant, by which he solemnly consecrated himself to God. It was probably done on the day of his making a profession of religion, and in the year in which he was twenty-six years of age. The following is the paper alluded to.

"Infinite Jehovah, Eternal Majesty of all worlds, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, three in person, though but one in essence, I do this day, which is March 27, 1769, in a most serious, considerate and solemn manner, give up myself unto Thee, soul and body, living and dying, for the present momentary state of my earthly existence, and for the future endless state of my being, to be from this time forward wholly at thy wise and gracious disposal. I make choice of thy favor for my portion, esteeming it infinitely preferable to all the enjoyments of sin, and hoping for it in no other way but through Jesus Christ the mediator. Thy law I look upon as altogether holy, just and good, and will aim to pay constant and universal obedience to it. If Thou shalt spare my life, I will devote my time and all other talents to thee, to be improved in Thy service, and to Thy glory. I further engage always to resist the suggestions and temptations of Satan, the enemy of God and man, and to attend with diligence and obedience to the teachings of the Holy Spirit in and by the holy Scriptures. I willingly resign earth for heaven, and the applause of man for Thy approbation and that of my own conscience. To Thee, O Lord, I commit my *all*. And being sensible that I am weak and insufficient of myself to do what I have promised, I depend upon the constant and powerful assistance of the Holy Spirit to enable me.

May this solemn engagement be ratified in heaven.

DANIEL CHAPLIN."

Immediately after the above, he subjoins certain resolutions by which to govern his future life. I cannot but think they are written with uncommon precision and power, for a young man who had not yet entered the walls of a college.

"For the future direction of my life I resolve,

"1. That I will make religion my chief concernment.

"2. That I will never be afraid or ashamed to speak in defence of religion.

"3. That I will make it my daily practice to read some part of the holy Scriptures, that I may become acquainted with the will of God, and be quickened and comforted, and qualified to serve Christ and promote the interests of his kingdom in the world.

"4. That I will every day reflect upon death and eternity.

"5. That I will daily pray to God in secret.

"6. That upon all proper occasions I will reprove vice, and dis-courteousness it, and to my utmost encourage virtue and religion.

"7. That I will dispute only for light, or to communicate it.

"8. That I will receive light wherever and however offered.

"9. That I will give up no principle before I am convinced of its absurdity or bad consequences.

"10. That I will never be ashamed to confess a fault to an equal or to an inferior."

After leaving college, he made additions to these resolutions from time to time, as he felt their need. I will select only two, though the limits of selection are large.

In September 29, 1772, just after leaving college, he resolves, "to keep one day in every month, when my circumstances will admit of it, as a day of fasting and prayer, more especially to seek unto God for ministerial gifts and graces, for direction and assistance in all spiritual life, and for the enlargement of Christ's kingdom in the world;"—"to make it a rule to do no action, at any time or place, of which action I should not be willing to be a witness against myself hereafter."

On the back of the paper containing the above, is the following memorandum, dated, "Groton, August 2, 1814. I have great cause of shame and humiliation, that I have adhered no more closely to the forgoing solemn covenant and resolutions; yet I feel myself under great obligations to acknowledge the mercy and faithfulness of my God and Saviour, in enabling me to be faithful, as I have reason to believe, in a good degree. I have also abundant encouragement to hope and trust that his grace will be sufficient for me in time to come."

Dr. Chaplin fitted for college at Dummer's Academy. At that time, as Dr. Fisher, who is still living, remarks, "young Chaplin had a large corporeal system, and a mind no ways inferior." He graduated at Harvard college, (from which also he received the honor of D. D.) in a class of forty-eight, of whom six were ministers. He was one of the first three scholars in his class. Eight class-mates survive him.

From the time of leaving college to his ordination, six years intervened. A part of this time was spent in the study of theology, at Portsmouth, N. H. under the direction of the Rev. Mr. Chandler.

On January 1, 1778, Dr. Chaplin was ordained at Groton, as I believe by a unanimous request of the church and people. The town had just been convulsed by a high political excitement which caused the removal of his predecessor. It required a very uncommon share of prudence thus to settle in a community, torn as it were by a hurricane. But God sent a pilot who could calmly hold the helm amid troubled waters.

Two years after his settlement, he had an invitation to take charge of the Academy at Exeter, where his prospects of a

comfortable support for his family were much more flattering than among his people, in those times of distress. But after much prayer, he concluded that he should probably do more good to remain at the post where he had been stationed; and he relinquished bright prospects without a murmur.

I now propose to give some of the visible results of the ministry of Dr. Chaplin, and then to present some brief notices of his character, as a minister, and as a Christian.

Before giving these results, it seems necessary, in order to judge of his labors, to look at the situation of this town when Dr. C. was ordained. Here he labored faithfully, for fifty years, and grew old in trying to lead this people to the Saviour. It has frequently been noticed, that a revival of religion usually follows the settlement of an evangelical minister. No such special revival followed the settlement of Mr. Chaplin. He found religion in a low state, and so it continued during most of his life; and there are several reasons why it could not (humanly speaking) have been otherwise.

1. In the first place, the whole society had become leavened with Arminianism—a cause sufficient to obstruct the usefulness and prevent the visible success of his labors. If, during the ministry of one servant of Christ, the lethargy could be shaken off, and the church be brought to action, it would be no small gain. The records of those times, as well as the testimony of many now living, show, that of all machines, a lifeless church is the most inefficient. There could be, and there was, no such thing as a thorough-going discipline. Few pictures are more melancholy than that of some of our churches about two generations ago.

2. The half-way covenant, as it is called, was a palzy upon our churches. With too much conscience, in those days of family instruction, wholly to neglect the forms of religion, men found it delightful to have some mode by which their children could be baptized, their families made respectable, and their consciences put at rest. Almost all the congregation belonged to the church, in this sense of the term. While this practice was continued, which was during the greater part of Dr. Chaplin's ministry, he could do but little for the purity of the church. But,

3. Dr. C. came to this town in the midst of the revolutionary war. The country invaded, the laws almost suspended, the question of the future government or even liberty of the nation was that which swallowed up all others, and engrossed the thoughts and feelings of all. Every man of any respectability or influence was intensely interested respecting

the fate of his country, and scarcely any other subject was deemed worthy of notice. So that when Mr. C. came into the ministry, he found active, stirring, and powerful men in his church; but religion was not that on which they expended their activity. The church was carried along with the tide, and patriotism almost of necessity crowded out spiritual life from the bosoms even of real Christians. And after the war had terminated, it was a great while before our government was organized, courts of justice in full operation, and the heavy embarrassments of the war and the agitation of the public had in any good degree subsided, so that the mind could look at religion in its proper light. That struggle which was the making of this nation most severely shook the pillars of the church of God. Take now the eighteen years, from the death of the good Mr. Trowbridge to the settlement of Mr. Chaplin, and then add the period of war and commotion, and a whole generation must have grown up and passed away, before the gospel could have much effect. Is it any wonder then, that he fought like one beating the air, and poured out his labors like water upon a rock? The church was spell-bound by peculiar circumstances, and it was not in the power of a mortal to control or alter them. It is easy to cultivate a field which has been faithfully managed; but take one which has long been left to itself, and at the same time be compelled to suffer the fences to be such as to admit your neighbor's cattle when they please, and it is no easy matter to render that field either productive or beautiful. What a man might do in one situation is but a poor criterion of what he may do in some other. He might push a boat with speed wind and tide favoring, but if both were contrary, he might toil with great assiduity, and yet make but little progress.

I may add, too, the customs of society, in days now gone by, had a bad effect upon a minister's usefulness. He was expected to go almost directly from college to his field of labor; to mingle with what might be thought the more genteel though the more irreligious part of society; to share in, or at least connive at, what are called innocent amusements and social hilarity; in short, to be more of the minister in the pulpit, than during the week. Powerful revivals were not expected, were not prayed for, were not witnessed. If God suffers the fashions of the world to come in, and bury up the church; it is a fearful sign that he has no spiritual mercies in store for her. For the last sixty years, too, the use of ardent spirits among all classes had become more and more common, so that a human being could neither be born nor die, labor nor

rest, see friends at home or abroad, or do business of any kind, without drinking. If the air had been poison, and ardent spirits had been the antidote, they could hardly have been more common. What could a church—what could a minister do, in a community thus destroyed and destroying one another?

As nearly as I can ascertain, the number of members in the church, at the time of the ordination of Mr. C., was 150. The number added during his ministry was 147;—nearly three a year on an average. The most ever admitted in one year was in 1814, being 20, the year in which the half-way covenant was abolished. The number of children baptized during his ministry was 761. The number of marriages 450.

I now proceed to mention some traits in the character of Dr. Chaplin which were prominent.

1. He was *sound and eminently evangelical in his sentiments*.—My acquaintance with Dr. C. did not commence, until he had begun to fail under the labors of the pulpit. I well recollect the following to have been the impression which I received; that he was a most venerable and graceful man, distinguished for his piety, and very clear and evangelical in his views. I believe this would have been the impression which any stranger would be likely to receive. He was not tied up to systems of theology—perhaps not as methodical in his classification of the doctrines as modern theologians generally; but for clear, definite, scriptural, common-sense views of the government of God, few have been his equal.

It has been pretended that in his later years Dr. C. altered his opinions. But this is said without the shadow of a reason. Twenty-three years ago, he preached before the General Convention of ministers in Massachusetts. In that sermon, which was published, he says, speaking of the character of a minister:—

“It is moreover a necessary part of the character of Gospel ministers, that they have an *experimental* knowledge of the religion which they teach from the word of God. They should be good men in the sense of the Scriptures. They should embrace the truths of revelation with a firm belief and cordial affection. They should be renewed after the image of God, by the Holy Spirit, and conformed to the Gospel in their views and general conduct. Without a rational change of the moral frame of the heart, men cannot be considered as the real friends of Christ, and therefore as qualified to negotiate the treaty of reconciliation between God and their fellow creatures. If they are not reconciled to God themselves, what fitness can there be in their assuming or receiving the office of reconciling others to

him. The teachers of religion are described in the Scriptures as workers together with God in reconciling men to him. But if they be enemies in their hearts to him, what reason is there to expect them to work with him, or according to his will. A man may have great learning, and the powers of eloquence to a distinguished degree; yet being destitute of the views, moral habits, and disposition of a Christian, be utterly unfit in his present state of mind to be employed as a messenger of Christ."

"The faithful preacher will preach and dwell on those *doctrines* of revelation which appear to have been considered by the sacred writers as fundamental, and of the greatest importance, and which have had the most influence on the minds of men. These doctrines are,—the being and perfections of God,—a trinity in the unity of the God-head,—the eternal divinity of the Son and Spirit,—the unchangeable sovereignty of God in all his operations,—the apostacy and ruin of man by sin,—the freedom and accountableness of all the human race,—the mission of the Son of God,—the nature and necessity of regeneration by the influence of the Holy Spirit,—justification by faith in the blood of Christ,—the new obedience and progressive sanctification of Christians,—the resurrection of the dead,—the final judgement, and the everlasting destination both of the righteous and the wicked, according to their respective characters; that to the former God will grant an ample salvation, and to the latter he will assign complete and endless destruction."

Of this sermon the judicious editor of the Panoplist remarked,—“we read few modern sermons, in which we find more to commend, or less to censure. It is a solid, sententious, seasonable discourse; worthy of the serious attention of Christians in general; but especially of those who have taken upon themselves the charge of souls.”

2. Dr. Chaplin was uniformly a *very decided man*.

Few men have shared so entirely the confidence of their people as he did. One reason of this was, they always knew where to find him. In coming to a decision, he did not bring his foot down with great vehemence, but when it was down, there was no moving it. It was that kind of decision usually denominated *persevering*. There was no tiring him out. Cautious and cool in concluding to pursue any given course of conduct, he was inflexible in pursuing it. No obstacles, no difficulties could move or deter him. On one occasion, he found a poor family sick, and suffering from the cold. He told the woman that she should have a load of wood the next day. During the night a very heavy snow fell, and drifting blocked up the roads. But the next day, the old man, then nearly seventy, was chopping in the woods, while his son was breaking paths out with a few sticks at a load, till the family had received the full load promised; and then they went and cut it up. By this time it was night; but he had kept his word and supplied the destitute, at a time when most men would have called it an impossibility.

Probably this trait of character was one cause of the peace and tranquillity of the town for so long a period. The temperament of a public man is soon known. If he is fickle, or easily moved, there will always be enough to keep him in trouble, turning to the right hand or to the left, and then complaining of his want of consistency of character. If he is firm and not easily turned, men will soon feel that it is useless to try; and if he preserves a conscience void of offence, they will suffer him to walk in his own path unmolested. It is not for the peace or the happiness of a people to have a minister who dares form no opinions, and pursue no course or plans, without first consulting them.

3. Dr. Chaplin was a man of *deep and uniform piety*.

All who have heard him pray, will readily admit this. There was a deep solemnity upon all, when he rose to pray. It was the sympathy of the heart. There was an unction about him, and a fulness of thought and feeling, which is sometimes called appropriateness, but which means, that the heart accompanies the language. He seemed to stand on the top of Pisgah and see all the promised land. From an intimate acquaintance with him I have reason to believe, that through life he adhered to the resolution of his youth to pray daily in secret. Indeed it was impossible for any one to have so completely obtained the mastery over himself as he had, without daily and secret communion with God. From some question which he one day put to me, I was led to infer, that for more than 60 years he had daily knelt in his closet. His piety was kindled, nourished, matured in this way. He was a great reader; but the word of God was his chief delight. At morning, noon, and night, during my acquaintance with him, he was found sitting down with the simplicity of a child, and reading the book of God for nourishment to his soul. And very few men understood the mind of the Spirit better than he.

Even during his last sickness, he would ask and answer questions concerning the word of God which were original and discriminating. While on the very verge of eternity, waiting to receive permission to cross the river of death, he went back to the testimony of the Prophets and Apostles for light and consolation.

Before called away, Dr. C. had many severe trials to pass through. That his parents and aged relatives should go down to the grave before him was not remarkable. But of eight children, whom he saw ripening into maturity, and promising to

be his support in old age, he buried five out of his sight. In the furnace of afflictions he was repeatedly and severely tried, but he came out as gold. I shall never forget the impression made upon my mind in seeing him pass the ordeal once. Let me describe it just as it was.

This community will not soon forget Dr. James P. Chaplin, late of Cambridgeport—a man highly and universally beloved. He was cut down suddenly in the bloom of life and in the midst of usefulness. His fall was felt far round the world where his dust sleeps, and his name is embalmed in the sweetest recollections of those who knew him best. He was the child of many prayers, the object of fond expectation, and was all that a father could desire in a son. The affection between the father and the son was reciprocal. The father leaned upon him as upon a staff; and the son repaid the confidence by acts which nothing but the most refined affection could suggest. It might be said, as of Jacob, the old man's heart was bound up in the child. On Friday evening tidings came, that Dr. J. P. Chaplin was ill; though no immediate danger was apprehended. On Saturday, the only remaining son went down to see him. On Sabbath evening my Bible Class were assembling—the room was full. I went in and told them I could not be with them, as Dr. Chaplin died that morning at 9 o'clock. A deep, audible groan through the assembly testified how the stroke was felt in his native village. As we were going to the house of the aged father, the son said, 'these are heavy tidings to carry to an old man—to a father almost 90 years of age!' It was all that passed between us on the way. In a few moments I was standing in the family parlor. There was the old man, his wife, and two daughters. He was sitting by the stand, reading his little Testament. He arose and gave me his hand. His son dared not trust his feelings to come in. 'Have you heard anything from Cambridge today, Sir?' 'No'—he replied with uncommon quickness. There was a long pause, each dreading to speak. 'Are you prepared, Sir, to receive any tidings which Providence may send?' He started perceptibly—the hectic flush passed over his countenance—but it was gone in a moment. 'At what hour,' said he, with a calmness that was more than affecting—it was sublime—'at what hour did the awful event take place?' I told him. A burst of agony broke from every one, except the aged Father. As soon as he could speak, he said in a subdued tone of voice. 'I think I can say I am thankful to God for having given me such a son—to give back to him!' He then opened his lips, and for an hour, spake

with a calmness, a clearness and an eloquence, which showed not only the man, the father, and the minister, but the *Christian*, who had been baptized by the Holy Ghost. A letter which he shortly after wrote to a beloved grandchild, bore ample testimony that this was not the effect of insensibility to the loss.

I trust I may here allude to the divisions among his people, which commenced about five years ago, without exciting disagreeable feelings. At a proper time, when health and strength began to fail, Dr. C. more than once respectfully asked the town for assistance. To these requests no attention was paid. When his health *did actually* fail, he procured help for a few Sabbaths, which step gave great offence to those who had refused to pay any attention to his requests. When the town acted, it was to take the pulpit out of his hands. I do not say who was right, or who wrong; but Dr. Chaplin *believed* he had a legal and ecclesiastical right to his pulpit till regularly dismissed;—he *believed* that very uncourteous and disrespectful language was held towards him by the committee of the town;—he *believed* that a guard was actually provided to keep him out of the pulpit on the Sabbath;—(I do not assert that it was so, but he lived and died without ever doubting it;) he *believed* that he was threatened to be resisted even “unto blood”—that his support was wrongfully withheld from him—and that much evil was said of him;—and yet—I never heard him use an angry expression, or make a severe remark against any man! I never saw him when there seemed to be the least bitterness of feeling! It seemed hardly possible for any one to pass through what he did, and yet so uniformly and clearly reflect only the image of Christ. I do not believe he knew what it was to feel like an enemy towards any man; and I may add, (what I have never heard asserted respecting any minister of the Gospel) that I do not believe that for many years of his life Dr. C. had a personal enemy on earth.

The last sickness of Dr. C. was severe and trying; but it was borne with the meekness of a child. As death approached, there were no high excitements and raptures; nor were there any fears. He went down to the valley of death as the full sun of autumn sets, when not a cloud dims its brightness. The eye of faith so clearly gazed upon eternal realities, that the bosom gave not a sigh, nor the eye a tear, nor the heart a throb of fear, as the king of terrors came. It seemed not so much like death, as like the sweet confidence of the infant falling asleep in the arms of its father. Many men have been

more noticed in life, and many will be longer noticed on earth ; but few, it is believed, have found a nearer passage to the bosom of the Saviour, or will receive a brighter crown of joy in the day of his appearing.

“ The good old man is gone !
 “ He lies in his saintly rest ;
 “ And his labors all are done,
 “ And the work he loved the best.
 “ The good old man is gone—
 “ But the dead in the Lord are bless'd.”

To the Editor of the Spirit of the Pilgrims.

MY DEAR SIR,

The following Letters, which I offer for publication in the Spirit of the Pilgrims, and which I take the liberty to address to *young ministers*, are designed particularly for those who have been educated in this Seminary. I would also include its present members. To address the Christian ministry at large in the manner here proposed, I should not consider as properly belonging to me. But I have thought it might not be unsuitable to address myself to those, to whom I have sustained a very endearing relation, and whose studies, preparatory to the ministry, it was my delightful office, in connection with others, to superintend. One of the motives which influence me in this undertaking is, I must frankly say, that I have a deep consciousness of my deficiencies as a teacher of Theology, and am desirous, while God gives me life and health, of attempting something which may be expressive of my friendship, and at the same time prove to be of service, to those who have pursued or are pursuing their professional studies here, and to whose improvement and usefulness I most heartily wish to contribute. The circumstance that I am addressing myself to them, and not to my seniors, or to strangers, and that most of those whom I have in view, are still young ministers, or students, will lead me to dispense with formalities, to cast off restraints, and to indulge myself in a freedom of thought and expression, which in other cases might not be allowable.

It is not my object to remark on that particular class of subjects, which Dr. Miller has treated so ably and usefully in his Letters on Clerical Manners ;—Letters which I would recommend to the serious and repeated perusal of all Theological students and young ministers. My Letters will be somewhat miscellaneous, but will relate chiefly to different modes of thinking and reasoning on moral and theological subjects, and to different modes of exhibiting the truths of religion in public. And considering what is to a great extent the prevailing taste and practice of the day, I shall not be backward to touch occasionally upon subjects which are in their nature philosophical and metaphysical, wishing, as I do, that if the Christian

religion must maintain an alliance with philosophy, it may be with that which has soundness and truth on its side, and not with science falsely so called.

I have chosen to write these Letters in my own name, because, on general principles, I am satisfied that no writer ought to shift off a direct responsibility by keeping himself concealed; and because I think it must, in all ordinary cases, be of special use to an author to feel, that he is acting openly, and is personally answerable for what he writes.

LEONARD WOODS.

Theological Seminary, Andover, Jan. 1, 1832.

LETTERS TO YOUNG MINISTERS.

LETTER I.

BELOVED BRETHREN AND FRIENDS,

The subjects on which I propose to address to you several familiar Letters, are those which are always interesting to ministers of the gospel, and, as I conceive, specially so at the present day. I have been particularly inclined to an undertaking like this, because the time allotted to study in our Theological Seminary is so short, and the field of inquiry so extensive, that every subject, even the most important and difficult, must of necessity be passed over in a rapid manner, and with only a partial consideration. But imperfect as the acquisitions are which students are able to make in three years, they are, in my view, of essential importance to their ultimate usefulness. And I regard it as one of the valuable ends which are answered by a regular course of study in our Divinity Schools, that young men are led to a careful survey of the field which lies before them, and get a large and distinct view of the knowledge to be acquired and the good to be accomplished in the sacred office.

It is indispensable to the proper usefulness of a minister, that he should maintain a constant and lively interest in that which appertains to his great work, and that he should aspire after clearer and more extensive and more scriptural views of the principles of Christianity, and of the best way of teaching and defending them. His reputation and success depend in a great measure on his continued diligence in the improvement of his mind. Nothing can be more unsuitable for any minister, especially for one just entering on the sacred office, than to feel satisfied with his past attainments, and to be confident of the correctness of all his opinions. On the contrary, nothing can be more suitable for him, than frequently to make the inquiry with himself, *whether the views which he and his brethren*

entertain of the doctrines and laws of Christianity, and their methods of inculcating them upon their people, are agreeable to the word of God. An inquiry like this should be made very seriously, and should be carried into middle life, and even into old age. For we are never to imagine ourselves beyond the reach of error, or too old to be capable of higher acquisitions in knowledge. Great improvement may be made by those who have studied the Christian religion with the best advantages, and for the longest time, and who have preached it with the most remarkable success. Their success must indeed be supposed to imply, that they have exhibited important truths with clearness and fidelity. But it certainly does not imply, that they are free from error; nor does it imply, that an entire freedom from error would not greatly increase their success. No minister then can refer to the length of the time he has studied and preached, or to the measure of his success, as a proof that his opinions are all correct, or that there is no fault in his manner of preaching. And it must certainly be looked upon as very unseemly for one, who ought to be humbled under a sense of his deficiencies, to wrap himself up in a fancied perfection, because God has put him into the ministry, or continued him in it for a long time, or made the gospel preached by him a savor of life unto life to many. God often sees fit to honor his sovereign grace by employing those as ministers, and blessing their labors, whose knowledge is very defective, whose opinions are in many respects erroneous, and whose characters are marked with not a few blemishes. This surely is no reason why we should think it of little consequence to strive after higher knowledge, more correct opinions, and a better character; though it is evidently a reason why we should be lowly in heart, and should remember continually, *that the excellency of the power which gives success to the preaching of the gospel, is not of man, but of God.* The way then is open for us to inquire, whether our own opinions, or the opinions of any other ministers are true, and whether any particular modes of preaching, ancient or modern, are conformed to the right standard, and suited, in the highest degree, to accomplish the great end of preaching. And if it should come within the plan of these Letters to pursue this inquiry, in relation to some points, with great freedom; who would complain? Who in this land of liberty, and this age of free inquiry, would wish to impose any restraints, except those of justice, truth and love? And, if imposed, who would submit to them? Religion never has been injured, and never will be, by free inquiry, conducted on right principles, and carried on simply for the discovery of the truth.

But religion may be injured by false arguments, and by bad passions. And it may be injured, too, by silence, when we ought to speak; or by timidity, when duty calls for boldness; or by a slumbering confidence that all is safe, when we ought to be awake and at our post, remembering that there are more false opinions in the world than true, and more zeal against Christianity than for it.

Now when you seriously consider the errors, whether more or less flagrant, which are advocated at the present day, especially by professed Christians and ministers, you may sometimes be disposed to indulge anxious and desponding feelings, and to say within yourselves, *What will be the end of these erratic movements of the human mind?* My own heart has been no stranger to such feelings. Looking, as I wish always to do, with lively emotions at *the cause of truth*, and believing that it involves the highest interests of man, I have found it no easy matter to maintain a quiet and happy state of mind, when I have seen its prospects overcast. I know, however, there are considerations adapted to secure to us the perpetual enjoyment of inward quietness and peace. These considerations have been of special use to me, and they may be so to you.

The chief consideration which I shall suggest is, *that God is the unchangeable Friend and Supporter of the truth, and that he will sustain it, and finally cause it to prevail.* He loves the cause of truth with a strength of affection infinitely superior to what we are capable of, and takes an infinitely higher interest than we do, in its success. In his unsearchable wisdom, he may, indeed, for a time, suffer the truth to be obscured and suppressed, and error to triumph. But be not afraid. This temporary triumph of error will only prepare the way for its more signal overthrow. God, the Friend of truth, has infinite wisdom and power, and doeth all his pleasure among the hosts of heaven and the inhabitants of the earth. And is he not able, when he pleases, to confound error, and give prevalence to the truth? Take those false opinions which are most pernicious and destructive. To an alarming extent you see them believed and defended. Men of learning and talent, and, in some instances, of respectable character, are laboring, by all that is plausible and imposing in sophistry, and by artful appeals to the unsanctified heart, to propagate them far and wide. Now does the impious zeal and hardihood of these men, and their temporary success, occasion fear or inquietude? Think then of the omnipotence of God. How easy it is for him to restrain the propagators of error, and to prevent the evil they are madly striving to accomplish. By the agency of his Spirit he can

renew their hearts, and bring them cordially to love and zealously to promote what they once hated and labored to destroy. Or he can so operate on the minds of others, that the advocates of error shall lose their influence. He can so order it in his providence, that every examination and every discussion of the subjects in debate shall make known the darkness and deformity of error, and the lustre and glory of divine truth. He can raise up powerful defenders of the faith, whom no adversaries shall be able to gainsay or resist. Or, if it seems good in his sight, he can suffer error to prevail, till its evil consequences shall alarm even its adherents, and constrain them to turn from it with shame and abhorrence. The history of the church abounds with examples of this.

The same ground of comfort is necessary for us, and in some respects still more necessary, in regard to *those errors which cleave to the minds of Christians*. Such errors excite more painful emotions within us, because they are most unnaturally associated with the truth, and maintained by those who love the truth. But we have reason to think that there will ere long be a remedy for all these remaining errors of Christians. We hope God will, in larger measures, impart to them the influences of his Spirit, and thus give them greater illumination of the understanding and greater spirituality of affection. And if he does this, the evil will quickly be cured. For error naturally retires from that mind, in which the light of the knowledge of divine glory clearly shines. Whenever God shall be pleased more abundantly to pour out his Spirit upon his ministers and people, and more fully to sanctify their hearts, they will at once attain to better conceptions of divine things, and will be happily freed from a variety of mistaken or defective views, which are sure to accompany lower degrees of sanctification.

You will find a Christian here and there, who is very tenacious of his mistaken opinions. He may contend for them with the zeal of one who is ambitious to be the head of a party. Or his conscience may perhaps be misguided, and he may really believe his errors to be important truths, and so may contend for them to do God service. What shall be said of such a case? I reply, as to the individual himself who thus pertinaciously maintains wrong opinions from feelings of ambition, or from religious motives,—it may be that nothing can ever be done effectually to open his eyes, before the light of heaven shall shine upon them. And others may be associated with him, or rise up after him, who will pertinaciously adhere to the same false notions. But the time will at length come, when

those false notions will be exposed and rejected. The event is certain. Perhaps men of a more correct faith will be raised up, like Calvin, Edwards and Fuller, whose writings or oral instructions will cast such a light on the doctrines of divine truth, that error, however thick the veil which has covered it, will be instantly seen by every one, and renounced as soon as seen. Or God may judge it best in this case, as in the other, to let the error run on, till its hurtful consequences shall open the eyes of all to its deformity and mischievous tendency.

Is there any one of you, then, whose heart throbs with fear, or is oppressed with gloom, on account of the errors which prevail, and the discredit which is done to divine truth? To such an one I would say,—remember that the Lord, who reigns over all, is an unchangeable enemy to error; and that, however great the subtily with which it strives to conceal itself, he will finally bring it to light, and expose it to general contempt. And what is more; he will make the temporary prevalence of error the means of bringing his people to a more perfect knowledge and a more unwavering belief of the doctrines of revelation. That he has often done this, the history of the church clearly shows. And that he will continue to do it, his gracious promises manifestly imply. What solid reason then have we quietly to commit the cause of truth to his almighty protection, and to cheer ourselves with the assurance that he will give it success. Long and dreary has been the time in which error has borne sway. But the bright and glorious day will come, in which truth shall reign through the world, and shall reign forever. Happy are they who discover and embrace the truth, and are active in its defence. The Lord will be their friend: he will compass them with his favor as with a shield. As to error, all error, whether more or less flagrant,—we ought from our heart to be afraid of it, and to labor with the greatest earnestness to rid ourselves of it. For error is as really opposed to the character and will of God, as sin is. And they who would not be partakers in the evils of its overthrow, must not be found among its subjects or its allies. Away, then, you will say with me,—away with every false opinion, however zealously we may have contended for it, and however great the self-denial which the renunciation of it may require. If any one of our errors is dearer to us than others, it is just so much the more injurious; and giving it up will be a sacrifice more acceptable to God, and will do more to fit us for heaven.

This search for the truth and this endeavor to rid ourselves of error, is a work of the first importance. It ought to be pursued with unremitting diligence; and never to be given up as

long as life lasts. In the day of adversity, on the bed of sickness, and even in the hour of dissolution, we may still be making improvement, growing in the knowledge of divine things, and detecting and renouncing errors which have been injurious to our spiritual interest. Happy they, who, with a humble reliance upon the grace of God, are thus intent upon the great work of curing the disorders, and promoting the health, beauty and vigor of their own immortal minds.

But in this momentous work, how could we proceed, and what hope could we have of success, were we left to the mere guidance of our own erring reason? In what uncertainty and error should we have been perpetually involved, had not God granted us his word to be a guide to our faith? And in consequence of the great ignorance that is in us because of the criminal blindness of our hearts, how unable should we still be to come to a right knowledge of God's word and to a right faith in its heavenly truths, without the inward teaching of the Holy Spirit? With these helps, the word and the Spirit of God, if there is a pious docility and diligence on our part, we shall not fail of success in our inquiries after the truth.

That the word of God is the only and sufficient rule of our faith and practice, is the grand principle for which Protestants have contended in opposition to the doctrine of the church of Rome. This principle, universally received and acted upon, would put an end to error and division, and would ultimately bring all Christians to see the light and glory of divine truth.

But the right reception and use of this Protestant principle implies much more than is commonly apprehended. It implies a full conviction, that the Scriptures were written under the infallible guidance of the Holy Spirit; that they contain truths un-mixed with error; and that they teach all which is necessary for us to know in our present state. It demands that our great and only inquiry should be, what did God intend to communicate to us by these writings; in other words, what is the meaning of the divine testimony; and that in determining what this meaning is, we should be free from prejudice; distrustful of ourselves; humble and docile; earnestly desirous of knowing the truth, and resolved to embrace it, how much soever it may oppose the prepossessions of our natural reason or the biases of our own heart. And it requires that we should apply ourselves, with diligence, patience and prayer, to the business of interpreting the Scriptures by those rules which the wisest and best men have laid down, and which common sense, properly enlightened and guided, cannot but approve.

I shall pursue this subject more particularly in my next Letter.

"THEOLOGY OF NATURE."

In the *Token* for 1832, there is an article upon the "Theology of Nature," from the pen of the Rev. Orville Dewey, of New Bedford. There seldom has been witnessed a more striking instance of servitude to theory, than is manifested in this article. To me it is perfectly incomprehensible how a man can live thirty or forty years in this world, and witness no voice of woe, and behold no scene of suffering. It seems, however, that there are such happy men. Judging from their writings, they see nothing but beauty, they hear nothing but melody, they are conscious of nothing but rapture. Upon the tiptoe of delight, they are gliding through an enchanted scene. Apparently they have found some corner of the globe which has never heard the divine denunciation, "cursed be the ground for thy sake." How romantic and fanciful is the following description!

"The earth opened its fertile bosom and sent forth its flowers and fruits to gratify the taste; the world rung with the voice of melody to regale the ear; and hues of light were spread over the verdant earth, and the glowing clouds of eventide, and the glorious expanse of heaven, to delight the eye of man. And upon this theatre, overspread with more than the magnificence of eastern palaces, and beneath the shining canopy of heaven, there went forth life, buoyant and stirring and gifted, to enjoy it to the full; life with its untiring and matchless energies; life with its light sportings of pleasure, and its secret workings of delight; life not bare and barren, an abstract existence, but clothed with senses, endowed with sensibility, connected by magic ties of association with the objects around it, touched with rapture at the visions that pass before it, and kindling with irrepressible aspirations after brighter visions yet to be revealed; life, full as nature is of heavenly gifts; full of glorious capacities, of dear affections, and unbounded hopes, and thus tending, with manifest direction to a more enduring state of being."

Where is the original of this picture? I had always thought that there was *death* in the world also. And unless my senses have greatly deceived me, I have seen many a poor mortal writhing in the agonies of a dying hour; and I have seen many a widow weeping with a bursting heart as she has looked around upon her Fatherless children. To me, nature has ever spoken in a voice of woe, as well as in a voice of joy. With rich mercies, there has been the mingling of affliction. There are probably few to be found who hear but one voice; who see no sickness, no death; nothing but "*life with its untiring and matchless energies; life with its*

light sportings of pleasure, and its secret workings of delight."

It is undoubtedly true, that many persons pass through life, too exclusively regarding the sorrows to which they are exposed. This is natural; for "*man is born to trouble, as the sparks fly upwards.*" And a throbbing nerve, or an aching heart, will cloud a brilliant sky, and throw gloom over the most lovely landscape. But it is indeed unaccountable, that any man can see nothing in life but visions of rapture. The beggar who stands in rags at my door, contrasts with the gaily dressed traveller whirling by in his curricule. The proudly prancing steed, is contrasted with the half starved beast of burden, groaning beneath the lash of a merciless driver.

We read of Heaven, a place of uninterrupted joy. We read too of Hell, the abode of endless and unmitigated woe. The Theology of nature and of the Bible teaches, that the present world is neither the one, nor the other; but, as it would seem, a partial combination of them both. In this world, there is a remarkable union of discordant scenes. Here, beauty and deformity are most singularly blended;—the verdant field, and the arid desert; the luxuriant forest, and the pestilential morass. Here is the quietude of the summer evening, and the wasting wintry tempest, howling through the crevices of the poor man's dwelling, and drowning the cries of the benighted and perishing traveller. Here is the gentle zephyr fragrant and refreshing, and the desolating tornado burying in a moment the hopes of thousands. Here is the glassy lake, and the peaceful dwelling upon its margin; and the devouring earthquake tumbling the mountains upon the waters, and sweeping many unprepared to the grave! Here is the ocean bearing upon its bosom many a richly freighted ship;—and again the same ocean lashed by the tempest, and the same ships driven in wrecks to its bottom, and many a wife made a widow, and many a mother childless. At one time we behold the city, in health and prosperity; and then the fire has passed over it, and the pestilence arises to complete its destruction. Here is the nutritive herb, and the mortal poison; the invigorating atmosphere, and the death-bringing miasma. Surely joy is not the only sound that is heard in this world. Even if men were perfectly holy, they could not in this world be perfectly happy; for there are bodily sufferings to which they are exposed, and many mental afflictions which "for the present are not joyous, but grievous." At times, one is in the vigor of health,

and the blood of youth glides warmly through his veins; again, he is pale and emaciated, turning upon his uneasy pillow, pain lacerating every nerve, and pouring a tide of agony through all the courses of his frame. At one time he is animated with hope, and again in the gloom of despair. He is the child of reverses. His life is but a continued succession of changes; of transient joy and heart breaking sorrow. The morning sunshine is followed by the evening tempest. As one strikes the chord of disappointment, there is, in almost every bosom, something which vibrates harmonious to the strain.

Is it not strange that a human being can be so blinded by attachment to his own religious speculations, as to see nothing of all this? And yet we have daily evidence that the moral vision may be so perverted by error, that a man may glance his eye over the world, without allowing it to rest upon a single scene, which would militate against his "fond imaginings" of the character and government of God. To such a man, not only reasoning loses its power, but facts their influence. He says, with the writer of the "Theology of Nature," the world is "filled with life, infinitely diversified, changing, active, intense life and pleasure. It is, I repeat, a crowded scene. It seems as if it were designed that every thing which could live, should enjoy happy hours of being."

To say nothing of the false coloring of the above, it is manifestly looking at but one half of the picture. The fly is happy when sporting in the sun beams; but is it happy when struggling in the web of the spider? The rabbit is happy when feeding securely in the clover; but is it happy when the teeth of its pursuer enter its tender sides. The young birds are happy in their nest, when the mother hovers over them with their food; but are they happy, when the unfeeling sportsman has laid their mother dead upon the ground, and they are lingering through the agonies of starvation. Perhaps, it is said, the number who suffer are small compared with the number who are happy. This may be true. But what then? Is there not suffering, and great suffering in the world? And in looking at "natural theology," must not the *suffering* as well as the *joy* be taken into the account.

It is not uncommon for men to decide what kind of a Bible God ought to have given us, and then to declare that the Bible is such a book. If we indulge pleasing dreams of what we would like the world to be, it will not change stubborn facts. Our poetical descriptions may do for a young lady's album. They may even be pronounced *beautiful*, by some

fair reader, who glances over them in the pages of an "annual." But after all, "man is born to trouble." God says so.

There is a close analogy between the teachings of Revelation, and the Theology of nature. The Bible declares that God made man upright, and he rebelled against Him; that he made this a happy world, but that the transgressions of man drew down upon it the Creator's curse. God has said, "cursed be the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life." This is the theology of the God of the Bible. This is the theology of his word. And how is it with his works? It is in this respect the same. We see a world resting under the blight of its Creator's frown, and yet behold many mercies mingled with his judgments. The whole aspect of the world tells us that here light and darkness, sin and holiness, are contending for the mastery. Here are to be heard the prayers of the faithful, and the oaths of the blasphemer. From one dwelling ascends the hymn of praise breathed from pious hearts, and rising as grateful incense to the throne; from the next, the song of the drunkard is belched forth, amid scenes fit only for Hell's guilty caverns. Here is a Paul, and there a Herod. Here a body of philanthropists, and there a banditti of thieves. The theology of nature and the theology of the Bible, are not contradictory. It is not wonderful that one who in the Bible, can find no evidence of a ruined world, or of an offended God, should endeavor to erase all such evidence from the page of nature. But it is indeed wonderful that he can, in defiance of the testimony of all his senses, and in direct contradiction to his afflictive experience, see nothing but a "joyous creation."

The groans of a million and a half of slaves swell upon every breeze which sweeps over our land. Go and tell them what a blissful world this is. Stand upon the heights of Africa and sound abroad the syren song. And what will be the response? Go to the blood stained fields of Europe—to crushed Poland—to Scio. Go stand upon the ruins of Barbadoes, swept with the besom of destruction, and there, in the midst of its mourning families and blasted hopes, read this sentimental article upon the "Theology of Nature;" and what mockery would it seem! In that dark and dreadful night, when the God of nature sent forth the tornado, and the groans of the dying were lost in the crash of their dwellings, and the uproar of the elements, it appears to me, that nature assumed an aspect, which was not altogether joyous and rapturous. We have heard of earthquakes piling cities

in ruins ; of floods sweeping thousands at once into eternity ; of the cholera clothing whole nations in mourning, leaving the widow to weep without a comforter, and the orphan cry in vain for bread. Nay more ! we can hardly enter a dwelling in our own neighborhood, in which death has not made its ravages. The husband's heart beats anxiously, as he sees the hectic flush painting the cheek of his wife. The father bends over his dying son, with almost bursting emotions of grief. And in that sad procession which follows a Father to the grave, I see something in the weeping eye, and the heaving bosom, which proclaims that this world is not merely a "joyous creation." But to all these scenes, which are occurring around the rest of the human family, the writer of the article under review appears to be a stranger. He says,

"Is it not rather, I repeat, a joyous creation ? Does it not sing from side to side with notes of joy ? It is not the moaning owl from her blighted tree that I commonly hear, but the glad song of the birds of day. I look abroad through the glades and forests too, and I see not demure creatures stalking forth in staid and dull formality ; but the prancing steed in the valley, the bounding goat upon the hills, the sportive flocks in the pasture. All around me is activity ; yes, and the activity of pleasure. Swift wings fan the air around me, quick steps hurry by in their gambols, and the whole wide firmament sends forth from its viewless strings the music of a rejoicing creation. Heaven and earth are filled, I had almost said, with a visible joy. It seems as if the spirit that is abroad in the universe were scarcely veiled from our eyes ; as if we almost saw it through its robe of light ; saw an expression more intense than any countenance can give, in the serene Heavens ; as if we felt a presence nearer than that of any friend, in the beauty and fragrance and breath of summer."

Who would imagine this to be a description of our world of sorrow and of sin ? It is a pretty dream ! But alas, from such dreams we must awake to the reality of the truth. He, who can thus convert the world into fairy land, can surely, with less difficulty, make the Bible conform to his wishes. The man who has a poetic world, needs a poetic religion. But a substantial faith is requisite for him, who looks upon life as it is, with its mingled shades of joy and woe. Most of us need a religion which will console in affliction, and sustain and animate in death.

A.

REVIEWS.

THE DIVINE AUTHORITY AND PERPETUAL OBLIGATION OF THE LORD'S DAY, *Asserted in seven Sermons, delivered at the Parish Church of St. Mary, Islington, in the months of July and August, 1830.* BY DANIEL WILSON, M. A., *Author of Lectures on the Evidences of Christianity, &c. First American Edition, with a Recommendatory Preface, by REV. L. WOODS, D. D.* BOSTON: Crocker & Brewster. 1831. pp. 212.

Continued from p. 58.

VI. To these accumulated arguments we might add, that *all the reasons which ever existed for the Sabbath are applicable alike to every age and country.* They are found in the very nature of man, in the relations he sustains to his Maker, and the immortal interests to be secured by a proper observance of this sacred day. Are not all these the same in every clime and period of the world?

Now, if a law neither expires by its own limitations, nor is expressly repealed by the same authority that enacted it, it must necessarily continue in force till the original reasons for it shall cease to exist. *Manente ratione, manet ipsa lex.* But the law of the Sabbath contains in itself no limitations; it has never been repealed by its divine Lawgiver, only the day of its observance changed for reasons perfectly obvious and satisfactory; nor will any one of the original reasons for it ever cease to exist till the Sabbaths of earth shall all be merged in the never-ending Sabbath of heaven. If it was necessary even for Adam in Paradise, it is surely far more necessary to raise man from the ruins of the fall, and restore him to the image and favor of God. If it was designed to provide for those who labor a weekly season of rest, and to furnish mankind with sufficient opportunities for worshipping God, and securing the salvation of their souls; must it not in every age and clime be equally indispensable for the attainment of these objects? Is there a time coming when men will need no intervals of rest to recruit the exhausted energies of body and mind; a time when they will be released from all obligation to worship God, and commemorate the wonders of creation, providence and grace; a time in which they will want no Sabbath to discharge the sacred duties of

religion, and accomplish its high and holy purposes? No; it is quite as necessary for us as it was for the saints of old; and it will continue to be needed even through the millenium, till all the graces and virtues of earth shall be transplanted to the paradise of God, and the spirits of the just made perfect shall enter on the blessed Sabbath of eternity.

On the united strength of all these arguments we may safely rest the universal and perpetual obligation of the Sabbath. If it was appointed by God himself at the close of the creation, and given to our first parents as the representatives of their whole posterity;—if he renewed it amid the glories of Sinai, and engraved it with his own finger among the other imperishable principles of the decalogue;—if it is nowhere expressly repealed by divine authority, but enjoined throughout the Bible almost as frequently, and enforced by the same eternal sanctions, as repentance, or the worship of God;—if it was for so many thousand years observed as scrupulously as any other precept of the moral law by prophets, and all the saints of old;—if it was recognized by our Saviour himself both before and after the abolition of the Jewish economy, introduced by his own example and that of his Apostles among the primitive disciples, and handed down from that time to the present as an ordinance of divine appointment;—if the transfer of this institution from the last to the first day of the week was made by Christ and his Apostles without affecting its grand and only essential principle, and has ever been fully sanctioned by the special smiles of heaven on the Lord's day;—if all the reasons that rendered a Sabbath necessary or desirable to the Jews and early Christians must continue with increasing force down to the end of time; then do we feel constrained to regard the Sabbath as *binding alike on all mankind, in every age and country.*

Our limits will not allow us to enter on a subject so extensive as *the duties, or proper observance of the Sabbath*; but we cannot conceal our regret in observing the disposition, so prevalent among the open and covert enemies of vital godliness, to convert it into a season of recreation and amusement. Some of these men, who would fain show the same sort of respect for the Sabbath that Hume and Hobbes did for Christianity, try very hard to work themselves into a belief that it was intended merely or mainly as a day of idleness, festivity, and mirth. What! did the Lord of heaven and earth rest on the seventh day of the creation, just to encourage, by his own example, such a prostitution of one day in seven to sensual indulgences? Did He, who is "of purer eyes than to behold

iniquity, and in whose sight the very heavens are not clean," proclaim, amid the glories of Sinai, a holiday of pleasure and revelry? Did he engrave it twice on tables of stone, and then enshrine it with his moral law in the doubly hallowed ark of the covenant? Did he enforce such a day of sensual gratification by a multitude of promises and threatenings, by all the high and awful sanctions of his own authority? Did he so often rebuke and punish his people for "not doing their own ways, and finding their own pleasure on his holy day?" Such a Sabbath an emblem of that rest which remaineth in heaven for the people of God! The supposition shocks not piety alone, but common sense. It is a most glaring absurdity. It is in the face of all that the Bible says on the subject. The example of God's people in all ages is against it. It thwarts the grand purpose of the Sabbath, by making it a holiday of vice and profligacy. Such a perversion of this sacred day would open a fountain of pollution and crime that would deluge the land. One day in seven set apart by the whole community for amusement and sensual indulgencies! How long could religion, or morality, or our liberties withstand such an engine of corruption and ruin? Neither the enemies of our freedom, nor the great adversary of souls, could desire a surer guarantee for our temporal and eternal destruction.

We cannot refrain here from making a few remarks on the *various utilities of the Sabbath*. He whose "tender mercies are over all his works" gave it to his creatures for their benefit, and wisely adapted it to their nature, circumstances, and wants. He did not overlook even the brutes employed in the service of man; for this sacred day provides for them all an indispensable season of rest from their labors, and tends to guard them against those excessive toils to which avarice or cruelty might otherwise subject them.

But the Sabbath was emphatically "made for man." Does not his very nature require such a weekly season of rest? Does not the man of business need it, to relieve his cares and perplexities; the statesman, to unbend his thoughts from the responsibilities of his station; and men in every employment, to diversify the dull routine of their ordinary occupations, and recruit the exhausted energies of body and mind?

The Sabbath was designed especially for the relief of those who earn "their bread by the sweat of their brow." It is peculiarly the poor man's blessing; and miserable indeed would be his lot, if no Sabbath returned to interrupt his toils, to refresh his weary frame, and cheer his jaded spirits. It forms his only sure defence against the cruel exactions of those

whose avarice, aided by their power, might have compelled him to toil in their service seven days in the week, and yet allowed him only a pittance barely sufficient to preserve him from nakedness and starvation. If any man desires a commentary on this assertion, let him look at the manner in which the laboring classes in England, especially in the manufacturing towns, are treated by their rich and lordly employers. Their wages are cut down to the lowest point that will pay for their daily bread; and if no Sabbath, enforced by the laws of God and man, came to their relief, they would be doomed to labor every day of their lives, and still obtain not a farthing more than they now receive. Abolish the Sabbath, and how soon would our stages, and steam-boats, and factories, and workshops, and counting-rooms, and printing establishments, all continue their ordinary operations from one end of the year to the other, and thus compel the laboring classes to toil incessantly, with little or no increase, in the end, of their present compensation.

But the Sabbath is in a variety of ways subservient to the temporal interests of mankind. We need not suggest how far it promotes neatness and comfort among the lower classes, and how much softness, civility and sweetness of manners it diffuses through all ranks. It is pre-eminently a republican institution, and tends, by frequently bringing men together on a level, as the children of a common Father in heaven, to abase their pride, to soften the asperities of their temper, and produce such an interchange of kind and respectful regards, as must improve their general character, and greatly increase the amount of their enjoyments.

But mark the social results of Sabbath-breaking. Where do you find the most filthy, famished, boorish wretches of our race? In the sanctuary, or in those habitations which the Sabbath has made Bethels of devotion? No; you will find them in the resorts of Sabbath-breakers—in the grog-shop, in the gambler's haunt, in those cellars, and garrets, and smoky hovels of mud and thatch, which have never been consecrated to the holy and delightful duties of the Sabbath.

This sacred day is also the guardian of good morals. It promotes all the social virtues, by inculcating the best precepts of morality, and enforcing them by the most powerful sanctions. Every friend of the Sabbath will be a friend of good order; nor can he, so long as he clings to this ark of God, sink into the abyss of profligacy and crime. How can any man become decidedly vicious, without first breaking away from this holy institution? Must he not, before starting on

his guilty career, escape from its powerful restraints, and steel his bosom against its bland and holy influences? Does the drunkard, the thief, the murderer, any veteran in vice and villainy, keep the Sabbath? No; such an instance cannot be found in all the annals of guilt. Chief Justice Hale, one of the most illustrious luminaries of English law, remarks that, of all the persons convicted of capital crimes, while he was on the bench, there were but very few who would not on inquiry confess, that they began their career of wickedness by neglecting the duties of the Sabbath, and indulging in vicious conduct on that day.

This testimony is confirmed by universal observation. Pass through the streets and lanes of our large cities; visit not only the abodes of the vicious and suffering poor, but the more fashionable resorts of guilty indulgence; go to dram-shops and gaming houses, to theatres and their bacchanalian purlieus, those sewers of a city's pollution—those laboratories of wickedness, where profligates and villains are manufactured by wholesale; inquire at the penitentiaries and prisons, at the scaffold itself; and in all these abodes of vice and misery, how many will you find, that have been wont from their youth to observe God's day of holy rest?

The Sabbath is also the best safeguard of our liberties. It promotes the spirit, the principles, and all the virtues, which are so indispensable to the support of a government like ours. Why do not Spain and Italy become free? They have not strength of character sufficient to shake off the incubus of despotism, nor such a degree of intelligence and virtue among the people as is requisite to preserve or enjoy liberty. France did obtain her freedom years ago; but it soon became a fountain of pollution and blood, flowing over the land, and requiring the strong arm of a military despot to stay the torrent. Mexico, and parts of South America have achieved a nominal independence; but it has been little better than a foot-ball of faction, or like one of their own volcanoes, grumbling its subterranean thunder, and occasionally pouring forth desolation and death. Without the sanctifying influences of the Sabbath, how shall a whole community be made to govern themselves? By laws? The first breath of popular phrenzy would blow them away, like a feather before a hurricane. What! can you coax an exasperated multitude to tie up their own hands? Would a mob of infuriated malcontents legislate themselves into submission? "Alas! Leviathan is not so tamed." How long, then, could a nation of Sabbath-breakers remain free? Would not all our glorious institutions sink together in the same grave that buries the

Sabbath? Yes; erase this sacred day from our calendar, or neutralize its benign influences on the community; and you prepare the way for such Vandal irruptions of ignorance, irreligion, and abandoned profligacy, as would ere long sweep away the last vestige of our fondly cherished liberties.

We cannot pause to mention the variety of ways in which the Sabbath tends to promote the intellectual improvement of society. Look at the flood of light which it is continually pouring upon all classes. It furnishes the most effectual means ever devised for diffusing knowledge and mental culture among the great mass of mankind. It instructs every age and rank; it makes all either teachers or learners in the school of religion; it brings infancy, manhood and old age to the place of prayer, and there imparts to them instruction on subjects important alike to all, and peculiarly fitted to call into healthful exercise the noblest faculties of the mind. The Sabbath has in fact done more than all other causes put together, to promote the intellectual improvement of society at large, and especially of the lower classes. It is the luminary of our mental hemisphere; and without its genial light, nine-tenths of the population of Christendom might eventually sink back into all the darkness of their former ignorance and barbarism.

But the Sabbath is far more important to our spiritual interests. It is the scaffolding on which to stand, in erecting the building of God. It is the main channel through which the gospel pours upon the mass of society the full tide of its truths and its sanctifying influences. It is the principal engine of God's moral government over our race, and gives an indispensable impulse to that system of operations which is destined, under God, to work out the redemption of a world. Destroy the Sabbath; and you might almost as well burn the Bible; for it would soon be neglected and well nigh forgotten. Annihilate the Sabbath; and you might as well demolish the sanctuary; for its mouldering walls would ere long be covered with moss, and there would the swallow build her nest, and the owl pour forth his nightly dirge over the ashes of piety, buried beneath the ruins of her own temple. Blot out the Sabbath; and you might as well finish the work of desolation at once,—abolish the Christian Ministry, and disband the church, and put an end to all the efforts of piety, and dig the grave of Christianity herself, and ring the knell of her final departure from earth, and let loose the powers of darkness to sway an undisputed dominion over our world, and drag its guilty inhabitants down to the realms of eternal night!

With such views concerning the divine authority of the

Sabbath, and its vast importance to all our interests, we cannot but regard the habitual Sabbath-breaker as deeply stained with guilt, and the author of incalculable mischief. If there is an individual in the land that is sapping the very foundation of our civil and religious institutions, and opening a fountain of evil that will pour its bitter waters through time, and through eternity, it is he who would fain annihilate the Sabbath, or who habitually profanes it by worldly business and pleasure. The community may connive at his wickedness; but if he exerts so baleful an influence on the temporal and spiritual interests of society; if he does so much to defeat all the means which God employs for the salvation of mankind; if he steels his own heart, and the hearts of those around him, against the blessed tendencies of the Sabbath to prepare them for heaven; will its Almighty Lawgiver hold him guiltless? Is his conscience now asleep? Alas, it cannot always sleep! The trumpet of the last day will surely wake it, and call the transgressor of the fourth commandment to as strict an account, as that of the violator of any other precept of the decalogue.

We tremble also for a Christian community, that can smile with apparent complacency on the Sabbath-breaker. If a man bears false witness, we punish him with rigor; if he steals our property, we confine him in a prison; if he commits murder, we send him to the gallows, and brand his name with perpetual infamy. But has God forbidden these crimes more expressly than the profanation of his holy day? Yet how do many regard the man who continues week after week, through his whole life, to trample on the law of the Sabbath? While God looks upon him as one of the boldest rebels against his throne, not a few in society seem to envy his freedom from the troublesome scruples of other men's consciences, and even admire those pleasure-loving favorites of fortune, who spend this day of hallowed rest in worldly amusements, and fashionable dissipation.

But can Christians, with a safe conscience, thus connive at the violation of this sacred day? Would God hold them guiltless, while smiling complacently on the habitual Sabbath-breaker, and virtually abetting his wickedness? Are they not bound, by the high authority of Jehovah, to stand aloof from every profanation of the Sabbath, and cautiously abstain from exerting any influence likely to destroy or diminish its moral energies? God has settled this question himself. Examine his own explanation of the fourth command, and you will find that he makes our responsibility here commensurate with the whole extent of our influence. "In it *thou* shalt not do any

work"—Is this all? Does he require thee to do *no more* than simply to keep the Sabbath thyself? Let the sequel answer.—"Thou, *nor thy son, nor thy daughter, nor thy man-servant, nor thy maid-servant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates.*" Here God expressly requires us to see that all under our control observe the Sabbath; and if we require, or willingly permit, our children or servants, our cattle or our property, to profane this sacred day, we are in the eye of God as truly Sabbath-breakers, as if we trampled it under our own feet.

So common sense would say. *Qui facit per alium, facit per se.* Did not Solomon build the temple, without lifting a hammer upon it himself? May not a monarch, while reposing in his palace, wage war on a distant continent? Is not the man who employs his capital in the slave-trade, as guilty as any of the reckless crew whom he hires to carry on for his own benefit this abominable traffic in flesh and blood?

There is, then, a vast and fearful responsibility resting on the professed friends of God; and they ought to sleep no longer over the dangers which encompass the Sabbath. Do you ask what these dangers are? We have not time to mention their number, or the sources from which they spring; but look at the countless forms of its violation among us; pass along our coasts, and rivers, and all our great thoroughfares; visit our cities, and large towns, and manufacturing establishments; go to the numberless places of fashionable resort; and guilty dissipation on this sacred day; count the Sabbath-breaking lines of public conveyance that are regularly traversing the whole country; inquire at livery-stables, at dram-shops, and gaming-houses; go to many a field, and work-shop, and factory, and counting-room, and printing establishment; behold the swarms of European Sabbath-breakers that are drifted to our shores by almost every wave of the Atlantic; and will you not perceive a mighty-tide of Sabbath profanation spreading over the land, and threatening to sweep away this sacred institution?

But what shall be done to roll back this threatening tide? Nothing? Something *must* be done, or the Sabbath is gone forever. But what *can* be done? Shall we legislate? Our fathers legislated; but where now are their laws? Entombed in the statute-book, little more than a dead letter.

It is impossible for laws alone to enforce a proper observance of the Sabbath. They may manacle the hands, and fetter the feet; but can they force the heart? They may carry a man to the sanctuary; but can they there restrain his wandering thoughts, raise his grovelling desires to heaven,

and compel him to worship God in spirit and in truth? They may seize his property and person; but can they make him find the Sabbath a delight, and revere it as the holy of the Lord? Can they endear this blessed day to his heart, and enshrine it among his purest and most delightful affections?

Here human legislation is powerless; and all history proves its utter impotency. Nearly every State in the Union has enacted laws in behalf of the Sabbath. What is the result? It is in many parts of our country little more than a holiday; in some, it is prostituted to gaming, horse-racing, and kindred practices; and in our great commercial metropolis, no less than fourteen hundred shops were lately found open on this sacred day. But are there no laws in the city of New York, to guard the Sabbath from profanation? Yes; laws very like our own; but not a public sentiment to enforce their observance, or their execution. No wonder then at the violation of the Sabbath; for law, in a community like ours, is a mere echo of the people's voice. Their voice must not only exact, but execute every law; and just as well might you think of swimming up the falls of our own Niagara, as attempt to enforce among us any laws that are not sanctioned and sustained by public opinion. There is indeed such a jealousy of legislation on all moral subjects, that a law expressly in favor of the Sabbath would seriously impede, rather than promote, any enterprise which depends on the spontaneous efforts of the people.

Shall we, then, set the Sabbath adrift on those wild and angry waves which so often sweep across the turbid ocean of politics? No; let us rather anchor it fast by the throne of God. Let us place it under the guardian care of its Almighty Lawgiver, and call on its friends to hear his voice, bidding them *use the same moral means for promoting a due observance of his holy day, that they employ in persuading men to repent, and embrace the gospel.*

The temperance reform has developed a principle sufficient, with the blessing of God, to redeem the Sabbath; and we hail the plan proposed by the General Association of this State, as the best adapted to accomplish "a consummation so devoutly to be wished." They recommend, as our readers already know, that ministers should preach on the subject, and then procure among their people the signatures of as many, both male and female, as are old enough to act intelligently, and are willing to subscribe the following agreement:

"Believing that all worldly business and travelling on the Chris-

tian Sabbath, except for purposes of piety, necessity, or mercy, and all worldly visiting and amusements on that day are contrary to the divine will, and injurious to the social, civil, and religious interests of men; we, the subscribers, agree that we will abstain from any such violations of the Sabbath, and that we will use our influence to persuade our own families and others to do the same."

This measure needs little or no comment. It aims directly at the grand object, proceeds on the right principle, and employs, it is thought, the best means. It is adapted to the nature of the subject, to the genius of our institutions, and the state of society among us. It appeals simply to the piety and patriotism of the community, and calls only on those who respect the Sabbath themselves, and appreciate its importance, to unite their example and efforts in behalf of an institution which the interests of two worlds, and the laws both of God and man require us to sustain. It puts the laboring oar, where it ought to be, in the hand of those whom God has made the special guardians of his holy day, and thus aims to enlist an influence that shall render the Sabbath reformation thorough, universal and permanent.

To this measure there are no valid objections, that were not made against those pledges of temperance, which have now become so justly and so generally popular. We cannot see how any sincere friend of the Sabbath can excuse himself from signing a pledge, so simple, so easy, and so reasonable.

Do you say, 'I keep the Sabbath already; I have always kept it; and I need no pledge to deter me from violating it?' Very well;—this is the reason why we wish the influence of your example. If you did not, and would not, observe the Sabbath yourself, we should not desire your signature.

'But would you make me confess, by signing such a pledge, that I am a Sabbath-breaker?' By no means; and the pledge, so far from implying this, goes expressly on the supposition that you respect and appreciate the Sabbath enough to support it by your example.

'But you may have the benefit of my example as well without the pledge as with it?' Surely not; for how could your example be known beyond the narrow circle of your acquaintance? Could the examples of so many thousands in the temperance cause have been brought, without a pledge, to bear on public sentiment through the land? We need a similar pledge to turn the current of public opinion and practice in favor of the Sabbath.

'But I dislike every kind of pledges.' If you are unwilling

by such a pledge, to let the world know your determination to keep the Sabbath, can you be its sincere and steadfast friend?

'But we are already bound by the laws of God and the land to keep the Sabbath.' So are *all* our citizens; but *do* they keep the Sabbath? If you feel the obligation of these laws, what objection can you have to *expressing* it by a public pledge?

'But I see no need of such an effort in behalf of the Sabbath.' No need! Have you been asleep? Then open your eyes on the wide-spread and increasing profanations of this sacred day, and you will see need enough of all that the friends of God and our country can do to rescue the Sabbath from its degradation, and extend its blessed influences over the land.

'But what good will this Sabbath pledge do?' The same that the temperance pledge has done—it will, if generally adopted, turn the current of public opinion in favor of the Sabbath. True; a few insulated examples will not do this; but would not a simultaneous enrolment all over the land accomplish the object?

'But will pledges *alone* redeem the Sabbath?' By no means; but they will begin the reformation, and form an engine sufficient, if kept in operation long enough, to work out the redemption of this sacred day. What important work of benevolence was ever finished at a stroke? Did a single effort of Clarkson and Wilberforce accomplish the work of African emancipation? So the proposed pledge only commences this work; but it may, and it should, lead on to such exertions, as will ere long triumphantly accomplish it.

'But, if we adopt this pledge, why not promise to abstain also from theft, murder, and every species of wickedness? When it shall become, as in the case of the Sabbath, so fashionable to steal, and murder, and perpetrate similar enormities, that public sentiment will not permit the laws against them to be executed, then it may be necessary to change a perverted public sentiment, by uniting the friends of God and man in a pledge of total abstinence from such crimes.

'But, if we push this measure, shall we not array against our cause the influence of all that do not sign the pledge.' Not necessarily; and, if we should, ought such an apprehension to deter us from prosecuting a great and good object? On this principle, the friends of Africa ought never to have raised their voice against the slave-trade, because they were sure to array against them some of the wealthiest and most

influential men in the world ; philanthropists should not unite in favor of temperance, because those who continue the use or traffic of ardent spirits will inevitably be offended ; nor must we endeavor to form or sustain any public sentiment against dishonesty, and theft, and murder, because, forsooth, every knave, and thief, and murderer in the land, may be exasperated to throw his influence on the wrong side ! Strange and tremendous logic ! !

‘ But there is a strong jealousy of such associations ; and we shall surely meet with opposition.’ Jealousy ! Where ? Among the sincere and devoted friends of the Sabbath ? No ; but among those who disregard its divine authority, and trample on those laws of God and man which require its observance. And what does the jealousy of *such* men prove ? Simply that they fear these measures will be successful in arresting, or exposing to public displeasure, their accustomed violations of the Sabbath. Opposition ! How do you know you will meet any at all ? Have you tried the experiment ? If not, you have no right to echo this watch-word of cowardice and alarm. There is surely no need of provoking opposition against a measure so free from reasonable objection ; and even were it inevitable, shall we sit still, and let the Sabbath perish before our eyes ? Paul met with opposition ; our Saviour too met with opposition ; but ought they, through fear of opposition, to have shrunk from preaching the gospel ? Wicked men are opposed to all our benevolent associations ; but shall we for this reason abandon every enterprise of benevolence, and let the world go to perdition ?

This measure appeals only to the friends of the Sabbath, and imposes on them the entire responsibility of restoring and perpetuating its salutary influences. Its success depends mainly on Christians ; and are they not bound, by all their obligations to God and man, to lead the van of this sacred enterprise ? Yes ; it is their duty and their privilege. God and the world expect it of them ; their example and efforts might be successful ; but their reluctance would retard and eventually defeat every movement in behalf of the object.

It is in the power of Christians, with the promised blessing of God, to redeem and perpetuate the Sabbath. If they would themselves keep it as they ought, and promote its observance in their families and neighborhoods ; if they would, in their private, social and public devotions, habitually commend it to the care of its Almighty Lawgiver ; if they would sign the proposed pledge themselves, and persuade as many as possible in the circle of their acquaintance to do the same ;

might they not exert a wide and powerful influence in behalf of this sacred cause? There are, in Massachusetts, probably, more than seventy thousand professed disciples of Christ; and being scattered through the whole community, moving in all ranks of society, and touching the main springs of every effort in favor of religion or morality, they might easily bring a vast multitude into this measure. Should every one sign the pledge himself, and persuade only three others to do the same, we should have in this single state nearly 300,000. In New England there are perhaps 250,000 Evangelical Christians; and if they would all sign the pledge, and each obtain three other subscribers, there would be arrayed in behalf of this sacred day the plighted example of one million. There are in this country nearly 1,500,000 professed Christians, beside Papists; and if all these would do the same, we should see enlisted at once in this cause 5,400,000,—more than half, and that the best half, of our whole adult population.

Shall we now say, that nothing can be done to arrest the current of degeneracy among us? Let every Christian do what he can do, and should do; and would not the Sabbath ere long be fully redeemed, and its blessings diffused through the land? Shall we then fold our hands in indolence or fear, and coldly lament that nothing can be done? True, with *such* feelings, nothing *can* be done; but if we sleep on till this ark of God, freighted with the destinies of two worlds, is drifted over the cataract, or drawn into the whirlpool, will not God and posterity hold us responsible for the consequences?

But a peculiar responsibility rests on ministers of the gospel. They are more interested than any other class of men in the Sabbath; they are better acquainted with its high and holy claims; they are able to exert a more powerful influence in its behalf; and a deep, unceasing interest on their part is absolutely essential to the full and permanent success of any effort to restore or sustain this sacred institution. Could not the ten thousand Protestant ministers in our country bring the great mass of our population to respect the Sabbath, and feel much of its blessed influence? Let them cry aloud; and their voices, sounding through the nation, would ere long wake its slumbering conscience to revere God's day of holy rest. They are the constituted guardians of the Sabbath; and woe to the church, woe to the land, if they betray their high and sacred trust.

But what, in fact, are ministers and churches doing through the land? Are they awake and at work? Do they all keep

the Sabbath themselves, as they have covenanted before heaven and earth to do? Do none of them for worldly purposes travel or labor on this holy day? Do churches call such offenders to a prompt and strict account? Do the whole community frown upon them? Are these baptized Sabbath breakers arraigned before the tribunal of public opinion, as recreant to their sacred and oft-repeated vows?

Here lies the grand obstacle;—and we must first purify the altar and the sanctuary. Pastors and churches must reform themselves, before a successful appeal can be made to men of the world in behalf of this sacred cause. Never, till they cease from all questionable practices on this holy day; never, till they wake to a strict and jealous guardianship of the Sabbath; never, till they embalm it in their own affections, and endear it to the hearts of their families; never, till they rise to a faithful performance of their duty, and to vigorous, united efforts for its preservation; till all this is done, we can never expect to see the Sabbath enthroned in the hearts of the whole community, and extending its benign influences through the length and breadth of the land.

But let all this be done, and we despair not of the Sabbath cause. It is the cause of man; it is the cause of our country; it is the cause of Zion and of God. All the attributes of his character, all the promises of his word, are implicitly pledged for the ultimate success of efforts to redeem and perpetuate the Sabbath. It is the central pivot of all the instrumentalities employed for the salvation of the world. These efforts then *must* succeed, or all is lost. They *will* succeed; for not only is our own land to be made Immanuel's land, but all the kingdoms of the world are destined to become the kingdoms of our Lord and Saviour.

Say, then, will not the great Lawgiver of the Sabbath crown with success the efforts of its friends? Yes; let them do all they can and should do; let them all remember the Sabbath themselves to keep it holy; let them add to the force of his example the power of moral suasion; let them urge all the arguments than can be drawn from the word of God, from the laws of our country, from the dearest interests of time and eternity; let them make every appeal likely to reach the understanding, the conscience, and the heart; let there be a prompt, spontaneous union of all its friends for its support; let the pulpit speak, the press speak, and every friend of God and man be ready to act in its behalf; let the scattered elements of public opinion be collected into one radiant point, that shall send forth through the community an all-pervading influence;

let the best Christians, patriots, and philanthropists among us be united in a simultaneous, spirited effort to save an institution, so important to the temporal and eternal welfare of mankind; let them, finally, commend this sacred cause in faith and prayer to Him who ordained the Sabbath; and then may they hope, ere long, to see it raised from its present degradation, and diffusing its blessed influences through the whole mass of our wide-spread and growing population.

O for a voice of thunder to rouse a slumbering nation, or at least to wake those ministers and churches that are now asleep over the dangers which are gathering around this sacred day! We plead for the best interests of two worlds. Are you a friend of man? Then sustain an institution so essential to his welfare in time and through eternity. Are you a patriot? Then cling to the Holy Sabbath; for if this ark of God should sink, there would be engulfed with it the dearest hopes of our country. Are you a Christian? Then preserve as the apple of your eye this main-spring of all successful efforts to save a lost world.

And is not this the very time to cast anchor in that stream of degeneracy, which is so fast sweeping the Sabbath to destruction? Now, while God is granting such copious effusions of his Spirit; now, while he is pouring upon us so rich a variety of blessings through the channel of this sacred day; now, when we so peculiarly need its benign influences to sustain and extend these seasons of refreshing from his presence; now, when the number of its sincere and plighted friends is so greatly increased by revivals of pure and undefiled religion; now, while the Lord of the Sabbath is laying us under so many special obligations to lend our example and our utmost efforts for its preservation; is not now the time to accomplish this blessed reformation? If not now, when can it be accomplished? Will delay facilitate the work? Alas! we have already delayed too long. Every year, every month is big with danger. Let us wait a little longer, and the Sabbath is gone beyond our power to restore it. May the Lord of the Sabbath preserve us from a catastrophe so fatal!

Our readers, may, perhaps inquire after the work whose title stands at the head of this article; and we are frank to confess, that we have chosen rather to furnish them with a brief discussion of the subject itself, than to spend time in commending a book already too well known to need any praise from us. We will not vouch for the accuracy of every statement, for the correctness of every position, or the validity of every argument; but the author, with his usual spirit and power, has

treated the general subject in a manner more full and more satisfactory than we recollect to have found in any other writer. The work is highly practical, and well adapted to popular use. Its republication in this country is well-timed; and we recommend it to the attention of all who wish to understand the Scriptural claims of the Sabbath. It will richly reward a thorough perusal; and we could wish that, in this day of shallow and flippant sophistry respecting the Sabbath, every Christian, and every unbeliever too, would give these lectures a candid and careful reading. The Preface by Dr. Woods is full of judicious and pertinent remark, and well calculated to direct the reader's attention to a right view of the Sabbath, as an institution resting on the authority of God, and claiming a place in our religious affections.

We rejoice to observe in England the spirit that has called forth these Lectures. The Sabbath, as a handmaid to vital godliness, is prostrate all over the continent of Europe; and we hail, as an omen of good, the efforts of British Christians to rescue this sacred institution from the fatal influence of such low and lax notions as those of Paley, and to promote such an observance of it as will render it an efficient auxiliary in the salvation of men. "An Association" formed among the author's people "for the better observance of the Christian Sabbath" led to the delivery of these Lectures; and "nearly four hundred of the most respectable housekeepers" immediately united with it. We bid all such efforts God speed; and if every minister in Christendom would take the high ground of Mr. Wilson, and urge his people "to close their shops, their counting-houses, their offices, their books of account on this blessed day;" "to avoid the reading of secular books and public newspapers, the writing of letters of business, the paying and receiving of ordinary visits, the indulging in vain and worldly conversation;" "to set apart the day for spiritual duties, and give it up exclusively to God;" we are sure that the Sabbath might be redeemed from its degradation through the Christian world, and be made to exert ten fold more influence than it now does in saving men from sin and its woes. *There is no subject so intimately and extensively connected with the salvation of mankind;* and "it is our heart's desire, and prayer to God," that the Sabbath reformation may, as that of temperance aims to do, extend not only through our own land, but over all Christendom.

A PRACTICAL VIEW OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION. *From the seventh London Edition.* BY T. BABINGTON, Esq. *Late Member of Parliament. With a Preliminary Essay.* BY REV. T. H. GALLAUDET. *Fourth American Edition.* Hartford: Cook & Co. 1831. pp. 212.

THE FAMILY MONITOR, OR A HELP TO DOMESTIC HAPPINESS. BY JOHN A'GELL JAMES. *From the third London Edition, corrected and enlarged.* Boston: Crocker & Brewster. 1831. pp. 205.

If there is any subject to which we are bound by the title of our work to give diligent attention, it is that of *religious education*. THE SPIRIT OF THE PILGRIMS bore them across the ocean to a howling wilderness, in the hope of possessing a country where the *family* might have free scope in training successive generations to holiness and heaven. Nothing, we are sure, is more likely to preserve or restore the doctrines of our fathers, and their influence on the minds of men, than an imitation of their earnest and pious care of the rising generation. The works named at the head of this article have received already such tokens of approbation, as to warrant our recommendation of them as worthy of a place in every family in the land. The work of Mr. Babington has been several times published and widely circulated in this country, with great effect, we doubt not, upon the character both of rising families and of parents; that of Mr. James is a suitable companion to it. We earnestly desire that they may be followed by some work more adapted to the peculiarities of our own population, and suited for a manual in all the families of our country.

Having thus commended these works to our readers, we proceed (to what is much more important) to commend the subject itself to the good sense, the patriotism and piety of the country. Can we do this better, than by attempting to unfold the *moral opportunity* afforded by the domestic constitution.

"The domestic constitution," says Mr. James, "is a divine institute. God formed it himself, and like all the rest of his works, it is well and wisely done. It is a preparatory system for training up the good citizen and the real Christian.—The power of other constitutions is remote, occasional and feeble; but this is close, constant and mighty. With other systems the character is only casually brought into contact, but this always teaches us. We live and move and have our being in the very centre of it."

The argument for the existence of a wise and benevolent Creator from the marks of design in the contrivances of the

natural world, which Paley so admirably unfolds, is no less beautiful in its application to that contrivance of the social state, THE FAMILY. It is a perfect system, in which the experience of mankind has found nothing defective, nothing excessive; which requires nothing to be added to it and nothing taken from it, to make it a complete machinery of private and social welfare. How wonderful that it should not be more the object of piety and patriotism to give it scope!—The domestic constitution *commences* on the most admirable principle. The partners in it form their connexion by choice, from mutual affection, and become united in a mutual interest—in a fellowship of property;—or rather, in a fellowship of condition, whether of wealth or poverty, of joy or sorrow, which nothing but death can dissolve. Marriage is the most perfect freedom; or it is the most binding slavery: uniting two persons to each other indissolubly, in willing bonds. Under these circumstances, there is the fairest chance of a mutual and permanent regard to each other's welfare. Even self-love forbids indifference or unkindness in either party, and scarcely can find temptation to forget the claims of plighted love. The necessities and the cares of each find their best aid and relief in the sympathy and help of the other, and so nurse the primitive affection as to make it ever new, ever growing. The term agreed upon for the dissolution of the compact has the strongest tendency to direct both minds to avoid whatever may cause painful reflection in a dying hour, and to be diligent in acquiring a treasure which will remain to each, when a separation has taken place, and in enjoying which both may be united in the future world to part no more.

The system commenced so fitly for the benefit of two parties is soon found to have *extended itself*: other individuals rise up to claim a share in affections which are already pledged—in property which is already possessed by two equal owners. But in this perfect system, the intruders, demanding everything for themselves, excite no grudging, and bring no interference with the mutual obligations and rights of the original parties. The new inmates are objects of a mutual and individual affection, and win from the heart of both the care they claim. Instead of separating united hearts and allied interests, they bind them anew with parental bonds; making still stronger the conjugal tie. Far from weakening a covenant made to endure until death, they introduce cares and interests, which, if no covenant had been made, should render the partnership lasting as life. Far from hindering the welfare of the original parties, they promote it in the highest degree, by directing their

efforts into a new direction, and by requiring unceasing diligence in providing for the present and future wants of beings like themselves,—at school in this world, that they may be educated for that to which all are fast hastening. *Let us now see how the system works this double execution.*

The necessity of food, sleep, and raiment makes a fixed dwelling place indispensable. To this necessity the world is indebted, as a prime cause of all its progress in civilization, intelligence and morals. Even wandering savages are compelled to provide huts and tents, and have a tendency, from necessity, to rise into modes of life more and more suited to intellectual natures. Hence the great mass of mankind have risen into something like stationary and regular life, not by a beaver's instinct, but by the influence of motives on the mind, notwithstanding all the downward tendencies of ignorance and sin. In civilized and christian nations, the same necessity prepares a comfortable house, agreeable accommodations, and spreads around all the blessings of home. *Home* becomes the place of refreshment and rest; of cheerful enjoyment and of relieved suffering: the place to which parents turn and look back wishfully as they withdraw, and which seen from a distant hill-top fills them with joy inexpressible as they return;—which childhood loves, which manhood cannot forget, but which, even after it has nestled for itself, affords at every return a renewal of the pleasures of early childhood, saddened and softened often by the remembrance of many dead. If there be a word in human language, more wont than any other to awaken agreeable emotions, and incline the heart to whatever is lovely and of good report, that word is HOME; and as the gospel shall by its influence sanctify and adorn it, it will come to signify the seat of piety and happiness, a sacred garden, where parents and their children grow, and thrive, and flourish, and bear fruit, until the great husbandman transplants them to the fields above.

As a first measure in establishing the family state, that difficulty is provided for which has baffled more than Roman wisdom—that of setting two equal heads to aid and check each other in the difficult work of government. In the domestic system, the point of supremacy is fixed, as well by nature and circumstances as by revelation, in the party most subject to the *influence* of the other; so that equality and subordination are exactly such as to unite the wisdom of both; to secure in all common cases the leading of one; and to provide a resort to a final authority in cases of extraordinary emergency. The misery of two heads, lingering in indecision, or

hindering and harming all the members by contests for superiority, nature has not blundered on, in the constitution of the family.

Into this system, so fitted to receive them, the new inmates are admitted immediately from the hand of their Maker, before they have been exposed to any contamination from without, and of course with the fairest prospects for their moral cultivation; yet under the force of a conclusion, wrought by the history of all ages, by all observation, and by divine testimony, of a *liability to sin*, which nothing can remedy but the help of God revealed in the gospel, lest exertion should be paralyzed by an impression that success is easy and sure. Circumstances for a long time favor the success of parental care. At first, children are so helpless and exposed, that they have neither the power nor the inclination to stray away from under the parental wing; and for more than one fourth part of the term of human life are we inclined to seek its shelter; until every opportunity has been afforded of forming the character, of winning the affections, and of securing a good influence upon the succeeding period of independent life.

There is a provision also for parental skill. The young and inexperienced are not presumed to have gained their qualifications, by the opportunity furnished by their own nurture in families; nor are they hurried into complicated and harassing cares. At first, a single subject is presented, so engrossing the affections, as to urge the utmost attention and diligence in acquiring the skill which is needful to promote and secure its well being, and yet bringing so few labors and cares, that leisure and liberty remain for application to every source of knowledge, and for considerate and careful experiment. We cannot mistake the divine design. Youthful parents will find, if they are faithful, that they have no occasion for unpreparedness for the momentous work of training their children; or if they are unfaithful, what excuse can they find for their neglect?

Wisely limited at first, the domestic system is always small and manageable, perfectly fit to be entrusted to a race doomed, for wise purposes, to eat their bread in the sweat of their brow. It requires no diligence, or care, or watchfulness, which is above the power of the united parties, in the midst of the business which necessity demands of them. Rather it is at once so small, and requires such a care, that it is *best* managed in the midst of the ordinary occupations of life. In the earliest period of life, the mother cannot, if she would, get rid of her little ones, but for years they beset her in all her em-

ployments; and the father can scarce help rendering his aid, and refreshing himself with the care of his children, in the interval of out door toils; nor can either party fail, as soon as possible, to require the aid of their children, in the business by which they are striving to promote the comfort of their household. Thus situated, the care which children need, if given at all, must be given amidst the business of life. It is well that the circle is small and manageable;—it is also well that the care demanded must be so given—that it cannot find a place of seclusion and retirement from the world, in which both parties have to act. The care which must be given in the midst of business is the very care best fitted to promote the mutual improvement of all concerned. It prevents parents from being absorbed in the grosser interests of life, to the neglect of mental and moral culture; and it forbids a mental and moral culture of the young which shall give them a distaste and unfitness for those duties of life, which are appointed as the means and the tests of their mental and moral requirements. Thus parents, amidst their toil and drudgery, occupy the station of *prophets and teachers*; and the children's place of learning their lessons is a *world in miniature*.

It is thus that parents and their children have the fairest opportunity of mental culture. Through the earliest years of childhood, there are objects enough in the narrowest circle to inspire curiosity and excite inquiry, and the occasions increase as age increases and the field of observation widens; while the commonest things cannot be explained, the commonest questions answered, without thought and reflection, without feeling the need of gaining more knowledge. New and difficult circumstances occur in every family, which demand the energy and devices of parents and their children, and furnish the opportunity of fitting both for the expected demands of later life. It is here that in teaching and learning, the elder and the younger minds grow and flourish together.

In like manner, the family is a field for the exercise and cultivation of every Christian virtue. The family is the school of patience, of forgiveness, of kindness, of self-denial, of faith; for the circumstances of life are always giving occasion to exercise and strengthen these graces—graces fitted to each passing hour; yet nothing less than the faith and hope and charity which are to be absorbed, in charity—in love, as soon as discipline shall be needed no more. Even the natural affections which belong to the family are means of moral and religious improvement. Without the *essence* of that love which makes heaven happy, they are the best resemblances of it which can precede its exist-

ence, and are the provision which God has made for alluring sinful beings to seek him for a grace of which, without the social affections, they would have scarcely an apprehension. These affections are cherished and invigorated by the uncertainties of health and life; and by sickness and death they are made so tender, so softened and mellow, as to prepare the way often for the reception and growth of Christian graces. Who has seen so little of the effect of calamity and sickness and death, in softening the heart, awakening the conscience, inspiring good resolutions, and exciting earnest desires, as not to admire the family, in its exposures and liabilities, as the peculiar field for receiving the good seed, and moistening and warming it, until it "die," and spring up, and bear much fruit. Who does not see it as a vineyard fenced and cultivated; and hear over the families of Christendom the lamentation, 'What could have been done more to my vineyard, that I have not done in it? Wherefore, when I looked that it should bring forth grapes, brought it forth wild grapes?'

This view of the intellectual and Christian advantages which the family possesses *within itself* may be closed by noticing, that its common and special occasions are peculiarly adapted to awaken a spirit of dependence, and to produce the custom of *private and family prayer*; i. e. to *bind the family to God*.—Families are sustained by anxious labors and cares of apparently uncertain issue; are exposed to perplexities, and sufferings, and sorrows, beyond all human skill to avert. Thus the united head are forced by circumstances, and by their natural tenderness for their offspring, to look to the Giver of all good, and to teach their children that there is no helper but God. Under this arrangement, which almost forces the unwilling to call upon God for the supply of their social wants, it is astonishing that any should ever ask for a Scripture warrant or command for family prayer. Since nature—*nature* demands it so plainly, that nothing could forbid it but a voice from heaven, sanctioned by as many miracles as confirm the Bible. The necessities of nature call our families to God daily. Let us not wait to see if the privilege is made our duty by a positive command. Instead of searching for a command of Scripture to obey the loud voice of nature, let us hasten to our privilege, unless we are divinely forbidden. An old writer remarks on family prayer, "Fire is good—you'll have it. Food is good—you'll have it. Prayer is good too, (nay better than all these) will you not have that also?"

This call of nature to family prayer, which is made by the common necessities of life, is more imperious, and is more sen-

sibly felt amidst the calamities, sicknesses, and anxieties, from which, in the wisdom of Providence, no family is free. How often have families; which in the ordinary course of life have lived without social, yes, and perhaps without private prayer, been forced to seek the Lord in the season of anxiety and trouble! Oh, there are many prayerless families, amidst the allowed delusions of prosperity; but who willingly suffers his house to be prayerless in adversity? So loud, in these dark and gloomy seasons, is the voice of nature within; so strong are the yearnings of the heart after a Helper greater than man; that often infidelity and vice are for a moment suppressed, and the sneering infidel has been known, again and again, to ask some minister or religious friend to be the leader of his family to the Father of all grace. Oh no: prayer is not merely a private act; nor is social prayer confined to the public assembly. He must be a riddle of a Christian, who prays in his closet—and in his church—but has no prayer at home. Nature rebukes him—all the feelings of a husband and father rebuke him—the very heathen rebuke him,—who have better learned nature's lesson than to have a public religion, and no household god.

It is thus that the domestic system is fitted, within itself, for the benefit of all parties. No situation can be conceived more favorable for the intellectual and Christian culture of the young. Is it not as plain, that no mode for the improvement of maturer years can be imagined, equal to the care of a young and rising family? Celibacy, seclusion, monachism give but leisure, without opportunity—vacancy, without the means of intelligence and piety. But the family presents constant occasion for the exercise of all the mental faculties, of all the moral graces. The wants, weaknesses, anxieties, which are felt in the care of a family, and the growing demands of growing childhood, carry forward education through the years of mature life, as becomes beings whose minds are not straitened in their growth, by the stature of a man. As soon as we escape from the guidance of our elders, we are placed under a new course of discipline, in forming domestic arrangements, and in the care of the rising generation. We have the opportunity of exercising and training ourselves, at the very time that we stand by divine appointment at the head of families, using our best exertions in training our children.

This beautiful system, so admirably formed, so carefully preserved, which employs and produces wisdom and piety in the parents, as the means of producing it in their children—which secures the opportunity of mutual influence and action—per-

vades all society. It is no privilege of the rich ; it is no doom of the poor ; it is no adoption of the wise ; it is no imposition on the ignorant ; but alike the chosen system of all classes of society, fitted to the use and comfort of all, no where hindered but by neglect and sin ; it being not a machinery to be moved and governed by force from without ; but a moral mechanism, which can be kept in motion only by the power of motives on the mind. Dead matter, and even animal instincts, yield submissively to the hand that forms them ; but reasonable creatures *can* bury the most precious talents, and turn to the giver with the false accusation, *Thou art an hard master.*

The wisdom of the domestic system further appears, from *its fitness to unite with larger societies.* It is no system which, by its perfection *within itself*, makes its members uninterested in the public welfare, but is itself so interwoven with larger societies, as to extend a family interest over towns and states and countries.

At first, the family was the seed of larger societies. The patriarchal state was such a civil society as nature formed during the long life of a grey-headed ancestor, obeyed and beloved by the influence of the domestic system. In modern times, especially amidst the motley intermixtures of mankind in a country like our own, we might think that circumstances would destroy all the influence of the domestic system upon the civil condition, and that it would be favorable neither to warm-hearted patriotism nor to regular obedience. Yet gathered, as even this country is, by a continued influx from other lands, how rapidly do families get interwoven with general society by various association and relationship. Thus on every hand the way is prepared for agreeable and useful intimacies, and for a deep interest in the preservation of all the institutions and regulations which promote the welfare of society. Civil society is thus made up of families so combined together, wheel within wheel, of one great piece of mechanism, that the well-going of each separate part cannot be secured, without the easy and harmonious movement of the whole.

But patriotism grows up in the domestic state, not only by means of the immediate interest which every family has in the *present* condition of society, but by the anticipations of parental love. If natural affection be not paralyzed or destroyed, patriotism in the most extended sense is the growth of the domestic system. Nothing seems wanting to secure our interest in the condition of society for years and ages to come. For the objects of our affection we hope to leave behind us, to outlive us perhaps for half a century, and to transmit their bless-

ings to those who may outlive them. Who, in such a condition, would set a train, which might explode even in a century; or be indifferent to those habits and practices of society which may bring ruin upon his remote descendants? Who will not feel inclined to plant trees of blessing which may come to maturity, and bear fruit, long after he is dead?

Nor let us think that the great Contriver forgot to connect this primary society with that kingdom which is to displace all other kingdoms and to fill the earth. When the private seal was given to the patriarch, it was made known to him as the mark of that national church of which he was the constituted head; and it was at the same time announced to him, that in him and in his seed all the families of the earth should be blessed. Well might we be astonished, if we did not perceive in the family a fitness to combine with families in all the public institutions and offices of religion. The church clusters together families—parents and their children, as the objects of her care—while its various institutions are promoted and sustained in part by those who are not within her pale, by their sense of the value of her services to their young and rising families. Thus families are the nurseries of the church—and the church the patron of families. No careful observer can help perceiving the tendencies of the social system; but in the divine revelation we may expect to see the statement and traces of its benefits, we may expect to learn how to give full scope to its benignant power.

How marked are its indirect commendations in the history of the chosen people. All the ceremonies of the Jewish ritual were adapted to furnish the occasion for children to cluster around their parents, to inquire and be instructed in the service of God. The first commandment with promise requires children to honor their parents; and assures them, in its fulfillment, of personal and public happiness. At the settlement of the Jewish tribes in the land of Canaan, the leader of their armies repeated his private resolution, and it became the seed of public blessing for the generation following, 'As for me and my house we will serve the Lord.' The inspired penmen, in describing the highest public blessings, do but describe the condition of a nation of happy families. When David had given the people rest from their enemies, he promised peace upon Israel under the image of a fruitful vine running up the sides of the house, and of children like olive plants round about the table. His prayers for public deliverance were for a blessing upon the families of his people—"That our sons may be as plants grown up in their youth, and our daughters like

corner-stones polished after the similitude of a palace." With an exclamation which applies equally to the family, and to the nation as a larger circle of brethren, he says, "Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity."

The New Testament restores to its proper use an institution so well fitted to be the channel of its grace to every creature. It assigns to all the members of it their appropriate duties; exhibits it as the theatre for the exercise and trial of the most difficult and important graces; warns against the danger of failing in the struggle; shows the dreadful array of principalities and powers, the rulers of the darkness of this world, hovering over the little enclosure of the family; and offers its panoply as the means of victory. It then leads us forth, rejoicing in victory and in strength gained in the little circle of the family, to prayers and supplications for all saints, and for the heralds of the gospel, that they may have universal success.*

How wonderful that this consummate contrivance has not more interested the attention of mankind, and that it should not be the grand object of piety and patriotism to give it scope. Without disparaging any plan which has been devised for the welfare of our race, we may safely say, that it is more important to give scope to this which is furnished to our hands, than to adopt any or all others. The world less needs inventors and lawgivers, than it does the help of those who will clear away the rubbish and the rust, which hinders the motion of the domestic machinery, until order and harmony shall prevail throughout Christendom and the world.

MISCELLANEOUS.

DR. LATHROP ON ELECTION.

The following remarks on the doctrine of Election, by the late Dr. Joseph Lathrop, of West Springfield, are worthy of attention at the present time.

"The question, whether election is conditional, will easily be solved by considering the end which it respects.

* See Eph. vi, 10—19—in connexion with the directions, Chap. v, 22—33, and vi, 1—9.

"If we consider it as respecting the *original plan* of salvation, it must be absolute and unconditional. It could not be owing to any foreseen worthiness in fallen creatures, that God chose and determined to send them a Saviour, and to propose such a particular method of salvation; but merely to his self-moving, sovereign, race. Their guilt and impotence were the reasons why such a method of salvation was necessary, and therefore their foreseen holiness and worthiness could not be the reasons why such a method was adopted.

"If we consider election as respecting the *means* of salvation, it is unconditional. It was not owing to the virtue and goodness of the human race, that a revelation was given them. It was not owing to the previous desires, prayers and endeavors of the Ephesians, or other Gentile nations, that they were brought unto a church state, and to the knowledge of the way of salvation. It is not owing to any thing which we had done, that the gospel is sent to us, and that we were born and have been educated under it. All this must be ascribed to the pure favor of God. He chose the Ephesians, not because they were holy, but that they might be holy. He predestinated them, and made known to them the mystery of his will, according to the good pleasure which he purposed in himself. In this sense the Apostle applies the words of the prophet, "I am found of them who sought me not; I am made manifest to them who inquired not after me."

"Farther: If we consider election as it respects the *first awakening influence* of the Spirit of God on the hearts of obstinate sinners, whereby they are excited to seek the mercy of God with earnestness, and to attend on the means of salvation with diligence, it is here also sovereign and unconditional. For that sinners, dead in their trespasses, should be awakened to consideration, inquiry, and an attendance on the means of life, must be owing, not to their own previous good dispositions, but to some special providence, seasonable word, or internal influence, which was not of their seeking. Accordingly our Saviour says, "Behold, I stand at the door and knock: If any man hear my voice and open the door, I will come in to him, and sup with him, and he with me." His knocking is from his own motion, not from the invitation of sinners: *That* is the occasion of their opening; not *this* the occasion of his knocking.

"Again: If election be considered as it respects the grace of God in the *conversion* of sinners, I think, it may be called sovereign and unconditional. To prevent mistakes, I would qualify this observation.

"The gospel comes to men accompanied with the Spirit, which is given to convince them of sin, awaken in them an apprehension of danger, and excite their attention to the means of safety. Such exercises ordinarily precede conversion. And as sinners more readily yield to these motions of the Spirit, and more diligently apply the means of religion, they have more reason to expect the grace which will prove effectual, "Whosoever hath, to him shall be given." In this sense I admit, that converting grace may be called conditional. But where shall we find those who have never resisted the Spirit of grace, or neglected the means of salvation? —To sinners under this guilt and forfeiture, God can be under no obligation, by justice or promise, to grant the presence of his re-

newing, or the return of his awakening grace, or even the prolongation of life. If the continuance of life, and the repeated excitations of the Spirit, are sovereign and unpromised mercies, converting grace is no less so. *Saving* benefits are never promised to sinners on any conditions, but those which imply a change of character.

"Now if among those who have alike abused and forfeited the grace of God, some are reclaimed, and others left in a state of sin, I can see no violation of justice or of promise; for none, on either of these grounds, had a claim to the benefit. The former must adore God's mercy; the latter condemn their own perverseness. The mercy granted to those is no prejudice to these. Election then, in relation to converting grace, is, in this sense, absolute, that it is the result of God's good pleasure, and not the effect of any condition actually performed by the sinner, in virtue of which he could claim it.

"But then, if we consider election, as it respects the final *bestowment* of salvation, it is plainly conditional. *This* God gives, and this he *determines* to give, only to such as are made meet for it. To imagine, that he chooses some to eternal life without regard to their faith and holiness, is to suppose that some are saved without these qualifications, or saved contrary to his purpose. It is the express declaration of scripture, "Without holiness no man shall see the Lord. God hath chosen us to salvation through sanctification of the spirit and belief of the truth." The terms of salvation are in the gospel clearly stated; and we must not imagine, that, contrary to this statement, there is a secret purpose, which will open the door of salvation to the finally impenitent, against whom the gospel has shut it, or will shut the door against the sincerely penitent, to whom the gospel has opened it.

"Whatever difficulties may attend this doctrine, so much is plain; They who are chosen to salvation, are chosen to be holy. And whatever doubts we may have concerning our own election, we may make it sure, by adding to our faith the virtues and works of the gospel, "If we do these things we shall never fall." "

THE VALUE OF A CHILD.

Extracted from H. Knox.

"The moment in which a rational, immortal spirit animates a human body, a spark is kindled which shall never be extinguished. The material sun will grow old, wax dim with years, and be probably put out as a lamp that burneth; the stars shall fall from their orbits, and be covered with darkness; but this breath of the Almighty, this intellectual spark once kindled up in the moral world, shall burn on with undiminished and ever-increasing lustre, as long as God himself endures.

The birth of a child we deem to be but a trifling event, and look with *indifference*, perhaps with *contempt*, on the little helpless stranger. But if we viewed it with the penetrating eye of reason; if we considered it as emerging from eternal night into life immortal; as an heir of worlds unknown, and a candidate for an ever-

lasting state; as a glimmering spark of being, just struck from nothing by the all-creating rock, which must burn and flame on to eternity, when suns and stars have returned to their native darkness or non-entity; which must survive the funeral of nature, and live through the rounds of endless ages; which must either rise from glory to glory, ascending perfection's scale by endless gradations, or sink deeper and deeper into the bottomless abyss of misery, and to which its immortality must either prove an *insufferable curse*, or a *blessing inconceivable*, according to the manner in which it shall have acquitted itself in its present and probationary state; we shall clearly discern, that the value and importance of a human infant can scarcely be computed.

To illustrate this thought, let us briefly consider *the evil or good* which may be either *done or received* by a child in the course of its existence. And,

1. Perhaps this child is an *embryo fiend*. Knowest thou, O Parent, to what this child is born, of what this child is capable? It is now a pitiable, helpless infant; but if thou knewest the enormous sins and dreadful sufferings with which its future existence is pregnant, and most of them perhaps through thy own sinful example and guilty neglect, then thou wouldst be so far from rejoicing at its birth, that thou wouldst weep and lament for the miseries which are coming upon it, and upon thyself for thy neglect of the duties which thou owest it. Perhaps thou hast never prayed that God might sanctify this child. It has been indeed baptised; but hast thou ever offered up one fervent prayer for it since it has been born? Instead of setting before it a pious and virtuous example, teaching it to pray, inspiring it with a horror against vice, instilling into its tender, opening mind the principles of piety and good morals, correcting its errors, and restraining its passions and appetites; hast thou not, by the opposite example, fostered every malignant passion, and cherished every budding vice in its soul? And what is the consequence? It grows up a monster of wickedness; spreads the baneful contagion of vice as far as its influence can reach; becomes the tempter of every company; the spoiler and obstructor of all good! How many of its fellow-immortals has it drawn into guilt and misery! Perhaps it at length becomes infamous for wickedness, and blots the annals of history with a character disgraceful to human nature, and with crimes before *unparalleled, unheard of!* And O! who can describe the miseries which await it in a state of retribution! The *Neros*, the *Herods*, the *tyrants*, the *scourges* of the earth, were once helpless infants!

2. Perhaps this child is an *embryo-angel*. Knowest thou, O parent, to what this child is born, of what this child is capable? It has been the child of thy prayers and vows. Thou hast solemnly given it up to God in baptism, and he has graciously accepted the surrender. It is thy constant solicitous care to recommend it daily to the guidance and protection of its Father in heaven; to set a blameless, pious, and virtuous example before it; to instil into its tender opening mind the principles of piety, integrity, and universal goodness. Indulgent heaven smiles on thy endeavors, and renders them successful, by the concurring aids of omnipotent grace. The seed of knowledge and of grace so liberally

sown, will presently grow up into a plenteous harvest of usefulness here, and glory hereafter. The child, like the holy child Jesus, will grow in knowledge, as in stature, and in favor both with God and man. The implanted principle of grace shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life. He shall bring forth much fruit to the glory of his fellow mortals. Nor shall his progress in holiness and happiness be terminated by this mortal life, but go on through eternal ages. In a word, who can conceive the good of which such a child may be made the instrument, or the degrees of happiness and of glory to which it may be advanced? *St. Paul*, and all those worthies under the *Patriarchal*, *Mosaical*, and *Christian* dispensations, who wrought so much good in the world, and who now shine in such superior orbs of glory, were once *feeble, despised infants!* May I speak it with propriety on this occasion, the blessed Jesus was once an infant!

KNOX'S FAREWELL.

The venerable John Knox, the Apostle of Scotland, having encountered perils and hardships scarcely exceeded by those of the great Apostle of the Gentiles, died Nov. 24, 1572. A few days before his death, having called together the session of his church at Edinburgh, he addressed them as follows:

"The day now approaches, and is before the door, for which I have frequently and vehemently thirsted, when I shall be released from my great labors and innumerable sorrows, and shall be with Christ. And now, God is my witness, whom I have served in spirit, in the gospel of his Son, that I have taught nothing but the true and solid doctrine of the gospel of the Son of God, and have had it for my only object to instruct the ignorant, to confirm the faithful, to comfort the weak, the fearful and the distressed by the promises of grace, and to fight against the proud and rebellious, by the divine threatenings. I know that many have frequently and loudly complained, and do yet complain, of my too great severity; but God knows that my mind was always void of hatred to the *persons* of those against whom I thundered the severest judgements. I cannot deny but that I felt the greatest abhorrence at the sins in which they indulged, but I kept this one thing in view, that, if possible, I might gain them to the Lord. What influenced me to utter whatever the Lord put into my mouth so boldly, without respect of persons, was a reverential fear of my God, who called, and of his grace appointed me, to be a steward of divine mysteries, and a belief that he will demand an account of my discharge of the trust committed unto me, when I shall stand before his tribunal. I profess, therefore, before God, and his holy angels, that I never made merchandize of the sacred word of God, never studied to please men; never indulged my own private passions or those of others, but faithfully distributed the talent entrusted to me, for the edification of the church over which I watched. Whatever obloquy wicked men may cast on me respecting this point, I rejoice in the testimony of a good conscience. In the mean time, my dearest brethren, do you perse-

vere in the eternal truth of the gospel ; wait diligently on the flock over which the Lord hath set you, and which he redeemed with the blood of his only begotten Son. And the Lord from on high bless you, and the whole church at Edinburgh,—against whom, as long as they persevere in the word of truth which they have heard of me, the gates of hell shall not prevail.”

RECENT PUBLICATIONS.

1. *Lectures on Christian Theology, by George Christian Knapp.* Translated by LEONARD WOODS, Jun. Abbot Resident at the Theol. Sem. in Andover, Mass. In two Volumes. Vol. I. New York: G. & C. & H. Carvill. 1831. pp. 539.

The Lectures of Knapp, the first volume of which is just from the press, are a valuable offering to the religious public, and one highly deserving the attention of our readers, especially of clergymen. We say this, not because we entirely approve of all the speculations of the Author (although he is, in general, decidedly evangelical) but because the work is learned—it is biblical—it is *historical*, exhibiting the sentiments and language of the Church at different periods ;—and we see in it the views of one, who could stand alone, like a rock in the ocean, amid the surrounding waves of Rationalism and Infidelity, until, near the close of life, the prospects of truth began to brighten, and the signs of better days appeared. The manner of discussion adopted in this work, the references, the technics, and not a few of the topics, will be new, and of course interesting and instructive, to the generality of American readers.—The Translation is highly creditable to Mr. Woods, and the Preface (of nearly thirty pages) and Notes exhibit a commendable extent and accuracy of theological research.

The Author of these Lectures appeared on the stage at the time when the theologians of Halle began to be “divided into different schools, according as they adhered more closely to the principles of Spener and Franke” (the founders of the University) “or fell in, either with the more ascetic, or the more free and liberal principles then prevailing.”

“His father had been elected, in 1737, to the Theological Faculty at Halle, and was associated with the younger Franke in the direction of those Institutes of learning and charity which are generally known by the name of the Orphan House. He had seen the example, and heard the instructions of the founders of the University, and was one of the few who had walked in their footsteps. He labored, though with a mildness and moderation which won the praises even of his opponents, to promote practical Christianity, in opposition to the bold and reckless speculations of some of his colleagues. His only son, the Author of these Lectures, George

Christian Knapp, was born in the Orphan House at Glaucha in Halle, on the 17th of Sept. 1753, and received his early education in the Royal Pädagogium, one of the cluster of institutes there established by Franke.

“He entered the University at Halle, Sept. 1770, in the 17th year of his age, and there attended the Lectures of Semler, the first herald of the false illumination then breaking upon the world, and of Noesselt, Gruner, and others, who were one in feeling and action with Semler. During the first year of his course, he sustained a great loss in the death of his father. But in pursuance of his counsels, in the very spirit of those early teachers at Halle whom he had been taught from his youth to venerate, he devoted himself to the study of the original Scriptures; and made it his great object to become thoroughly acquainted with the language, the facts, and the doctrines of the Bible.

“He completed his studies at Halle in April, 1774; and after an absence of a few months, which he spent in study at Gottingen, in visiting the most celebrated cities in Germany, and forming acquaintances with the most distinguished men, he returned, and in 1775, began to lecture upon Cicero, and also upon the New Testament, and some of the more difficult portions of the Old. He was at that time in feeble health, and probably could hardly have believed that he should be continued half a century in the employment which he then commenced. The unusual approbation with which he was heard in these courses obtained for him the appointment, first of Professor Extraordinary (1777,) and then of Professor Ordinary (in 1782.) In addition to his exegetical courses, he now lectured on Church History, and Jewish and Christian Antiquities. But he was not, like the great majority of the Professors in the German Universities, employed merely in Academical labors. On the death of Freylinghausen (1785,) he and Niemeyer were appointed Directors of Franke's Institutes, and continued jointly to superintend these noble and extensive establishments for more than 40 years.—In the division of duties, the oversight of the Bible and Missionary establishment fell to Dr. Knapp, and he was thus brought into connexion with the Moravian Brethren.

“It was in the summer of the same year in which he received this appointment, and after he had often lectured on subsidiary branches, that he commenced the composition of the Lectures on Theology, now presented to the public. As he continued his regular courses in Exegesis and History, was occupied partly in the concerns of the Institutes, and was moreover often interrupted in his studies by severe illness, he did not complete them before the summer of 1789, when he first read them before a class of 186. After this time, he continued to lecture on Theology (though latterly in shorter courses) until near his death, and always to numerous auditories.

“But while his life passed away in these pursuits so congenial to his taste, he was not freed from those pains and sorrows which are the common lot of man. His peaceful professional career was frequently interrupted by the political disorders of the times, and the repeated occupation of Halle by foreign troops. His domestic peace was also invaded by the long-continued illness of his wife, and by the violent sickness with which he himself was often at-

tacked, and the constant infirmity under which he labored. These evils, however, great as they might be, must have appeared trivial in comparison with those, with which he saw the Church afflicted. He was called to behold new principles, which he regarded as false and dangerous, rapidly supplanting those in which he had been educated, and to which, from his own conviction, he was attached. He was compelled to hear the truths which he held most sacred and precious, treated with profane levity. He found himself, at last, the only decided advocate of evangelical religion among the Professors at Halle, and exposed to ridicule and contempt for teaching the very doctrines in which Spener and Franke had most gloried. These were trials under which his natural firmness and composure must have failed him, and in which he could be supported only by a pious confidence in God. He cherished this confidence, and through its influence remained unmoved during times of unparalleled darkness and danger. Nor was his confidence misplaced. Toward the close of his life, the prospect seemed to brighten. The *better times* which Spener thought so near, but which had been long delayed, seemed again approaching, and it was not difficult to discern the signs of a new epoch at hand. On the third centennial festival in commemoration of the Reformation, which occurred in the year 1817, the slumbering spirit of the Evangelical churches was awakened. In a Programm which our Author delivered on that occasion, and which is inserted in his "Scripta Varii Argumenti," he poured forth his pious supplications in behalf of the German Church and his beloved University in a strain of unusual eloquence. From that time, he had the joy of beholding the cause which he held most dear gradually gaining ground. His own reputation, too, increased with his declining years. And among the most cheerful passages in his life, is that which occurred just before its close. On the first of May, 1825, he had been fifty years connected with the Theological Faculty of the University, and according to an established custom, a Jubilee-festival was then held in his honor. And many were the marks of personal affection and esteem, as well as the civil and academic honors, then heaped upon the venerable and happy Jubilar.

"Not long after this, while he was continuing his summer course of Theology, he was seized with a violent illness, from which he never recovered. He died in peace, and Christian confidence, on the 14th day of October, 1825, in the 73d year of his age. According to his particular direction, his remains were interred privately, early on the third morning after his decease, in his family tomb by the side of his wife, who had died eight years before. He requested, with that genuine modesty for which he was always distinguished, that in the public notices of his death, nothing should be said to his honor, and that it should only be witnessed of him, that he lived by faith in the words, *I know that my Redeemer liveth.*"

2. *Journal of Voyages and Travels, by the REV. DANIEL TYERMAN, AND GEORGE BENNETT, Esq. Deputed from the London Missionary Society to visit their various stations in the South Sea Islands, China, India, &c. between the years 1821 and 1829. Compiled from Original Documents, BY JAMES MONTGOMERY. In three*

Volumes. From the first London Edition. Revised by an American Editor. Boston: Crocker & Brewster, 1831.

It is our intention to publish, as soon as practicable, an extended notice of these volumes. In the mean time, we need only say, that we have read them with deep interest, and, we hope, not without profit. The subjects of which they treat are various, as the objects which fell under the notice of the tourists; the style is always perspicuous and, in many places, exquisitely beautiful; the delineations are evidently from nature and truth; and the volumes are commended to the notice of the mere Naturalist and Philanthropist, as well as of the Christian. The following are some of the lessons which the perusal of them has most deeply impressed upon us: The degraded character and the miserable state of the idolatrous nations;—The only way to benefit these nations, even in a civil point of view, is to send them the gospel;—The practicability and immense advantage of Christian missions; The excellence and power of the religion of the Bible, which can transform the most ferocious savages into the likeness of the meek and benevolent Jesus;—The uniform spirit of our religion, under whatever circumstances exhibited;—and the obligations of Christians to diffuse this religion, by every means in their power, and to the utmost boundaries of the globe.

3. *The Child's Book on the Soul. Part Second.* BY REV. T. H. GAULLAUDET, late Principal of the American Asylum for the Deaf and Dumb. Hartford: Cooke & Co. 1831. pp. 157.

The object of Mr. Gallaudet's first book on the Soul, which we noticed several months ago, was, by a variety of familiar illustration, to teach and enforce the simple truth, "that a child has a soul, distinct from the body, which will survive it and live forever." In this second book on the same general subject, "the inquiry of the child, whither his soul will go after his body is dead, and who will take care of it, is attempted to be answered." The two books contain instruction on the following subjects: 'The immateriality and immortality of the soul; the existence of God; that he is a Spirit; his omniscience, omnipresence, and eternity; his being the Creator, Preserver, and Governor of all things; his goodness and holiness; the fact that he has given us a revelation of his will; that we must love and obey him, and do good to others; and the rewards and punishments of a future state? These several topics are illustrated in short and familiar dialogues, so conducted as to be within the comprehension of a child, and followed by questions adapted to the use of children. The plan of these little works is ingenious; the language is simple and natural; the most important instruction is made plain and interesting; and the whole is deserving the attention, not only of parents, but of teachers in Infant and Sabbath Schools.

4. *The Biblical Repository* for January, 1832.—This number of the *Repository* contains the following articles: 1. The Great Mystery of Godliness incontrovertible. A critical examination of the various readings in 1 Tim. iii. 16. By Dr. Henderson. 2. Remarks on the internal evidence respecting the various readings in 1 Tim. iii. 16. By Professor Stuart. 3. The nature and moral influence of heathenism, &c. by Professor Tholuck. 4. On the principles of in-

terpretation. By Professor Stuart. 5. On the nature of prophecy. By Professor Hengstenberg. 6. An Address on the necessity of physical culture to literary men, and especially to clergymen. By Edward Reynolds, M. D. 7. Foreign Correspondence. 8. Literary Notices.⁷

The first of these Articles was published by Dr. Henderson in a pamphlet, in July, 1830, and was noticed at some length in our number for February, 1831. The object of the author is to show, in opposition to Griesbach, Sir Isaac Newton, and some others, Trinitarian and Unitarian, that the common reading of 1 Tim iii. 16 is *sustained* by the testimonies usually referred to in questions of this nature. This, it is well known, has long been the opinion of Professor Stuart; and the design of what he has written on the subject in the number before us is to follow out the discussion of Dr. Henderson, by a more particular consideration of "the internal evidence" in the case.—We have been much interested with Professor Tholuck's learned Article on "the nature and moral influence of heathenism," and with Professor Hengstenberg's on "the nature of prophecy." The discussion of both these subjects is to be continued, and we shall probably have occasion to refer to them hereafter.—As to Dr. Reynold's Address, we know not in what terms to express our sense of its value. It should be in the hands of every man of studious and sedentary habits in our country. It contains precisely that information and counsel which such men need, and for the want of which so many are yearly breaking down under the pressure of their labors. We earnestly hope it may be published in a form adapted for general circulation.

By the latest intelligence from Germany, it appears that the recent religious discussions there have been productive of the most important results. "The storm," says Professor Tholuck, "has become quite still, and THE FRUITS HAVE BEEN BEYOND ALL EXPECTATION. I have no longer room in my *auditorium*, and must read my private course on the exegesis of the New Testament in the large public lecture room; and inasmuch as Wegscheider and Thilo both read exegesis at the same time, this is certainly a great deal. In like manner my private rooms no longer suffice for those who attend our evening religious exercises. I have had to transfer these to my *auditorium*, and even here there is no longer place to sit down. I know also several instances, where those who were deeply sunk in rationalism have not only become supernaturalists, but, so far as the human eye can see, are really converted from darkness to light, and adorn their profession by their lives and conduct. And generally speaking, although for myself I would not wish such another explosion" [referring to the late *exposure* of the rationalists] "yet it cannot be denied that the *impresion made* has been in many respects highly salutary." And so the impression made by an earnest and able discussion of the claims of Evangelical religion must always be. Much as we desire, if it be possible, to live peaceably with all men, we deprecate the return of that day, when "in ignorance and implied belief all shall be agreed, as colors agree in the dark."

5. *The Amaranth: a Literary and Religious Offering, designed as a Christmas and New Year's Present.* Edited by J. H. BUCKINGHAM. Newburyport: Charles Whipple. 1832. pp. 180.

The design of this little volume is apparent in its title. It contains a variety of articles, in prose and in verse, the most of which we have read, and some of them with more than ordinary satisfaction. Mr. Withington's "Advice to an Infidel" is excellent. His "Whitefield" will afford entertainment both to the friends and enemies of this extraordinary man. It details some incidents not commonly known, and is, on the whole, "a pretty rational" account of Whitefield. The name of Mrs. Sigourney occurs frequently in the volume, and she never wants readers. Her "Jehiel Wigglesworth," is a story well told, although we think the provincial dialect of the country is, in some instances, rather overdone. "Alfred Raybourg" is a tale of mournful interest, but of excellent moral.—The volume was intended, doubtless, rather for entertainment than edification, and is well calculated to answer its proposed end.

6. *A Lecture on Moral Education, delivered in Boston, before the American Institute of Instruction, August 26, 1831.* By JACOB ABBOTT. Boston: Hillard, Gray & Co. pp. 22. 1831.

The subject of this Lecture, it will be seen, is not moral *instruction*, but moral *education*—the art, not of teaching pupils what their duty is, but of leading them to perform it. This most important department of education, Mr. Abbott justly assumes, is in the rear of every other, and he endeavors to show by what means it may be most successfully advanced.

"The true theory of moral discipline seems to be this: When the human heart is assailed by temptation, if conscience and moral principle triumph, they are strengthened by the victory. If they yield, they are weakened, and prepared to be vanquished more easily on a subsequent attack." "Our rule of moral education, then, is this: *Keep virtuous principle always in the field of battle, but be sure so to fortify, and encourage, and protect her, that she shall always conquer.* She must be exposed. Without exposure, there will be no healthy and vigorous growth. But do not force her to too rough or sudden an exposure, lest you rend the roots of the stem which you wish to strengthen and mature."

In the progress of the Lecture, this important principle is illustrated by a variety of detail, which renders the discussion exceedingly interesting. We hope the pamphlet may fall into the hands of thousands of school-teachers, in different parts of our country.

7. *A Call to seek first the kingdom of God; A Sermon occasioned by the death of Mr. Amos Pettengell, who departed this life at New Haven, Conn. Nov. 20, 1831, aged 27 years. Addressed particularly to the young men of his acquaintance.* By L. F. DIMMICK, Newburyport: Charles Whipple. 1832. pp. 116.

8. *The Conversion of the Jews: A Sermon at the Ordination of the Rev. William G. Schauffler, Missionary to the Jews, preached in Park Street Church, Boston, Nov. 14, 1831.* By MOSES STUART, Prof. of Sacred Literature in the Theol. Sem. Andover. Andover: Flag & Gould. 1831. pp. 40.

9. *A Dissertation on the Subject of Future Punishment.* By OLIVER JOHNSON, Editor of the *Christian Soldier*. Boston: Peirce & Parker. 1832. pp. 32.

THE
SPIRIT OF THE PILGRIMS.

VOL. V.

MARCH, 1832.

NO. 3.

COMMUNICATIONS.

MEMOIR OF REV. JOHN SMITH, D. D. LATE PROFESSOR OF
THEOLOGY IN THE THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY, BANGOR,
MAINE.

The subject of the following memoir was a native of Belchertown, Mass. and was born March 5, 1766. He was a graduate of Dartmouth College, and pursued his theological studies with the Rev. Dr. Emmons of Franklin. In 1797, he was ordained pastor of the church in Salem, N. H., where he spent about twenty years of his life. He was afterwards settled at Wenham, Mass., where he had resided but a short period, when he was called to the Professorship of Theology at Bangor. Here he continued, discharging with great fidelity the duties of his office, until called from his labors by the sickness which terminated his life. He died April 7, 1831.—The following passages from the sermon preached at his funeral exhibit the most prominent features of his character.

“I think that all, who were in any degree acquainted with him, must have perceived that he possessed what is fitly termed a *reasoning* mind. How far this might have been owing to the native structure of his mind, I have no means of judging. For a long course of years, however, he cultivated chiefly, and I may say almost exclusively, his reasoning powers. He seemed to possess no relish for works of fancy of any description. The most glowing pictures, and the most moving eloquence, unless connected with some visible chain of arguments, were well nigh powerless, when addressed to him. This was no doubt owing to a faulty neglect of the imaginative faculty. For I am inclined to think that naturally he possessed a vigorous imagination; and there were moments when it broke forth, as it were, in spite of himself, and carried him into a region of great sublimity. These moments, however, but seldom occurred. Locke had more charms for him, than Milton; and the acute Edwards

waked up more feeling in his heart than could have been elicited, perhaps, even by Whitefield. He loved the naked truth; and on subjects of a religious nature, few men could reason with greater ability. Even those who disagreed with him in sentiment, could not but feel that there was keenness and force in his arguments.

"As a preacher, he dwelt much on the perfections of God—the great principles of the divine government—and on all those truths, which are adapted to make men feel their obligations to submit to God, and accept the salvation offered in the Gospel; and although he possessed none of those graces of elocution and manner, which secure superficial applause, yet his method of exhibiting naked truth oftentimes gave him great power over the consciences of his hearers.

"As a Theological professor, his constant aim was to imbue the minds of his pupils with clear, consistent, connected, systematic views of what he believed to be the doctrines of the Bible—well knowing that these lie at the foundation of all religious experience and moral duties. His manner of intercourse with those under his instruction was such, as never failed to give him a strong hold on their affections. I think I may say, he was greatly beloved and venerated by them all. His natural temper was marked by sympathy, kindness, good will, and great firmness of purpose. There was in him a certain greatness of soul, that kept him at almost an infinite distance from every thing that could be considered mean or low. He was no intermeddler. He never troubled himself with matters which did not concern him. Such was his firmness of purpose—his unyielding perseverance, where duty called him, that some have thought him stubborn. But the only stubbornness which I ever discovered in him, was a fixed determination, come what would, never to abandon the post which, in his judgment, duty had assigned him.

"As regards *his piety*, all who knew him will agree with me, that it was strongly marked with the character of *solidity*. It did not consist in visions and airy fancies. It was built upon substantial truth. Its foundation was laid on the rock. He had examined carefully and prayerfully the great truths which relate to the divine character and government, and the way of salvation, and, by the grace of God, he was enabled to rest upon them with unshaken confidence. This gave stability and consistency to his character and conduct. He was never accustomed to say much respecting his own feelings—he chose rather to speak of God, and Christ, and the nature of true reconciliation to the divine government. He loved to dwell on the power of Christ, and the rising glories of his kingdom on earth."*

As "he was not accustomed to say much respecting his own feelings," neither is it known that he kept any record of them. They must be gathered chiefly from his course of conduct. A covenant, found among his private papers, is almost the only writing yet discovered which alludes to his feelings, and is here copied entire.

* Funeral Sermon, by Rev. Mr. Pomroy of Bangor, pp. 10, 11.

“ Monday, July 21, 1806.

“Glorious and blessed God; I now appear in thy holy presence to renew my covenant with thee. I was professedly given up to thee in infancy, and received the seal of the righteousness in which, I have reason to hope, my parents were interested by faith. In my youth, I entered into covenant with thee, I hope with some degree of sincerity of heart; but have great reason to lament my awful departure from thee, and violations of my covenant engagements.

“Though I have been unfaithful, yet thou art a faithful and merciful God. I now solemnly renew my covenant engagements to be thine forever, relying on thy grace to enable me to perform. Blessed God, I acknowledge the justice of thy holy law, in condemning me and all sinners. I loathe myself on account of my past sins, and repent of them, desiring to be made holy. I do heartily accept of the terms upon which thou art offering salvation to guilty sinners. O may I not say this without a sincere heart! To thee, O Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, I give up myself, soul and body, to thy most righteous disposal. I choose thee, O God the Father, to be my God; O God the Son, for my saviour; O God the Holy Ghost, for my sanctifier; trusting in the infinite mercy of God the Father, relying upon the merits of God the Son, and praying for the sanctification of the Spirit. To the one God in three persons I devote my time, and talents, and all I have. Accept me for Christ's sake, and make me such as thou wouldst have me to be. By thy grace I will cultivate the talents thou hast given me, and improve my time to glorify thee. Thou knowest my weakness, and my proneness to disobey my God and Saviour, and resist the Holy Spirit. All my sufficiency is of thee. I renounce myself, and trust in thee. By thy grace I am resolved to be faithful in my family, in the ministry, and in every situation in which I am called to act. To thee, O merciful God and Saviour, I resign my nearest earthly friend. O fit her for the everlasting enjoyment of thee. In thy gracious hands I leave my nearest earthly relations. O interest them all in the mercy of the gospel. To thee, O Heavenly Father, I resign the dear people of my charge. O pour thy blessed Spirit upon them. Forgive my unfaithfulness for the sake of the dear Redeemer. Trusting in thee to fill me with thy love, and relying on thy free grace, I resolve to be more faithful in thy cause, more disengaged from the world, more exemplary in my deportment, more prayerful, more humble, more zealous and engaged in religion, more spiritual and evangelical in doctrine, more above the fear of man, more frequent and religious in my visits; to maintain a greater sense of the worth of souls, and labor more ardently to win them to Christ.

“As thou hast taught me not to expect long ease and health in this world, I cheerfully leave it with thee, O merciful God, to order my sickness, and pain, and the manner of my death, as thou seest best; trusting in thee to comfort me in time of sickness and pain with thy gracious presence; and when flesh and heart shall fail me, O be thou then the portion of my soul.

“Trusting in thy grace to soften my hard heart, and to enable me to keep this covenant, and relying on thy great mercy in Jesus

Christ to pardon my sins, in thy most holy presence I acknowledge this to be my voluntary act, and to it subscribe my name.

JOHN SMITH."

This covenant bears evident marks of sincerity, and no one who knew him can doubt, that it spoke the feelings of his heart. It was evidently designed for *his private use*. Its existence was not known to his "nearest earthly friend," until after his decease; but the paper on which it is written appears to have been frequently examined.

The religious sentiments of Dr. Smith are well known to all who were accustomed to hear him, in the house of God, the recitation room, or in private religious conversation. He held no sentiment which he was ashamed to avow. He was accustomed to preach what are usually termed "doctrinal discourses;" yet he wielded the doctrines of the Bible for a *practical* purpose. It was "to make men feel their obligations to submit to God, and accept the salvation offered in the gospel." In the recitation room, he was ever ready to hear objections, when they were urged by a desire to know the truth; nor was he accustomed, either to evade the force of them, or to silence them by mere authority. He usually closed the discussion of particular doctrines with remarks of a practical nature, which in some instances were peculiarly rich, tender, and affecting. His whole intercourse with his pupils—his counsels and his prayers—were those, not merely of an instructor, but of a *father*, breathed forth in strains of parental tenderness. Probably all who have enjoyed his instructions can respond to the following sentiments expressed at his funeral. "To the members of the Theological Institution, who have had the benefit of his instructions, his counsels, his paternal care, I need not say, your loss is great. You feel it to be so. You have lost more than a friend. He was a *father* to you all. Long will you remember his deep solicitude for your welfare and usefulness in the world."

In his family, and in his intercourse generally, there was a union of dignity and simplicity, of gravity and cheerfulness, which made his society always agreeable, even to those who were averse to his sentiments. He possessed much of the "milk of human kindness;" and the deep solicitude manifested during his last sickness, and the thrilling sensation produced by his death, showed how much this trait of his character had won upon the affections of all who knew him. The mind loves to linger upon his prominent characteristics, and numerous incidents rush upon the memory which might serve to illustrate them; but it is time to approach the closing scene, and look in upon him in those moments which try the soul.

He had usually enjoyed good health, and sustained the duties of his station, after being left alone in the theological department, with unshrinking zeal and assiduity, till some time in February, when he was afflicted with a cold, which occasioned some interruption in the recitations. A slight affection of the lungs confined him to his house, but no serious fears were entertained as to the result of his sickness. He seems to have had some apprehensions himself that he might not recover, as appears from his arrangements to release his mind from earthly cares. His Will was signed on the 5th of March.

Not far from this time he requested the students to meet at his room. They will probably never forget the very affectionate manner in which he received them—expressing his regret at being unable to meet them at the Seminary—and the hope that the Lord would soon restore his health, and grant him that privilege. He stated that it might be several days, perhaps weeks, before he should be able to be with them, and submitted the question whether they wished a temporary instructor procured. When they had unanimously expressed their willingness to wait the event of his sickness, hoping that he might be soon restored, he seemed much affected—thanked them for their attachment—exhorted them to make the best possible use of their time—and gave them advice in relation to their studies. Shortly after this, he was confined to his room, which he never left, till he went to his long home. His disease gradually increased, and no remedies seemed to check its progress. Its fatal termination, however, was not anticipated, till about the middle of March. He continued to cherish the hope that he should recover, and spoke little of his own feelings.

When his recovery had become doubtful to himself and others, he was asked, if he found the doctrines which he had preached consoling to him. He replied, 'It is my only consolation that God reigns, and that he will do right. I know he will do perfectly right. I cannot say, I have that enjoyment which is desirable. I have no doubt of the power and willingness of God to save sinners—even the chief of sinners. But whether he will save my soul or not, I cannot tell. I know, and feel, that if he does not save me, it will be right—perfectly right. The blood of Christ is sufficient, and is my only refuge. I sometimes think it has been applied to my soul. I have long professed to be a friend of Christ—but my sins have been great. My past unfaithfulness seems now a cruel sin—a daily sin.'—After a little pause he said, 'I wish to be reconciled to the will of God, and yet I have a strong de-

sire to recover. I trust this sickness will be of use to me, and that if I do recover, I shall be more faithful. But God knows what is best, and he *will do right.* Not long after this he spoke of the Seminary and its prospects. 'I feel,' said he, 'that something must be done for it. *It must be sustained, and its embarrassments removed.*' Here he seemed to check his feelings, and soon after said, 'I fear I have wrong feelings. I sometimes become impatient. I cannot doubt that there is interest enough in this State to sustain the Seminary, if it could be brought before the churches in the right manner. But I ought to be willing to leave it in the hands of God. I hope I shall do this.'

From the middle of March to the twentieth, his disease increased, and there appeared but little prospect of his recovery. During this period, he seemed to be fast preparing for death. To a clerical friend who inquired after the state of his mind he said, 'I think I have given my soul to the Redeemer. I am a great sinner, and when I think how unfaithful I have been, and how much I have neglected my duty, I feel that deep humility and self abasement become me. I have been a great sinner, but I know that Christ is able to save great sinners, and I think I am willing to trust him;—I have no other refuge, no other hope. The views I have long entertained of the character and government of God remain firm and unshaken. I have not that joy which some have expressed, but I think I can trust the Redeemer. I know he came to save his people from their sins, and this is all my hope.'

The twentieth of March, being the Sabbath, was a day of deep interest to him. In the morning, he desired that public prayers might be offered for him, and dictated the form of a note to be read in church. During the day, he requested one who had the care of him, to sing the 51st Psalm L. M. which he designated by the first line, "Show pity Lord O Lord forgive." He seemed wholly absorbed in the exercise, and when the singing ceased, with a look of inexpressible tenderness he said;—'That meets my case—That is just the language of my heart.' He spoke of the state of religion in the village. 'I believe' said he, 'there will be a glorious revival of religion here, and that truth will be victorious. I know not that I shall live to see it, but it is no matter whether I do or not.' He had often spoken of the state of religion during his sickness; but had not before expressed so much confidence that a revival was about to commence.

About this time his disease appeared to be checked, and strong hopes were entertained of his recovery. For several

days his strength increased, and by the close of the month he was able to walk about his room. During most of this period his mind was in a happy state, and to one who was watching with him he remarked, 'There was a time, when I thought I should not recover. I examined the evidences of my hope for eternity, and came to this result, that if I was ever saved, it would be of the mere sovereign grace of God—not anything in me, but *all of grace*. I have been a minister upwards of thirty years. I have assisted in ordaining a great many ministers, and I have been called a faithful minister;—I have been settled a number of years over a people, and was called a faithful minister;—I have been here a number of years, and have been called a faithful minister;—I have a large circle of acquaintances, and I presume I am called, in general, a faithful minister;—but *all this did not weigh a feather in support of my hope for eternity.*'

Hopes of his recovery were entertained by himself and his friends till the night preceding the first day of April. He had been unusually cheerful during the day, and thought of riding out the next day, if the state of the atmosphere should be favorable. In the evening he was able to lead in the devotions of his family, and retired enjoying much happiness. He rested well the former part of the night; but towards morning, his disease returned upon him with much violence, and after a week of exhaustion and suffering, swept him into eternity. During the greater part of this time, he was unable to converse, except in a broken manner; but his mind was uninterruptedly tranquil and happy. He continued to express an unshaken trust and confidence in the Saviour, and an entire willingness to go down at his bidding into the dark valley of the shadow of death. His language on this subject was, 'Perfectly willing—waiting—waiting to be called—ready to depart and be with Christ.'—He was much affected with the kindness of friends, and seemed to notice with overflowing gratitude all the little attentions which he received. 'I have more mercies,' said he, 'than I can express. Every thing has been done for me that could be done. I have had the kindest physicians, the kindest watchers, and the kindest attentions, that any person could have; and it is all of the mercy of God.'—The goodness of God to him was a subject of which he often spake, and with the utmost energy of feeling. 'God,' said he on one occasion almost in a rapture,—'God is good—*very good*. My Saviour is precious. Times, seasons and circumstances are all in the hands of God;—a blessed truth! He has ordered the time and circumstances of my sickness in

great mercy. Great is his mercy and faithfulness towards me. He gives me kind friends, praying friends, and I feel that prayer is answered. I sometimes think that I am going to be literally rocked to sleep. O blessed, blessed, blessed Saviour! Eternity—eternity—it is near! But not too near;—nor will it be too long.'

He was an example of patience and submission under sufferings; and was enabled repeatedly and unreservedly to commit himself and all his concerns to the care and providence of his heavenly Father. His greatest anxiety was for his beloved Seminary, and the last intelligible words he uttered were to implore upon it the blessings of heaven. 'God bless the Seminary. Thou wilt bless it—and keep it. I give it up to thee; I can do no more for it. Thou canst do all things.'

Notwithstanding the sufferings of his body, his happiness, during some of the last hours of life, seemed indescribable. He could speak but a word or two at a time, but was able to lisp in accents such as these, 'Blessed place! Blessed privilege! Peace on a death-bed. I have peace—I am happy,' &c.

He lingered in this happy frame until the evening of April 7th, when his speech entirely failed—his eye lost its intelligence, and moved with difficulty—his limbs grew cold—his breath became perceptibly shorter, and after a few respirations—ceased. There was no struggle—not a limb was moved—the wheels of life stopped—the pulse and heart had ceased to beat—and the happy spirit had fled. C.

LETTERS TO YOUNG MINISTERS.

LETTER II.

BELOVED BRETHREN AND FRIENDS,

At the close of the last Letter, I stated the Protestant principle, that *the word of God is the only and sufficient rule of our faith and practice*, and endeavored to show, in part, what is implied in rightly receiving and applying this principle. But it was my intention to pursue the illustration farther.

In relation to this general subject, there is one point of great importance, though often overlooked in practice, namely; that *as soon as we ascertain, by impartial inquiry, what God*

teaches us in his word, we have come to the end of our inquiry;—we have attained to the knowledge of the truth.

This is a principle so essential to the believer in revelation, and so extensive in its influence, that I shall dwell upon it with more than ordinary care. I shall first illustrate the principle by the following example.

I am desirous of learning the truth in regard to the duration of future punishment. Accordingly I apply myself to the study of the Scriptures, and find a variety of passages which represent the punishment of the wicked as endless. I am quite sure that if the sacred writers spoke of the happiness of the good in a manner exactly similar, no one would doubt that they meant to teach its endless duration. But the question soon rises in the mind, whether the everlasting misery of many of the human race is consistent with the benevolence of God, or with the atonement of Christ. What regard shall I pay to a question like this in ascertaining the meaning of the Bible? None at all. Suppose God had addressed me thus: *This subject has depths which you cannot fathom, and is surrounded with difficulties which human wisdom cannot remove. But for the glory of my justice and holiness, and for the benefit of my eternal kingdom, it is my unalterable purpose that the wicked according to their proper desert, shall suffer a punishment without end.* Could any one doubt the fact? Now God does seem virtually to address me in this manner. He plainly teaches this tremendous truth, although he knew all the difficulties which would arise in our minds respecting it. These difficulties he does not undertake to solve. He requires it as a most reasonable thing, and a proper expression of our confidence in him, that we should believe the doctrine which he teaches, notwithstanding its unsearchableness, and that we should believe it to be perfectly accordant with his infinite wisdom and goodness, though we may be unable to see how it is so.—But should not the natural horror we feel at the thought of endless misery, and our strong desire that it may be prevented, have an influence upon our judgment as to the meaning of the Scriptures? To answer this, take another case. Our legislators make a law, that every murderer shall be put to death. The words of the law are plain and determinate. But men in general, especially criminals, feel a natural horror at the thought of such a punishment, and a wish that it might not take place. Ought such a feeling to affect the sense they put upon the law, and to lead them to say, *Such cannot be its meaning; it is too dreadful to believe?* Surely not. And for the same reason,

the horror we feel at the thought of the endless punishment of ourselves or our fellow men, and our desire that all may be happy, cannot be permitted to have any influence upon us in determining the sense of Scripture. We have no reason to think that the infinite God, in making his laws and arranging things in his moral kingdom, was influenced merely by such views and feelings as belong to ignorant, imperfect, sinful beings. But to make the sense of his laws conform to our views and feelings, would be in effect to attribute our views and feelings, circumscribed, fallible, and disordered as they are, to his infinite mind. It would be saying, that he is subject to all our weaknesses, and is no more influenced by a regard to his own glory and the general interests of his kingdom, than we are. It would, in short, be making God altogether like ourselves. I contend, therefore, that our natural views and feelings as to the propriety or the desirableness of any particular doctrine should not influence our judgment as to the true meaning of the revelation which God has made.

If in the instance now before us, the question should be, whether the endless punishment of the wicked, *admitted to be a certain truth*, has anything in it inconsistent with the dictates of justice or benevolence; we might then direct our reasoning to that point, and might, in the best manner in our power, show that it is not inconsistent, and that no valid objection lies against it. But if the *truth* of the doctrine is the subject of inquiry; then we have nothing to do with the justice or utility of endless punishment, as viewed by us, but must confine ourselves to the single question, whether the Scriptures reveal the fact. If, without any revelation, we were able, in our way of reasoning, to prove to our own satisfaction the justice and the necessity of endless punishment; still this could not be relied upon as the foundation of our belief as to the fact. And after we had, by a process of general reasoning, come to the conclusion, that there must be endless punishment; if the word of God should declare against it, that conclusion of ours, in all propriety, should stand for nothing. On the other hand, if we were wholly unable, by any reasoning of ours, to make out the justice or propriety of endless punishment, or to obviate the objections and difficulties urged against it; this would be no sufficient reason why we should disbelieve the fact, when made known by revelation. Whatever the operations of our reason may be, and whatever we of ourselves may think to be right; we must remember that we are not competent to judge what God will do, any farther

than he is pleased to inform us. From our imperfect wisdom and benevolence we are wholly insufficient to determine what plans a God of infinite wisdom and benevolence will adopt, and how he will compass the ends he has in view.

This then is the position I maintain. If our inquiry is whether the wicked will in fact endure endless punishment; the testimony of God, and that only, must be consulted; and our understanding of the meaning of that testimony must not be influenced, one way or the other, by any reasoning of ours as to the consistency of such punishment with the divine benevolence or justice. For while we seem to be reasoning respecting *divine* benevolence and justice, we are in fact reasoning respecting our *own* benevolence and justice. And it is by no means certain, that those measures of government which would agree with such benevolence and justice as ours, would agree with the infinite benevolence and justice of God. Still, after we learn from the word of God that the punishment of the wicked will be endless; and after we have given full credence to the fact; it may then be proper and useful for us to attempt, with modesty and caution, to vindicate the divine conduct from the objections of unsanctified reason, and to show, as far as the case admits, that it agrees with acknowledged principles of justice and benevolence.

I shall refer to another example, though I intend not to dwell upon it. God declared to Abraham, that he should have a son, and that his posterity, by that son, should be as the stars of heaven for multitude. Abraham knew it was the declaration of God, and as such he believed it, though human reason might have urged strong and unanswerable objections against it. His faith rested, not upon any reasoning of his own, but simply upon the word of God. The only concern which his reason had with the subject was this: It decided, *that every declaration of God must be true, and worthy of confident belief*, whatever objections might seem to lie against it. And he suffered no objections or difficulties in the least to influence his mind as to the *meaning* of the divine declaration. This is the main point I have in view. Our faith must rest simply upon the divine testimony. It was this which distinguished Abraham's faith, and rendered him worthy of being held up as an example to all believers in after times. *He believed God.* The word of God was the sole basis and rule of his faith. His reason did nothing but apprehend and believe the divine testimony.

To adopt the principle which I have now endeavored to illustrate, would be exceedingly advantageous to ministers, as

well as private Christians. We are prone to forget the high authority of God's word, and to treat it with irreverence and neglect. It is too much the fashion of the day, even among Christian ministers, to form opinions respecting the various doctrines and duties of religion, in the way of general reasoning. And if there is an occasional reference to the Scriptures, it is evident that they hold only a secondary place, and that their decision has less influence than the arguments suggested by human reason. By proceeding in this way, we subject ourselves to a great loss of time, and to great uncertainty and perplexity on the subject of religion. We part with an infallible guide, and take one that is fallible. We shut our eyes against the light of the sun, and attempt to find our way by the light of a taper. In a word, we give up the divine authority of revelation. And if by mere reasoning we happen in any case to arrive at the knowledge of the truth, and then believe it merely because our reason has discovered it; such faith gives no glory to God. It is not the faith of a *Christian*, but of a *rationalist*.

But it is said, reason and philosophy are necessary in order to discover the meaning of God's word. And to show this, the declaration of Christ is adduced; "this is my body." But all that is necessary in this case is to put ourselves, as far as may be, in the situation of those to whom the declaration was made. The proper inquiries are,—*What was the occasion on which the words were spoken? What were the circumstances of the Apostles to whom they were spoken? What object had Christ in view? What had been his manner of speaking? What sort of metaphors had he been accustomed to use? How would his Apostles naturally understand his words?* Now this is not *philosophizing*. The Apostles had no need of *philosophy* in order to understand this declaration of Christ, any more than they had to understand him, when he said, "I am the *vine*; ye are the *branches*." Apprehending the meaning of figurative language is not, properly speaking, a matter of *philosophical reasoning*, but a matter of *taste*, and *feeling*, and *common sense*. If *philosophy* should be applied to the declaration of Christ, "this is my body," I should suppose it must relate to the propriety and utility of metaphorical language; and so must lead to an analysis of those principles of the mind which make such language natural, and which account for its effects. But the right understanding of metaphorical language and its proper influence on the mind is no more dependent on any reasoning of this kind, than eating and digesting food is de-

pendent on our understanding the physiology of those parts of the body which are particularly concerned in eating and digestion.

I mean not by any thing I have said, to express the opinion that philosophical reasoning on the subject of religion is in all cases to be rejected as of no use. My position is, that it cannot be considered as necessary, and cannot be properly used, in determining the sense of Scripture. And I should suppose that any one must be satisfied of this, when he considers, that those to whom the sacred writers addressed themselves were far from being philosophers, and that if philosophy was necessary to the right understanding of God's word, they were utterly incapable of knowing the truth, and were tied down to unavoidable ignorance and error.* But neither Christ nor his apostles ever represent philosophical knowledge, or a capacity for metaphysical reasoning, to be at all necessary to those who would learn the truths of religion. What they insist upon as necessary is, a humble, docile, and obedient disposition, and prayer to God for the teaching of his Spirit. "If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine."—"If any man lack wisdom, let him ask it of God." Instead of giving countenance to philosophizing in religion, the sacred writers directly discountenance it. When some inquired, "*how* are the dead raised?" the Apostle did not give them *the philosophy of the resurrection*. He first charged them with folly in asking the question, and then referred them to the vegetation of grain, in order to show them that their objection against the resurrection of the body was futile. And as to the quickening and growth of the seed sown,—he did not enter into the *philosophy* of vegetation, but merely mentioned the *fact*. The argument he used to confute their objection was *rhetorical*, not *philosophical*. He vindicated an important doctrine of revelation by

* "The preacher is to make the truth of Scripture the burden of his communications to his people, because this is a message which can be easily understood. It is brought down to the comprehension of a common religious assembly. It is the *simplicity of scriptural truth*, which adapts it to all classes of hearers."—"But of all modes of communication, the language of metaphysical philosophy is the least adapted to the understanding of an ordinary congregation. Philosophical preaching requires a philosophical audience." "How is a plain man to arrive at a knowledge of religious truth, by the refinements of metaphysical reasoning? Suppose he makes the attempt. He has a new science to learn; a science abounding in nice distinctions; requiring an analysis of the faculties and operations of the mind; and embracing a knowledge of the relations of cause and effect, powers and susceptibilities, motives and actions.—If he looks to the pulpit for instruction on these subjects, he is involved in the mysteries of metaphysical phraseology. His minister speaks to him in an unknown tongue. He finds that he has not only a new science, but a new language to learn."—"If metaphysical philosophy had been necessary to salvation, it would seem that the Bible would have given us a new metaphysical language."

PRESIDENT DAY'S SERMON ON THE CHRISTIAN MINISTER'S COMMISSION.

an apt analogy taken from the natural world ;—as Christ illustrated and enforced an important duty, by referring to the fowls of the air, and to the lilies. If that reasoning which is strictly *philosophical*, may ever be used on the subject of religion, it must be for the purpose of illustrating and enforcing a doctrine or precept already made known and received, and vindicating it against objections. In some cases, though I think rarely, the philosophy of the mind may afford us important assistance in accomplishing these objects. And those men, who unhappily carry their habit of speculation too far, and are more in alliance with philosophy than with Christianity, may sometimes have their defective faith aided and strengthened by finding an agreement between the principles of mental science and the doctrines of revelation. But their faith would stand in no need of such help, if it relied, as the faith of Abraham did, with unwavering confidence on the simple word of God. Besides ; those Christians who rest their faith entirely on the divine testimony are, in my view, much more likely to have a correct understanding of that testimony, than those who rest their faith partly on that, and partly on the deductions of speculative reason. And it is very easy to see which kind of faith does the greater honor to the word and the veracity of God.*

* On the subject here under discussion, the views expressed by President Day in the sermon before referred to are so just and reasonable, that I shall quote a few more passages ; at the same time recommending to ministers and Theological students a serious and repeated perusal of the whole sermon.

“The evidence of Scripture truth is the testimony of God himself. Here human reason has no right to interfere. It is bound to stand aside and hear what God the Lord hath said. Reason decides, indeed, and decides intuitively, that the word of the God of truth is to be believed.—It is bound to submit implicitly to the divine declarations, whatever they may be. Here is the distinction between faith and mere reason.—The truths which God reveals to us, may or may not accord with the opinions which we ourselves had formed. Their previous probability or improbability is, therefore, no ground on which we are to receive or reject them, when we find them in the word of God.—It is not a sound principle of interpretation, to determine before-hand what doctrines ought to be found, or are probably found in the Bible, and therefore to make it speak a language in conformity with our pre-conceived opinions.—The scriptural evidence is in favor of any doctrine is wholly independent on the probability furnished by reason alone without the aid of revelation. This evidence is the simple testimony of God. It is neither weakened nor strengthened by any previous opinion which we had formed on the subject revealed.—The doctrines of metaphysical philosophy ought to have no influence in determining the doctrines of the Bible. If the language of Scripture is to be so explained, as to conform invariably to probabilities suggested by reason, then it is no revelation. It makes known to us no new truths. It can decide no controverted point. For each contending party will give the passages referred to as proofs, the meaning which accords with its own opinions. This is the great reason why the various denominations of Christians make, ordinarily, no approaches towards agreement in doctrine, by discussions which professedly refer to the Scriptures as a common rule of faith. In truth, each party, instead of making the Scriptures the only standard of belief, makes his own opinions, to some extent at least, the standard of Scripture.—If the book of God is to be interpreted according to pre-conceived philosophical opinions, it will not be *one* Bible but *many*. It will be made to contain as many different systems of doctrines, as there are different schemes of philosophy brought forward to give a construction to its contents.—It may be necessary, in interpreting the Scriptures, to take into consideration the opinions and modes of thinking of the classes of persons

I have extended my remarks to such a length, because I conceive the point under consideration to be of primary importance, and because I think it would conduce in a high degree to our benefit as Christians, and to our usefulness as Ministers, if we could bring ourselves to such a habit of mind as to make it our constant inquiry, *what doctrine God has revealed in his word*; but never to make the inquiry, so incompatible with the character of Christians, *whether the doctrine which God has revealed is true*.—You may perhaps think it needless to dwell longer on the general principle I have stated. But I am desirous of giving so clear an illustration of it, that no one can fail of understanding it aright. Let me therefore apply it to the question of Christ's character. This is a subject of pure revelation. Our inquiry is, what do the Scriptures teach? But a difficulty arises. *How can it be that Jesus Christ is God, when there is only one God, the Father?* What influence shall a difficulty of this kind have upon us in determining the meaning of the divine testimony? None. Suppose we are totally unable to reconcile the doctrine of Christ's divinity with the doctrine of the divine unity. What then? We are not required to reconcile them. Our business is to determine *philologically* and *historically* what the inspired writers taught, just as we determine what Athanasius or Arius taught. The only difference between the two cases, which I need to notice, is this; that the very doctrine which the inspired writers taught is the doctrine which we are unhesitatingly to receive as true; but as to the doctrine of Athanasius or Arius, we are to believe it or not, as we find it supported by proper evidence. The one is directly binding upon our faith; the other not. But the method of determining what doctrine was taught, is substantially the same in both cases. Now suppose you make it your object to inquire what doctrine Athanasius taught. Would you think it proper that your views of the consistency or inconsistency of his doctrine should influence you in determining what his doctrine actually was? You would look for the *usus loquendi*. You would take into view all the circumstances of the writer, and of the time when he wrote. But in ascertaining what doctrine he held, you certainly would not first inquire whether, agreeably to your mode of reasoning, the doctrine was philosophically correct, and then conclude that it was his doc-

to whom they were originally addressed. The true point of inquiry is, how did they, if they were candid, understand what was said to them. How did the children of Israel understand Moses? How did the primitive Christians understand Christ and his Apostles? But the words of Scripture were not spoken to modern metaphysicians. Paul did not reason with philosophers of the present age. *Their speculative opinions are not the standard according to which the Bible is to be interpreted.*"

trine, or not, according as it agreed or disagreed with your notions. No enlightened and impartial man ever proceeded in this manner in determining what opinions were maintained by any *uninspired* writer. And no one can with propriety proceed in this manner in determining what doctrines were maintained by the inspired writers. Suppose a man should release his mind, as the German Rationalists have released theirs, from the idea that the Sacred writers were inspired, and from all sense of obligation to believe what they taught. He could then surely pursue the question, what doctrines they taught, without being embarrassed with any reasonings about the consistency or inconsistency of those doctrines. So some of the most learned Rationalists have pursued it. And so ought we. Those Rationalists have, in various important instances, decided, that the Scriptures teach the doctrines which we hold. We agree with them, thus far, in deciding what the sense of Scripture is. But we go farther than they, and hold this sense of Scripture to be perfectly according to truth, and make it the foundation and rule of our faith. We agree substantially with them in the manner of ascertaining what the doctrines of the Bible are; but we differ widely, as to the manner in which the doctrines, thus ascertained, are to be regarded by us.

But should any be disposed to ask, whether in determining the meaning of the divine declarations, we are not to have respect to the moral sentiments and feelings which are inseparable from the constitution of human nature;—my answer would be, that, if in any cases we do this, it should be with great caution. If the divine declaration is unambiguous, and its meaning obvious, it is to be received on the ground of its own authority, or the veracity of God, whether it agrees or not with our moral sentiments and feelings; and for this plain reason, that our moral sentiments and feelings in any particular case may rest on defective or partial views of things. God commanded Abraham to offer up his son Isaac as a sacrifice. Abraham had the same moral sentiments and feelings as we have, and the same paternal affections. If his moral sense had been consulted, must it not have decided, that killing a man, especially a son, would be exceedingly unnatural, inhuman and wicked, and that a kind and merciful God would forever disapprove of it? How could Abraham then believe that God actually commanded it? Certainly he could not, if he had formed his opinion of the meaning of the divine declaration in the manner above mentioned. But he had one moral sentiment, which was paramount to all others, and controlled all others; and that was, that *whatever God says, is right*. He knew that God com-

manded him to perform the deed. He consulted not with flesh and blood; he consulted not with his own sensibilities, as a parent; he consulted not even with the sentiments which belonged to his moral nature respecting the evil of slaying a man, or respecting human sacrifices. Nor did he inquire how this command could be consistent with the previous promise of God, or with the command not to kill. He yielded entirely to the authority of God's command. He had higher confidence in God's perfections, than in the dictates of his own moral nature;—and he acted against all those dictates, except that one which was superior to all others, and which is indeed the highest moral principle proper to the human mind, namely; *that God is to be believed and obeyed*. In any such case, it is evident that an attempt to model the meaning of God's word according to our own speculative notions or natural feelings would lead us far astray, and that the right meaning of God's word is that which readily suggests itself to the docile, obedient, pious heart.

But after we have ascertained the doctrine of revelation, and have received it as the matter of our faith, the question may and often does arise, whether such doctrine agrees with our common principles of reasoning, or with facts which occur in the natural or moral world. This may be a suitable inquiry, and we may sometimes find it advantageous to pursue it with all the means in our power. But after all, the result of this inquiry is not to effect our belief of the doctrine revealed. Suppose the doctrine does agree with our common principles of reasoning, or with known facts in the natural or moral world; this we shall consider a pleasing circumstance, and one which will enable us to silence the objections of unbelievers, and to do something perhaps towards preparing them to receive the truth. This may be the case with the doctrine, taught in Rom. 5th, respecting the evils which are brought upon the posterity of Adam by means of his one offence. It is very easy to make out an analogy between this divine constitution, and events which continually take place. But this analogy is not the ground of our faith in the doctrine. For should we be wholly unable to make out any such analogy, we should still believe the doctrine taught by the inspired writers, *simply because it is thus taught*. And supposing that to be the case, instead of attempting to do what is beyond our power, it would become us frankly to acknowledge, that the doctrine differs, wholly or in part as the fact may be, from the deductions of reason in other cases, and has no analogy to truths otherwise made known. An acknowledgement like this is as consistent with

our cordial belief of a doctrine made known by revelation, as it is with our belief of any principle of magnetism or electricity, which has no analogy to other principles in the science of physics. Such an acknowledgement, I think, should be readily made by every Christian, in regard to the Scripture doctrine of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and the doctrine of Christ's person, as including divine and human attributes. Refusing to make this acknowledgement, and attempting to find something among created beings which would be analagous to this peculiar mode of existence, has occasioned needless perplexity, and has done much to turn off the minds of men from the only true ground of Christian faith, *the divine testimony*.

But I have another remark, which, though it may seem very easy to be understood, and though any one may be ready to assent to it as soon as he hears it, will still be found to deserve a very careful consideration. It is this:—The Protestant principle of making the Bible our only and sufficient standard requires that we should conform to it, both as to the *matter* and the *manner* of teaching. By this I do not mean that we should confine ourselves to the mere language of inspiration, and make our instructions consist merely of quotations from the Bible. Teaching *what* the sacred writers taught and *as* they taught, implies nothing like this.

I can best explain my meaning by an example. The sacred writers teach the important doctrine, that Christ made an atonement for the sins of men. But in what *manner* do they teach this doctrine? How do they set it forth? Sometimes they represent, that Christ *died for us*; sometimes, that he *died for our sins*; sometimes, that he was a *sin-offering*, that he *bare our sins in his own body on the tree*, and that *God laid on him the iniquities of us all*; sometimes, that he was a *propitiation for our sins*, that he *redeemed us*, that he *reconciled us to God*, &c. Now when we teach the doctrine of the atonement, this is the *kind* of representation we should make. The Scriptures use a great variety in the manner of exhibiting the subject; so should we. But how various soever the manner in which we exhibit the doctrine, we should keep our eye upon the manner in which it is set forth in the Scriptures, and should not only avoid whatever would be inconsistent with that, but should make it perfectly manifest, that we derive our conceptions of the doctrine, and our mode of teaching, from the Bible. If we undertake to explain it, and to reason upon it; our explanation and reasoning should be such as will plainly correspond with the current language of the inspired writers; and *will make it perfectly natural and congruous for us freely to*

quote that language, and intermix it with our own explanations and reasonings. In short, we must make it manifest that we delight in the Scripture representation, and Scripture phraseology, and consider it as best suited to the nature of the subject; and on this we must build all our logic, and all our rhetoric. Now let those who are accustomed to reason abstractly on the doctrine of the atonement compare the doctrine as exhibited by them, with the doctrine as exhibited by the sacred writers; let them put their favorite conceptions and language by the side of those texts which most fully express the conceptions of the inspired teachers; and then see whether there is not a visible and wide difference. Turn your thoughts to those preachers and writers who carry their fondness for philosophical investigation into the subject of religion, and see how they exhibit the doctrine of Christ's atonement, and then say, whether there is any appearance of their regarding the Bible as their only and sufficient guide. If they do so regard it, how comes it to pass that they seldom, if ever, set forth this radical principle of religion in the light in which it is set forth by the inspired writers? How does it happen that a doctrine, which always appears in the Scriptures so obvious, and so full of vital warmth and energy, comes in their hands to be so cold, and speculative, and lifeless, and so remote from common apprehension?

I consider the same remarks important, in regard to the manner in which the doctrine of atonement is applied to practical purposes. The Apostles often make use of it as a means of enforcing obedience, a motive to a holy life. We should do the same. It should be evident from our manner of treating the subject, that we view Christ's death in the same light with them; that it has the same influence upon us, as it had upon them, and that we carry it out into the same practical uses.

The remarks I have made on this doctrine will be sufficient to explain generally what I mean by conforming to the Bible as to the matter and manner of teaching.

But perhaps a question may arise in the minds of some, whether the principle I have laid down will exactly hold at the present day; whether the change which has taken place in the mode of thinking, the prevalence of a new set of errors, the new systems of education,—in a word, whether the change in the circumstances of man, does not call for a change both as to the matter and manner of religious instruction.

To this I reply: There is no proof that any change has taken place, which materially affects the subject under consideration. Man's relation to God, to the moral law, to Christ, to his fellow creatures,—all his moral relations, are the same

now, as they were when the Scriptures were written. Man's natural character is the same. He has the same faculties, dispositions, passions, appetites,—the same deceitfulness, and selfishness, and perverseness of heart, the same backwardness to feel and acknowledge his obligations to be holy, the same unwillingness to forsake his sins and come to Christ, and the same propensity to justify himself. Generally, the same false opinions, both theoretic and practical, prevailed formerly, as those which prevail now. What kind of error in regard to the subject of religion can be found at the present day, to which there is not some reference in the Scriptures? It is manifest, that not only the more flagrant errors, but all the slighter departures from the simplicity of the Gospel, both as to doctrine and practice, are more or less noticed and rebuked by the sacred writers.

It is also true, that the salvation provided for man, and the way of obtaining it, are subject to no change. The repentance, faith and obedience required, are always the same. Sinners in all ages and circumstances have the same need of the influence of the Holy Spirit. They possess no powers or principles of action, which will ever, in any instance, set aside or diminish the necessity of their being born again. What Christ said to Nicodemus is as true and important now, as it was then. The renewal of sinners is the work of God in as high a sense at the present day, as formerly.

As therefore man's nature, relations, and duties, and other circumstances, so far as religion is concerned, are always the same; there can be no occasion for any material change, either in the matter or manner of religious instruction. If Christ and his apostles were to appear among us and to teach the doctrines and duties of religion at the present day; is there not every reason to think that they would teach the same things, and much in the same manner, as they did eighteen hundred years ago? Whatever changes have taken place in the world since the days of inspiration, there has been and can be no change, which materially affects the subject of religion; and what was true and important in doctrine, and suitable in the manner of teaching, in the time of Christ and the Apostles, must be so now.

The supposition that a material change is to be made at the present day in the matter or manner of instruction found in the Bible, would lead to very dangerous consequences. If we suppose it is left to our discretion what doctrines and precepts of the Bible shall be preached at the present day, and what omitted, or in what manner these doctrines and precepts shall be explained and inculcated; and if we suppose that the word of God is not to be taken as our standard in these respects;

then we should consider ourselves at liberty, if we thought best, to omit in part, or altogether, the perfect obligation of man to obey the divine law, his depravity and ruin, the necessity of divine influence in his renewal to holiness, the sovereignty of God's grace, justification by faith, the duty of obedience, self-denial, forgiveness of injuries, and any other doctrine or duty inculcated in the Scriptures; or if we should not wholly omit them, we should feel ourselves at liberty to receive them, and exhibit them to others, in a very different light from that in which the Bible exhibits them. And where should we stop? What limits could be set to our deviation from the principles contained in our sacred books? And in all this, what reproach should we cast upon the word of God, and how manifestly should we abandon the grand article of Protestantism, that the Bible is the only sufficient rule of faith and practice! *It was, we should say, sufficient once,—but it is not so now.*

THE GROWTH OF UNITARIANISM.

Although there is less boasting now than formerly, respecting the growth of Unitarianism, and grievous complaints are uttered in regard to the gloominess of the times, yet, mingled with these, we sometimes hear the lingering notes of exultation, and transactions in the country are occasionally referred to, which, to those not particularly acquainted with circumstances, may seem to indicate that the doctrine is prevailing. I allude to the instances (two or three of which have occurred recently,) in which towns have voted to dismiss their Orthodox ministers, under circumstances which lead to the expectation that possibly Unitarians may be settled in their places. This subject ought to be explained, not only that it may be understood by the public generally, but that interested individuals on both sides may understand it, and may be led to shape their course accordingly. In the remarks which follow, I do not profess to describe any particular case, but merely to exhibit the *usual* course of events leading to dismissions like those above mentioned. The public will see *how* Unitarianism grows; and out of *what materials* it grows; and what *results* are to be anticipated from its growth, both to those who embrace, and those who reject it.

It is well known (perhaps it might have been expected) that

as our settlements become older, and our population more numerous, a class of men are brought together in many of our towns, who make no pretensions to religion, and seem not to concern themselves at all about it. They may in some instances call themselves Universalists; but they attend no meeting, have none of the forms of religion in their houses, and in fact assume no appearance of religion, whether abroad or at home. A portion of them are grossly vicious; but this is not the case with all. Some are merely irreligious and worldly. They have usually a sort of undefined prejudice against the minister, which becomes the stronger in proportion to his worth, and rises in many instances to palpable hatred. They pay him nothing, and are never willing to see him in their houses, except when some of their families are dying or dead; and then if he comes and offers a prayer, they think him under greater obligations to them for their attention, than they to him for his services.

Connected with this motley tribe of irreligionists, there are in some of our towns from two or three to half a dozen, who call themselves Unitarians. They are generally men of some wealth and influence, who know that it is reputable to keep up the appearance of religion, but are determined not to be encumbered with its restraints. They have probably been at Boston a good deal in years past, while Unitarianism rode over the head of every thing there, and learned, to their unspeakable satisfaction, that worldly, indifferent, pleasure-loving men *could be religious*, without any great change or trouble. They learned that Unitarianism was all the fashion in town,—that Unitarians, like themselves, were opposed to frequent religious meetings, and were the principal promoters of those amusements which they loved, but which they had always been told were sinful.* After a few such visits to the metropolis—witnessing the liberties in which fashionable Christians there indulge themselves, hearing their conversation, and replenishing their pockets with tracts and papers, they return, to laugh at the unmodish scrupulosity of country professors, to oppose the measures and doctrines of their minister, and to call themselves Unitarians. They consider religious meetings during the week as a nuisance; revivals of religion as a pitiful delusion; church covenants and examinations as an encroachment on their religious rights; and balls, theatres, and

* Says a Unitarian of Boston. "We have no doubt that the Unitarians form a large part of those, who resort to 'doubtful or positively injurious amusements,' who 'patronize theatres,' and are averse 'to social religious meetings.'" See *Review of a Letter to a Unitarian Clergyman*, p. 16.

cards as things that must not be spoken against. They are loud in the praise of some Unitarian preachers whom they have heard—so polite, so eloquent, so refined;—and are astonished that their minister should be so uncivil as not to be willing to admit them to his pulpit. They are determined not to put up with such intolerable arrogance; and as their minister seems not likely to be flattered or frightened out of his “exclusiveness,” they resolve to take measures for his dismissal. But how shall they proceed? A vast majority of his supporters—of those who usually attend meeting, and seem to have any serious regard for religion, are his devoted friends. How then shall their object be accomplished?

They immediately address themselves to the class of persons first described, with a view to secure their friendship and co-operation. They say to them, ‘You are members of the parish as much as the deacons are; or if you are not members, you can easily become such; and you have as good a right to the meeting house and funds as any persons in the town. We have been imposed upon by this strict, uncompromising, Calvinistic theology long enough; let us now unite, and have something better. If you prefer Universalist preaching, you shall have it occasionally;* although we are confident, when you hear the Unitarians, that you will be satisfied there is no great difference. You are as good Unitarians now as we are, and doubtless have been Unitarians for a long time, though you did not know it. You have not, indeed, paid much attention to religion, but this is not your fault, but that of the minister. The subject has been presented in such an odious form, that persons of sense could not be expected to attend to it. Only consent to unite with us, and we will call a parish meeting, and the business will soon be in our own hands.’

The coalition thus proposed is speedily formed; a parish meeting is called; and scores, who scarcely ever saw the inside of a meeting house on the Sabbath, are brought forward to attend. For fear of a failure, some perhaps from other towns are drawn in to afford their aid. They assemble first at the tavern, and having poured out their libations there, they rush into the house of God, to transact the business for which their leaders have called them together. In the midst of noise and tumult, the question is proposed and taken on the dismissal of the minister; a majority is found against him; and a *pæan* is rung the country round, to celebrate the triumphs of Unitarianism.

* Frequent complaints occur in the Universalist newspapers of promises such as these, which afterwards were not fulfilled.

But, 'let not him that putteth on the harness boast himself as he that putteth it off.' The *results* of the triumph—if triumph it can be called—remain to be seen.—One of the first of these is, the practical demonstration which is made of the *nature* and *claims* of Unitarianism. A great part of these liberal voters, only a few months previous, knew nothing and cared nothing about any religion. They pursued the present world regardless of the future. They were 'lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God.' And they profess to have experienced no change. They have only learned that they are Unitarians, and have been such the greater part of their lives, though they did not know it. What then must they think of Unitarianism, as a system of religious faith? And what must others think of it? A triumph of Unitarianism such as this is enough to show its emptiness, and destroy its credit forever. It is unspeakably disgraceful to any thing claiming to be a system of religion to grow out of such materials, and by such means.

Another immediate result of the measures above described is a *separation* in the society, between the friends and the enemies of truth. The members of the church, and those who think and act with them, are not to be so easily deprived of their privileges. They immediately retire from the parish, and make provision for the public worship of God under circumstances in which they will be secure from further molestation.

The separation thus accomplished may now be viewed in its consequences to both parties. And, first, to the Unitarians. They are left in possession of the house of worship and parochial funds, and have the power given them, if they please to use it, (as they always do,) to plunder the church of her funds. They may think, therefore, that they have accomplished their whole purpose, and are in a fair way to prosper. But they soon find themselves subject to great inconveniences. They are under the necessity now of going to meeting, forenoon and afternoon, fair weather and foul, in order to make up any thing like a decent congregation. This in some instances, I know, has been felt to be a grievous burthen. The individuals spoken of could consent to pay a trifle for the support of religion, and think little of it; and if they had the Orthodox with them to go to meeting at *all* times, and leave them at liberty to stay at home, except when the weather and other circumstances rendered it convenient and agreeable for them to be out, they could get along very well. But to be placed in circumstances where, if they do not go to meeting nobody will, and the house will be left literally empty—to have such a necessity continually pressing on

them, is intolerable ! It may be borne during the excitement of the separation, but cannot be submitted to for any considerable length of time.

But this is not all : Unitarians, left thus alone, often find themselves in company at which they are somewhat startled, not to say ashamed. The persons whom they flattered as good Unitarians, and rallied out to vote the dismissal of the minister—when they come to sit down with them in the house of God, after the serious Christians have fled—make but a sorry appearance there. They are a kind of living burlesque upon Christianity. Their minister is ashamed of them,* and they are startled and ashamed as they look round upon one another.

And then what prospect have they, in present circumstances, of further propagating their doctrines ? Mixed up and half concealed as they formerly were, there was an opportunity for something to be done ; but now, their sentiments are all out ; their nakedness is exposed ; they are hedged round with a triple enclosure, so that nobody comes nigh them who is not of their own company, and the work of proselyting is at an end.

Many of these forsaken Unitarian parishes are likely, ere long, to become extinct. Others, in all probability, will fall to the Universalists. Of some of them a great majority of the members are Universalists now, and have been received with a promise that they shall occasionally hear Universalist preaching. But the Unitarian minister, they find, is as unaccommodating as the Orthodox ; and they will not endure his exclusiveness. They have rallied once, and they can again ; have helped to turn out one minister, and they can serve another in the same way. They are resolved to have teachers who will be more liberal and explicit, and whose instructions are better suited to their inclinations.

So much for the consequences of a separation to the Unitarians who are left behind. What then are its effects on those who depart ?—One of the first feelings of the Orthodox, after such a trial is past and their religious order is re-established, is that of *liberty* and *security*. They have obtained a release from their bondage ; the snare is broken, and they are escaped. They can now hear the Gospel

* The writer of this article was once visited by a Unitarian minister, an old acquaintance, who had received a call to settle over one of these forsaken parishes. He sought the interview himself, and commenced the conversation by asking what he ought to do. " I have been preaching," said he, " at ———, and am expected to settle ; but to tell the truth, I do not wish to have any thing to do with them. So far as I can find, there is scarcely a Christian there. They are almost all Universalists, unprincipled men, and I do not feel," said he, with tears, " as though I could trust myself among them."

preached in its purity, having none to cavil or find fault. They can appoint their meetings, and attend them, and pursue their various plans of benevolence, having none to molest or make them afraid. Their minister, too, feels like another man. He is relieved of a source of continual anxiety, temptation and distress. He is eased of a heavy burthen, which was crushing him to the dust.—It has been the lot of the writer of this article to be often with his brethren, in different places, under circumstances like those here described. He has seen them poor and straitened—stripped of their former accommodations, and left with naught to depend on but God and their own resources; but he has uniformly seen them exhilarated and happy. And often has he heard the exclamation, ‘How thankful we ought to be that we have obtained a release! Nothing on earth could induce us to be as we were before!’

In consequence of a separation like that above described, a channel is opened in which the truth may have *free course*, run, and be glorified. Its heralds dispense it with all boldness and plainness, none murmuring or forbidding them. The hindrances which before obstructed it are removed, so that now it can reach and affect the heart. God accepts and blesses the sacrifices of his people, and pours upon them the influences of his Spirit. Revivals of religion almost invariably follow these separations. The church is first purified, and then enlarged. Its dead and dry branches are broken off and left behind, and living ones are grafted in. Religion and irreligion, instead of being, as formerly, commingled and obscured, are presented in strong and glowing contrast, that every one may distinguish between the chaff and the wheat.

In the present state of the ecclesiastical laws in Massachusetts, the condition of many of the original parishes is in the last degree precarious and trying. They are so divided among themselves that little can be done except to quarrel and find fault, and there is nothing to prevent the whole population of a town from rushing in, and taking possession of their accommodations and privileges. I would not encourage separations in such places, until there is a *real* necessity for them. But when the necessity comes, it is rather to be welcomed than deprecated. It comes fraught with blessings for the church. I could name now a dozen places where (if it were permitted to do evil that good might come) I would gladly persuade the Unitarians to excite the rabble, and vote out the minister, and thus open the way for a separate establishment, in which the truth might shine forth disencumbered and prevail.

REVIEWS.

THE LIFE AND TIMES OF THE REV. RICHARD BAXTER.
With a Critical Examination of his Writings. BY
 REV. WILLIAM ORME. *In two volumes.* BOSTON: CROCK-
 ER & BREWSTER. 1831.

SELECT PRACTICAL WRITINGS OF RICHARD BAXTER.
With a Life of the Author. BY LEONARD BACON, *Pas-
 tor of the first church in New Haven.* *In two volumes.*
 New Haven: Durrie & Peck. 1831.

The times of the Rev. Richard Baxter were interesting and eventful. Few distinguished men of any age have witnessed so many extraordinary vicissitudes in public affairs. Never, within so short a period, did the civil and ecclesiastical government of England undergo such rapid and astonishing changes; and never, we believe, since the days of Luther, have the events of *seventy* years had so mighty a bearing upon the political and religious liberties of mankind.

Baxter passed through no less than three of the most remarkable revolutions, which the Island of Great Britain has experienced for near a thousand years. He saw one king condemned and beheaded by his own subjects—two others driven into exile—one of them unexpectedly restored to the throne of his father, and the other, the last of the Stuarts, yielding the sceptre to the house of Orange. He beheld the monarchy suddenly changed into a commonwealth, under the much vilified protectorate of Oliver Cromwell; and after the death of that great man, the commonwealth sinking, almost as suddenly, beneath the resuscitated monarchy. With unavailing grief and remonstrance, he saw the profligate Charles second plunging the court, and threatening to draw the whole nation, into the vortex of impiety and licentiousness. He saw James second, as weak as he was cruel and bigotted, shrinking away from the indignant frown of an abused and long suffering people; and he lived just long enough to hail the accession of William and Mary to the throne of the United Kingdoms.

In the church, he beheld changes no less rapid and surprising;—the Presbyterians rudely plucking the mitre from the heads of the Bishops—the Independents, in their turn, supplanting the Presbyterians—and these, again, yielding to the

Episcopal Hierarchy, which they had expended so much blood and treasure to overthrow. Under the despotic reign of Charles first, Baxter saw the most learned and pious ministers of the Gospel in the kingdom ejected from their livings, driven from their flocks, and most cruelly punished, by fine, imprisonment, and exile, for the unpardonable crime of non-conformity. He saw many of them restored, during the interregnum, and then subjected to fiercer persecutions, from the return of the second Charles to the glorious revolution in 1688.

As Baxter beheld the true church of Christ, and her most devoted ministers, again and again suffering under great outward affliction, from the open hostility and secret plots of the "man of sin," and still more from the scorn and mortal enmity of a spurious protestantism, so he witnessed the righteous retributions of heaven, which fell upon the proudest of her enemies. In particular, did he behold the imperious *Laud* hurled from his Archiepiscopal throne, and brought to the scaffold.

It was, moreover, in the early days of Richard Baxter, that the suffering Puritans began to look for a place of refuge on this western continent; that the first little band of exiles, for conscience' sake, landed on Plymouth rock; and that other companies of kindred spirits soon followed, to share with them in the toils and perils of the wilderness. It was in his times, and while their brethren whom they had left behind were struggling with various success against the encroachments of arbitrary power, that the Carvers, the Winthrops, the Endicots, the Cottons, the Davenports were laying the foundations of those civil and religious institutions, which have ever been the glory of our land.

In short, the seventeenth century, during more than three quarters of which Baxter lived, was a period of deep agitation in the elements of ecclesiastical, no less than of civil government. The true principles of liberty and of religious toleration began to be better understood than they ever had been before, though most of their advocates were still in the twilight of the Reformation. It was a period of great *crimes*, great *virtues*, and, as we shall have occasion directly to show, of great *men*. The political heavens have sometimes been blacker, and have shot out fiercer fires—earthquakes have more terribly shaken the nations—the current of human depravity has, at times, been deeper, darker and more impetuous—the heavings and eruptions of ambition, hate and atheism have been more appalling and destructive—and the flames of persecution have been more scorching;—but hostility to civil

and religious freedom was never more decided—the lust of power never more craving—the victims of persecution never less pitied by the authors of their sufferings, and “the mother of harlots,” with her mitred and half reformed progeny, were never more inimical to the Gospel of Christ, or to the civil and religious liberties of mankind.

Nor was Richard Baxter formed, either by nature or grace, to pass through life, an idle and indifferent spectator of the great drama which was acting upon the theatre of his country. With all his bodily infirmities, he was one of the last men in the nation to sit still, and let the world take care of itself; or to throw down the oar in rough weather, and resign himself to be drifted wherever the conflicting currents of the times might chance to carry him. He possessed a free spirit, an honest heart, and a quick conscience. He believed he had something to do for God, for the church, and his country; and he was not afraid to do it. He hated tyranny in all its forms, whether it wore the crown or the mitre. Baxter loved all good men, however they might differ in their politics, or in their notions of church government. Though not so scrupulous at first, as many others, in regard to pictures and ceremonies and subscriptions, he was nevertheless afflicted in all the afflictions of his non-conforming brethren; and when, after the fall of the Commonwealth, the wounds of the mongrel beast were healed, and persecution again repaired her dungeons, he shrunk not from the fierceness of her wrath, but calmly submitted to her cruelties. It would be exceedingly interesting, did our limits permit, to follow this devoted servant of Christ through all the changes of his long and eventful life;—to see how he filled the humble sphere which, as a minister, he first occupied at Dudley—to follow him from Dudley to Bridgenorth, from Bridgenorth to Kidderminster, and thence to the parliamentary army, and then back to Kidderminster;—to see him now preaching before Parliament and the Lord Protector, and now arraigned as a culprit before the execrated Jeffries—to follow him to prison—to commune with him in his bonds—to rejoice with the church in his enlargement—to admire the almost unabated energies of his active mind under the infirmities of sickness and old age—and to witness his final departure to the ‘Saint’s everlasting rest.’ It would be interesting and instructive, far beyond the ordinary details of Christian biography, to dwell upon all these particulars; but we can only glance at the most of them, and must refer our readers to the ample details, judicious reflections, and truly evangelical spirit of the works before us.—These are not

in the number of those crude and hasty compilations, which are alike ephemeral in their origin, and in the interest which they excite; but are well digested memorials of the life of a great and good man, and of the eventful times in which he lived. To bring together and condense these rich and various materials, must have cost the compilers no small amount of labor. The works ought to be in the hands of every clergyman, or at least upon the shelves of every village library.

We have said already that the age to which Baxter belonged was prolific of great men. A glance at the following list of his illustrious contemporaries will fully justify this observation. It is very remarkable, that so many of the brightest luminaries of the eastern hemisphere rose together upon the British Isles, in the early part of the seventeenth century.

Oliver Cromwell was born in	1599	Manton,	1620
Lightfoot,	1602	Marshall,	1621
Chillingworth,	1602	Poole,	1624
Hammond,	1605	Boyle,	1626
Milton,	1603	Bates,	1626
Sir Mat. Hale,	1609	Charnock,	1628
Archbishop Leighton,	1611	Tillotson,	1630
Henry Vane,	1612	Howe,	1630
Jeremy Taylor,	1613	Barrow,	1630
Baxter,	1615	Locke,	1632
Owen,	1616	Bishop Bull,	1633
Wallis,	1616	Stillingfleet,	1635
Algernon Sidney,	1617	Sir Isaac Newton,	1642

To these might be added the names of many other distinguished characters, who flourished during this remarkable period; but we shall barely mention the following: Gregory, the great mathematician, Bishop Hall, Archbishop Usher, Clarendon, Selden, Pococke, Whitlocke, Henry, Flavel, Mead, Calamy, Reynolds, Prideaux, Patrick, Burnet, Sherlock, and Atterbury. Such were the men, who were made by the times of which we are now speaking, and who, in their turn, made the times in which they lived. Where shall we look for a brighter constellation? To say nothing of the rest, we have here, the greatest Epic Poet, the greatest Astronomer, the greatest Intellectual Philosopher, and one of the greatest Jurists that England ever produced; each endowed with powers which would have shed a transcendent lustre upon any age or nation, and all springing into life within the limits of one generation!

If Richard Baxter did not "attain to the first three" in intellectual vigor and stature, he certainly belonged to the same race of "the giants," and it is hazarding nothing to say, that in that exalted moral worth which sheds a brighter glory upon an age, a country, or a smaller community, than mere talents or genius can ever confer, he had no superior, and but few equals, among the distinguished men of his times.

The subject of these memoirs was born at Rowton, Nov. 12, 1615; and though so deplorable was the state of religion in that part of the Island, as indeed it was in almost every other part, that he seems to have enjoyed no religious advantages in his early childhood, either from preaching or pastoral instruction, yet his mind was very early and seriously impressed by the conversation and example of his father, who, about the period of his birth, had been brought to the knowledge of the truth, by a diligent perusal of the holy scriptures. As is too common in such cases, however, these impressions gradually wore off, though they often renewed their "compunctuous visitings," and seem never to have been wholly dismissed, till they issued in saving conversion to God.

His advantages for study, in his boyhood, were extremely limited, and often interrupted. "From six to ten years of age, he was under the four successive curates of the parish, two of whom never preached, and the other two drank themselves to beggary, and left the place." His next teacher was a lawyer's clerk, who had been dismissed from the office for hard drinking, and then turned curate under forged orders "for a piece of bread." "Once, and once only, he preached in Baxter's time, and then he was intoxicated." Subsequently to this, young Richard acquired the rudiments of classical learning under a master of respectable character and attainments; but when he was fitted for the University, instead of going forward to enjoy its privileges and receive its honors, he was handed over to a private tutor, who almost entirely neglected his trust.

When Richard was about fifteen years of age, he was more thoroughly awakened to a sense of his guilt and danger than ever before; and in a short time, began to indulge a hope of reconciliation to God, "through the blood of the everlasting covenant." But owing, probably, to the want of a judicious spiritual guide, and to his comparative neglect of the scriptures for such human treatises as he could find on the nature of experimental religion, he was for some time harrassed with doubts, which weighed down his spirits, and deprived him of the rich consolations of the gospel. Many others, in more enlightened times, have suffered from the same cause. Indeed, it is common for persons, when they begin to perceive that a change of some kind has taken place in their religious views and feelings, to place too great a reliance upon human tests of piety, and to be too little conversant with that infallible standard, which alone "is able to make them wise unto salvation." We do not mean to dissuade from the use of such helps, as Edwards, and Doddridge, and Baxter, but only to say, that the Bible should be

studied more than all of them, and that too many other books are placed on the shelf, which the Scriptures ought ever to occupy. To consult the sacred oracles *last* with reference to the genuineness of our religious experience, or practically to place them on a level with any uninspired writing, is too much like 'forsaking the fountain of living waters, and hewing out broken cisterns.'

After a protracted season of sore spiritual conflicts which by the grace of God, no doubt, ministered essentially to his humiliation, and contributed to prepare him for the work to which his life was to be devoted, Baxter applied himself, with as much assiduity as the feeble state of his health would permit, to the study of divinity—not so much in a systematic form, however, as by a careful perusal of the best practical theological works which were placed within his reach. By the advice of his former tutor, he was induced to lay aside his theological books, in his eighteenth year, and go to London, with the view of trying his fortune at court, under the patronage of Sir Henry Newport. But within a month, he became so disgusted with the frivolity and irreligion by which he was surrounded, that he turned his back upon the metropolis, bade farewell to all the employments and promises which had for a moment allured him from the path of duty, of suffering "for righteousness sake," and of pre-eminent usefulness to the church. As his mind was now more than ever impressed with the importance of the Christian ministry, and as he thought himself warned by his consumptive habit, that he was near the verge of eternity, he resumed his studies with an ardor which his constitutional feebleness seemed hardly to justify, determined, if possible, "to save some," before he himself should be called to his final account. So powerful at this time were his convictions of the wretchedness and peril of sinners, and of the force of the reasons which ought to persuade them to "flee from the wrath to-come," that he thought they must be literally mad if they would not hear; and "was simple enough to imagine he had so much to say on these subjects, that they would not be able to withstand him;" forgetting the experience which had long before exclaimed, in the bitterness of disappointment, 'Old Adam is too strong for young Melancthon;' Such a forgetfulness is by no means rare, in young persons of a sanguine temperament and in the ardor of their "first love." They are apt to overlook those discouragements, which are often disheartening to ministers of more experience;—nor is this on the whole to be regretted; since their zeal and sanguine hopes of great results may stimulate them to efforts, which their seniors in age and

experience will rarely make, and which not unfrequently are crowned with great success. In this view of the subject, and after many years of careful observation, we have come to the deliberate conclusion, that many pious and worthy ministers of the gospel lose quite as much as they gain by a more intimate acquaintance with the desperate depravity of the human heart. When they were young, in the blossom of hope, and the first warm gushings of faith and holy yearning over the perishing, nothing appeared impossible—scarcely any thing discouraging; and they labored accordingly. In the maturity of life, they have been abler polemicists, perhaps better preachers, and certainly much wiser counsellors; but withal less zealous, more prone to look at the inherent difficulties which lie in the way of men's conversion, and less successful in 'winning souls to Christ.' Many bright exceptions to this remark there certainly are; but the whole history of the church shows how difficult it is, in the sacred calling, to carry along all those feelings which contribute so essentially to early success in the ministry, and incorporate them with that maturity of judgement, that accumulation of experience, and that deeper knowledge of man's fallen nature, which characterize the later periods of life.

Till 1634, Baxter was a decided, though not a bigoted conformist. His reading had been almost exclusively confined to the hierarchal side of the question. Of the Nonconformists he knew but little, except from the slanderous reports of their enemies, till just before he took orders, when he became acquainted with several of their ministers, whose fervent piety interested him exceedingly in their favor, and weakened his confidence in the existing establishment, under which they were cruelly persecuted. In 1638, Baxter was ordained by the Bishop of Worcester, and besides preaching in some destitute places, received the requisite licence to teach a free school at Dudley. It was here that he first seriously examined the subject of nonconformity, and came to the conclusion, that subscription, the sign of the cross in baptism, and giving the Lord's supper to scandalous persons, were unlawful. In other respects, he was still a conformist, although, on some points of minor importance, he was doubtful.

In about a year he removed from Dudley, having accepted an invitation to assist the incumbent at Bridgenorth, whom he describes as "a grave and severe divine, very honest and conscientious, an excellent preacher, but somewhat afflicted with want of maintenance, and more with a dead-hearted unprofitable people." Here Baxter preached to a large congre-

gation, with much fidelity and considerable success, notwithstanding the ignorance, stupidity and tippling habits of the people, when he commenced his labors among them. In his own opinion, he never preached more fervently, and never longed after his hearers more passionately in the bowels of Christ, than during his short stay at Bridgenorth. But as in matters of conscience he had the effrontery to differ from the ruling ecclesiastical powers, and would not bend to all their wishes, he found himself constrained to remove again; and in 1640, was established in a sort of lectureship at Kidderminster. To this place he became exceedingly attached, and here it was, that, after his return from the parliamentary army, of which we shall have occasion to speak directly, his ministerial and pastoral labors were crowned with wonderful success.

In going to Kidderminster, where most of the people were "ignorant, rude and loose in their manners," it seems to have been rather an encouragement to him than otherwise, that the gospel had not, at least for a long time, been faithfully preached among them. For "the state of Bridgenorth, he says, had made him resolved never to settle among a people, who had been *hardened by an awakening ministry*: but that he would go, either to those who never had enjoyed such a blessing, or to those who had profited by it." We shall not undertake to defend this somewhat remarkable resolution, because the gospel ought to be preached everywhere, and to 'every creature;' but sure we are, that any faithful minister has more reason to hope for success among the ignorant, and even the vicious, if they will but hear him, than in preaching to those who have slumbered for years under the thunders of Sinai, and have been all the while growing deafer and deafer to the voice of mercy from Calvary. We believe it is Baxter himself, who somewhere quaintly compares sinners of this latter class to 'a blacksmith's dog, that has been so long accustomed to lie under the anvil, as not to mind the hissing cinders.' We know of nothing more disheartening than to stand and prophecy, from sabbath to sabbath, over dry bones, which have already been, prophesied to for a long course of years in vain.

The state of religion throughout England, at the time of which we are speaking, was most deplorable. The dignities of the Church were worldly, tyrannical, and bitterly hostile to serious godliness, if not to the whole spirit of the Protestant Reformation. The great body of the inferior clergy were ignorant, bigoted, 'lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God,' and many of them were openly and shamefully immoral. To a great extent, the nobility and the higher class

of gentry were either papists or infidels, or were nominal protestants, the fit instruments of an arbitrary and infatuated monarch, who was goading on his subjects to desperation, and whetting for his own neck the axe of the executioner. In the lower class of the people, ignorance, irreligion, and a kind of ferocious hatred of all who made any pretensions to experimental piety, prevailed to a most alarming extent. In the middling class were found nearly all the Nonconformists, or Puritans and Precisians, as they were contemptuously called, and with them were many of the ablest and most popular preachers of the times. As the spirit of persecution waxed fiercer and fiercer, and Charles at length came to an open rupture with his parliament, multitudes of the nonconformists fled to the garrisons of the latter for protection and for bread, and many of them ultimately enlisted in defence of their country's liberties. When the civil wars had spread over the kingdom, it was greatly owing to their religious zeal, courage, activity and influence, that the armies of the Commonwealth became invincible. Though a decided friend of monarchy, and of the existing ecclesiastical establishment, Baxter was far from looking with indifference upon the arbitrary encroachments of either, and he has fully proved, that it was not the hated Puritans and Roundheads who kindled up the fires of civil discord, but their implacable enemies, who compelled them to fly for protection wherever they could find it, and in whose behalf the sympathies of all good men throughout the kingdom became warmly enlisted.

It was not because Baxter had any predilections for the camp, that he did not keep himself aloof from that tumultuous arena, on which the pending contest was soon to be decided. Gladly would he have remained at Kidderminster in the bosom of his beloved flock, and devoted himself, as he had done, to their spiritual benefit. But the partizans of the king, who were very numerous in that part of the island, exasperated by an order of parliament to deface the paintings and remove the crucifixes, made a violent assault upon his life, though he had done nothing to forward the execution of the order; and finding he could no longer enjoy either peace or safety there, he retired, first to Gloucester, and then to Coventry.

He had not been long at Coventry, when he was invited to preach to the parliamentary garrison in that town; and so acceptable were his labors, that when it was known that the governor had consented to his removal to a chaplaincy in the army, the soldiers were almost ready to mutiny; and it must have cost him a hard struggle, to tear himself away from re-

monstrances which were as little to have been expected, as they were highly honorable, to both parties.

The reasons which influenced Baxter to enter the army, are stated at length in the Memoirs before us. That he acted conscientiously, there cannot be a doubt. That he made up his mind deliberately, and availed himself of the best advice he could obtain, there is every reason to believe. That to a man of his feeble constitution, such a step must have been attended with great personal hazard, is certain. That during the two years he remained in the army, he was 'in perils oft, and in labors abundant,' no one will question who knows any thing of the matter. And that he accomplished but little, in comparison with what his zeal for the honor and purity of religion had led him to anticipate, we know from his own testimony.

The occasion of his ever listening to overtures from the camp was this. While he resided at Coventry, and just after the battle of Naseby, he went down to visit two or three intimate friends, who were in Cromwell's army; and though he seems to have tarried but a night, he was greatly disquieted with what he saw and heard. Till then he had supposed that the object of the war was, to preserve the existing order of things, both in church and state; but now he became convinced, that a decisive blow was meditated against both. Many of the officers and soldiers, he believed, were sober and religious men; but there were also among them hot-headed and conceited fanatics, who were extremely active, and who he feared would gain a paramount influence in the army, if they were not immediately checked.

Cromwell and his officers had sometime before proposed to form "that famous troop with which he began the war" into a church, and had invited Baxter to become their pastor; and he now deeply regretted having declined the invitation, as it would have placed him in the very centre of motion, and might have enabled him to exert a salutary christian influence over some of the most prominent actors in the scenes which followed. And though that golden opportunity had been lost, he was still in hopes that something might be done to check the sectaries and fanatics of the army, who he thought were fast "leavening the whole lump;" and to save the nation from that great revolutionary shock, with which he plainly saw it was threatened. And never, we believe, did any chaplain labor more faithfully to instruct the ignorant, and confirm the wavering, or to counteract the doctrines and cabals of levelers and schismatics. In these efforts, Baxter's pre-eminent

skill and power in all the subtleties of polemic disputation gave him a decided advantage over every one who ventured to meet him in the field of argument. But Cromwell was now jealous of him in all his movements, and he found it much easier to confute his opponents, than to silence them. Such labors and discouragements were more than his shattered constitution could sustain. "His bodily health, always feeble and broken, at length sunk under the pressure of his circumstances, and he was compelled reluctantly to retire from the stormy atmosphere of a camp, to the calmer region of a pastoral cure."

After he left the army, he slowly recovered from his exhaustion; and as soon as he was able to preach, we find him once more drawn to Kidderminster, by an attraction which proved to be the earnest of unparalleled success. The fourteen years which he now spent in cultivating that long neglected and rugged field, and in reaping its abundant harvest, constitute by far the most useful and happy period of his life. It is here, in the simple garb of a parish minister and in the systematic routine of unobtrusive pastoral labors, that Baxter appears to the highest advantage. For it is here that we behold the pungent and searching preacher—the indefatigable and truly "Reformed Pastor"—the burning and shining light of the church—the friend of the poor—the counsellor of the aged—the father and guide of the young. Give us, O God, such honors, such blessedness, such "seals"—and let the Cæsars and Napoleons take the purple, and the marble, and all the incense which the world is pleased to offer.

[To be Continued.]

THE NEW DIVINITY TRIED. *Being an Examination of a Sermon delivered by the Rev. C. G. Finney, on Making a New Heart. First published in the Volunteer.* BY ASA RAND. Boston: Light & Harris. 1832. pp. 16.

REVIEW OF "THE NEW DIVINITY TRIED." *Or an Examination of Rev. Mr. Rand's Strictures on a Sermon delivered by Rev. C. G. Finney, on Making a New Heart.* Boston: Peirce & Parker. 1832. pp. 44.

The history of the controversy contained in these pamphlets may be given in few words. In the autumn of the last year, the Rev. Charles G. Finney, a Presbyterian clergyman, who

had obtained much celebrity, and whose labors had been signally blessed in some of the Middle States, was earnestly invited to come and spend the winter in Boston. He came, and commenced preaching, on the Sabbath and in the week. On a Sabbath evening in October or November he delivered an extemporaneous discourse, from Ezek. xviii. 31, on making a new heart. The Rev. Mr. Rand, editor of the Volunteer, was present and took notes; and, without the knowledge or consent of the preacher, occupied a considerable part of his next number in giving an Abstract of the Sermon, and in Strictures. By the help of a correspondent, the Abstract was corrected in the succeeding number, and the Strictures were somewhat qualified; and the whole was then published in a pamphlet, under the title of "The New Divinity Tried," &c. The Review before us is an examination of that pamphlet. The object of the Reviewer is, not to appear as the advocate of Mr. Finney, but to remark upon the course pursued by Mr. Rand; expose the misrepresentations into which he seems unhappily to have fallen; and to disabuse the public mind in regard to the general subject.

The Reviewer commences by censuring the course pursued by Mr. Rand in procuring the materials for his pamphlet. The sermon of Mr. Finney was originally his *own property*; and as such at his own disposal. He had a right to do with it as he pleased. In the exercise of this right, and in the regular discharge of his ministerial labors, he chose to *preach it*; but this was not publishing it from the press, nor did it give any other person the right to publish it, or any part of it, from the press, *without his consent*. There are, indeed, certain occasional discourses and set speeches which are so commonly noticed from the press, that the fact of a person's appearing on one of these occasions implies his consent to be the subject remark. But this is not the case, in our country,* with sermons delivered in the ordinary course of ministerial labor, and we hope never may be; as we are sure it must have a very unfavorable effect on the feelings of ministers, and on the style of their preaching, to oblige them ordinarily to go into the pulpit, with the expectation that *abstracts* of their sermons are to be written and printed, and made the subject of public censure. Mr. F. had no reason to expect that such a course would be taken with him,

* We know that preachers, in the ordinary course of their labors, have sometimes been subjected to public criticism in England; and we also know, that this mode of treatment has been frowned upon by some of the best and ablest writers of that country. As an instance, we may refer the reader to a volume entitled, "The Pulpit," published in London in 1809, and to the merited reproof and castigation of its author in the Eclectic Review for the same year, p. 863.

and the fact of his *preaching* the sermon in question implied *no consent* on his part that it should be taken. Hence, the Abstract of his sermon (which was *bona fide* his own property) was taken and published *without his consent*; and the publication was properly *surreptitious*.*

The extreme difficulty—we had almost said *impossibility*—of correctly exhibiting a sermon in this way, would be likely to deter a considerate and fair-minded hearer from attempting it—especially with the view of subjecting his notes to public criticism and censure. We have no doubt that Mr. R. *intended* to give an accurate representation of the sermon of Mr. F.,—and that he succeeded better than most men would have done in like circumstances. Still it was found—when his Abstract had been circulating, exciting attention and making impressions, for a full month—that it *needed correction* in important particulars. And after all, it was but an abstract; and none of our readers (our clerical readers especially,) need be informed, how little can be known as to the character of a sermon from such a skeleton.

But Mr. R. pleads that a *necessity* was laid upon him,—“that sentiments, which we deem *subversive of the Gospel in their results*, are frequently *preached* before this community, which have not been *printed*; and feeling necessity laid upon us to examine them, and vindicate the truth, we took the only method which was left us.” Volunteer, p. 188. Now *we* are editors as well as Mr. Rand, and are liable to feel the necessity of which he speaks, as strongly as he; but we can truly say that we have found no such necessity. The *SUBJECT* of a sermon is always public property, although the *sermon itself* (without the consent of the author) is not; and erroneous views of doctrine may, in any case, be exposed and refuted, without taking improper liberties.—But on this part of the subject, it is not our intention to enlarge.

The Reviewer, under his second and third heads, charges Mr. R. with “a *want of distinctness and accuracy* in respect to the meaning and use of theological terms;” and, as a necessary consequence, with “various *misrepresentations* of Mr. F.’s views of religious truth.” In other words, because Mr. F. does not state certain doctrines in precisely the terms to which Mr. R. has been accustomed, or does not explain them in the same way, he is represented as denying them. For instance, Mr. R. represents Mr. F. as “totally disregarding the doctrine

* We use this word, because it is the proper word to be used in the case; and not as implying any *criminal intention*—any thing more than an oversight, a mistake in judgment, on the part of Mr. Rand.

of *original sin*," because he does not, by this phrase, understand the same as "transmitted pollution;" whereas the Reviewer shows, "there are at least *seven* other senses in which that phrase has been used among orthodox churches and writers," in some one of which Mr. F. as really believes the doctrine of "original sin," as Mr. R. does in his sense. The notion of "*transmitted pollution*" has not been held by the majority of New England ministers, for the last fifty years. It never was held, and never can be, by that numerous and respectable class of theologians, who believe that all sin is a *voluntary* transgression of the law of God.

Again; because Mr. F. discards the notion of a *sinful bias* or *taste*, distinct from sinful exercises of the will and prior to them, Mr. R. represents him as having "made off with the doctrine of *entire depravity*," whereas Mr. F. believes this fundamental doctrine as really as Mr. R., and urges it in his preaching with as much frequency, explicitness and power. A vast majority of the Orthodox clergy of New England might be represented, on this ground, as denying "the doctrine of *entire depravity*," with the same propriety as Mr. F.; for they agree with him in discarding the notion of a *sinful bias* or *taste*, as distinct from and prior to sinful exercises of the will.

And to particularize but once more, (for we cannot follow the Reviewer through all the mazes of this intricate subject,) because Mr. F. does not explain the mode of the Spirit's operation in conversion in the same manner as Mr. R., the latter represents him as virtually denying the necessity and agency of the Holy Spirit in this change. "It (conversion) is made to rest on the will of man, and *not* on the promise and upholding grace of God, *not* on the intercession of Christ that his faith fail not, or on *that Spirit* which is to be in him a well of water, springing up into everlasting life." Now all the hearers of Mr. F. know (what is evident, from the Abstract which Mr. R. has published) that he is a sincere believer in the necessity and reality of the special operations of the Holy Spirit in conversion, and professes to rest on this important doctrine all his hopes of success.

It is exceedingly to be regretted that Mr. R. should mistake and misrepresent the religious sentiments of Mr. F., as he has done in these and other particulars. We do not believe he has done it intentionally; but the effect will be (so far as his publications have influence) to render Mr. F. an object of suspicion; to weaken his hands in the great and arduous work to which

* It will be understood that we here speak of *moral* pollution.

his life is devoted; to divide and distract the Orthodox community; and to agitate the public mind, we fear to no good purpose.*

The Reviewer, under his fourth head, exposes several "instances of inconsistency, and some of direct or implied contradiction," in the Strictures of Mr. R.;—and proceeds, in the fifth place, "to examine the allegation of *novelty*," preferred against Mr. F., and by implication against others.—An important distinction is here made between the *doctrines* of religion, and the *philosophy* of these doctrines; or between the simple facts of Christianity, and the mode of stating and illustrating these facts. The same distinction is made by President Day, in his Sermon reviewed in our number for January; and in an article on Orthodoxy in the same number. It seems to be recognized by Mr. R. in his Strictures;† and he professes to accord (with how much consistency we pretend not to say) with most, if not all, the *doctrines* in the sermon of Mr. F. The charge of novelty then lies against the *philosophy* of these doctrines, or against Mr. F.'s mode of stating and explaining them. Thus, it is represented as one of his *novelties*, that "moral character is to be ascribed to *voluntary exercises alone*." But this sentiment, whether true or false, is certainly no novelty. It was maintained by Edwards, Bellamy, Hopkins, Witherspoon, West of Stockbridge, Spring, Fuller, Dwight, &c. and is still maintained by Emmons, Griffin, Woods, Wines, and by a great majority of the Orthodox clergy of New England.

Most of the other novelties charged upon Mr. F. disappear upon a right explanation of terms. Indeed, there are but two things in the Abstract of his sermon, which would strike a well informed clergyman of New England in the light of novelties. The first is, the *infrequent recognition* of the necessity of the operations of the Holy Spirit in conversion; and the other, his explanation of the *manner* in which the Spirit operates. In regard to the first of these it should be observed, that it is probably a maxim with Mr. F., as it is known to be with some other of our most effective ministers, to preach, in

* In the Volunteer for February, it is insinuated that Mr. F. and those who agree with him, hold that sinners "can repent now, by an *easy self-direction of the carnal mind*,"—of course, that repentance does not imply any *radical change* of the carnal mind. p. 22½. We regret that our brother editor should suffer himself to throw out such insinuations, without acquainting himself with facts. We feel assured that they are groundless. We have just as much reason to believe that Mr. F. holds and teaches the necessity of a *radical change* of the carnal mind, and that such a change is implied in true repentance, as that these views are maintained by the editor of the Volunteer.

† He distinguishes expressly between the "*philosophical views*" exhibited in the Abstract, and the "*theological views*."

general, *but one thing at a time*;—that is, if they are to preach on the necessity of Divine influences, they will preach that, so far as practicable, *by itself*; or if they are to preach on the obligation of sinners to repent, they will preach that, so far as practicable, *by itself*. This mode of preaching, pursued with suitable cautions and qualifications, we have no doubt is the proper one. Ministers are under no obligations to declare the *whole* council of God every time they undertake to preach. Although the truths of the Gospel are mutually consistent, and each is important in its place, it would not be difficult so to commingle them in a sermon, and so to set them over one against another, as to make them, in their influence on common minds, effectually *counteract* one another; and this, we have no doubt, is often done. And yet the opposite mode of preaching, to persons not acquainted with it and with the reasons of it, may leave the impression that the preacher omits, perhaps rejects, important connected truths.

Mr. F. (if correctly represented in the Abstract) teaches that the Spirit operates only by motives; and that the speciality of his operations in conversion consists in his giving unwonted power and efficacy to motives. "He presents motives by means of the truth; he *persuades*, and the sinner yields to his persuasion."* This view of the subject can hardly be called a *novelty*, as it is said by Ridgley (*Body of Divinity*, vol. iii. p. 46) to have been "maintained by many divines of great worth," as Charnock, Cole, and others, "who have in all other respects explained the doctrine of regeneration agreeably to the mind and will of God, and the analogy of faith." It is also known to be maintained by some excellent ministers at the present day. It cannot be denied, however, that this account of the manner in which the Holy Spirit operates in conversion is *not* in accordance with the more common representation of the subject by the standard divines of New England. The received doctrine here has been, (it is that adopted by the Reviewer, and we have no doubt of its correctness,) that, in addition to motives, there is in conversion a *special and direct influence of the Spirit upon the mind*. This influence, though real, is not perceptible, except in its effects. It is so exerted as not at all to interfere with the regular operation of the laws of mind, or with the free agency of the subject, and leaves him room for no inference but this, that his will is too obstinate, and his love of sin too strong, to be subdued by any thing but Almighty grace.

* This, it will be seen, is not conversion by moral suasion unaided, or aided only by the ordinary assistance of the Spirit, in the sense of the Arminians, but conversion by the special influences of the Spirit, making the truth effectual.

On the subject of *novelties* in religion, we deem it necessary to offer a few remarks. What may in strictness be denominated the *doctrines* of Christianity are so clearly revealed in the Bible, are so connected one with another, and have so long been the subjects of discussion and of faith, that they are not likely now to be *directly* or materially affected by novelties. We have no expectation of seeing any of the great doctrines of the evangelical system satisfactorily refuted and discarded, or of seeing new doctrines brought forward with valid claims to be received into their number. But in regard to the different modes of *illustrating* and *applying* the doctrines of the Bible, it would be hazardous to affirm that no further improvements can be made. It is far from being improbable, as the Millennium approaches, and light increases, and the Gospel becomes more a topic of research and interest, that its doctrines may be better stated and explained than they have ever yet been; that seeming difficulties attending them may be more fully elucidated; that objections may be more solidly refuted; that the current theology may become (*habilius ensis*) a more fit and effective instrument, and better adapted than before for the mighty work which it is destined to accomplish. While, therefore, new explanations should in no case be received without deliberative and prayerful caution, it should not be held a sufficient reason for denouncing a particular mode of statement, that *it is new*. Let it be carefully examined, first by the Bible,—and then in its relation to connected truths, and in its practical influence; and if it passes the ordeal, let it be thankfully received. If not, let it be set aside, with as little disturbance to the church as possible.

The Reviewer concludes by stating "briefly what are the *real differences* between the theological views of Mr. F., as presented in the Abstract, and of the editor of the Volunteer, as presented in his *Strictures*. In *doctrine*," he says, "there is no disagreement. And in *philosophy*, there are only the three following differences,"—which may be stated in his own words:

"1. Mr. F. holds that 'a moral character is to be ascribed to voluntary exercises alone;' and in this agrees with Augustine, Calvin, President Edwards, Dr. Hopkins, Dr. Woods, and the great majority of Orthodox divines in New England from Edwards to the present time. The editor of the Volunteer holds that a moral character is to be ascribed, in part at least, to something else besides voluntary exercises; and in this differs from Augustine, Calvin, President Edwards, Dr. Hopkins, Dr. Woods, and the great majority of Orthodox divines in New England from Edwards to the present time.

"2. Mr. F. holds that the Spirit in converting men does not move them 'by a direct and immediate act,' but 'presents motives by means of the truth,' and so 'persuades' them, and they yield to his persuasion. The editor of the Volunteer thinks that the method of the Spirit's operation in converting and sanctifying men is not and cannot certainly be known; and if he must adopt a theory, would incline to the opinion that it is by an immediate influence on the mind, exciting, in a way perfectly consistent with its agency and accountability, its susceptibilities to the truth. Of these views we have expressed our preference for that of the editor.

"3. The only remaining point of difference is, the very important one, in regard to a holy or sinful taste, bias, or affection, distinct from the will and prior to its exercises, and 'controlling' volitions. The editor believes there is, and must be, such a thing in every moral being. Mr. F. wholly denies and discards such an opinion."

Or to make the matter still more short, Mr. R. is a believer in what used to be called "the *Taste Scheme*," and Mr. F. (with a slight difference of phraseology,* and with some peculiarities of explanation in regard to the mode in which the Spirit operates in regeneration) is a believer in "the *Exercise Scheme*." Mr. R. believes that there is something sinful in the natural man—something needing to be changed, and which is changed in regeneration—*prior* to voluntary exercises and affections, and controlling them; while Mr. F. believes that there is nothing sinful in the natural man—nothing needing to be changed, or which is changed in regeneration, *except* the voluntary exercises and affections.

These differences of explanation, which occasioned not a little discussion some fifteen or twenty years ago, have long ceased to agitate the public mind; and we regret that the controversy should be revived. Especially do we regret that it should be revived, in the manner and under the circumstances which have been described. In this controversy, the parties on both sides are decided believers of the Orthodox faith—in the strict technical sense of the term *equally* Orthodox; as they agree in maintaining the great and essential doctrines of the gospel, and differ only in their modes of stating and explaining some of these doctrines. They have been accustomed to regard each other as brethren, and have harmoniously co-operated in works of faith and labors of love; and manifestly they *ought* thus to co-operate. They may with pro-

* What Mr. F. calls "the governing purpose" which is changed in regeneration, Dr. Samuel Spring calls "the primary affection," in distinction from those which are *subordinate*; and Mr. Wines calls the same an "immanent affection," in distinction from those which are *imperate* or *executive*. Others have called this "governing purpose" the "prevailing inclination," or the controlling and habitual preference" of the soul. It is held to be the *deepest*, *nethermost*, of any of the voluntary affections.

priety discuss their differences; but this should be done with a *fraternal* spirit—not holding up one another as objects of suspicion and ‘subverters of the gospel’—but while endeavoring to convince, endeavoring also to *encourage* one another in every good word and work.

In regard to the differences here spoken of, we have no hesitation in expressing our predilection for what has been called “the Exercise Scheme.” We have thought this the most *Scriptural* view of the case, the most easily and satisfactorily explained, and that which gives to ministers the greatest freedom and power in pressing home the obligations of the gospel. If something needs to be changed, and must be changed in regeneration, distinct from voluntary affections, prior to them, and controlling them, we have never been able to see the propriety of exhorting sinners to repent and be converted. Nor on this ground can we see how it is, that God *commands* sinners immediately to repent, and threatens them with all the terrors of his wrath, if they do not obey. Still our brethren who adopt “the Taste Scheme” philosophy profess to feel none of these difficulties. Many of them, we are assured, preach the gospel with great plainness, earnestness and power,—and we bid them God speed. Instead of throwing one obstruction in the path of their usefulness, we would help them onward by all means in our power. On our part, we need, and we solicit, a reciprocation of sympathy and fellowship; and we devoutly pray that, instead of being broken into parties, and ‘biting and devouring one another,’ we may continue *united* for the defence and propagation of the GOSPEL.

MISCELLANEOUS.

DR. CHALMERS ON PREDESTINATION.

The following passages are from a Sermon of Chalmers, on the declaration in Acts xviii, 31, ‘Except these abide in the ship ye cannot be saved.’ We recommend them to the attention of our readers.

“You have all heard of the doctrine of predestination. It has long been a settled article of our church. And there must be a sad deal of evasion and of unfair handling with particular passages, to get free of the evidence which we find for it in the Bible. And independently of Scripture altogether, the denial of this doctrine brings a

number of monstrous conceptions along with it. It supposes God to make a world, and not to reserve in his own hand the management of its concerns. Or though it should concede to him an absolute sovereignty over all matter, it deposes him from his sovereignty over the region of created minds, that far more dignified and interesting portion of his works. The greatest events of the history of the universe, are those which are brought about by the agency of willing and intelligent beings; and the enemies of the doctrine invest every one of these beings with some sovereign and independent principle of freedom, in virtue of which it may be asserted of this whole class of events, that they happened, not because they were ordained of God, but because the creatures of God, by their own uncontrolled power, brought them into existence. At this rate, even he to whom we give the attribute of omniscience, is not able to say at this moment what shall be the fortune or the fate of any individual—and the whole train of future history is left to the wildness of accident. All this carries along with it so complete a dethronement of God—it is bringing his creation under the dominion of so many nameless and undeterminable contingencies—it is taking the world and the current of its history so entirely out of the hands of him who formed it—it is withal so opposite to what obtains in every other field of observation, where, instead of the lawlessness of chance, we shall find that the more we attend, the more we perceive of a certain necessary and established order—that from these and other considerations which might be stated, the doctrine in question, in addition to the testimonies which we find for it in the Bible, is at this moment receiving a very general support from the speculations of infidel as well as Christian philosophers.

“We are ready enough to concede to the Supreme Being the administration of the material world, and to put into his hand all the force of its mighty elements. But let us carry the commanding influence of Deity into the higher world of moral and intelligent beings. Let us not erect the will of the creature into an independent principle. Let us not conceive that the agency of man can bring about one single iota of deviation from the plans and the purposes of God; or that he can be thwarted and compelled to vary in a single case by the movement of any of those subordinate beings whom he himself has created. There may be a diversity of operations, but it is God who worketh all in all.

“The will of man, active and spontaneous and fluctuating as it appears to be, is an instrument in his hand—and he turns it at his pleasure—and he brings other instruments to act upon it—and he plies it with all its excitements—and he measures the force and proportion of each of them—and every step of every individual receives as determinate a character from the hand of God, as every mile of a planet's orbit, or every gust of wind, or every wave of the sea, or every particle of flying dust, or every rivulet or flowing water. This power of God knows no exceptions. It is absolute and unlimited; and while it embraces the vast, it carries its resistless influence to all the minute and unnoticed diversities of existence. It wields an entire ascendancy over every attribute of the mind; and the will, and the fancy, and the understanding, with all the countless variety of their hidden and fugitive operations, are submitted to it. It gives movement and direction through every one point in the line of our pilgrimage. At no one moment of time does it

abandon us. It follows us to the hour of death, and it carries us to our place and our everlasting destiny in the region beyond it. It is true, that no one gets to heaven, but he, who by holiness, is meet for it. But the same power which carries us there, works in us the meetness. And if we are conformed to the image of the Saviour, it is by the energy of the same predestinating God whose good pleasure it is to give unto us the kingdom prepared for us before the foundation of the world.

"Thus it is that some are elected to everlasting life. This is an obvious doctrine of Scripture. The Bible brings it forward, and it is not for us, the interpreters of the Bible, to keep it back from you. God could, if it pleased him, read out, at this moment, the names of those in this congregation, who are ordained to eternal life, and are written in his book.

"But the same God who ordains the end, ordains also the means which go before it. Now the ordination of the end, God has not been pleased to reveal to us. He has not told us who among you are to be saved, as he told Paul of the deliverance of his ship's company. This is one of the secret things which belong to him, and we dare not meddle with it. But he has told us about the ordained means, and we know, through the medium of the Bible, that unless you do such and such things you shall not be saved. This is one of the revealed things which belong to us, and with as great truth and practical urgency as Paul made use of, when he said to the centurion and soldiers, that unless these men abide in the ship ye shall not be saved, do we say to one and to all of you, unless ye repent ye shall not be saved—unless ye do works meet for repentance, ye shall not be saved—unless ye believe the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, ye shall not be saved—unless the deeds done in your body be good deeds, and ye bring forth those fruits of righteousness which are by Jesus Christ to the praise and glory of God, ye shall not be saved.

"Mark the difference between the situation of Paul urging upon the people of the ship the immediate adoption of the only way by which their lives could be saved, and the situation of an ordinary minister urging it upon the people of his church, to take to that way of faith and repentance, by which alone they can save their souls from the wrath that is now abiding on them. Paul did know that the people were certainly to escape with their lives, but that did not prevent him from pressing upon them the measures which they ought to adopt for their preservation. Even, then, though a minister did know those of his people whose names are written in the book of life, that ought not to hinder him from pressing it upon them, to lay hold of eternal life—to lay up their treasure in heaven—to labor for the meat that endureth—to follow after that holiness without which no man can see the Lord.

"But we are not in possession of this secret—and how much more then does it lie upon us to ply with earnestness the fears and the consciences of our hearers, by those revealed things which God hath been pleased to make known to us? What! if Paul, though assured by an angel from heaven of the final deliverance of this ship's company, still persists in telling them, that if they leave certain things undone, their deliverance will be impossible—shall we, utterly in the dark about the final state of a single hearer we are addressing, let down for a single instant the practical urgency of the New Tes-

tament? The predestination of God respecting the final escape of Paul and his fellow-travellers from shipwreck, though made known to the Apostle, did not betray him into the indolence which is ascribed, and falsely ascribed, to the belief of this doctrine; nor did it restrain him from spiriting on the people to the most strenuous and fatiguing exertions. And shall we, who only know in general that God does predestinate, but cannot carry it home with assurance to a single individual, convert this doctrine into a plea of indolence and security?"

DEATH-BED OF HUME.

In the London Christian Observer for November, we find the following letter addressed to the editor.

I inclose a passage relative to the death-bed of Hume, the historian, which appeared many years ago in an Edinburgh newspaper, and which I am not aware was ever contradicted. Adam Smith's well known narrative of Hume's last hours has been often cited, to prove how calmly a philosophical infidel can die; but if the inclosed account be correct, very different was the picture. I copy it as I find it, thinking it possible that some of your numerous readers may be able to cast some light upon the subject. If the facts alledged in the following statement are not authentic, they ought to be disproved before tradition is too remote; if authentic, they are of considerable importance on account of the irreligious use which has been made of the popular narrative; just as was the case in regard to the death-bed of Voltaire, which to this hour, in spite of well-proved facts, infidel writers maintain was calm and philosophical. The following is the story:

"About the end of 1776, a few months after the historian's death, a respectable looking woman dressed in black came into the Haddington stage coach while passing through Edinburgh.

"The conversation among the passengers, which had been interrupted for a few minutes, was speedily resumed, which the lady soon found to be regarding the state of mind persons were in at the prospect of death. One gentleman argued that a real Christian was more likely to view the approach of death with composure, than he who had looked upon religion as unworthy his notice. Another (an English gentleman) insisted that an infidel could look forward to his end with as much complacency and peace of mind as the best Christian in the land. This being denied by his opponent, he bade him consider the death of his countrymen David Hume, who was an acknowledged infidel, and yet died not only happy and tranquil, but even spoke of his dissolution with a degree of gaiety and humor. The lady who had lately joined them, turned round to the last speaker and said, 'Sir, this is all you know about it: I could tell you another tale.' 'Madam,' replied the gentleman, 'I presume I have as good information as you can have on this subject, and I believe that what I have asserted regarding Mr. Hume has never before been called in question.' The lady continued; 'Sir, I was Mr. Hume's house-

keeper for many years, and was with him in his last moments; and the mourning I now wear was a present from his relatives for my attention to him on his death-bed; and happy would I have been if I could have borne my testimony to the mistaken opinion that has gone abroad of his peaceful and composed end. I have, sir, never till this hour opened my mouth on this subject; but I think it a pity the world should be kept in the dark on so interesting a topic. It is true, sir, that when Mr. Hume's friends were with him, he was cheerful, and seemed quite unconcerned about his approaching fate; nay, frequently spoke of it to them in a jocular and playful way; but when he was alone the scene was very different: he was anything but composed; his mental agitation was so great at times as to occasion his whole bed to shake. He would not allow the candles to be put out during the night, nor would he be left alone for a minute. I had always to ring the bell for one of the servants to be in the room, before he would allow me to leave it. He struggled hard to appear composed even before me; but to one who attended his bed-side for so many days and nights, and witnessed his disturbed sleeps and still more disturbed wakings; who frequently heard his involuntary breathings of remorse and frightful startings; it was no difficult matter to determine that all was not right within. This continued and increased until he became insensible. I hope in God! I shall never witness a similar scene."

I leave your readers to weigh the probability of this narrative; for myself, I see nothing unlikely in it; for a man who had exerted all his talents to deprive mankind of their dearest hopes, and only consolation in the day of trial and the hour of death, might well be expected to suffer remorse in his dying hour: and the alleged narrator of the circumstance, who states herself to have been his housekeeper, is affirmed to have made the declaration on the spur of the occasion, from regard to truth, and by no means from only pique or dislike towards Mr. Hume or his family. Some of your northern readers may perhaps be able to inform me who was Mr. Hume's housekeeper at the time of his death, and whether there is any proof in writing, memory, or tradition, to the effect of her alleged statement.

LETTER FROM REV. DR. TAYLOR.

Not a few of our readers are aware that the Rev. Dr. Taylor, Professor of Didactic Theology at New-Haven, has been suspected of a departure, on some points, from the Orthodox faith; and that "much alarm has been expressed lest, as a teacher of theology, he should introduce heresy into our churches." The existence of such suspicions and alarms induced the Rev. Dr. Hawes of Hartford to address to him a Letter, requesting him to "make a frank and full statement of his religious views." The following is the Reply of Dr. Taylor to this Letter,—taken from the Connecticut Observer of Feb. 20th. It will be examined with interest by our readers generally, whether

they accord with the writer in all his explanations, or not; and those who love the peace and welfare of Zion, will endeavor to judge of it with *fairness* and *candor*.

Yale College, Feb. 1, 1832.

DEAR BROTHER—

I thank you for yours of the 23d ult. in which you express your approbation of my preaching during the protracted meetings at Hartford. This expression of fraternal confidence is grateful to me, not because I ever supposed that we differed in our views of the great doctrines of the Gospel, but because for some reason or other an impression has been made, to some extent, *that I am unsound in the faith*. This impression I feel bound to say in my own view is wholly groundless and unauthorized. You think, however, that "I owe it to myself, to the Institution with which I am connected, and to the Christian community, to make a frank and full statement of my views of some of the leading doctrines of the Gospel, and that this cannot fail to relieve the minds of many, who are now suspicious of my orthodoxy."

Here I must be permitted to say, that the repeated and full statements of my opinions, which I have already made to the public, would seem to be sufficient to prevent or remove such suspicions. The course you propose, however, may furnish information to some who would desire it before they form an opinion, as well as the means of correcting the misrepresentations of others. I therefore readily comply with your request, and submit to your disposal the following statement of my belief on some of the leading doctrines of the Gospel. I believe,

1. That there are three persons in one God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.
2. That the eternal purposes of God extend to all actual events, sin not excepted; or, that God foreordains whatsoever comes to pass, and so executes these purposes as to leave the free moral agency of man unimpaired.
3. That all mankind, in consequence of the fall of Adam, are born destitute of holiness, and are by nature totally depraved; in other words, that all men, from the commencement of moral agency do, without the interposition of divine grace, sin, and only sin, in all their moral conduct.
4. That an atonement for sin has been made for all mankind by the Lord Jesus Christ; that this atonement was necessary to magnify the law, and to vindicate and unfold the justice of God in the pardon of sin; and that the sinner who believes in the Lord Jesus Christ is freely justified on the ground of his atoning sacrifice, and on that ground alone.
5. That the change in Regeneration is a *moral* change, consisting in a new holy disposition, or governing purpose of the heart as a permanent principle of action; in which change the sinner transfers the *supreme* affection of his heart from all inferior objects to the living God, chooses Him as the portion of his soul, and His service and glory as his supreme good, and thus, in respect to moral character, becomes a *new man*.
6. That this moral change is never produced in the human heart by *moral suasion*, i. e. by the mere influence of truth and motives, as the Pelagians affirm, but is produced by the influence of the Holy

Spirit, operating on the mind through the truth, and in perfect consistency with the nature of moral action and laws of moral agency.

7. That all men, (in the words of the article of your church) may accept of the offers of salvation freely made to them in the Gospel, but that no one will do this, except he be drawn by the Father.

8. That the necessity of the influence of the Holy Spirit in regeneration results solely from the voluntary perverseness of the sinner's heart, or disinclination to serve God, which, while it leaves him a complete moral agent and without excuse for neglecting his duty, suspends his actual salvation on the sovereign will of God.

9. That the renewing grace of God is *special*, in distinction from that which is common, and is resisted by the sinful mind, inasmuch as it is that which is designed to secure and does infallibly secure the conversion of the sinner.

10. That all who are renewed by the Holy Spirit are elected or chosen of God from eternity, that they should be holy, not on account of foreseen faith or good works, but according to the good pleasure of his will.

11. That all who are renewed by the Holy Spirit, will, through his continued influence, persevere in holiness to the end, and obtain eternal life.

Such is my Faith in respect to some of the leading doctrines of the Gospel. These doctrines I preach: these, I teach in the Theological department of this Seminary; these, I have repeatedly published to the world. With what truth or justice any regard me as a "Teacher of Theology introducing heresy into our churches," the candid can judge.

But it may be asked, whether, after all, there are not some points, on which I differ from my brethren generally, or at least from some of them? I answer,—it would be strange, if any two men should be found to agree exactly, in all the minute matters of religious opinion.—With respect, however, to what is properly considered the Orthodox or Calvinistic SYSTEM of doctrines, as including the great FACTS of Christianity, and as opposed to and distinguished from the Unitarian, Pelagian, and Arminian *systems*, I suppose there is between the Orthodox ministry and myself an entire agreement. In respect to comparatively minor points, and philosophical theories, and modes of defending the Calvinistic system of doctrines, there has always been, as you are aware, a diversity of opinion with freedom of discussion among the Calvinists in this country, especially in New-England; but which has never impaired their fellowship or mutual confidence. To these topics of difference, greater or less importance has been attached by different individuals. In respect to some of these, (and in respect to them, I suppose myself to agree with a large majority of our Calvinistic clergy,) I will now briefly but frankly state what I do *not*, and what I do believe.

I do *not* believe that the posterity of Adam are, in the proper sense of the language, guilty of his sin; or that the ill desert of that sin is truly theirs; or that they are punished for that sin. But I do believe, that by the wise and holy constitution of God, all mankind, in consequence of Adam's sin, become sinners by their own act.

I do *not* believe, that the nature of the human mind, which God

creates, is itself sinful; or that God punishes men for the nature which He creates; or that sin pertains to any thing in the mind which precedes all conscious mental exercise or action, and which is neither a matter of consciousness nor of knowledge. But I do believe that sin universally is no other than selfishness, or a *preference* of one's self to all others,—of some inferior good to God; that this free voluntary preference is a permanent principle of action in all the unconverted; and that this is sin, and all that in the Scriptures is meant by sin. I also believe, that such is the *nature* of the human mind, that it becomes the occasion of universal sin in men in all the appropriate circumstances of their existence; and that therefore they are truly and properly said to be sinners *by nature*.

I do *not* believe, that sin can be proved to be the necessary means of the greatest good, and that as such God prefers it on the whole to holiness in its stead; or that a God of sincerity and truth punishes his creatures for doing that which he on the whole prefers they should do, and which, as the means of good, is the best thing they can do. But I do believe, that holiness as the means of good, may be better than sin; that it may be true, that God, all things considered, prefers holiness to sin in all instances in which the latter takes place, and therefore sincerely desires that all men should come to repentance, though for wise and good reasons he *permits*, or does not prevent, the existence of sin. I do *not* believe that it can be proved, that an omnipotent God would be *unable* to secure more good by means of the perfect and universal obedience of his creatures, if they would render it, than by means of their sin. But I do believe that it may involve a dishonorable limitation of his power to suppose that he could not do it.*

I do *not* believe that the grace of God can be truly said to be *irresistible*, in the primary proper import of this term.—But I do believe, that in all cases it *may* be resisted by man as a free moral agent; and that when it becomes effectual to conversion, as it infallibly does in the case of all the elect, it is *unresisted*.

I do *not* believe, that the grace of God is necessary, as Arminians and some others maintain, to render man an accountable agent, and responsible for rejecting the offers of eternal life. But I do believe, that man would be such an agent and thus responsible, were no such grace afforded, and that otherwise "grace would be no more grace."

I do *not* believe, that it is necessary, that the sinner, in using the means of regeneration, should commit sin in order to become holy. But I do believe, that as a moral agent he is qualified so to use these means, i. e. the truth of God when present to his mind, as to become holy at once; that he is authorised to believe, that through the grace of the Holy Spirit, this *may* be done; and that except in so doing, he cannot be truly and properly said to *use* the means of regeneration.

* The question is not whether God, all things considered, has purposed the existence of sin rather than to prevent it; but for what *reason* has he purposed it? Some affirm this reason to be that sin is the necessary means of the greatest good. Now what I claim and all that I claim is, that no one can prove this to be the reason why God has purposed the existence of sin, and that some other may be the true reason, without affirming what the true reason is.

I do *not* believe, that we are authorised to assure the sinner, as Arminians do, and some others also, that the Holy Spirit *is* always ready to convert him. But I do believe that we are authorised to assure any sinner, that it *may be true*, that the Holy Spirit is now ready to convert him,—“that God PERADVENTURE will now give him repentance,” and that thus, in view of the possible intervention of divine influence, we remove what would otherwise be a ground of fatal discouragement to the sinner, when we exhort him to immediate repentance.

I have dwelt the more on some of these particulars, because much pains has been taken by some individuals to make the impression, that I have departed from the true faith respecting the influences of the Holy Spirit, even denying his influences altogether. So far is this from the fact, that as you well know, no one attaches higher importance to this doctrine than I do; preaches it more decisively, or appreciates more highly its practical relations and bearings. In my own view, the power of the Gospel on the mind of the sinner very much consists in the two great facts of his complete moral agency as the basis of his obligation, of his guilt and of his duty;—and of his dependence on the sovereign grace of God, resulting from his voluntary perverseness in sin. Without the latter, we could, in my opinion, neither show the Christian what thanks he owes his Deliverer from sin, nor awaken the sinner to flee from the wrath to come. This doctrine seems to be indispensable to destroy the presumptuous reliance of the sinner on future repentance, as it shows him how fearfully he provokes an offended God to withhold the grace on which all depends. At the same time one thing is indubitably certain, viz. that God never revealed the doctrine of the sinner's dependence on his Spirit, to prevent the sinner from doing his duty at once. God does not call sinners to instant compliance with the terms of life, and then assure them, that such compliance is utterly out of the question, and to be wholly despaired of. The opposite impression, however, is not uncommon; and it is an error not less fatal to immediate repentance, than the fond hope of repenting hereafter. Both are to be destroyed; and he who does not preach the Gospel in that manner which tends to destroy both, preaches it but imperfectly.

In the earlier revivals of this country, great prominence was given in the preaching to the doctrine of dependence, in the forms of regeneration, election, &c. This was what was to be expected from the Calvinistic preachers of the time, in view of the prevalence of Arminianism. In the more recent revivals, however, a similar prominence seems to be given to moral agency, in the forms of present obligation to duty, its present practicability, &c. The preaching thus distinguished in its more prominent characteristics has been undeniably owned and blessed by the Spirit of God, although we are very apt to believe, that what is true of one kind of preaching at one time, must be true of it at another. Now I believe, that both the doctrines of dependence and moral accountability, must be *admitted by the public mind*, to secure upon that mind the full power of the Gospel. I also believe, that greater or less *prominence* should be given to the one or the other of these doctrines, according to the prevailing state of public opin-

ion. When, at the earlier periods alluded to, the doctrine of dependence was dwelt on chiefly, (I do not suppose exclusively,) the public mind believed enough, I might say too much, concerning the free moral agency of man, and had not so well learned as since, to pervert the doctrine of dependence to justify the waiting attitude of a passive recipient. And then both doctrines told with power on the mind and the conscience, and through God were attended with great and happy results. But the prominence given to the doctrine of dependence in preaching was continued, until, if I mistake not, it so engrossed the public attention, and so obscured or weakened the doctrine of responsibility, that many fell into the opposite error of quietly waiting for God's interposition. Hence, when this prevailing error is again corrected by a more prominent exhibition of man's responsibility in the form of immediate obligation, &c. the power of both doctrines is again combined on the public mind, and we see the same or even greater results in revivals of religion. Nor would it be strange if the latter kind of preaching should in its turn prevail so exclusively and so long, that the practical influence of the doctrine of dependence should be greatly impaired, to be followed with another dearth of revivals, and a quiet reliance of sinful men on their own self-sufficiency. On this subject, I have often, in view of the tendency of the human mind to vacillate from one extreme to the other, expressed my apprehensions. In some of my brethren whom I love and respect, I see what I esteem a *disproportioned* estimate of the importance of preaching dependence; in others whom I equally respect, I see what I regard as a *disproportioned* estimate of the importance of preaching moral responsibility. In regard to myself, I can say that I have aimed in this respect rightly to divide the word of truth, and that those discourses in which I have best succeeded in bringing the two doctrines to bear in their combined force on the mind, have been more blessed to the awakening and conversion of sinners, than almost any others which I preach. When both doctrines are wisely and truly presented, the sinner has no resting place. He cannot well avoid a sense of guilt while proposing to remain in his sins, for he sees that he is a free moral agent, under all the responsibilities of such an agent, to immediate duty. He cannot well presume on his resolution of future repentance, for he sees that sovereign, injured grace may at once abandon him to hopeless sin. He is thus shut up to the faith—to the immediate performance of his duty. In accordance with these views, I aim, in my instructions to those who are preparing for the ministry, to inculcate the importance of a consistent, well proportioned exhibition of the two great doctrines of the sinner's dependence and responsibility, that in this respect they may hold the minds of their hearers under the full influence of that Gospel which is the power of God to salvation.

I have thus stated, more minutely perhaps than you anticipated, my views and opinions. I could wish that they might be satisfactory to all our Orthodox brethren. I have no doubt that they will be to very many, and to some who have been alarmed by groundless rumors concerning my unsoundness in the faith.—With respect to what I have called *leading doctrines*, I regard these as among the cardinal truths of the Christian system. They

are truths to which I attach the highest importance, and in which my faith is more and more confirmed, the more I examine the word of God.—To *some* of those of which I have spoken as *comparatively minor points*, I attach a high importance in their practical bearings and doctrinal connections. They are points, however, in regard to which there is more or less diversity of opinion among the Orthodox: and as it is not my intention nor my practice to denounce others as heretics, merely because they differ from me in these matters, so I should be pleased with the reciprocation of the like catholicism on their part.

Yours affectionately,

NATHANIEL W. TAYLOR.

REV. J. HAWES, D. D.

RELIGIOUS SENTIMENTS OF SIR ISAAC NEWTON.

In one of our previous Volumes* is a Communication on the question, 'Was Sir Isaac Newton a Unitarian?' in which the writer weighs the evidence on both sides, and comes to the conclusion, that it is not only without reason, but *against* it, that Unitarians have so long and confidently reckoned this distinguished philosopher as in their number. This Article was re-published in the (London) Congregational Magazine, and a Reply to it has since been attempted in the Monthly Repository, the principal Periodical of the English Unitarians. This Reply cannot be said to require an answer, as it contains little or nothing which we had not seen, and to our satisfaction examined, before inserting the Communication above referred to;—nothing to shake or invalidate the following conclusion of our Correspondent:

"I have now shown, that Newton was by profession and worship a Trinitarian, and that not a sentence can be gathered from his numerous writings to show that he was not a Trinitarian. So far from this, it is evident from passages which have been quoted, that he regarded the Trinity as belonging to the faith of the primitive church; did not hold the Lord Jesus to be "a creature;" spoke familiarly of "his Divinity," and "his humanity;" and represented him as receiving the same Divine worship and honor from the primitive Christians which they rendered to the Father. By some of his cotemporaries he was called an Arian; but we have seen that he thought himself injured by such an imputation, and could hardly forgive the individual who first attempted to fasten it upon him."

We should not again have alluded to the subject, but for the purpose of introducing an extract from "the Life of Sir Isaac Newton, by David Brewster, LL. D. F. R. S.," a volume of much interest, the xxvith of Harper's Family Library. It is as follows:

"As this learned dissertation [Newton's "Historical Account of two Notable Corruptions of Scripture"] had the effect of depriving the defenders of the doctrine of the Trinity of the aid of two leading texts, Sir Isaac Newton has been regarded as an Antitrinitarian.

* Vol. iii. p. 281.

an; but such a conclusion is not warranted by any thing which he has published;* and he distinctly warns us, that his object was solely to "purge the truth of things spurious." We are disposed, on the contrary, to think that he declares his belief in the doctrine of the Trinity when he says, "In the eastern nations, and for a long time in the western, the *faith* subsisted without this text; and it is rather a danger to religion than an advantage, to make it *now* lean upon a bruised reed. There cannot be better service done to the truth than to purge it of things spurious; and therefore, knowing your prudence and calmness of temper, I am confident I shall not offend you by telling you my mind plainly; especially since it is no article of faith, no point of discipline, nothing but a criticism concerning a text of Scripture which I am going to write about." The word faith in the preceding passage cannot mean faith in the Scriptures in general, but faith in the particular doctrine of the Trinity; for it is this article of faith only to which the author refers when he deprecates *its* leaning on a bruised reed. But, whatever be the meaning of this passage, we know that Sir Isaac was greatly offended at Mr. Whiston for having represented him as an Arian; and so much did he resent the conduct of his friend in ascribing to him heretical opinions, that he would not permit him to be elected a Fellow of the Royal Society while he was President."

RECENT PUBLICATIONS.

1. *Essay on the Application of Abstract Reasoning to the Christian Doctrines; originally published as an Introduction to Edwards on the Will.* BY THE AUTHOR OF 'THE NATURAL HISTORY OF ENTHUSIASM.' First American Edition. Boston: Crocker & Brewster. 1832. pp. 163.

The title page scarcely need have informed the reader that this Essay is "by the Author of the Natural History of Enthusiasm." The book itself shows frequent and decisive marks of having proceeded from the same vigorous pen. Of the two works, the latter displays more acuteness of thought, and a wider extent of philosophical research; but in both, there are the same characteristic traits—the same striking, quickening, original conceptions, bodied forth in a rich and flowing drapery of style.

* M. Biot has well remarked that there is absolutely nothing in the writings of Newton to justify, or even to authorize, the idea that he was an Antitrinitarian. This passage is strangely omitted in the English translation of Biot's Life of Newton. We do not know upon what authority Dr. Thomson states, in his History of the Royal Society, that Newton "did not believe in the Trinity," and that Dr. Horsley considered Newton's papers unfit for publication, because they contained proofs of his hostility to that doctrine.

The author begins by awarding due praise to Edwards, both as a philosopher and a Christian, and by averring that his particular object in preparing his treatise on the Will was triumphantly accomplished.

"Whatever may in the next age be the fate of the "Inquiry concerning Freedom of Will," (in the *present* age it holds all its honors and authority,) it may safely be predicted that, at least as an instance of exact analysis, of profound or perfect abstraction, of conclusive logic, and of calm discussion, this celebrated essay will long support its reputation, and will continue to be used as a classic *material* in the business of intellectual education. If literary ambition had been, which certainly it was not, the active element of the author's mind (as it was the single motive in the mind of his contemporary and admirer Hume,) and if he could have foreseen the reputation of his "Essay on Free Will," he need have envied very few aspirants to philosophic fame. What higher praise could a scientific writer wish for, than that of having, by a small and single dissertation, reduced a numerous, a learned, and a powerful party, in his own and other countries (and from his own day to the present time) to the sad necessity of making a blank protest against the argument and inference of the book, and of saying, "The reasoning of Edwards *must* be a sophism; for it overthrows our doctrine." And then, if we turn from theology to science—from divines to philosophers, we see the modest pastor of the Calvinists of Northampton assigned to a seat of honor among sages, and allowed (if he will lay aside his faith and his Bible) to speak and to utter decisions as a master of science.

Again; "the metaphysics of Edwards demolished the metaphysics of Whitby. This was natural and fit; for the philosophy of Arminianism could no more endure a rigid analysis, than a citadel of rocks could maintain its integrity against a volley of musketry."—"Edwards achieved his immediate object—that of exposing to contempt, in all its evasions, the Arminian notion of contingency, the blind law of human volitions: and he did more;—he effectively redeemed the doctrines called Calvinistic from that scorn with which the irreligious party, within and without the pale of Christianity, would fain have overwhelmed them:—he taught the world to be less flippant; and there is reason also to surmise (though the facts are not to be distinctly adduced) that, in the reaction which of late has counterpoised the once triumphant Arminianism of English Episcopal divinity, the influence of Edwards has been much greater than those who have yielded to it have always confessed."

The writer of the work before us assigns to 'Edwards on the Will' a *still more important result* than even the discomfiture of the Arminians. "This celebrated treatise must be allowed to have achieved an important service for *Christianity*, inasmuch as it has stood like a bulwark in front of principles which, whether or not they may hitherto have been stated in the happiest manner, are of such consequence, that if they were once and universally abandoned by the church, the church itself would not long make good its opposition to infidelity. Let it be granted that Calvinism has often existed in a state of mixture with crude, or presumptuous, or preposterous dogmas. Yet surely, whoever is competent to take a

calm, an independent, and a truly philosophic survey of the Christian system, and can calculate also the balancings of opinion—the antitheses of belief, will grant, that if Calvinism, in the modern sense of the term, were quite exploded, a long time could not elapse before evangelical Arminianism would find itself driven helplessly into the gulf that had yawned to receive its rival.

“Whatever notions of an exaggerated sort may belong to some Calvinists, Calvinism, as distinguished from Arminianism, encircles or involves GREAT TRUTHS, which, whether dimly or clearly discerned—whether defended in Scriptural simplicity of language, or deformed by grievous perversions, will never be abandoned while the Bible continues to be devoutly read; and which, if they might indeed be subverted, would drag to the same ruin every doctrine of revealed religion. Zealous, dogmatical, and sincere Arminians little think how much they owe to the writer who, more than any other in modern times, has withstood their inconsiderate endeavors to impugn certain prominent articles of the Reformation. Nay, they think not that, to the existence of Calvinism they owe their own, as Christians. Yet as much as this might be affirmed, and made good; even though he who should undertake the task were so to conduct his argument as might make six Calvinists in ten his enemies.”

Our author censures the work of Edwards for “that mixture of metaphysical demonstrations and Scriptural evidence which runs through it, breaking up the chain of argumentation; disparaging the authority of the Bible, by making it part and parcel with disputable abstractions: and worse, destroying both the lustre and the edge of the sword of the Spirit, by using it as a mere weapon of metaphysical warfare.” He admits, however, that this was the fault rather of the times than of the man, as “he did but follow in the track of all who had gone before him.”

This writer further objects to Edwards, on account of his “mingling purely abstract propositions, with facts belonging to the *physiology of the human mind*.” The distinction here referred to, which it must be admitted that Edwards too much confounds, is discussed at length, and made very palpable, in the work before us.

Our author uniformly treats the philosophy of Brown, and especially his theory of causation, with great contempt. He despairs of settling theological disputes by dint of metaphysical discussion, and decides, with more positiveness than we can approve, or than we think consistent with other parts of his Essay, that the celebrated question of liberty and necessity is of little or no importance in its bearing upon theology and Christian doctrine. His object, however, is to prepare the way for the conclusion—a conclusion, the value of which we trust is coming to be more justly appreciated—that “*Christianity is essentially a documentary religion*,” and that “to ascertain the true meaning of the words and phrases used by those who spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, should be the principal aim of the studies of the theologian.” The Essay concludes with the following eloquent passages in relation to this subject:

“The Arminian divine, inwardly persuaded, he knows not on what ground, that human nature contains a *something* more than

the passivity of brute matter, or of animal life, has recourse to the figment of Contingent Volition; and then, to give his unintelligible notion an appearance of consistency, has been led to the enormous error of denying the Divine fore-knowledge. Thus, in his zeal to defend one attribute of Deity, he has demolished another. Why will he not be content with the simple principles of human nature, as known to all men, and as recognized in the transactions of every day, and with the plain evidence of the Bible, which always takes up and supposes the existence of those principles?

"His opponent, the Calvinist, spurning the absurdities of Arminian metaphysics, believes that, when he has scattered these sophisms, he has exhausted the subject of human agency, and may triumphantly return from the vanquished field to his own theological position; nor deems it necessary once to lay aside his high lenses, or to look abroad upon human nature as it shews itself to the *naked eye* of common sense. Then he goes to his Bible, cased in metaphysical certainties, and proceeds, without scruple or compunction, to apply the crushing engine of dogmatical exposition to all passages that do not naturally fall in with the abstractions which he has framed to himself. Meanwhile, men of sense are disgusted, and sceptics glory. How shall these evils be remedied? How, unless by the prevalence of a better—a genuine system of interpretation?

"But even without this better exposition, a great and important reform would spontaneously follow from a more vivid persuasion of the *reality* of the great facts affirmed in the Scriptures. Let but the quickening affirmations of the inspired writers be allowed to take effect, on the ground of the ordinary motives of human life; let it but be believed that the Son of God has come to inform men (his fellows, by an ineffable condescension,) of a future danger to which all are liable; and to impart to them freely a benefit they could never have obtained by their own efforts; and then it will no more seem pertinent or necessary to adjust the terms of this message of mercy to metaphysical subtilities, than it does to do the like when a friend snatches a friend from ruin, or when a father bears his children in his arms from a scene of perils. How much mischief has arisen from the supposition that a *mystery* belongs to the matter of salvation, which waits to be cleared up by philosophy.

"Philosophy, it is to be hoped, will at length work its way through its own difficulties. But the result to Christianity of so happy a success, would simply be, to set in a stronger light the enormous folly of obstructing the course of a momentous practical affair by the impertinences of learned disputation."

2. *The Select Works of Archbishop Leighton, prepared for the Practical Use of private Christians; with an Introductory View of the Life, Character, and Writings of the Author.* By GEORGE B. CHEEVER. Boston: Peirce & Parker. 1832. pp. 569.

The Christian public are here presented with a choice volume of practical, spiritual, *devotional* theology. To the worldly unsanctified man the greater part of it will indeed be uninteresting, for the very sufficient reason that it will be unintelligible. He can no more understand it, than he can Paul when he says, '*If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things have passed away; be-*

hold, all things have become new ;—or than Nicodemus could understand the Saviour, when he assured him of the necessity of the new birth. ‘*The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God,*’ &c. But to the sincere, devout, elevated Christian, whose spirit is allied to that of the excellent author, the work before us scarcely needs a recommendation. It will be enough for such an one to know that it is from the pen of Leighton, one of the most eminently holy men with which the church of Christ has ever been honored, and that it contains the breathings of his soul on a great variety of those subjects which, of all others, the Christian most loves to contemplate. It is divided into short sections, under appropriate heads, and will be found very suitable for the closet, the family, or the social circle.—The Introductory Memoir (of sixty pages) adds much to the value of the volume. It is written in Mr. Cheever’s usual happy manner; embodies many striking anecdotes and incidents in the life of Leighton; and is, on the whole, a satisfactory delineation of his character.

3. *Hints, designed to aid Christians in their Efforts to Convert Men to God.* Philadelphia: J. Ashmead & Co. 1832. pp. 32.

This little manual is the joint production of the Rev. Dr. Skinner of Philadelphia, and the Rev. Edward Beecher late of Boston. The subject of which it treats is certainly one of immense importance. Christians are denominated the *salt of the earth*, and the *light of the world*; and they are required, by the genius and spirit of their religion, as well as by the express injunctions of the Saviour, to *exert themselves* in the service of him who hath called them out of darkness into his marvellous light, and for the advancement of his cause in the hearts of their fellow men. They are cheerfully to undergo toils, and sacrifices, and sufferings, and expose themselves (if it must be so) to dangers and to death, if by any means they may *save some*. For their encouragement in this arduous work, they are assured, that ‘he who converteth a sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death,’ and that ‘they who turn many to righteousness shall shine as the stars of heaven forever and ever.’—The object of the pamphlet before us is to call the attention of Christians to this great duty, and to urge it upon them—the duty of “conversing with men with reference to their immediate repentance.” The work is divided into six sections,—relating to the *importance* of the duty in question; to the *preparation* for it; to the *nature* of it, or “the things to be done;” to *cautions* necessary to be observed; to the “manner of performing the duty;” and “concluding remarks.” The observations under these heads are brief, but direct and pertinent, calculated not only to excite Christians to the performance of their duty, but to show them how it should be performed. The pamphlet ought to have, and must have, an extended circulation. It will be found a valuable directory to ministers and others, who are accustomed to meet *inquirers*, and to give them counsel. We wish it were in the hands of every professing Christian in our country.

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COMMUNICATIONS.

CLEMENT OF ROME.

Of this venerable apostolical man very little is known, except that he was a companion and fellow-laborer with Paul, and received testimony from the pen of inspiration, that his 'name was in the book of life.' Phil. 4:3. In what country he was born, or of whom, it is impossible now to determine. He is generally represented as the *third* bishop of Rome;* although the accounts respecting the succession of these early bishops are so confused and contradictory, that even this point cannot be satisfactorily ascertained. That he was advanced to the government of the Roman church, and retained this office several years, is certain. His reputation in the primitive church was deservedly high, being scarcely inferior to that of the Apostles. He died, according to Eusebius, in the third year of the emperor Trajan, but whether in the ordinary course of providence, or by the hand of violence, it does not appear.

While Clement had charge of the church at Rome, a division arose in the church at Corinth, and some of its aged presbyters were unjustly deposed.† In the progress of difficulties, the

* Irenæus says, "When the blessed Apostles had founded and established the church at Rome, they delivered the office of the bishoprick in it to Linus," of whom Paul makes mention in his second Epistle to Timothy, Chap. iv. 21. "To him succeeded Anacletus; after whom, in the third place, Clement obtained that bishoprick, who had seen the blessed Apostles, and conversed with them; who had the preaching of the Apostles still sounding in his ears, and their traditions before his eyes." *Contra Hæres.* Lib. 3. C. 3. In the same account, Eusebius and Jerome substantially agree. *Hist. Ecc.* Lib. 3. C. 13. *Viri Illus.* Cap. 15.

† These ejected Presbyters had probably been chosen, at a time when 'not many wise or learned were called;' and they might have been deficient in those ornamental qualifications which the polished and wealthy part of their hearers began to require. Or length of time and love of novelty might diminish the respect which had once been felt for these venerable men, and inspire a restless desire of change.

brethren of this latter church sent to Rome for advice. Accordingly Clement, in the name of the church over which he presided, addressed to them a long letter of instruction and counsel.

He begins by apologizing for some delay which had occurred in attending to their request. He commends the past spiritual attainments of the Corinthians, and the measure of their grace and faith. But as worldly honor and prosperity increased, that Scripture was fulfilled in them, which saith, 'Jeshurun waxed fat and kicked.' Envyings, discord, and tumults were excited, and for a time prevailed. The excellent author of the Epistle proceeds to speak of the disgrace and misery of these things, and urges the importance of repentance, humiliation, and a return to the paths of duty and of peace. He urges, also, the importance of order in the church of God, of a patient waiting for Christ, and of diligence in every good word and work. In regard to the particular cause of division in the church at Corinth, he speaks as follows :

"We cannot think that those may justly be thrown out of their ministry, who were either appointed by the Apostles, or afterwards chosen by other eminent men with the consent of the whole church,* and who have with all lowliness and innocency ministered to the flock of Christ in peace, and were for a long time commended by all. For it would be no small sin in us to cast off those from their ministry,† who holily and without blame fulfil the duties of it. Do ye, therefore, who laid the first foundation of this sedition, submit yourselves unto your priests, and be instructed unto repentance, bending the knees of your hearts." Chap. 44, 57.

He goes on to speak of the exalted privileges and hopes of believers ; of their unspeakable obligations to Christ ; of the duty of praying one for another, especially for those who have fallen into sin ; and concludes by saying,

"Now, may the all-seeing God, the Father of spirits and the Lord of all flesh, who hath chosen our Lord Jesus Christ, and us by him to be his peculiar people, grant to every soul of man that calleth upon his glorious and holy name, faith, fear, peace, long-suffering, patience, temperance, holiness and sobriety, unto all well pleasing in his sight, through our High Priest and Protector, Jesus Christ, by whom be glory, and majesty, and power, and honor unto him, now and forever more. Amen."

Respecting the date of this Epistle, the most diligent inquirers have not been agreed, some fixing it as early as A. D. 70, and others as late as 96. It was certainly written before the close of the first century, and before the death of the Apostle John.

* In primitive times, the consent of the church was necessary for the appointment of church officers.

† Literally "from their bishoprick," showing that bishop and presbyter were at this time regarded as holding the same office. In a previous chapter, Clement speaks of bishops and deacons, as the only officers which the Apostles appointed in the churches. Chap. 42.

So highly was it esteemed in the primitive church, that Eusebius informs us it was wont to be read in the public assemblies of Christians,* and was sometimes placed in the same volume with the books of the New Testament.

For many years after the revival of letters, the Epistle of Clement was supposed to be lost. The circumstances of its discovery and publication were as follows: When Cyril, Patriarch of Alexandria, removed from thence to Constantinople, about the beginning of the seventeenth century, he brought with him many valuable books to the latter place. Among these was a very ancient manuscript of the Septuagint, and of the New Testament in Greek, commonly called the Alexandrian Manuscript, written about four hundred years after Christ. This he sent as a present to Charles first of England, who committed it to the care of Mr. Patrick Young, at that time keeper of the king's library. At the end of this manuscript, Mr. Young discovered the Epistle of Clement, and was commanded to publish it for the benefit of the world. This he did, with a Latin translation and notes, at Oxford, A. D. 1633.

The Epistle here spoken of is the only undoubted writing of Clement which is now extant. Several other works have been attributed to him, as a Second Epistle to the Corinthians; an Epistle to James, the Lord's brother; books of Homilies, and of Recognitions; and the Apostolical Constitutions and Canons;—but their claims to be regarded as his are more than doubtful.

The genuine Epistle of Clement is chiefly hortative, and of a practical nature. Still, his exhortations are based on certain fundamental truths, to which he frequently, though incidentally, refers. To those who have not access to the Epistle itself, it may be interesting to learn what some of these truths are.—It appears that Clement believed and taught,

1. The *inspiration* of the Scriptures. In quoting the Scriptures, he customarily speaks of them as the words of the Holy Spirit. See Chapters 13, 16, and 22. "Look," says he, "into the holy Scriptures, *which are the true words of the Holy Ghost.*"† Chap. 45.

2. The *sovereignty of God*. "By the word of his power he made all things, and by the same word he is able, whenever he will, to destroy them. 'Who shall say unto him, what does

* "We know that this Epistle has been formerly, and still is, publicly read in many churches." Hist. Ecc. Lib. 3. Cap. 16. Jerome also testifies the same. "Clement wrote a very useful Epistle, in the name of the church at Rome, to the church at Corinth, which in some places is read publicly." Viri Illus. Cap. 15.

† Without doubt, he regarded the Scriptures as the word of God; and he must, therefore, have believed that *the Holy Ghost is God*.

thou? or who shall resist the power of his strength? Wisd. xii. 12. When, and as he pleaseth, he will do all things, and nothing shall pass away of all that has been determined by him." Chap. 27. In speaking of believers, he usually calls them the *elect*, the *chosen* of God, &c. See Chapters 1, 50, 58.

3. *The proper Divinity of Christ.* "Being content with the portion God had dispensed to you, and hearkening diligently to his word, ye were enlarged in your bowels, having his sufferings (*Παθηματα Θεου*) always before your eyes." Chap. 2.

4. *The atonement of Christ.* "Let us look stedfastly to the blood of Christ, and see how precious his blood is in the sight of God; which, being shed for our salvation, has obtained the grace of repentance for all the world."*—"Showing that, by the blood of the Lord, there should be redemption to all that believe and hope in God."—"For the love that he bore towards us, our Lord Jesus Christ gave his own blood for us by the will of God; his flesh for our flesh, his soul for our souls." Chapters 7, 12, 49.

5. *Native depravity.* Clement quotes, with approbation, from the Septuagint translation of the book of Job, "No man is free from pollution, no not though he should live but one day;" (Job 14:4.) and from the fifty-first Psalm, "Behold I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me."

6. *Unconditional submission.* "Let us obey his excellent and glorious will, and imploring his mercy and goodness, let us fall down upon our faces before him, and *cast ourselves upon his mercy*; laying aside all vanity, and contention, and envy, which leads unto death." Chap. 9.

7. *Justification by faith.* "We are not justified by ourselves, neither by our own wisdom, or knowledge, or piety, or the works which we have done in the holiness of our hearts; but by *that faith* by which God Almighty has justified all men from the beginning." Chap. 32.

8. *The resurrection of the dead.* "The Lord does continually show us that there shall be a future resurrection, of which he has made our Lord Jesus Christ the first fruits. Day and night manifest a resurrection to us. The night lies down, and the day arises.—Every one sees how the seed is sown. The sower goes forth, and casts it upon the earth, and the seed in time dissolves; and from the dissolution, the great power of the Lord raises it again, and of one seed many arise, and bring forth fruit."

* The idea is, that repentance is available *only through the blood of Christ*.

My readers must excuse me, if I love to linger over this beautiful Epistle—the most instructive and best authenticated relic of ecclesiastical antiquity. With another paragraph, however, as a connected specimen of the manner of the author, I will bring this paper to a close.

“Let us consider, beloved, how near the Spirit of the Lord is to us, and how that none of our thoughts or reasonings, which we frame within ourselves, are hid from him. It is therefore just that we should not forsake our rank, by doing contrary to his will. Let us choose to offend a few foolish and inconsiderate men, lifted up and glorying in their own pride, rather than God. Let us reverence our Lord Jesus Christ, whose blood was given for us; let us honor those who are set over us; let us respect the aged that are among us; and let us instruct the younger men in the discipline and fear of the Lord. Our wives let us direct to do that which is good. Let them show forth a lovely habit of purity in all their conversation, with a sincere affection of meekness. Let the government of their tongues be made manifest by their silence; let their charity be without respect of persons, alike towards all such as religiously fear God. Let their children be bred up in the instruction of Christ; and especially let them learn how great a power humility has with God, how much a pure and holy charity avails with him, how excellent and great his fear is, and how it will save all such as turn to him with holiness in a pure mind. For he is the searcher of the thoughts and counsels of the heart, whose breath is in us, and when he pleases he can take it from us.” Chap. 21.

LETTERS TO YOUNG MINISTERS.

LETTER III.

BELOVED BROTHERS AND FRIENDS,

In the two Letters which I have addressed to you, I have attempted to show particularly what is implied in the Protestant principle, that *the Bible is our only and sufficient guide*. The last point I endeavored to illustrate was, that this Protestant principle requires us to conform to the Holy Scriptures in regard both to the *matter* and the *manner of teaching*. It may perhaps be thought that I have said as much on this point, as its importance demands. But my impression is different; though I am ready to acknowledge that I am liable, in this case as in every other, to partial and mistaken views. It has for years been a subject of inquiry with me, whether my own mode of preaching, and that which is common among evangelical ministers, is sufficiently *scriptural*; whether, as to matter or manner, it is conformed, as much as it should be, to that inspired book which we profess to receive as our perfect and infallible

rule ; whether we have not adopted a manner of thinking and of preaching, which more or less sets aside the inspired volume ; and whether in this way we do not evidently dishonor the benevolent Author of revelation, deprive our hearers of the sincere milk of the word, and spend time and labor upon that which profiteth not. The result of my inquiries is a serious apprehension, that the literature of modern times, the endless variety of books which have been written on moral and religious subjects and which contain a greater or less mixture of error with truth, the numberless controversies which prevail among Christians, and a want of a more diligent study of the Scriptures and of a larger measure of piety and faithfulness, have insensibly produced a hurtful effect upon us, and that we are in danger of having our minds "corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ." This apprehension has respected my own case as really as that of any of my brethren in the ministry. Now if there is the least danger on this subject, it is important that we should be aware of it. A small mistake among those who are set for the defence of the Gospel, may be the occasion of great mischief to the church of Christ. Inquiry then is manifestly proper. And if on careful inquiry it shall appear that among Gospel ministers at the present day there is no departure from the inspired rule, and that the interests of truth and godliness are all in a state of perfect security ; the comfort of such a conclusion will be an ample recompense for the time spent in the examination.

I cannot allow that the remarkable success of the Gospel, as preached by its ministers of late, is any reason why we should suppress our fears, and abstain from such an inquiry as I propose. Any one who has been a careful observer of human nature, and who is at all acquainted with the history of the church, knows full well that a time of prosperity is a time of special danger. The same rain and sunshine which produce a plentiful harvest of wheat, may contribute also to an uncommon growth of tares. What season of unusual prosperity has the church ever enjoyed, which has not, through the corruption of man's heart, proved a season of extraordinary danger, and an occasion of various and lamentable evils ? In proportion then as God has been pleased in his great mercy to pour out his Spirit and revive his work, and to give enlargement to his people ; just in that proportion have we cause to be awake, and to guard in earnest against the designs of our great enemy, who is always plotting against the church, and is never better pleased than when he sees us lulled to sleep by our prosperity. If any man shall look abroad upon the wonderful work of God which

has recently been accomplished by means of the word preached, and shall hence be led to say, *there is no longer any danger to the church, and fears and jealousies as to any evils to which we are exposed are all out of place*; that man has yet to learn a most important lesson; and the sooner he applies for instruction to the word and providence of God the better. The inspired writers teach us to rejoice with trembling, to be vigilant, and to exercise a godly jealousy. If we fail of this, the safety of the church is endangered.

Allow me then to proceed with my design, and to remark, first, on the subject of man's *moral obligation*;—a subject very plain and simple in itself, but easily perplexed and obscured. My general inquiry is, whether this subject is not often treated in a manner which ill accords with our infallible standard.

In order to prevent mistakes and to prepare the way for what I wish to say, it may be proper for me freely to express to you the conclusions which I have adopted on this subject, and the manner in which I have been led to adopt them.

What then, I ask myself, is the doctrine of *moral obligation*? Expressed in the simplest, easiest manner, it is this: *We are in duty bound to obey the divine commands.* In other words, *we ought in all respects to conform to the moral law.* Or thus: *it is just and right that we should be what God requires us to be, and do what he requires us to do; and we are altogether inexcusable and deserving of punishment, if in any respect we fail of this.*

I next inquire, what proof is there of this high obligation? And the only answer I can give is this: It is, like many other things, so evident and certain that, properly speaking, it does not need proof, and hardly admits of it. There is nothing more evident. What argument can a man produce to prove that cutting or burning his flesh is painful; that honey is sweet; and that the rainbow exhibits a variety of beautiful colors? In any such case, nothing is necessary, but that the senses should be in a right state, and that the objects should be presented in such a manner as is suited to produce the sensation. It is equally so in regard to what we call moral obligation. Let a man's mental faculties be in a right state; let his heart be pure from sin, the eyes of his understanding open, his conscience awake, unbiassed, and active, and all his affections holy; and let him, in this state of mind, look up, and see the glorious character of God, as exhibited in the works of creation, providence, and redemption. Then let him hear God announce the first and great command; "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with

all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength." Would that man need any argument to *prove* his obligation to love such a Being? Do the angels need to have it *proved* to them, that they ought to love the God of heaven? And when a sinner is renewed, and has a clear spiritual discernment and purity of heart, does he need to have it *proved*, that he is under obligation to love and obey God?

These remarks disclose an important principle, namely; that *the feeling of obligation is founded in the very constitution of the human mind*; that it is an ultimate fact in our moral nature. And this is only saying, that God has made us moral and accountable creatures; that he has so formed us, that we are the proper subjects of law, and have an inward consciousness that obedience is our duty, and that disobedience is totally wrong and worthy of punishment. Were it not for this constitution of our mind, no argument could ever convince us that we are under any obligation to love God; no increase of knowledge, no improvement of our faculties, no persuasion, could ever give us a *feeling* of such obligation. We should be totally incapable of any thing like this, without a new creation.

As to the reality and extent of our moral obligation, and the vast importance of acknowledging and feeling it, I scarcely have words to express myself so strongly as I wish. That we are moral and accountable beings is, in my view, just as certain as our existence. And our eternal interests require, that we should have a deep impression of it. Our moral agency and moral obligation is not only certain, but *perfect*. Of course, it does not depend at all upon our character. Our being holy does not originate our obligation; nor does our being sinful destroy or diminish it. We are equally under law, and equally bound to obey it, whether our character is good or bad. Of this I shall offer no proof, as every man must be fully convinced of it, who will take the subject into sober consideration. The fact evidently is, that the propriety of our being placed under law, and our obligation to obey it, depends upon those intellectual and moral faculties with which our Creator has indued us, and which we always continue to possess, whatever may be our character, or our external circumstances. Those who are to the last degree depraved, have still all that constitutes moral agency, and will have it forever. It is indestructible. We can no more be rid of it, than of our existence. So the thing stands in the Scriptures. To whom did God give the law at Sinai? Of whom did he require obedience? Of perfectly holy beings? No; but of those who were sinful; for the most part, of those

who were entirely sinful,—sinful without any mixture of holiness. And did Moses, who spoke in the name of God, ever intimate that there was to be any abatement or letting down of the high demands of the law on account of the sinfulness of man? Did the prophets, or Christ, or the Apostles ever intimate such a thing? The fact is, no messenger of God, either under the former or the latter dispensation, ever gave a single divine command to any persons who were without sin. There was no opportunity for this. All whom the prophets, and Christ, and the Apostles addressed, were sinners; most of them entirely so. And yet they required them to love God with all the heart, and to be perfectly and unceasingly holy. Now did those messengers of God require what was just and right? It was just and right, then, that men should comply with their requisitions. In other words, they were under perfect obligation to love God and obey his commands. Thus, the very fact that moral precepts have been given to men, implies, that those who are in a state of sin are complete moral agents, and in duty bound perfectly to obey.

This is always made evident by that influence of the Spirit which frees the minds of sinners from darkness and delusion, and causes them to know divine truth. They who are taught of the Spirit, are convinced of sin. They are sensible that they are and always have been under perfect obligation to love and obey God, and that they have no excuse for transgression. They acknowledge from the heart that the law is good, and that they ought to have kept it constantly and perfectly; that in disobeying the law, they have acted a most unreasonable and wicked part, and that they really deserve the punishment, dreadful as it is, which the law denounces against those who transgress. All this sinners feel and acknowledge, when they are thoroughly convinced of sin, and judge of things according to truth. One who is only in part convinced of sin, feels and acknowledges this in part. His conscience is disturbed, but not fully awakened; uneasy, but not faithful. He still endeavors to justify himself. He is so blinded by his selfish feelings, that he regards the very depravity which renders him ill-deserving in the sight of God, as an alleviation of his guilt. His refuges of lies are many. But that thorough conviction of sin, which the Holy Spirit produces through the truth, sweeps away all these refuges, and brings him, ashamed and trembling, to smite upon his breast, and say,—*I am very guilty; eternal death is my due; God be merciful to me a sinner.* Those who are thoughtless and quiet in sin have many false conceptions and reasonings in their minds, which can never be removed,

except by that Holy Spirit which Christ promised to convince the world of sin. On our part, if we would do that which is best adapted to convince men of sin, we must clearly explain to them the commands of the law and the Gospel, and must urge them to immediate and constant obedience, as their reasonable service, and that which God absolutely requires. We must endeavor to persuade them to this by the high sanctions of the law, and by all the motives suggested by the word of God. And we must make it as evident to them as possible, that the delay of obedience is continued rebellion. If they excuse themselves because they are depraved, and say, you require too much; tell them that you only convey God's message to them; that you require only what he requires; that their complaints are not against you, but against him; and that their controversy is with their Maker. Show them the absurdity and presumption of supposing, that God will or justly can abate any thing of his demands upon them, *because they are sinners*; this being the true and only reason why he disapproves and condemns them. Never leave them to think that the long continuance and high degree of their sinfulness, or its early date, can have any other effect than to increase their guilt, and render them the more inexcusable. Address the commands of God to them with great seriousness. Show them that you consider these commands to be perfectly just; that you are in earnest when you inculcate obedience; that you regard them as under the highest conceivable obligation incessantly to obey the divine law in all its length and breadth, and as meriting the awful displeasure of God for failing to do this. In a word, show them that you heartily join with God, and approve of his high and spiritual commands *as addressed to sinners*, and of the sentence of condemnation which he pronounces against every one who disobeys, whatever his circumstances may be.

As to the proper manner of exhibiting and inculcating moral obligation, we are, I think, to derive our lessons primarily and chiefly from the Holy Scriptures. We are to look much more than we have commonly done to the inspired teachers, as our models. They certainly had true practical wisdom, and their method of teaching was founded on just views of the human mind and character, and perfectly adapted to promote the highest good of the world. We are accustomed to celebrate the sacred writers as affording the best examples of a just and impressive eloquence,—an eloquence suited to awaken conscience, and move all the springs of human action. Now we should act very inconsistently with ourselves, if after all our admiration of the Bible as a perfect model of all that is eloquent and just

and useful in the manner of teaching, we should not be careful to copy it. I most earnestly hope that the extraordinary attention which is now given to the Scriptures by theological students, and by ministers of the Gospel, will produce happy results, and that the common mode of preaching will become much more *scriptural*, than it has been. And I hope, too, that the growing attention to the Bible in our Christian community, and especially among the young, will contribute effectually to form such a taste, that no preacher can indulge the hope of being acceptable to the public, unless he faithfully conforms to his infallible standard. Let us then seriously and patiently inquire, in what manner the momentous subject of our moral obligation is treated in the Holy Scriptures.

And here the first thing which occurs to me is, that the inspired writers do not formally *assert*, nor attempt by a process of reasoning to *prove*, our obligation to obey the divine commands, but take it for granted,—assume it as a well known and acknowledged fact. In this they are fully justified; and in this we ought, certainly in all ordinary cases, to imitate them; because the feeling of obligation originally arises not from the force of arguments, but from the very constitution of our nature, and always exists in full strength when the mind is in a right state, and has the proper objects in view. It is as evidently proper, that a religious teacher should take it for granted that men are in fact moral and accountable beings, and under obligation to obey the divine law, as it is for a teacher of optics to take it for granted that his pupils have the sense of seeing; or for a teacher of geometry, that his pupils have the faculty of understanding. And in ordinary cases, why should it be thought any more necessary for us in moral and religious discourse either to *prove* or to *assert* the fact, that we are accountable beings and under obligation to obey God, than in philosophical discourse to assert and prove that we are indued with various bodily senses and intellectual faculties, which render us capable of observing the physical world, and understanding philosophical truth? The teacher of natural philosophy says nothing, except incidentally, of these senses and faculties. He does not undertake directly to treat of them, and has no need to do it. Indeed he does not consider this to be within his province, as a teacher of natural philosophy. He takes it for granted that we are what we are, and proceeds immediately to teach the principles of his science. The same with the mathematician. Euclid does not begin his system of geometry by affirming and attempting to prove that we have eyes to see his diagrams, and a mind to understand his maxims and propositions. Should he affirm this and labor

ever so long to prove it, he would make it no more evident to us than it was before. He has therefore nothing to do with this, but proceeds at once to give us his maxims, and to lay down and demonstrate his propositions.

The inspired teachers generally, as it seems to me, act on the same principles. It is always manifestly implied in their instructions, that we are capable of understanding, believing and obeying the truth. But where do they directly *affirm* that we are capable of this? Where do they produce any *proof* of it? Nowhere. They take it for granted.

In order to be fully satisfied on this subject, and to get an exact idea of the manner in which the inspired teachers proceed in regard to the fact of man's moral obligation, let us examine some of the great occasions on which truth is taught and duty enjoined in the Scriptures.

We shall begin with the giving of the law. The Lord descended upon mount Sinai amid terrible thunders and lightnings; and Moses brought the people out of the camp to meet with God, and to hear his words. Now what did God say to them? In what manner did he inculcate their duty upon them? Did he begin by telling them that they had all the powers and faculties necessary to moral agency; that they were free, and accountable, and under obligation to obey? Nothing of this. "He spake all these words, saying, *I am the Lord thy God who have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. Thou shalt have no other gods before me. Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image.—Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain.—Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy.—Honor thy father and thy mother,*" &c. He simply gave his law; simply announced his commands to the people. Their being under obligation to render obedience was asserted in no other way, than in merely giving the commands. No proof was given, as it was a well known and acknowledged fact, which might justly be assumed. And how was it with Moses, who afterwards labored so particularly, and with an eloquence so moving, to enforce obedience upon the children of Israel? We have, in Deuteronomy, an account of his faithful and impressive address to the people, containing doctrines, precepts, warnings, threats, exhortations, and a recital of God's favors, and of their sins, in a great variety of forms. But where is the passage in the whole book, in which he distinctly asserted the fact of their moral agency, or gave them a philosophical description of those powers and faculties which constituted them moral agents, and made it just and proper that they should

keep God's law and be accountable to him for their actions? Let us peruse and re-peruse this sacred book, till we are imbued with its contents. In this way we may do much towards learning the art of plain, pungent, affectionate, powerful, and profitable preaching.—And it may be of some use to us to make the supposition, that Moses himself were now here, laboring among us as a religious teacher, and retaining the same views of man's obligation and man's sinfulness, and the same manner of setting them forth, which he had when he addressed the children of Israel after they had spent forty years in the wilderness. Might not his example, exhibited publicly before us in our religious assemblies, correct some common faults in our manner of preaching, and give us a taste for greater seriousness, simplicity and faithfulness? And if any of us, with our present habits, should be willing to stand forth and preach in his presence; what would he think of our manner of preaching? Would it not be a matter of wonder to him, that with all the advantages of the new dispensation, as well as the old, we had attained to no higher excellence?—Now, brethren, we may learn much from Moses, though we cannot have the advantage of conversing with him personally, or of hearing him preach in our pulpits. Let us more carefully study the Book of Deuteronomy, and more faithfully copy the model of sacred eloquence which it contains.

But we must consider other great occasions on which truth was taught and duty inculcated.

Look then at the instances in which the Prophets, from age to age, gave instruction, warning, reproof, and exhortation. Dwell upon those passages in their writings, where they undertook, with the greatest particularity, to teach men their duty and their guilt, and to urge them to repentance. Is there a single sentence which shows, that they ever stopped to assert and prove the doctrine of moral agency, or to inquire into the grounds of moral obligation, as ministers often do at the present day? Did they not always assume it as a thing too evident to need any proof that man is a moral agent, and in duty bound to obey the commands of God?

Take a higher example still, that of Jesus Christ. Look at the manner of his teaching in his Sermon on the mount. Read the beginning, and the middle, and the end of it. Read his parables; his conversations with his disciples; his addresses to unbelievers, to objectors, to cavillers. Never man spake as he spake. He is a perfect model. Who has studied this model as much as he ought?

Read also the addresses of Peter, of Stephen, and of Paul, in

the Acts. Read the Epistles, especially the Epistle to the Romans, in a part of which the Apostle undertook to reason with those who made some of the doctrines of the Gospel an occasion to excuse and justify themselves in sin. Where do any of these infallible teachers undertake to prove by metaphysical reasonings, where do they even *assert*, that those, to whom they gave instruction, were indued with the powers of moral agency, and that it was just and reasonable they should be under law? What reason have we to suppose, from what appears in holy writ, that they ever deemed it necessary or proper to assert and prove this? That man is in fact an intelligent and moral being, and a proper subject of law, is a truth perfectly plain and certain; and no affirmation or argument can make it more plain or certain. If a man has lost his natural consciousness of being a moral and accountable agent, there is little prospect of convincing him by philosophical reasoning. The degradation of his mind is of such a nature, that reasoning cannot remove it. To one who is free from this mental degradation, an inquiry into the grounds of moral obligation cannot be at all necessary. And to pursue such an inquiry in any case is not the province of the sacred preacher, but of the metaphysician. Yet while it is evident that the inspired writers do not make it their practice to prove or even to assert the fact, that we are moral agents, any more than they assert and prove that we have souls; it is also evident, that they have much to *do* with this fact. Whenever they address men, they address them as moral and accountable beings, and as under immutable obligations to obey the divine commands. And it is an object at which they constantly aim, to awaken in the minds of men a proper *sense* of this obligation. But by what means do they attempt to do this? Not, I repeat it, by asserting our moral agency; or by exhibiting the grounds of our obligation; (a business appropriate to the science of metaphysics, or mental philosophy;) but by holding up plain, obvious, certain truth; and this they do in a great variety of ways, giving to every one his portion. A few instances will show us something of the scriptural manner of awakening men to a sense of moral obligation.

Take then the case of David, when visited by the Prophet Nathan.* David had committed an offence against God, and greatly injured a faithful servant and friend. But his conscience was stupified, and he had no proper feeling of the obligation which he had violated. Nathan said not a word about conscience, or moral sense, or the grounds of moral agency; but

* See 2 Sam. 12:1—14.

he stated a case. There were two men, one rich, and the other poor. The rich man had exceeding many flocks and herds; and the poor man had nothing but one little ewe lamb. And the rich man spared to take of his own flocks to dress for a traveller, but took the poor man's lamb. David, looking at this deed as committed by another, and having his judgement thus freed from the bias of self-love, instantly pronounced the man who had done it worthy of death. Nathan then charged the deed upon David. "Thou art the man." David's conscience was roused; and with a penitent heart he said, "I have sinned against the Lord."

Jesus, with consummate skill, made use of the same principle in his parables. Always fixing upon the particular truth which was appropriate to the case, he presented it to view with great clearness, and in a manner perfectly adapted to guard against the blinding influence of passion, to suppress the disposition of men to self-justification, thoroughly to awaken their consciences, and to induce them to pass a just sentence upon themselves. There is no part of Scripture, from which we can derive more useful lessons as to the best manner of exhibiting the truths of religion in public and in private, than the parables of Christ. Let us study them again and again, and with increasing interest, for this very purpose.

When Peter addressed the Jews on the day of Pentecost, he did not go about to prove to them that they were moral and accountable beings, but by a proper exhibition of those truths which were specially applicable to their case, and suited to awaken their moral faculties, made them *feel* that they were moral and accountable. He charged them with crucifying Jesus of Nazareth, whom God had made both Lord and Christ. His discourse brought things to view which affected their consciences and their hearts, and led them to say, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?"

See how the Apostle Paul labors to awaken in the unbelieving and self-righteous Jews a sense of their violated obligations and their ill-desert. Instead of declaring to them that they have a conscience, he declares those plain and pungent truths which are suited to rouse conscience from its slumbers. Instead of telling them that they are intelligent moral agents, he endeavors to convince them that they are *sinner*s, *without excuse*. And what kind of considerations does he address to them for this purpose? They are considerations adapted, not to an abstract intellect, but to the conscience and the heart. He says; "Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art, that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemn-

est thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things. But we are sure that the judgement of God is according to truth against them who commit such things. And thinkest thou this, O man, that judgest them who do such things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgement of God? Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness, and forbearance, and long-suffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance? But after thy hardness and impenitent heart, treasurest up to thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgement of God; who will render to every man according to his deeds."—"Behold, thou art called a Jew, and retest in the law, and makest thy boast of God, and knowest his will, and approvest the things which are more excellent, being instructed out of the law, and art confident that thou thyself art a guide of the blind, a light to them who are in darkness, &c. Thou therefore who teachest another, teachest thou not thyself? Thou that preachest a man should not steal, dost thou steal? Thou that sayest, a man should not commit adultery, dost thou commit adultery?—Thou that makest thy boast of the law, through breaking the law dishonorest thou God?"*

This is only one instance of the plain, skilful, impressive manner, in which Paul labored to convince men of sin. Numerous other instances, equally striking, might easily be produced.

Go through the Scriptures, and you will find it a general fact, that those teachers who were indued with wisdom from above, labored to impress the minds of men with a sense of their obligation as moral agents, not by asserting the fact of their moral agency, nor by discoursing on the grounds of moral obligation, but by holding forth and applying those momentous, holy truths, which were adapted to awaken their moral faculties, to convince them of sin, and lead them to repentance.

Now, brethren and fellow-laborers in the holy ministry, what better can we do, than to make ourselves familiar with the manner in which Christ and his prophets and apostles treated this momentous subject, and to regard them as our models? Who is able to make improvements upon the honest, affectionate, and faithful manner of the inspired teachers? Happy shall we be if, by all our efforts, we come up half way to this exalted and perfect standard. Let us study the sacred volume with more intenseness of thought, and more of the spirit of prayer; so that we may have our habit of thinking, reasoning,

* Rom. 2:1—6, and 17—23.

and feeling, and our mode of teaching, formed in this divine mould.

These then are the results of our reasoning thus far. The general and important fact, that man is a moral agent, and under perfect obligation to obey the divine law, is so evident and certain, that it needs no proof, and may properly be taken for granted by Christian preachers. Still, in consequence of the great spiritual blindness and stupidity which sin has brought upon the minds of men, much needs to be done to awaken them to a lively perception of their moral existence, and their high moral obligations. But what is the best manner of doing this? The inspired teachers generally labor to do it, not by directly asserting and proving that we have a moral nature, (which would be like asserting and proving to men whom you invite to see a picture or a landscape, that they have eyes, and are able to see; or to men whom you invite to a concert of music, that they have ears to hear;) but they labor to do it by a clear exhibition of the most important objects,—by an earnest and faithful declaration of the most plain, sacred, and moving truths. Let us pursue the same object in the same way, honoring the inspired volume, diligently following our infallible guide, and faithfully preaching God's holy law and the Gospel of Jesus Christ, so that our hearers may never have cause to complain, that when they come as poor, perishing sinners, hungering for the bread of life, they are treated with a dry dissertation on the philosophy of the law, or the philosophy of the Gospel.

"PRETENSIONS OF THE EVANGELICAL CLASS."

A late number (Sept. 1831) of the *Edinburg Review*, under cover of a work purporting to form the subject of one of its articles, (An. V.) contains a severe attack on the principles and practice of the "*Evangelical Class*" of Christians. The writer of the article accuses this class of Christians of arrogant assumptions of preeminent piety; of false notions on the subject of public amusements, particularly theatres and ball-rooms; and of perverse misapplications of Scripture to the amusements which they reprobate, and to the doctrines which they uphold.

Charges so serious, in a work of so high a character, and es-

pecially as they are brought forward with great professions of candor, and supported by a lengthened array of arguments, are perhaps worthy of some notice and reply. How much soever we may prefer to let pass, unobserved, the common assaults of the enemies of religion, there are times when silence might be considered rather as a tacit acquiescence in deserved censure, than an exemplification of the spirit of our divine Master. But in the present instance, there are other reasons for refuting the slanderous accusations brought against the followers of Christ. The Article in question, although marked by the enmity of a heart unchanged by grace, and replete with falsehood and false reasoning, contains some truths;—truths which should cause the ears of Christians to tingle;—truths which, even from an enemy, may become instruments of good, if they are made the subjects of frequent reflection and proper application to the conduct of life.

We shall, therefore, pass through the Article, noting the falseness of the statements, and the fallacy of the arguments, and paying due attention to the truths with which they are mingled.

The principal question discussed is, whether participation in the customary amusements of life place us among the class designated in Scripture as "*the world*,"—to whom reference is had when the disciples are commanded, 'Come out from among them and be ye separate, saith the Lord,' &c. In answering this question, the author attempts to shew that the amusements of the world are not *more sinful in their nature and tendency than many other pursuits*, and that worldly-mindedness is not to be inferred from participation in them.

Thus no attempt is made to justify these amusements on the ground of their *intrinsic merits*, as having a tendency to good, or even as harmless; but simply on the ground that, in comparison with other pursuits, they are no worse. Whether this mode of reasoning be satisfactory to the conscience and understanding of the author, we do not presume to decide; but in the judgement of serious Christians, it will be very unsatisfactory. If any thing evil is to be tolerated, adopted, supported, because there are other things *as evil*, what limit is there to the introduction of fashionable vice? What possibility of elevating the standard of either taste or morals? This is precisely the plea of the cut-throat, and highway-man; precisely the argument used by the retailer or wholesale vender of poison, to support himself in destroying individual character, breaking up the blessed enjoyments of home, rending asunder the bonds of society, and damning the souls of his fellow men. A cause is truly

weak, whose boldest advocate must lay the foundations of its defence on the rotten basis of a common corruption,—the basis of defect and weakness in all other things beside.

The specification of the author's intended plan of argument is followed by the assertion, that the Evangelical class of Christians have made abstinence from these amusements, "which are no more sinful in their nature and tendency than many other pursuits," the only test of Christian character, without any reference whatever to the great moral evidences of the effect of religion on the mind. Now this assertion is utterly false. Nowhere, among even those who have most earnestly opposed the seductions of the theatre, and similar places of amusement, has abstinence and separation from them been made the *sole* test of religious character. It is true, that in looking for the evidences of a change from sin to holiness, from the love of the world and its toys, to a love for God and the infinite realities of an eternal state, Christians do rejoice to discover that disrelish for mere earthly pleasure, that contempt for worldly amusements, that abhorrence of the seductions of vice, which are the result of laying up treasures in heaven,—of following in the footsteps of our Lord. And it should be so. What relish can the ransomed soul, whose thoughts are on God and heaven, feel for the petty bubbles of mere idle pleasure? But never has this change of feelings with regard to amusements been made the *sole* test of Christian character. Much less has it ever been allowed to serve as a shield to cover the absence of other evidences of religious affections.

In pursuing the argument, that the public amusements spoken of are no worse than other pursuits, the author endeavors to shew, that the Evangelical class engage in other pursuits as sinful in their nature and tendency as worldly pleasures. He also asserts (what is not true) that this class proudly assume for themselves perfect innocence of the crime of *abusing the things of life*;—a sin of which all men are more or less guilty, and exemption from which no class of Christians ever yet dared claim.

The illustration of the proposition that the Evangelical class are engaged in pursuits as bad as worldly amusements is given in the fact, that they are as deeply engaged—as completely absorbed—as other men, in the pursuit after wealth. A most appalling picture is then drawn, from *the scriptures*—of the sinfulness of this service of mammon; and from *the life*—of the devotion with which professed Christians engage in the service; and although the coloring be exaggerated by an unhallowed imagination, yet in its principal features the delineation

tion, alas, is too near the truth. Our hearts burned within us, when we read the description, and remembered how zealously the labor for the meat which perisheth is every where carried on by Christians;—how grasping is their desire, and how untiring their effort to amass earthly wealth;—and above all, how totally they forget to use it as the means of advancing the cause of their Lord and master. It is not the mere seeking after, or the possession, of worldly wealth, for which Christians are justly condemned. For if, in the spirit of benevolent piety, the results of patient industry, of skill, and of the smiles of fortune, are given to promote the diffusion of eternal truth and happiness, then do that skill and industry appear in a holy and lovely light. We hope that the days of self-denial, of self-devotion, are about to return upon the Christian world,—in which the followers of Christ shall emulate his blessed example, and make their time, their health, their talents, their property, contribute to the performance of their Father's business. And in hastening on the triumphal chariot of Him who shall be King of nations, we care not if even his enemies aid in knocking away the obstacles which impede its progress.

But examining this illustration as pertaining to the author's main argument, we see at once the unreasonableness of censuring Christians for engaging in the serious business of life, as if by so doing they were needlessly exposing themselves to temptation. For Providence has so framed us, and so placed us, that we are compelled to engage in labor,—in that universal toiling after property, to suspend which would be to destroy society, and depopulate the world. Whatever may be the common tendency of money-getting, we must make it a part of our duty. And whether we look to the law of nature or of the Bible, we see in both, with equal clearness, the great doctrine of industry inculcated. That this engagement ordinarily tends to evil, is a corollary of the doctrine of our universally corrupt disposition. It becomes the duty of Christians to counteract this tendency—to make the acquisition and possession of wealth of service to the best interests of their race. The same excuse could never be given for indulgence in those worldly amusements which are needless, extravagant, unprofitable, nay pernicious; the consumers of time, and property, and sober thought.

Not only is the argument thus faulty, but the author draws from it a conclusion still more unreasonable. By his own confession, the Evangelical class abstain from these public amusements, whose evil tendency is allowed; and by his shewing, they are no more than other men busied in the search after wealth: and yet he says they stand *precisely in the same pre-*

dicament. This is a very strange conclusion indeed! How is it possible to deduce from it the preceding facts. Two points are stated, the one of resemblance, the other of difference; and yet the things compared are precisely alike! It is like saying that two persons are exactly similar in morals, both of whom are cheats; while one of them is temperate, and the other a drunkard.

But to crown the climax of sophistry, it is said that as enjoyment, under various forms, is the object of pursuit to the Evangelical class, as well as to all others, and that as amusements are only so many means of producing enjoyment, therefore, those who approve, and those who censure amusements are on the same footing, seeking a common object by different means. Now this, it will be seen, is the philosophy of the brothel, the gaming-house, and the various nurseries and seminaries of crime, in levelling all actions and men to the same grade, and commingling virtue in loathsome brotherhood with vice. This is the reasoning which equalizes angels and devils on the common ground of pursuit after enjoyment, and destroys all moral distinction between the benevolent Being who is on the throne of the universe, delighting to behold the happiness of his creatures, and the sovereign of hell, who delights to thwart the purposes and ruin the creatures of Jehovah.

Had the writer succeeded in placing upon the same footing the amusements and the business of life, he would not even then have proved his main proposition, which is, that these amusements are not contrary to Christian character, nor wrong in themselves, nor inevitably evil in their tendency; and that participation in them is therefore innocent or even useful. Sensible of this defect he proceeds with an attempt to remedy it. He argues that they cannot be unscriptural, on the ground that they are harmless, or, that they are not *necessarily* evil in their tendency. But experience has shewn their inevitable results;—and the Bible teaches us that any pursuit which has in view no good end, and exposes its followers to sin, must be wrong. The risk of evil should never be incurred save in the pursuit of good; and this is not the age to believe that the theatre and ball-room are productive of any moral or intellectual good, which might not be more firmly secured, and with infinitely less risk, in some other way. There is a total failure of proof from *principles* to support his doctrine, and the author had better have confined himself to reasoning from the practice of the Evangelical class.

To be sure the argumentum ad hominem is sad proof of a weak cause. We rejoice whenever we see error driven from its

entrenchments of seeming principle, and compelled to exhibit itself in this futile mode of hostility. And, therefore, while the advocates of theatrical amusements, and of other similar devices to kill precious time, and waste the hours of probation in thoughtless folly, are unable to defend themselves on the strength of their cause, are forced to admit the correctness of their opponent's theory, and can only rail at the imperfections of their practice, we must believe that truth is near her triumph.

The author's reasonings on general principles, and on the practice of the Evangelical class, are both (if not equally) extremely feeble, as may be seen from his defence of the drama against the charge of profaneness, and of a tendency to demoralize the actors. The profaneness of the stage is justified by the like sin in painting, and the other fine arts; and the objection to its moral influence is met by an accusation of inconsistency in those Christians who make the objection, inasmuch as they patronize the slave trade, by wearing the cotton, and eating the sugar, which are the products of slave labor. This last accusation might be easily answered, by showing that Christians have led the way in the cause of the abolition of slavery with untiring zeal; and that the products of slave labor are now mostly brought from those countries where the slave-trade is abolished.

The same weakness may be seen in the author's effort to show, that the objections to theatres &c. have arisen, not from sound principle, but from a two-fold and pernicious habit which he says has become very prevalent; viz. the habit of *distinguishing between religion and morals*, and of *reducing morals to very narrow bounds*. He says that the Evangelical class make a wrong distinction between religion and morality; demanding of their members merely separation from worldly amusements, a shew of zeal in benevolent enterprizes, and an observance of the external duties of public worship, and allowing them to be turbulent, factious, uncharitable, full of worldly ambition, subtle, supple, sly, selfish, contemners of the truth when falsehood suits their purpose; and all this uncondemned, unimpeached. A more sweeping and undeserved slander we have never seen. By its grossness it utterly refutes itself. The Evangelical class do indeed distinguish morality from religion, in such a way as to believe that one may have some claims to the first, and no claim at all to the second; but never so as to imagine that one can be religious who is not also moral. True piety is of both heart and life. It looks to both God and man. It produces holiness of motive and purpose, and of course purity of conduct, in its possessor. It cannot exist where the heart is unholy, any more than where the

life is flagitious. And this is the creed of the Evangelical class.

In pursuance of the slander, this class of Christians are charged with the other habit, of circumscribing morality within too narrow limits, in making it merely the opposite of looseness of life. If this were true, it would be a grievous fact; but being untrue, it aids not the author's object in the least.

In conclusion, I will only say, that in the attack on the practice of Evangelical Christians, there is truth enough to do them good, if they will act on the principle, "*licet ab hoste doceri*;" but in the defence of the amusements of the world, there is not a single sound argument adduced, from Scripture or philosophy, to shew them useful and desirable, or even indifferent;—and in the argument drawn from the conduct of the Evangelical class, there is such an exhibition of malice, as totally contradicts the pretensions to candor with which the article commences; and the whole structure of the paper bodes ill to the cause of theatres and ball-rooms.

WHY SMOOTH THINGS ARE WANTED.

A Letter to a Layman in answer to two Inquiries.

MY DEAR SIR,

In a late conversation you stated, that those with whom you are associated in public worship were, in many instances, uneasy under the ministrations of your pastor. The complaint is, that he does not preach enough of consolation—enough of the promises of the Gospel. They want more of this, and less of doctrines—less of the terrors of the law. At the same time you requested my views as the cause of these complaints,—and the course which ought to be pursued in regard to them. I shall answer your questions in the order stated.

I. Why do so many of your people call for smooth things, in opposition to the doctrines of the Gospel? Have you ever noticed the character of those who make this demand? I believe you will find them under one of the four following classes; and therefore, pointing out these classes distinctly will be answering your first question.

1. Those in a church, who are self-deceived, will complain of the want of smooth things.

That there are such in almost every church, we have reason to fear. Christ predicted this. The day of judgement only will reveal the *true* church of Christ. Now the mariner expects to be tossed and shaken while out upon the ocean, but hopes for quiet when once the ship is moored in the harbor. When the hypocrite has entered the visible church of Christ, he hopes to remain there without disturbance. He has closely drawn and well-adjusted the covering over his heart, and cannot but feel the hand to be rude that would turn it aside. You may admire this covering, but must not look behind it. You may view Jerusalem by day-light, but do not search it with candles. You may talk about religion and for it, and act for it, and quarrel for it,—any thing if you will not urge him to *feel* its power.

Many who would not openly call for smooth things, would highly relish them if thrown in their way. It has always been noticed, that when a community are set against the truth of God, many in the visible church are among the most decided. Who hated the teaching of Isaiah the most? The priest, the high professor. Who nauseated the preaching of Christ the most? The Pharisee, who thanked God that he was not as other men, and who could not endure the searchings of the Son of God. Many, we have reason to fear, enter the pale of the church, who feel a consciousness that they have never been born of God; and who, because they *are* there, will hold up a thick shield, lest the truth should reach them. Can they lay aside all their hopes, all their righteousness, and confess that they were deceived—were hypocrites? This is too much. Such persons would always call for tender dealing and for smooth things, were it not that, as soon as they do this, they shew distinctly what they are: so that the head may cleave to the truth long after the heart has loathed it. Your church is large; it has generally been prospered; has never been shaken; it is one of the oldest in the country; it embraces many who have been successful in the pursuit of wealth. I know you will forgive my frankness if I express to you the fear, that among those who are now calling for a more winning exhibition of the Gospel, will be found some, at least, who will make the same complaint against their final Judge.

2. Backsliding Christians call for smooth things.

In almost every church, members are found who are sleeping on their post. Neither hot nor cold, they enjoy nothing, feel nothing, hope for nothing, and have nothing like spiritual communion with their Lord and Master. Such persons dread disturbance. You may preach to the unconverted sinner; you

may hold up the situation of the openly wicked; you may walk around *their* tent, provided you do not enter. David glowed with indignation against the rich man who spared his own flock, and went and took the lamb reared in the bosom of his poor neighbor. The feet of the prophet were beautiful upon the mountains, and his eloquence admirable, till he said, *thou art the man*.—I have met with numbers in the church, who would allow the *whole church* to be addressed, if too close an individual application were not made. Generally speaking, you will find none complain of sharp arrows, unless they are pricked. The wounded of the flock will flutter. An uneasiness under the searchings of truth is a decided symptom of declension in a church. This dislike may not be openly expressed, but it would be a prodigious relief to the backslider to hear more of love, and less of doctrines.

3. Those who are secretly trusting to their morality for salvation, will desire smooth preaching.

Few will *say*, perhaps, that they are building on morality; but they live on, and know they are hastening to the judgement, and seek no other refuge. And to what are they trusting? They know nothing of the mercy of Christ,—and are unmoved by all the motives of the Bible; and to what are they trusting? Most evidently to their morality. Such hearers do not, cannot, relish the great doctrines of the Gospel.

Take the doctrine of *human depravity*. If it be true, that every imagination of the heart of man is only evil continually—if the Holy Ghost knew what was fact, when he testified that the carnal heart is enmity against God, not subject to his law, neither indeed can be, so that they who are in the flesh cannot please God;—if all this is true, it cuts up self-righteousness with a two-edged sword. It is the death-warrant to every hope founded on morality. Consequently a man trusting to such a hope, cannot but dislike the doctrine of depravity. It is a hard saying.

So of the *atonement*. Christ died for our sins, and there is none other name given under heaven among men whereby we must be saved. But the atonement is useless on the plan of morality, the deeds of the law; and any man building upon his morality, will either openly or secretly dislike the doctrine that Christ died the just for the unjust.

The doctrine of *regeneration* by the influences of the Holy Spirit is equally objectionable.—If morality is the idol, you may not take it away by any of the great doctrines of the Bible. Too much shielded to feel a single conviction of sin, too

proud to look to the Lamb of God, yet with no weapon but what is impotent as he tries to overcome the sins of the heart, such a moral man stands by himself, enjoying no good, and communicating none. He would have the Gospel preached, but you must not undermine his expectations. He must be suffered to walk in a genteel path to heaven, if he is only upright in his dealings, and if he does as well as he can, i. e. as well as it is convenient for him to do, in order to satisfy—not the violated law of God—but his own half-bribed conscience.

4. Those who are living in known sin, whether secret or open, have a great antipathy to the doctrines of the Bible.

In order to live quietly in any known sin, a man must turn away his eyes from himself, and look on something else. Let him fix them on the mercy of God. It is a delightful vision. High above all that is created—his throne from everlasting to everlasting—dwelling in unapproachable light—in his right hand is the sceptre of mercy. He created children, he sustains them, he loves them, and will not at last throw them away. ‘True. I am frail, weak, and not without my faults; and who is? But I mean no hurt, am as good as my neighbors, and better than many who call themselves Christians;—am no hypocrite, and have a good heart at bottom. I look at the glorious character of God—all mercy—and I do not believe he will ever make me miserable.’

Now the difficulty is, this is not the character of the God of the Bible. He never had any such tenderness towards an impenitent, unholy sinner. The rivers of life do not flow from his throne for such. Go to the ocean in a soft summer’s day. It is still and smooth as a sea of glass. But is this a full picture of the ocean? Is it never heaved, never raging, yawning, dangerous? God is not always thus forbearing towards the unholy sinner. Did Cain find him so? Did the people of Noah’s generation find him so? Did Judas find him so? Will the day of judgement show him to be such? Why take *one* part of his character, and look at it, and that the only part, too, at which the sinner dares to look? Why not look at his justice, at his holiness, and at his omnipotence, all guided by eternal truth and consistency? Oh! what madness—to rush on in sin against the Bible, the testimony of the church, of heaven, of God himself, and yet try to believe that God is too merciful to find it in his heart to do justice to his truth, or to his law? Is it any wonder that such a man instinctively dreads direct home preaching? And have you none such among your people?

Before answering your second question, suffer me to point out,

very briefly, the methods which ministers who preach smooth things take.

1. That of preaching positive error.

All who take this method, like Satan the first preacher of error, go directly in the face of the revelation of heaven. Sin is so small an evil, that it neither deserves nor will receive the judgements threatened: for God has but one attribute, which is love or compassion, and he will exercise that, though in so doing he sacrifice both his justice and his truth. It is not impossible for men to preach what directly contradicts the Bible. We have multitudes of such examples in the Scriptures, and may see them daily. The way-faring man, though a fool, *need* not err, for the revelation from God is plain. Do those then, who teach open, palpable error, believe the Scriptures? I put the question in another shape. You call a physician to your bed-side. He finds your eye bright, the small deep flush on your cheek, the ceaseless cough, attended with a debility that is extreme. It is the consumption. He goes to his books, they describe the case minutely, and say that no medicine can cure it. But *he* says you can be cured, will be cured; and that too in a few days. You tell him your father, your mother, and all your family died with the consumption. No matter; he says, he can cure you! Does he *believe* his books? No. But may he not be sincere in believing he can cure you? Possibly, for there is much sincere folly in the world; but whatever he may believe, he does not believe his books. Nor does that man believe the Bible, who with one hand holds it up, and with the other holds up a direct contradiction, which he must labor to prove true, because such proof pleases his hearers.

2. Omitting to declare the whole truth of God.

Most ministers have an idea that the whole truth of God should at some time or other be brought into light. But with many, the right time seems never to come; for there never was a congregation gathered, among whom some could not be found, upon whose ears the truth would fall gratingly. Some are so fearful, lest the sword of the spirit should have a rough edge, that they hardly dare use it out of the scabbard. The effects are the same as if positive error was taught. I go to see a friend, who has been bitten by a viper. He shews me the wound, describes the viper, and says he does not know how much of danger there is. I look at the limb, and know that within a week he must be a dead man. But I ask questions about his confinement, or about his family. I say nothing untrue, but I do not leave the impression that he is a dying man;

and the effect is just the same as if I tell him he will recover. So does he ruin the soul, who preaches just enough of truth to quiet the conscience, without ever alarming it.

3. Covering up the truth with ornament.

A refined and cultivated taste will find no enemy in religion. But if one spends his strength in merely dressing out his thoughts, he can do little else. The dish of bitter herbs must always stand beside the unleavened bread, and though you may weave garlands of flowers around it, its contents will still be bitter. It certainly is no recommendation to the soldier that his arms are not bright, but if he spend his whole time and strength in polishing them, he will be of but little use to his country. There has been a great fastidiousness of taste of late, (though the recent revivals are curing the evil,) and many congregations turn away from truth, unless she comes loaded with ornament,—which she can wear, to be sure, but which she needs not, and by which her energies are cramped. Mark the path which Christ trod. He has many flowers, but he never turned out of his way to pick them up. The great aim of the preacher should be to carry the truth of God to the heart, and press it warm there. This may be done by a hand gloved and ornamented indeed, but there is great danger lest the hand attract attention, while the life which it contains is overlooked and forgotten. The arrow may be taken from the quiver of the Almighty, but thrown by a hand so careful and delicate, that the thinnest breast-plate will turn it aside. I do not suppose that every preacher can have the fervent negligence of Paul, or the vehemence of Peter; but if all had the eloquence of feeling, few would fail of being powerful.

II. I now turn to your second question; viz. what course ought to be pursued by you, and those with you who have hitherto upheld your minister in the stand which he has taken.

Put it down, in the first place, that he does not pursue this course without knowing its unpopularity. The experiment has been going on for five thousand years, and the result is, that no minister can preach the whole counsel of God without being opposed. Prophets were disgusting, mere parable-speakers. Christ was abhorred. He delivered hard sayings, was mad, and had a devil. Paul was a babler, and beside himself, and he and his fellow-apostles were every where spoken against. It has always been thus. Why, then, are your people offended at their minister? He knows he is going counter to popular feeling, and is drawing odium upon himself. Why does he do it? He does not love to be hated, shunned, sneered at, slandered, to be the butt of ridicule, and the song of the drunk-

ard. No man loves to see the moral turning away displeased, and the rich and learned standing aloof. *Why* then does he do so? Because he conscientiously dare not speak smooth things, and say or act as if it will be well with the wicked. And will you be offended at a man for acting up to the dictates of conscience, even when he suffers by so doing? You may pity his narrow views, and commiserate the bondage of his spirit; but you ought not to be offended at him. You may envy a faithful minister his talents, his learning, his eloquence, his income, any thing; but if you knew the deep dislike which he every week encountered, you would cease to envy. The Jews would have made Christ a king; they would have staked their lives in his cause, if he would but compromise. But he would not, and therefore he was called a madman, and put to death. Your minister knows and feels all this; and he knows what would relieve him. But he may not, dares not, try the remedy.

Put it down, in the second place, that no man can do good without encountering opposition. It is not the person, but the *influence* of your minister that is so obnoxious.—You will not understand me to say, that if a man meets with opposition he is of course doing good. I only mean, that it is contrary to the experience of all useful men, from Abel down to the beloved disciple, to expect to do good without opposition. The current of the world is strong, the waters rush on, and he who undertakes to swim up stream needs firm nerves and a resolution unconquerable. I know it is said that a man who acts for Christ *need* not meet with opposition; i. e. he is to blame if he does. But how was it with Moses, the meekest man that ever lived? With Elijah when he was hiding in caves? With Jeremiah, when shut up in prison? With Ezekiel, when he spake parables? Which of the Prophets ever set foot in Jerusalem, without being persecuted? And was human nature in the days of Christ and his Apostles different from what it now is? Not at all. The corrupt tree cannot now bring forth good fruit. How often have I seen a bold, firm, good man, set aside by a church, because the wicked clamored against him. We know that the lion will one day eat straw like the ox; but not till the Gospel has subdued the earth. Nor will strong, marked, powerful opposition to the Gospel cease till that time. Change your minister, and you do not mend the matter. If you have another man who is any more popular, after the first freshness is gone by, it will only be because he is less faithful. If the wicked ever feel complacently towards him, it will be because his reproofs do not reach them.

Put it down once more, that the power of truth will, if steadily adhered to by its friends, gain the victory. From the days of Isaiah to the present hour, men have not ceased to desire smooth things. For nearly two thousand years, it has been predicted that the great doctrines of the Bible were going out of fashion, and that it would be but a short time ere the whole world would be rationalists or infidels. Why does it not come to pass? Why do those old-fashioned doctrines of Peter and Paul still keep such a hold on mankind? Is the world so full of darkness?—And cannot the efforts of men for two thousand years, poring in light all the while, do away this darkness? Cannot the sword of the Spirit be sheathed, so that its ravages may be stayed? Even here, in a country where the press may at once disenthral the nation, the adherents of the doctrines of the Bible are so numerous, and so fast multiplying, that all the wicked are quaking before them. Is there no way of converting mankind into sceptics, deists, liberalists, and the like? There is not, unless a way be first discovered, in which the consciences of men may be put finally to rest. As long as that worm gnaws, there is nothing done. The truth of God still continues its hold upon the conscience. You may quarrel with the truth, deny it, plunge into the darkness of infidelity, drag through life in sin, but oh the conscience! She will whisper, and thunder, like the voice of God. What an array is there now against the Gospel. The press groans in its attempts to destroy it. The dignified Quarterly, the newspaper, the halls of legislation, the little tract, all unite against it. Oh! if the cause of truth be not founded upon a rock, then may we wish for the wings of the dove to fly away from the windy storm; but as it is, the church of Christ stands,—a rock in the ocean, lifting up its high head, neither smiling nor frowning at the waves as they roll and foam beneath it. Eternal sunshine gilds its top.

You will understand me, then, to advise, that your minister go directly forward, keeping a conscience void of offence, and shrinking from no duty; and that his church hold up his hands by prayer. The results may safely be left to God.

T.

R E V I E W S .

THE LIFE AND TIMES OF THE REV. RICHARD BAXTER.
With a Critical Examination of his Writings. By
REV. WILLIAM ORME. *In two volumes.* Boston: Crock-
er & Brewster. 1831.

SELECT PRACTICAL WRITINGS OF RICHARD BAXTER.
With a Life of the Author. By LEONARD BACON, *Pas-
tor of the first church in New Haven.* *In two volumes.*
New Haven: Durrie & Peck. 1831.

(Concluded from p. 161.)

When Baxter first went to Kidderminster, he had to encounter ignorance, immorality, and hatred of the Gospel, among all classes of the people. The holy doctrines which he preached were, of course, extremely unpalatable. His unwearyed efforts to bring about a general reformation of manners they would not brook. Especially were the common people so incensed against him, on account of his favoring parliament and church reform, that, as we have already stated, they sought his life and compelled him to leave the town. But after his return, by the blessing of God upon his unceasing labors, a marvellous change was gradually effected. The particular account which he himself has given of this change, and of the course of religious instruction under which it took place, ought to be read over and over again, by every friend of the Gospel, and especially by every minister. A very brief abstract is all that can be inserted here.

Besides what he did upon the Sabbath, he preached a stated lecture on Thursday, and also occasional sermons on other days, as the state of his flock seemed to require. Every Thursday evening, he held a sort of conference in his own house, which appears to have been well attended, at which some one repeated the sermon which he had delivered on that day, and all were at liberty to ask questions and propose cases of conscience. The prayers were sometimes offered by himself and sometimes by lay members of the church. Once a week, also, "some of the younger sort, who were not fit to pray in so great an assembly," met with a few more experienced Christians, for devotional exercises. Every Saturday night, the people were accustomed to meet at each other's houses, to repeat

over the sermon of the preceding Sabbath, "and to pray and prepare themselves for the following day." This, no doubt, was a very profitable exercise; but we are tempted to ask, how nine tenths of the members of *our* churches would sustain such a weekly tax upon their memories? Days of fasting and prayer were also observed once in a few weeks by Baxter and his congregation, with special reference to the state of religion, the voice of providence, or the aspect of public affairs.

"Two days every week, my assistant and myself took fourteen families between us, for private catechising and conference; he going through the parish and the town coming to me. I first heard them recite the words of the catechism, and then examined them about the sense; and, lastly, urged them, with all possible engaging reason and vehemency, to answerable affection and practice. If any of them were stalled through ignorance or bashfulness, I forbore to press them any further to answers, but made them hearers, and either examined others, or turned all into instruction and exhortation. I spent about an hour with each family, and admitted no others to be present; lest bashfulness should make it burthensome, or any should talk of the weaknesses of others: so that all the afternoons on Mondays and Tuesdays I spent in this way, after I had begun it, (for it was many years before I did attempt it,) and my assistant spent the morning of the same day in the same employment. Before that, I only catechised them in the church, and conferred occasionally with an individual."

Besides all these labors, Baxter felt himself constrained, by the circumstances in which he was placed, to practice medicine five or six years at Kidderminster; and as he never would take the smallest compensation, he was 'crowded with patients, so that almost twenty would be at his door at once.' At length, he induced a pious physician to come and settle in the town, and thus threw off a burden which interfered with his studies, and caused him much anxiety, lest by some of his prescriptions he might do more harm than good. It is hardly credible, that so great an invalid as Baxter was, during all this period, could find time for writing and publishing books. But he tells us that, aside from his pastoral duties, as mentioned above, his "writings were his *chief daily labors*;" and all this, when he was so weak, that he could not rise till seven in the morning, and when, owing to his complicated infirmities, he required an hour or more for dressing!

Every first Wednesday in the month, he held a meeting for church discipline. Once a month, also he met with his brethren for prayer and ministerial conference, besides inviting those of them who were in the habit of attending his Thursday lecture to spend the afternoon with him at his house, "in the truest recreation." What this "truest recreation" was, with such a man as Richard Baxter, the pious reader will be at no loss to conjecture.

It would have been strange indeed if, under "the economy of grace," such a course of preaching and pastoral labors, steadily pursued from year to year, had not been crowned with great success. We do not forget that God exercises his sovereign prerogative, in the bestowment of spiritual as well as temporal blessings; but we do not believe that any minister of Baxter's devoted piety, and equally faithful and persevering in his efforts to save souls, will, in similar circumstances, ever be left to 'plant and water' fourteen years, or half that time, without 'receiving wages and gathering fruit unto life eternal.' And sure we are, that ministers cannot be too cautious about ascribing their want of success to the sovereignty of God in withholding his Spirit, when it may be chiefly owing to their own deficiencies. As Baxter's labors at Kidderminster were unremitting, and singularly adapted to the great end in view, his success in 'winning souls to Christ' was greater than he had ever dared to anticipate; and it would be doing him injustice to record it in any words but his own.

"I have mentioned my secret and acceptable employment; let me, to the praise of my gracious Lord, acquaint you with some of my success; and I will not suppress it, though I foreknow that the malignant will impute the mention of it to pride and ostentation.

"My public preaching met with an attentive, diligent auditory. Having broke over the brunt of the opposition of the rabble before the wars, I found them afterwards tractable and unprejudiced. Before I entered into the ministry, God blessed my private conference to the conversion of some, who remain firm and eminent in holiness to this day: but then, and in the beginning of my ministry, I was wont to number them as jewels; but since then I could not keep any number of them. The congregation was usually full, so that we were fain to build five galleries after my coming thither; the church itself being very capacious, and the most commodious and convenient that ever I was in. Our private meetings, also, were full. On the Lord's days there was no disorder to be seen in the streets; but you might hear a hundred families singing psalms and repeating sermons as you passed through them. In a word, when I came thither first, there was about one family in a street that worshipped God and called on his name, and when I came away, there were some streets wher: there was not one poor family in the side that did not so; and that did not, by professing serious godliness, give us hopes of their sincerity. And in those families which were the worst, being inns and alehouses, usually some persons in each house did seem to be religious.

"Though our administration of the Lord's Supper was so ordered as displeased many, and the far greater part kept away, we had six hundred that were communicants; of whom there were not twelve that I had not good hopes of as to their sincerity; those few who consented to our communion, and yet lived scandalously, were excommunicated afterwards. I hope there were also many who had the fear of God, that came not to our communion in the sacrament, some of them being kept off by husbands, by parents, by masters, and some dissuaded by men that differed from us. Those many that kept away, yet took it patiently, and did not revile us as doing them wrong: and those unruly young men who were excommunicated bore it patiently as to their outward behavior, though their hearts were full of bitter ess."

"Some of the poor men did competently understand the body of divinity, and were able to judge in difficult controversies. Some of them were so

able in prayer, that very few ministers did match them in order and fulness, and apt expressions, and holy oratory, with fervency. Abundance of them were able to pray very laudably with their families, or with others. The temper of their minds, and the innocency of their lives, were much more laudable than their parts. The professors of serious godliness were generally of very humble minds and carriage; of meek and quiet behavior unto others; and of blamelessness and innocency in their conversation."

We do not stop to inquire, whether all Baxter's measures to promote the work of the Lord among his people were the very best that could have been adopted; but we feel bound to say, what we fully believe, that the whole history of the church, during the seventeenth century, does not furnish a more striking example, either of ministerial fidelity or success. It strongly reminds us of what Edwards, and Bellamy, and others were permitted to see in America, a century later, and of the still more copious effusions of the Spirit in our own times. Baxter does not indeed call it a *revival*; but if we are to regard things rather than names, it *was* a continued revival of wonderful power; and the blessed fruits of it remained, long after the instrument was laid in the dust. Indeed, the church at Kidderminster, at least in one branch of it, seems to have retained its purity, and to have been blessed with a succession of pious and faithful ministers, to the present time.

Though a moderate friend to civil and religious liberty, Baxter was, in his politics, a decided royalist. He always regarded Cromwell as a usurper, and wondered how it could be that, under such a government, the church enjoyed so much greater prosperity, than it did either before or after the interregnum. He was thankful, however, for the protection which he and his brethren enjoyed under the commonwealth, and held it to be the duty of all men to demean themselves as good and peaceable citizens, whoever in the providence of God might be placed at the head of public affairs. And here it ought to be mentioned, as a proof of Cromwell's magnanimity, or policy, or both, that although he perfectly well understood Baxter's sentiments in regard to the validity of his government, he was so far from molesting the good man in his cure, that he permitted him to preach before him and his court, and actually consulted him in regard to the final settlement of religion in the country.

It is evident that Baxter had no tears to shed over the commonwealth, in its sudden dissolution, and that he contemplated the restoration of Charles second with satisfaction; but still, 'he rejoiced with trembling.' He knew what the ablest and best ministers of the kingdom had suffered in the former reign, and he had great reason to fear, that efforts would be made to renew those persecutions, which had driven so many godly

preachers from their parishes and from the country. He hoped, however, that the king would be inclined to toleration; and he was evidently deceived by that hypocritical policy which Charles found it convenient to adopt, till he should be securely seated upon his throne. This was the golden opportunity, as Baxter thought, to come to an agreement which would secure the religious rights of all parties; and with his constitutional ardor, he devoted himself, heart and soul, to the attainment of this great object. He had an interview with the king, and addressed him with much earnestness and ability on the subject. Commissioners were appointed, conferences were held, and various propositions were made; but nothing was done. The Bishops had the power, and the monarch was not unwilling that they should retain it. The Nonconformists were more cruelly treated than ever; and Baxter himself began to share in their troubles. Having tried in vain to bribe and silence him, by the offer of a Bishopric, the hierarchy determined to make him feel the full weight of its displeasure. Every possible embarrassment was thrown in the way of his resuming his charge at Kidderminster, which he earnestly intreated that he might be permitted to do; and after various abortive negotiations, he found himself most arbitrarily separated from his beloved flock forever.

Up to St. Bartholomew's day, in 1662, when the act of Uniformity went into effect, and about two thousand ministers were ejected from their livings, Baxter adhered to the Church of England, 'through evil report and good report;' but as he could no longer conform with a clear conscience, he went out with the multitude of his brethren, who 'took joyfully the spoiling of their goods,' and were treated as 'the ofscouring of all things,' by the civil and ecclesiastical powers of the state. For about three years after he left Kidderminster, Baxter resided mostly in London, struggling manfully, but in vain, as we have stated already, against that spirit of intolerance, which Charles and his court brought back with them from their exile, and preaching wherever he could find opportunity. In 1663, he left London and retired to Acton, where he remained for some time, and wrote "several considerable works, both practical and controversial."

About this time, he became connected in marriage with a lady of good family by the name of Margaret Charlton. She had been one of his flock at Kidderminster, and under his preaching became eminently pious. Her affection and assiduity did much to alleviate the distresses that were about to follow him.

Between 1665 and 1670, Baxter seems to have shared, with his ejected brethren, in that brief toleration which the great plague and the great fire brought to the metropolis, and to have availed himself of it, by preaching with happy effect amid the numberless graves, and the vast desolations of that devoted city. Within this period, however, his goods were distrained and he was arrested and sent to prison, for holding a conventicle, and for refusing to take the Oxford oath, the most oppressive of all the persecuting enactments of those disastrous times.

During the next six years, Baxter appears to have enjoyed some respite, in common with the nonconformists generally; to have preached in various places with his usual zeal, and in some with great success; and to have made fresh efforts with the government, to procure a relaxation of its stern and unscriptural policy towards the dissenters. At length, he was again arrested, and narrowly escaped being sent to prison.

In 1676, we find him preaching for a short time in the parish of St. Martin, London, "where about 60,000 persons had no church to go to, nor any public worship of God!" Being driven away from that great and perishing population, he went to Swallow Street, whither also he was soon pursued by the minions of the court, and forcibly excluded from the church. From this time up to 1687, he was subjected to sore and almost continual persecution, from the secret abettors of popery, and the open and ungodly partizans of a misnamed *protestant* conformity. His goods were distrained; his books were taken from him; his character was traduced; his person was seized; he was most brutally insulted and vilified from the bench of justice; and, notwithstanding his age and infirmities, was thrown into prison. In short, whatever he attempted to do for Christ and the church was counteracted with a sort of demoniac vigilance and hate; and wherever he went, 'bonds and imprisonment awaited him.' We offer our readers, in the following extracts, a curious specimen of the manner in which the most respectable nonconformist ministers were treated by the highest law officer of Charles second.

"On the 28th of Feb. 1685, Baxter was committed to the King's Bench prison, by warrant of lord chief justice Jeffries, for his 'Paraphrase on the New Testament,' which had been printed a little before; and which was described as a scandalous and seditious book against the government. On his commitment by the chief justice's warrant, he applied for a *habeas corpus*, and having obtained it, he absconded into the country to avoid imprisonment, till the term approached. He was induced to do this from the constant pain he endured, and an apprehension that he could not bear the confinement of a prison.

"On the 6th of May, which was the first day of the term, he appeared in Westminster Hall, and an information was then ordered to be drawn up

against him. On the 14th of May, he pleaded not guilty, to the information. On the 18th of the same month, being much indisposed, it was moved that he might have further time given him before his trial, but this was denied him. He moved for it by his counsel; but Jeffries cried out in a passion, 'I will not give him a minute's time more, to save his life. We have had to do,' said he, 'with other sorts of persons, but now we have a saint to deal with; and I know how to deal with saints as well as sinners. Yonder,' said he, 'stands Oates in the pillory,' (as he actually did at that very time in the New Palace Yard,) 'and he says he suffers for the truth, and so says Baxter; but if Baxter did but stand on the other side of the pillory with him, I would say, two of the greatest rogues and rascals in the kingdom stood there.'

"When I saw," says an eye-witness, "the meek man stand before the flaming eyes and fierce looks of this bigot, I thought of Paul standing before Nero. The barbarous usage which he received drew plenty of tears from my eyes, as well as from others of the auditors and spectators: yet I could not but smile sometimes, when I saw my lord imitate our modern pulpit drollery, which some one saith any man engaged in such a design would not lose for a world. He drove on furiously, like Hannibal over the Alps, with fire and vinegar, pouring all the contempt and scorn upon Baxter, as if he had been a link-boy or knave: which made the people who could not come near enough to hear the indictment or Mr. Baxter's plea, cry out, 'Surely this Baxter had burned the city or the temple of Delphos.' But others said, it was not the custom, now-a-days, to receive ill, except for doing well; and therefore this must needs be some good man that my lord so rails at."

"I beseech your lordship," said Pollexfen, one of Baxter's counsel, "suffer me a word for my client. It is well known to all intelligent men, that he wished as well to the king and royal family, as Mr. Love, who lost his head for endeavoring to bring in the son, long before he was restored. And my lord, Mr. Baxter's loyal and peaceable spirit King Charles would have rewarded with a bishopric, when he came in, if he would have conformed."

"Aye, aye," said the judge, "we know that; but what ailed the old block-head, the unthankful villain, that he would not conform? Was he wiser or better than other men? He hath been, ever since, the spring of the faction. I am sure he hath poisoned the world with his linsey-woolsey doctrine." Here his rage increased to an amazing degree. He called Baxter a conceited, stubborn, fanatical dog. "Hang him," said he, "this one old fellow hath cast more reproach upon the constitution and discipline of our church than will be wiped off this hundred years."

"Mr. Rotherham urged, that if Mr. Baxter's book had sharp reflections upon the church of Rome by name, but spake well of the church of England, it was to be presumed that the sharp reflections were intended only against the prelates of the church of Rome. Baxter said, My lord, I have been so moderate with respect to the church of England, that I have incurred the censure of many of the dissenters on that account."

"Baxter for bishops!" exclaimed Jeffries, "that is a merry conceit indeed!" Upon this, Rotherham turned to a place where it is said, "that great respect is due to those truly called to be bishops among us;" or to that purpose. "Aye," said Jeffries, "this is your Presbyterian cant; truly called to be bishops: that is himself, and such rascals, called to be bishops of Kidderminster, and other such places. Bishops set apart by such factious, snivelling Presbyterians as himself: a Kidderminster bishop he means. According to the saying of a late learned author—And every parish shall maintain a tithing man metropolitan."

Baxter beginning to speak again, Jeffries reviled him; "Richard, Richard, dost thou think we'll hear thee poison the court? Richard, thou art an old fellow, an old knave; thou hast written books enough to load a cart, every one as full of sedition, I might say treason, as an egg is full of meat. Hadst thou been whipped out of thy writing trade forty years ago, it had been happy. Thou pretendest to be a preacher of the Gospel of peace, and thou hast one foot in the grave: it is time for thee to begin to think what account thou

intendest to give. But leave thee to thyself, and I see thou'lt go on as thou hast begun; but, by the grace of God, I'll look after thee. I know thou hast a mighty party, and I see a great many of the brotherhood in corners, waiting to see what will become of their mighty Don, and a Doctor of the party (looking to Dr. Bates) at your elbow; but, by the grace of Almighty God, I'll crush you all. Come, what do you say for yourself, you old knave; come, speak up. What doth he say? I am not afraid of you, for all the snivelling calves you have got about you:" alluding to some persons who were in tears about Mr. Baxter. "Your lordship need not," said the holy man; "for I'll not hurt you. But these things will surely be understood one day; what fool one sort of Protestants are made, to persecute the other." And lifting up his eyes to heaven, said, "I am not concerned to answer such stuff; but am ready to produce my writings for the confutation of all this; and my life and conversation are known to many in this nation."

What an outrage upon humanity! What a mockery of justice! What an indelible blot upon the hierarchy of the seventeenth century! What an everlasting stigma upon the reign of a nominally protestant monarch!—But although "weeping may endure for a night, joy cometh in the morning." The venerable Baxter, the champion of religious toleration for more than half a century, the undaunted confessor, the meek and heroic 'prisoner of the Lord,' was released from his last confinement in 1685, and was fast approaching the close of his long, and active, and pre-eminently useful life. Within a short period, he was to be placed forever beyond the reach of his implacable enemies, and in spite of their pitiful slanders, to leave behind him a name, which 'shall be had in everlasting remembrance.' He spent the last five years of his life in the house of the Rev. Matthew Sylvester, his friend and 'companion in tribulation,' preaching steadily as long as his strength would permit; and then, after languishing for some time in great pain and most exemplary resignation, falling sweetly asleep, Dec. 8, 1691, in the 77th year of his age. "Write, blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: yea saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors, and their works do follow them."

In our reflections upon the life, character and labors of Richard Baxter, we shall be obliged entirely to pass over many fruitful topics, on which the mind delights to dwell, and to glance at others with extreme brevity.

Baxter was, by nature and study, one of the great men of his age. He possessed a mind of extraordinary acuteness, vigor and activity. There was no subject of human investigation so abstruse, that he had not the power to grapple with it; and whatever he took hold of in earnest, he was sure to leave upon it the prints of his strong hand. "As a controversialist," says Mr. Orme, "he had not only no superior, but no equal in his day. In the field of theological warfare he was a giant;

and in the practical instruction of religion, he was no less distinguished." His talents were sufficient to have placed him in the front rank among his contemporaries, in any profession. In defending the nonconformists, and discussing the great principles of toleration, he could with about the same ease dissect a sophism, and mill a prime minister, or an arch bishop. He placed too much reliance upon men's promises ever to be a good politician, and was quite too perpendicular for a courtier; but he had *capacity* enough for the cabinet, or the commission of an ambassador. His early disadvantages have already been noticed; and with all his subsequent application, he never could rise entirely above them. But when he had once got into the sunshine, he grew faster and longer than most other men. He read almost every thing that was worth reading, particularly in his own profession, and his memory was so retentive, that he rarely forgot any thing of importance. He could address the peasant and the monarch with equal pertinacity, and with almost equal ease. He was at home in the palace, and in the cottage. No mind was too low in the scale of improvement, to be susceptible of his influence; and none was so exalted, as not, when he put forth his strength, to feel the presence of a kindred spirit.

We are aware that some may be ready to accuse us of exaggeration, in the general train of these remarks; but that Richard Baxter is entitled to all the cubits that we have assigned him, we appeal to testimony which will not be controverted. Dr. Barrow says, "His practical works were never mended, and his controversial ones seldom confuted." Bishop Wilkins says, "If he had lived in the primitive times, that he would have been one of the fathers of the church; and that it was enough for one age to produce such a person as Baxter." Dr. Bates says, "His books, for their number and variety of matter, make a library." "His style," says Dr. Doddridge, "is inaccurate, because he had no regular education, and because he wrote continually in the view of eternity; but judicious, nervous, spiritual, and remarkably evangelical; a manly eloquence, and the most evident proof of an amazing genius, with respect to which, he may not improperly be called the English Demosthenes." Mr. Wilberforce classes Baxter among the "brightest ornaments of the Church of England," of which, however, as Mr. Orme well remarks, he was not the exclusive property; for though not a Dissenter, Baxter was in the strictest sense a nonconformist. But this is quite immaterial to our present purpose. "With his controversial pieces," says Mr. W. "I am little acquainted; but his practical writings are a treasury of Christian wisdom. It

would be a most valuable service to mankind, to revise them, and perhaps to abridge them, to render them more suited to the taste of modern readers."

It requires no more than a glance at the foregoing extracts, to see that there is a remarkable coincidence of opinion, among Churchmen and Dissenters, Theologians and Literati, in regard to the character and talents of Richard Baxter. This concurrence nobody can regard as accidental. Much less can any one ascribe it to religious or political favoritism; as he differed materially, on points of great importance, from some of his warmest eulogists; and probably did not agree, entirely, with any two of them.

The undoubted truth is, as we have already remarked, Baxter was a *great man*. With ordinary advantages for the development of his powers, he would have been distinguished in any age or country. Such an intellect as his does not come into this world, and remain here three quarters of a century, without making itself known and felt. There was compass, depth, and extraordinary versatility in his mind. It was vigorous, active, and more distinguished for metaphysical acumen, than that of almost any other man of his times. Had Baxter been a skeptic, or a man of accommodating morals, he would have held "a bad pre-eminence" in his life time, and would have left a corroding impress upon the intellectual and moral character of thousands. But the grace of God turned all his energies and influence into the right channels. His natural temperament was ardent, almost mercurial. Whatever he undertook, he did with all his might. He was frank, perhaps, to a fault.

What he thought about men and things, he was exceedingly apt to express, without stopping to weigh all the consequences. When some visitors, who had prolonged their stay a little beyond the limits of his convenience, remarked by way of apology, 'We are afraid, sir, that we break in upon your time;' his laconic answer was, '*To be sure you do.*' The word *disimulation*, was not to be found in all the vocabulary of his voluminous life. His honest soul looked fearlessly out of its own windows, and seemed little to care who might happen to see what was passing within. If he was more forward than most men to remind other people of their faults and foibles, he was still more severe upon his own, as these memoirs abundantly testify.

In the life of Richard Baxter, we have a most eminent example of industry and perseverance. The number of books which he wrote and published is astonishing. The

chronological list of his works, appended to the volumes of Mr. Orme, amounts to *one hundred and sixty-eight*; and a very considerable number of these are heavy quartos. His biographer has arranged them under twelve general heads or chapters, viz. Works on the evidences of religion; Doctrinal Works; Works on Conversion; on Christian Experience; on Christian Ethics; on Catholic Communion; on Nonconformity; on Popery; on Antinomianism; on Baptism, Quakerism and Millenarianism; Political and Historical Works, and Devotional Works. From this condensed table of contents it will be seen, that, as a writer, Mr. Baxter took a wide range. He wrote upon all the most important subjects which came under discussion, during the eventful period in which he lived. This must have required immense reading, as well as a vast amount of intellectual and manual labor.

"The age in which he lived was an age of voluminous authorship; and Baxter was beyond comparison the most voluminous of all his cotemporaries. Those who have been acquainted only with what are called his practical or spiritual writings form no correct estimate of the extent of his works. These form twenty-two volumes octavo, in the present edition; and yet they are but a small portion of what he wrote. The number of his books has been very variously estimated; as some of the volumes which he published contained several distinct treatises, they have sometimes been counted as one, and sometimes reckoned four or five. The best method of forming a correct opinion of Baxter's labors from the press, is by comparing them with some of his brethren, who wrote a great deal. The works of Bishop Hall amount to ten volumes octavo; Lightfoot's extend to thirteen; Jeremy Taylor's to fifteen; Dr. Goodwin's would make about twenty; Dr. Owen's extend to twenty-eight; Richard Baxter's, if printed in a uniform edition, could not be comprised in less than sixty volumes, making more than from thirty to forty thousand closely-printed octavo pages!

"On this mass of writing he was employed from the year 1649, when his first work appeared, till near the time of his death in 1691, a period of forty-four years. Had he been chiefly engaged in writing, this space was amply sufficient to have enabled him to produce all his works with ease. But it must be recollected that writing was but a small portion of his occupation. His labors as a minister, and his engagements in the public business of his times, formed his chief employment for many years, so that he speaks of writing but as a kind of recreation from more severe duties. Nor is this all; his state of health must be taken into consideration, in every estimate of his work. A man more diseased, or who had more to contend with in the frame of his body, probably never existed in the same circumstances. He was a constant martyr to sickness and pain, so that how he found it practicable to write with the composure which he generally did, is one of the greatest mysteries in his history."

Among the works of Richard Baxter, which are most familiarly known in this country, and which have been most eminently blessed for the conversion of sinners and the edification of the church, are his *Call to the Unconverted*, and the *Saint's Everlasting Rest*. Both these are invaluable. The last in particular, which was the first written of all his publish-

ed works, stands in our judgement nearer to the Bible, than any devotional treatise with which we are acquainted. There is no estimating the amount of instruction and holy consolation which it *has* imparted to thousands of God's people, on their way to that Rest of which it treats, and which it *will* impart to thousands more. The Reformed Pastor, also, is a treasure, which ought to lie constantly upon the table of every young clergyman. It was taken by the author from real life; that is, from his own personal labors and experience. It brings Baxter himself, as he preached and lived at Kidderminster, directly before us. We almost see the holy man of God, in his private retirement, and in all his intercourse with his people. Long will the ministers of Christ, and the churches too, have reason to bless God for this important work. Selections from the other practical works of Baxter, which have been less circulated in this country, are contained in the volumes of Mr. Bacon. Here are "thirty-two Directions for obtaining a Settled Peace of conscience, and Spiritual Comfort;" "the Character of a sound, confirmed Christian;" "Dying thoughts;" also several Sermons, and parts of other smaller works. We subjoin the following extracts from the sermons of Baxter, as specimens of his mode of address from the pulpit. The first is from a sermon preached in London, on "Making light of Christ."

"O Sirs, it is no trifles or jesting matters that the Gospel speaks of. I must needs profess to you, that when I have the most serious thoughts of these things myself, I am ready to marvel that such amazing matters do not overwhelm the souls of men: that the greatness of the subject doth not so overmatch our understandings and affections, as even to drive men beside themselves, but that God hath always somewhat allayed it by the distance: much more that men should be so blockish as to make light of them. O Lord, that men did but know what everlasting glory and everlasting torments are. Would they then hear us as they do? Would they read and think of these things as they do? I profess I have been ready to wonder, when I have heard such weighty things delivered, how people can forbear crying out in the congregation; much more how they can rest till they have gone to their ministers, and learned what they should do to be saved, that this great business might be put out of doubt. Is that a man or a corpse, that is not affected with matters of this moment? that can be readier to sleep than to tremble when he heareth how he must stand at the bar of God? Is that a man, or a clod of clay, that can rise and lie down without being deeply affected with his everlasting estate? that can follow his worldly business, and make nothing of the great business of salvation or damnation; and that when he knows it is hard at hand! Truly Sirs, when I think of the weight of the matter, I wonder at the very best of God's saints upon earth, that they are no better, and do no more in so weighty a case. I wonder at those whom the world accounteth more holy than needs, and scorns for making too much ado, that they can put off Christ and their souls with so little: that they pour not out their souls in every supplication: that they are not more taken up with God: that their thoughts be not more serious in preparation for their account. I wonder that they be not a hundred times more strict in their lives, and more laborious and unwearied in striving for the crown, than they

are. And for myself, as I am ashamed of my dull and careless heart, and of my slow and unprofitable course of life; so the Lord knows I am ashamed of every sermon that I preach. When I think what I have been speaking of, and who sent me, and how men's salvation or damnation is so much concerned in it, I am ready to tremble, lest men should judge me as a slighter of his truth, and the souls of men, and lest in the best sermon I should be guilty of their blood."

The following is from a Sermon on Repentance, preached before the English House of Commons at a solemn Fast, April 30, 1660.

"Many a time have I admired, that men of reason who are here to-day, and in endless joy or misery to-morrow, should be able to forget such inexpressible concerns! Methinks they should easier forget to rise, or dress themselves, or to eat, or drink, or any thing, than forget an endless life, which is so undoubtedly certain, and so near. A man that hath a cause to be heard to-morrow, in which his life or honor is concerned, cannot forget it; a wretch that is condemned to die to-morrow, cannot forget it. And yet poor sinners, that are continually uncertain to live an hour, and certain speedily to see the majesty of the Lord to their unconceivable joy or terror, as sure as they now live on earth, can forget these things for which they have their memory; and which one would think should drown the matters of this world, as the report of a cannon doth a whisper, or as the sun obscureth the poorest glow-worm. O wonderful stupidity of an unrenewed soul! O wonderful folly and distractedness of the ungodly! O could you keep your honors here for ever; could you ever wear that gay attire, and gratify your flesh with meats, and drinks, and sports, and lusts; could you ever keep your rule and dignity, or your earthly life in any state, you had some little poor excuse for not remembering the eternal things, (as a man hath, that preferreth his candle before the sun,) but when death is near and inexorable, and you are sure to die as you are sure to live; when every man of you that sitteth in these seats to-day can say, 'I must shortly be in another world, where all the pomp and pleasure of this world will be forgotten, or remembered but as my sin and folly; one would think it were impossible for any of you to be ungodly, and to remember the trifles and nothings of the world, while you forget that everlasting all, whose reality, necessity, magnitude, excellency, concernment, and duration are such, as should take up all the powers of your souls, and continually command the service and attendance of your thoughts against all seekers, and contemptible competitors whatsoever."

"Perhaps I could have made shift, instead of such serious admonitions, to have wasted this hour in flashy oratory, and neat expressions, and ornaments of reading, and other things that are the too common matters of ostentation with men that preach God's word in jest, and believe not what they are persuading others to believe. Or if you think I could not, I am indifferent, as not much affecting the honor of being able to offend the Lord, and wrong your souls, by dallying with holy things. Flattery in these things of soul concernment is a selfish villany, that hath but a very short reward, and those that are pleased with it to-day, may curse the flatterer for ever. Again, therefore, let me tell you that which I think you will confess, that it is not your greatness, nor your high looks, nor the gallantry of your spirits that seems to be thus humbled, that will serve your turn when God shall deal with you, or save your carcasses from rottenness and dust, or your guilty souls from the wrath of the Almighty. Nor is it your contempt of the threatenings of the Lord, and your stupid neglect, or scorning at the message, that will endure, when the sudden and irresistible light shall come in upon you, and convince you, or you shall see and feel what now you refuse to believe! Nor is it your outside, hypocritical religion, made up of mere words, or ceremonies, and giving your souls but the leavings of the flesh, and making God

an underling to the world, that will do any more to save your souls than the picture of a feast to feed your bodies. Nor is it the stiffest conceits that you shall be saved in an unconverted state, or that you are sanctified when you are not, that will do any more to keep you from damnation, than a conceit that you shall never die will do to keep you here for ever. Gentlemen, though you are all here in health, and dignity, and honor, to-day, how little a while is it, alas ! how little, until you shall be every man in heaven or hell ! Unless you are infidels you dare not deny it. And it is only Christ and a holy life that is your way to heaven ; and only sin, and the neglect of Christ and holiness, that can undo you. Look, therefore, upon sin as you should look on that which would cast you into hell, and is daily undermining all your hopes. O that this honorable assembly could know it in some measure as it shall be shortly known ! and judge of it as men do, when time is past, and delusions vanished, and all men are awakened from their fleshly dreams, and their naked souls have seen the Lord !”

When was a Christian legislature ever addressed with more plainness, fidelity and affection, than is apparent in these passages !

Immediately after the restoration of Charles second, Baxter was appointed one of his Chaplains in ordinary, and was once called to preach in the royal presence. Not many kings, since king Agrippa, have had the advantage of hearing such preaching. The sermon contains many passages pointed in that peculiar way, which must have made them *felt* by the Monarch and his profligate attendants.

“ Will you persuade us that the man is *wise*, that can climb a little higher than his neighbors, that he may have the greater fall ? That is attended in his way to hell with greater pomp and state than others ? That can sin more syllogistically and rhetorically than the vulgar, and more prudently and gravely run into damnation ; and can learnedly defend his madness, and prove that he is safe at the brink of hell ? Would you persuade us that he is wise, that contradicts the God and rule of wisdom, that parts with heaven for a few merry hours, and hath not wit to save his soul ?” “ Can you forget that death is ready to undress you, and tell you that your sport and mirth is done, and that now you have had all that the world can do for those that serve it and take it for their portion ? How quickly can a fever, or the choice of an hundred messengers of death, bereave you of all that earth afforded you, and turn your sweetest pleasure into gall, and turn a lord into a lump of clay ?” “ Princes and nobles live not always. You are not the rulers of the *unmoveable kingdom* ; but of a boat that is in an hasty stream, or a ship under sail, that shall speed both pilots and passengers to the shore. The inexorable leveller is ready at your backs to convince you by irresistible argument, that dust you are and to dust you shall return. Heaven should be as desirable and hell as terrible to you as to others ; no man will fear you after death, much less will Christ be afraid to judge you.”

Many of our classical readers will doubtless smile, when we further add, that Richard Baxter was a poet. The authority upon which we hazard the remark, however, is no less than that of the elder Montgomery.

“ This eminent minister of the Gospel, though author of some of the most popular treatises on sacred subjects, is scarcely known by one in a hundred

of his admirers as a writer in verse; yet there is a little volume of 'Poetical Fragments' by him, inestimable for its piety, and far above mediocrity in many passages of its poetry. The longest piece, entitled, 'Love breathing thanks and praise,' contains his spiritual auto-biography, from the earliest impressions made upon his conscience by divine truth, to the breaking out of the civil war between Charles I and the parliament. In this, and indeed in all the other minor pieces, he speaks the language of a minute self-observer, and tells the experience of his own heart in strains which never lack fervency, nor indeed eloquence, however unapt in the art of turning tuneful periods in rhyme the author may occasionally be found."

But whatever may be said of the rhyme of Baxter, it would be easy to show that some of his prose writings, especially those of a devotional character, abound with genuine poetry. We have room to offer but a single specimen from the Saint's Rest.

"As the lark sings sweetly, while she soars on high, but is suddenly silenced when she falls to the earth; so is the frame of the soul most delightful and divine, while it keepeth God in view by contemplation. But alas, we make there too short a stay, and lay by our music."

Richard Baxter had the true missionary spirit, in an age when the command of Jesus, 'Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature,' seems to have been scarcely thought of by the great body of his professed disciples. How his soul yearned over the perishing heathen, and with what a holy flame it would have burned, had he lived in the nineteenth century, the reader will be enabled to judge, with tolerable correctness, from the following extract.

"There is nothing in the world that lieth so heavy upon my heart, as the thought of the miserable nations of the earth. It is the most astonishing part of all God's providence to me, that he so far forsaketh almost all the world, and confineth his special favor to so few; that so small a part of the world hath the profession of Christianity, in comparison of heathens, Mahometans, and other infidels; that among professed Christians there are so few that are saved from gross delusions, and have any competent knowledge; and that among those there are so few that are seriously religious, and who truly set their hearts on heaven. I cannot be affected so much with the calamities of my own relations or the land of my nativity, as with the case of the heathen, Mahometan, and ignorant nations of the earth. No part of my prayers are so deeply serious as that for the conversion of the infidel and ungodly world, that God's name may be sanctified, and his kingdom come, and his will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Nor was I ever before so sensible what a plague the division of languages is, which hindereth our speaking to them for their conversion. Nor what a great sin tyranny is, which keepeth out the Gospel from most of the nations of the world. Could we but go among Tartars, Turks, and heathens, and speak their language, I should be but little troubled for the silencing of eighteen hundred ministers at once in England, nor for all the rest that were cast out here, and in Scotland, and Ireland; there being no employment in the world so desirable in my eyes as to labor for the winning of such miserable souls; which maketh me greatly honor Mr. John Elliot, the apostle of the Indians in New England, and who ever else have labored in such work."

Finally, *Richard Baxter was a man of enlightened and*

eminent piety. This appears from the whole tenor of his life—from the deeply evangelical spirit of his doctrinal and practical writings—from the holy breathings of all his experimental and devotional works; and from the solemn but heavenly serenity of his soul, as he lingered painfully on the shore of eternity, and cast his longing eyes towards the haven of eternal rest. With the greatest truth and propriety, we think, might he have accommodated to himself that beautiful description which he gives of a Christian's devout meditations, at the conclusion of his Saint's Rest.

“As Moses, before he died, went up into Mount Nebo, to take a survey of the land of Canaan, so he ascended the mount of contemplation, and by faith surveyed his heavenly rest. He looked on the delectable mansions, and said, ‘Glorious things are deservedly spoken of thee, thou city of God.’ He heard, as it were, the melody of the heavenly choir, and said, ‘Happy the people that are in such a case; yea, happy is that people whose God is the Lord.’ He looked upon the glorious inhabitants, and exclaimed, ‘Happy art thou, O, Israel! Who is like unto thee, O people, saved by the Lord!’ He looked on the Lord himself, who is their glory, and was ready, with the rest, to fall down and worship Him that liveth forever and ever. He looked on the glorified Saviour, and was ready to say ‘Amen,’ to that new song, ‘Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb.’ He looked back on the wilderness of this world, and blessed the believing, patient, despised saints; he pitied the ignorant, obstinate, miserable world. For himself, when thus employed, he said, with Peter, ‘It is good to be here;’ or, with Asaph, ‘It is good for me to draw near to God.’ Like Daniel in his captivity, he daily opened his window, looking towards the Jerusalem that is above, though far out of sight. Like Paul's affections towards his brethren, though absent in the flesh from the glorified saints, he was yet with them in spirit, joying and beholding their heavenly order.”

Dr. Calamy, who visited Baxter in the last year of his life, says, “He talked in the pulpit with great freedom about another world, like one who had been there, and was come as a sort of express from thence to make a report concerning it.” “This excellent saint,” says Dr. Bates, who knew him well, and had long studied his character, “was the same in his life and death; his last hours were spent in preparing others and himself to appear before God.” “Never was penitent sinner more humble; never was a sincere believer more calm or comfortable.” “Many times he prayed, *God be merciful to me a sinner*, and blessed God that this was left upon record in the Gospel, as an effectual prayer.” After a slumber he awaked and said, “I shall rest from my labor.” When a friend was comforting him with the remembrance of the good which many had received from his preaching and writings, he said, “I was but a pen in God's hands, and what praise is due to a pen!” Being often asked by his friends, how it was with his inward man, he replied, “I bless God I have a well grounded assurance of my

eternal happiness, and great comfort and peace within." He expressed great willingness to die, and during his sickness, when the question was asked how he did, he answered, *Almost well.* He expired, as we have already stated, on the morning of Dec. 8, 1691; and few men, who have gone to their eternal rest since the days of Paul, could with more propriety have triumphed in the last hour, *I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith, henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord the righteous Judge shall give me at that day.*

We take our leave of this eminent servant of the Lord in the language of the excellent Mr. Orme, who now also rests from his labors, and who, we doubt not, has gone to the same bright and eternal abode.

"In his personal character, the grace of God shone forth with distinguished lustre. The Christian ministry enjoyed in him one of its brightest ornaments, and the Nonconformists one of their ablest defenders and advocates. He died full of years and honor, in the presence of his brethren, and lamented by all good men. He is now enjoying that 'Everlasting Rest,' of which he wrote so well, and for which he prepared so many. No sculptured monument has been reared to his memory to mark the spot where his ashes repose. He needs it not. His name lives in his works. Among the Christian writers of our country, there is perhaps no individual who occupies so wide a circle, or who fills it with so deserved an influence, as RICHARD BAXTER.

PLAIN LETTERS ON IMPORTANT SUBJECTS. By JONATHAN FARR. Boston: Leonard C. Bowles. 1831. pp. 230.

This is the same Mr. Farr, whose weighty objections to protracted meetings we were lately called upon to consider.* Some of these objections are repeated in the volume before us; but our readers will not expect us so soon to 'fight our battles over again' on that subject.—The history of this volume is thus given by the author:

"I began to write these letters some time after I began my professional duties; and almost all of them have lain by me these two years past. They grew out of the various circumstances, in which I was placed, while engaged in clerical labors. The long time which I spent 'unsettled,' gave me advantages which I endeavored to improve. My frequent change of place brought me into contact with a larger number of men, and with a greater variety of

* See Vol. iv. p. 554.

characters.* I was often thrown among strangers; and also among strangers to my views of religion. In such situations I have tried to get good, and do good. I have spent many of my leisure and solitary hours in writing down the thoughts which had been suggested by a call, a visit, or an interview. I have gone home to my study frequently, and with my pen continued to reason, expostulate, advise or comfort. In retirement, and on paper, I have spoken with more freedom and force. I have said what was forgotten in the presence of others; and what was kept back for want of time or confidence. Some of these letters, in a varied form, were actually sent; some others were written with an intention to send them, but circumstances prevented."

We think it doubtful whether Mr. F. will ever be the rival of Pliny or Cowper, or come, like them, to be regarded as a model of epistolary correspondence. True, he has a dashing, off-hand manner which may pass, with some, for ease and naturalness; but then his style is perpetually coarse, and his mode of address often in the last degree uncourteous. Whether his letters were actually sent or not, still, as they purport to be *letters*, the style ought to be that in which a Christian and a gentleman might be supposed to address his friends. We ask any competent reader of the volume before us whether such is the style of Mr. Farr. Who, that was not a semi-barbarian, would think of addressing his friends in this way?—And according to his own account, his conversation with them, even at their houses, is scarcely less rude and uncompromising than his letters. The following passage, taken almost at random, may be regarded as a specimen.

"I found no books in your house but those which favored your darling opinions, if I except the Bible, and that was bound by the erroneous and gloomy commentary of Scott. I mentioned several books which gave different views of Christianity; and asked you whether you had ever seen and read them? You replied in the negative, and expressed your unwillingness to see, and your determination not to read them. You spoke of their fatal errors, and their immoral tendency, though so ignorant of what they contained and taught. I asked you to state your doctrines, which were so essential and saving; and to support them by the authority of the word of God. You hesitated and blushed. You were confused and could give me no definite notions of your faith, and you had the wisdom not to attempt the proof of what you knew not. I then asked you to define and describe Unitarianism, and point out its pernicious errors. Here, again, you were perplexed; but at length you preferred a number of charges, which I told you were false and slanderous. I found by your conversation, that you knew not what we believed, nor what we disbelieved; nor our reasons for either. I asked you, from what sources you had derived your imperfect and wrong information about our heresy? who had taught you that we were infidels, and were to be abhorred and despised? who had abused your ears with such foul aspersions? who had filled your mind with such hurtful prejudices, and your memory with such injurious and uncharitable reports? Your countenance again told me of your uneasiness. I then asked you solemnly whether you loved Jesus Christ in sincerity? You burst into

* *Larger, greater, than what?*

tears, and said, you hoped you did. I asked you for the evidence of that love, and the foundation of even the hope. I asked you what was the example, the mind, and the spirit of Christ? and whether you verily thought, that you possessed these marks of goodness, and gave these signs of grace? Our conversation was here broken off by the entrance of a neighbor, and I retired. But I have resolved on writing to you in order still to keep your attention and feelings alive to these important things.

"Sir, I speak with plainness; but I do it for truth and for your soul. Your great ignorance, I hope, will, ere long, be instructed, and that you will grow in religious knowledge. Your great want of candor and charity, I hope you will have grace to discover and be sorry for; and that you will make that spirit of pride and prejudice soon give place to a spirit of meekness. I trust it is not yet your creed, that the possession of saving grace renders the exercise of the Christian graces and virtues unnecessary."

But it is not our intention to remark at length on the manner of Mr. F., or to enter into a minute examination of his arguments. Indeed, there is but little attempt at argumentation in the book. We shall merely correct some of his misrepresentations, and expose a few of the more glaring inconsistencies into which he has fallen.

He has much to say about "the damnation of infants," and represents some ministers as teaching that 'hell is paved with their little soft skulls.' "Such men as Edwards and Hopkins, so skilled in all the arts of logic, so gifted and learned, could soon reason a little infant into hell." p. 51.—It might require more learning and logic however than Mr. F. possesses to show that Edwards or Hopkins ever taught or believed the doctrine here imputed to them. The latter, commenting on the passage, 'Suffer little children to come unto me,' &c. says, 'Christ, by taking them in his arms, and praying for them, and blessing them, declared that *they were capable of receiving spiritual saving blessings*; and that *he actually fixed this character upon them, and conferred these blessings, and NUMBERED THEM AMONG THE SAVED.* For his praying for them and blessing them must imply all this, as he was always heard, and they whom Christ blesses *are blessed, and shall be blessed forever.*" This is said, to be sure, of the children of believers, but not in such a way as to exclude others, or to convey the idea that they are necessarily lost.

The course which some leading Unitarians have pursued in regard to this subject is very singular, and ought to be exposed. First, it is asserted in the Christian Disciple, (N. S. Vol. v. p. 221,) and repeated in the Christian Examiner (Vol. iv. p. 440,) that the doctrine of the future punishment of infants "follows necessarily from the Calvinistic system, and *would now be insisted on by all real and consistent Calvinists, if they thought their people would bear it.*" But when pressed

for proof in regard to this declaration, they say, "We have not undertaken, nor do we feel it to be our duty to prove, what we knew from the beginning it would be impracticable to ascertain. With the opinions of the great body of living Calvinists on the future state of infants, we have no means of becoming acquainted."* In 1827, these Reviewers had no hesitation in asserting (or in repeating the assertion) that "all real consistent Calvinists" believed the doctrine of "infant damnation," and would preach it "if they thought their people would bear it." But in 1828, they acknowledge that they "*knew from the beginning* it would be impracticable" to prove this assertion, as they "have no means of becoming acquainted with the opinions of the great body of living Calvinists" in regard to it! In other words, they acknowledge that they had asserted, what they *knew from the beginning* it would be impossible for them to prove!!

But notwithstanding this acknowledgement, the charge of "infant damnation" is brought forward in 'the Liberal Preacher' the next year, and the horribleness of the doctrine is amply set forth.† And Mr. F. insists upon it in the Letters before us, as a matter with which he is *personally* acquainted. "*I have observed,*" says he, "that those who had the strongest faith in, and the most to say about the damnation of infants, were persons of stern temperament, who never had any children, or whose children had become headstrong, unmanageable, vicious and dissolute." p. 51. On a subject like this, it is too late to deal in general accusations. Let us have names and dates, and the public will then know to how much credit representations such as these are entitled.

Mr. F. is quite out of humor with Thomas Scott, the venerable author of the Commentary on the Scriptures, and treats him with characteristic incivility.‡

"If Thomas Scott could have been promoted in the church, and had he been a bishop, or favored with some rich and honorable station, probably he would never have written his Force of Truth, (a deceitful title to a deceitful book) nor have become a sour, snarling, and grumbling Calvinist. Disappointed in his prospect of rising in one way, he sought another; and in his writings, continues to inculcate false principles, and give injurious impressions to multitudes."

"Scott's 'Force of Truth,' in my opinion, ought to be rather called the 'Force of Passion,' of ambition, of offended pride, and of party zeal. It abounds with arrogance and presumption. If you read his life, written by his son, and Cowper's and Newton's letters, you will know more about this man. He is thought, by many in this country, a 'great divine;' and he is sometimes quoted, as authority, by those whose station gives us leave to expect better things of them."

* Christian Examiner Vol. v. p. 237.

† Vol. ii. p. 109.

‡ Mr. Scott is not the only distinguished Christian and minister whose name is re

Now we appeal to the life of Scott written by his son to show, that this whole account is false and slanderous. Every one who has read the Memoir of Scott, or has the least acquaintance with the state of the English church at the period referred to, knows, that his change of sentiments, so far from being prompted by ambition, was effected in direct repugnance to every feeling of ambition. It was in fact such a renunciation of flattering earthly prospects, such a crucifixion to the world, as has scarcely been witnessed since the conversion of the Apostle Paul. And so far from becoming "a sour, snarling, grumbling" partizan in consequence of his change, it is evident from all the accounts of him, that it had a most happy and subduing effect upon his whole temper and character. From a quarrelsome, overbearing, cold-blooded Unitarian, he became a kind, humble, affectionate, and persevering follower of the benevolent Jesus. Hear the following testimony, delivered by the Rev. Daniel Wilson at his funeral.

"I close this review of his (Mr. Scott's) character, by noticing the gradual but regular advances which he made in every branch of real godliness, and especially in *overcoming his constitutional failings*. This is, after all, the best test of Christian sincerity. His failings, as I have already intimated, lay on the side of roughness and severity of temper, pride of intellect, and confidence in his own powers. But from the time when he first obeyed with his whole heart the truth of the gospel, he set himself to struggle against these and all other evil tendencies, to study self-control, to aim at those graces which are most difficult to nature, and to employ all the motives of the gospel to assist him in the contest; and he gradually so increased in habitual mildness, humility, and tenderness for others, as to become no less exemplary for these virtues, than he had long been for the opposite qualities of religious courage, firmness, and determination." *Memoirs, &c.* pp. 395, 396.

Mr. F. addresses one of his Letters to Dr. Watts, alludes to the change of sentiments which he supposes he experienced late in life, and intimates that he became a Unitarian. In proof of this, he refers to some of his latest publications, and especially to his "Solemn Address to the Deity."—Mr. F. and his admirers may never have learned, or may have forgotten, that the *last* publication of Dr. Watts previous to his death was entitled "The Glory of Christ as *God-man*,"—in which he declares "that *true and proper Deity is in Scripture ascribed to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit*, and that they are represented often as *as distinct personal agents*." p.

proached by Mr. F. Bunyan he 'dislikes;' Meikle has 'sweetened solitude with the bitter drugs of Calvinism;' Hervey 'has more evidences of folly and finery than of faith—more marks of pride and bigotry than of humble piety;' Young has 'violent passions and ambition;' 'Law's Serious Call is objectionable in doctrine;' and Baxter 'scolds and threatens too much' pp. 18—22. Really, it is an honor to Mr. Scott, and would be to any other man, to be reproached and condemned in such company.

iv. In his "Solemn Address to the Deity," too, are contained the following expressions :

"Hast thou not ascribed Divine names, and titles, and characters to thy *Son* and thy *Holy Spirit* in thy word, as well as assumed them to thyself? And hast thou not appointed to them such glorious offices as cannot be executed, without something of Divinity or *true Godhead* in them?" Speaking of Christ in this prayer, Lr. Watts says, "I believe he is a man, in whom dwells *all the fulness of the Godhead* bodily. I believe he is *one with God*; he is *God manifested in the flesh*; and that the *man Jesus is so closely and inseparably united with the true and eternal Godhead, as to become one person, even as the soul and body make one man.*"*

We quote another of the statements of Mr. F., to show to what lengths sectarian zeal and prejudices may go, in blinding the eyes of a man and hardening his heart.

"Many, now-a-days, show that they are Christians, chiefly by a violation of the distinguishing precepts of the gospel. Morality is nothing—good works are nothing—humility, meekness, mercy and charity are nothing. If you only have a flaming party zeal—and adopt the prescribed Orthodox faith of the day, you may have a good hope, and a good character, and many friends."

Mr. F. professes to have associated not a little with Orthodox Christians. Where did he learn that, in their estimation, "morality is nothing—good works are nothing—humility, meekness, mercy and charity are nothing?" And if the Orthodox make *nothing* of morality and good works, how is it that people generally are so grossly deceived respecting them, thinking them so much better than they are? How is it that our author himself has found it so difficult to persuade some people, that *all* piety and morality are not found on the side of the Orthodox?

"Many cannot distinguish between 'orthodoxy' and christian piety and virtue. There are many so prejudiced and foolish, that they think *all* seriousness and piety, *all* fearfulness of offending God, *all* anxiety about the soul, heaven, hell, and death, *all* carefulness in matters of religion—they think all this is Calvinism! They ought to be told in the plainest and simplest language, what 'orthodoxy,' Calvinism, Hopkinsianism, and trinitarianism, are, and what they are not; what is, and what is not peculiar to them. Many need to be told over and over again, that piety—the love, fear, worship, and obedience of God—is not exclusively Calvinism! To forsake the vanities, vices, and sins of the world is not exclusively Calvinism. To keep the Sabbath, to go to meeting, to be engaged and devout in the house of God, to pray in one's family and secretly, is not exclusively Calvinism. To dread the displeasure and judgement of God, to desire his favor and approbation, is not exclusively Calvinism. To be sober, watchful and devout; making religion the great business of life; feeling, thinking and speaking of it; ascribing all glory and praise to God;

* Those who wish to see a full and unanswerable vindication of Dr. Watts from the charge of Unitarianism, may consult an article in the Spirit of the Pilgrims, Vol. ii. p. 334.

relying on his providence, and tracing the divine hand in every event—this is not exclusively Calvinism. To be anxiously inquiring what we must do to be saved; to strive for a gospel faith, a godly repentance, and a christian hope of pardon, peace, and reconciliation; to be earnest in making every possible preparation for death: to be constantly prepared—this is not exclusively Calvinism!"

We wonder whether any Orthodox minister ever found it so difficult to persuade his hearers, that *all* piety, seriousness, and morality was not confined to the Unitarians!

Mr. F. seems to entertain peculiar notions in regard to the obligations of the marriage relation, and those not very consistent with the rights of conscience, or the peace of families or of society. He represents the Orthodox wife of a Unitarian husband, who goes to the meeting of her choice, and worships God according to the dictates of her conscience, as violating, not only her marriage vows," and "those duties of subordination and respect which nature points out," but the obligations of both "the Old and New Testament." p. 196. Is it true then, we would ask, according to the notions of modern Unitarians, that the husband is *bona fide* the keeper of his wife's conscience? that he can act for her in her religious concerns, and answer for her in the Judgement? that when charged hereafter with believing and cherishing a lie, it will be enough for her to respond, 'My faith was that of my husband! I was told that I ought to have no choice in the matter, but to form my religion according to his wishes!' What would Mr. F. say to a Unitarian wife, who had an Orthodox, or Universalist, or an Infidel husband? Or if he had lived in the days of the Apostles, when believing wives in some instances had unbelieving husbands, what advice would he have given to these afflicted sisters? Must they have turned back from Christ, and gone and worshipped at the heathen temples?—It is high time that all men of liberality or sense should frown on the abominable doctrine here advocated—a doctrine which, if carried out, would bind in adamant chains the consciences of half the human race.

Mr. F., like some other Unitarians whose writings we have seen, runs frequently into the most palpable inconsistencies.—He professes to be shocked at the "uncharitableness of the Orthodox, p. x, while he continually imputes to them the basest motives, and judges them in the most uncharitable manner. "It has seemed to me that *ambition, avarice, distinction, love of power and dominion, love of novelty, &c.* lay at the bottom of many of the religious schemes and enterprises of the day." p. xiii.—He censures the Orthodox for offering tracts to

those of a different opinion from themselves, p. xv; but, writing to one of a different opinion from himself, he says, "I shall endeavor soon to convey to you a number of Unitarian tracts and books, which I shall expect you will have the curiosity, patience, and ingenuosness, to read; to examine carefully and dispassionately. As you wish to sustain the character of a man and a Christian, I expect you will seize this opportunity to enlighten that ignorance, which is so disgraceful to yourself, and so unfriendly to others."*—He professes to "assert, defend and encourage, the right of *free inquiry* and *private judgement*," p. 155, but would altogether deprive the wife of this right, at least when she differs from her husband, and discourages the exercise of it in others. "I should advise you to avoid the meetings which are held so frequently in your neighborhood. If they entice you, consent not." p. 112.—In various parts of these Letters, Mr. F. enlarges upon the differences between the Orthodox and Unitarians, and labors to vindicate the system of the latter; while he asserts that these "differences are about things, not so clearly revealed, if revealed at all," and "about which it would be the wisdom of disputants" to confess their ignorance, and their piety and peace to *let them alone*." p. 7.—He censures the "*exclusive spirit*" of the Orthodox, p. 48, while he himself disapproves of promiscuous exchanges, p. 210, and thinks that Unitarians ought not to "send a child to a Calvinistic school or College." p. 45.

We might proceed to examine these Letters at greater length; but we are tired of the labor, and it seems to us unnecessary. What propriety in undertaking to refute a man, who thus perpetually contradicts and refutes himself?

MISCELLANEOUS.

CREED OF LORD BACON.

The following is part of the creed of Sir Francis Bacon, Viscount of St. Alban's, lord high Chancellor of England, author of *Novum Organum* and other philosophical works, and one of the greatest geniuses that any age or country has produced.

I believe that nothing is without beginning but God; no nature, no matter, no spirit, but one only and the same God. That

* Observe what delicacy of manner!!

God, as he is eternally almighty, only wise, only good in his nature; so he is eternally Father, Son, and Spirit in persons.

I believe that God is so holy, pure, and jealous, as it is impossible for him to be pleased in any creature, though the work of his own hands; so that neither angel, man, nor world, could stand, or can stand, one moment in his eyes, without beholding the same in the face of a mediator; and therefore, that before him, with whom all things are present, the Lamb of God was slain before all worlds; without which eternal counsel of his, it was impossible for him to have descended to any work of creation; but he should have enjoyed the blessed and individual society of three persons in godhead forever.

But that, out of his eternal and infinite goodness and love, purposing to become a creator, and to communicate to his creatures, he ordained in his eternal counsel, that one person of the godhead should be united to one nature, and to one particular of his creatures; that so, in the person of the mediator, the true ladder might be fixed, whereby God might descend to his creatures, and his creatures might ascend to God.

That he chose (according to his good pleasure) man to be that creature, to whose nature the person of the eternal Son of God should be united; and amongst the generations of men, elected a small flock, in whom (by the participation of himself) he purposed to express the riches of his glory.

That God created man in his own image, in a reasonable soul, in innocency, in free-will, and in sovereignty: that he gave him a law and a commandment, which was in his power to keep, but he kept it not: that man made a total defection from God, presuming to imagine, that the commandments and prohibitions of God were not the rules of good and evil.

That in the fullness of time, according to the promise and oath, of a chosen lineage, descended the blessed Seed of the woman, Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God, and Saviour of the world; who was conceived by the power and overshadowing of the Holy Ghost, and took flesh of the Virgin Mary: that the Word did not only take flesh, or was joined to flesh, but was made flesh, though without confusion of substance or nature; so as the eternal Son of God, and the ever blessed Son of Mary, was one person.

That Jesus, the Lord, became in the flesh a sacrificer, and sacrifice for sin; a satisfaction and price to the justice of God; a meriter of glory and the kingdom; a pattern of all righteousness; a preacher of the word which himself was; a finisher of the ceremony; a corner stone to remove the separation between Jew and Gentile; an intercessor for the church; a Lord of nature in his miracles; a conqueror of death and the power of darkness in his resurrection; and that he fulfilled the whole counsel of God; performing all his sacred offices and anointing on earth.

That the sufferings and merits of Christ, as they are sufficient to do away the sins of the whole world, so they are only effectual to

those which are regenerate by the Holy Ghost, who breatheth where he will of free grace; which grace, as a seed incorruptible, quickeneth the spirit of man, and conceiveth him anew, a son of God, and member of Christ.

That the work of the Spirit, though it be not tied to any means in heaven or earth, yet is ordinarily dispensed by the preaching of the word, and administration of the sacraments; the covenants of the fathers upon the children; prayer; reading; the censures of the church, &c.

That there is an universal or catholic church of God, dispersed over the face of the earth, which is Christ's spouse, and Christ's body; being gathered of the fathers of the old world, of the church of the Jews, of the spirits of the faithful dissolved, and the spirits of the faithful militant, and of the names yet to be born, which are already written in the book of life. That there is also a visible church, distinguished by the outward works of God's covenant, and the receiving of the holy doctrine, with the use of the mysteries of God, and the invocation and sanctification of his holy name.

I believe, that the souls of such as die in the Lord are blessed, and rest from their labors, and enjoy the sight of God; yet so as they are in expectation of a farther revelation of their glory in the last day. At which time all flesh of man shall arise and be changed, and shall appear and receive from Jesus Christ his eternal judgement; and the glory of the saints shall then be full; and the kingdom shall be given up to God the Father.

RECENT PUBLICATIONS.

1. *A Memorial of the Year eighteen Hundred and thirty one: A Sermon delivered at Newburyport, Dec. 31, 1831, on occasion of a public thanksgiving of several of the Churches for the Spiritual Mercies of the past year.* By L. F. DIMMICK. Newburyport: E. W. Allen, & Co. pp. 20.

Conversion the Work of God: A Sermon delivered Dec. 31, 1831, a Day devoted by several Churches in Newburyport and its vicinity to united praise for the spiritual blessings of the year. By DANIEL DANA, D. D. Newburyport: W. & J. Gilman. pp. 24.

These discourses, it will be perceived, were delivered on the same day, and on the same joyful occasion,—an “occasion of public thanksgiving in several of the churches in Newburyport and the vicinity for the spiritual mercies of the past year.” It is the object of Mr. Dimmick, first, to answer

some objections to Revivals of Religion, and then to speak of the recent revivals, of their distinctive character and their results, as witnessed in his own vicinity, and throughout the country. His remarks are appropriate and interesting, honorable to the Divine Spirit, and calculated to leave deep and right impressions on the mind. They must have prepared every devout hearer to respond with new emphasis, in the language of the text, *The Lord hath done great things for us, whereof we are glad.*

The subject of Dr. Dana's Sermon is also exceedingly appropriate to the occasion, *Conversion the work of God.* This important truth is established, first, from "the undeniable fact, that naturally there is not a particle of holiness, nor the remotest tendency to holiness, in the human breast," but "the depravity of man is so deep and vital," that no means, "apart from a special divine interposition, can accomplish the conversion of the soul;"—and, secondly, by an appeal to the Scriptures. In conclusion, Dr. D. endeavors to free the leading sentiment of his discourse from the objection, "that it is incompatible with the liberty and accountability of man," and makes it the ground of a fervent appeal to his Christian brethren and friends to *give to God the glory which is due to his name.*

"If conversion is the work of God; if it is a signal and transcendent display of divine power and mercy to man; if it is the most invaluable of all blessings; what praise shall we render, this day, for all the wonders which have marked the present year? Shall we not call on our souls, and all that is within us, to magnify the Holy One, for the marvellous things which He has wrought in the midst of us, and in our neighborhood, and through the length and breadth of our land? Ours has been a country distinguishingly blessed, from the period when our pious Fathers sought these shores. America has been signalized among the nations, as a land of revivals of religion. But no year, I apprehend, has been so richly fraught with this mercy, as the present. From every region of our country the delightful intelligence has come; and almost every gale has wafted to us new materials for devout gratitude and joy. Characters the most unlovely and unpromising, as well as the more pleasing and pliant forms of human nature, have been brought to bow before the doctrines of the cross. The aged, and the young; the wealthy, and the poor; the distinguished in society, and the almost unknown; the self-righteous and the profane; the moral, the intemperate, the impure; the hypocrite, the infidel, and the scoffer, have all found a common level at the Saviour's feet."

With the exception of a few expressions, which some of the author's friends might wish to see altered, the sermon before us is one of more than ordinary excellence.—We wish we could say the same of the notes appended to it. These notes, indeed, discover a spirit of kindness and faithfulness which we honor and approve; but they also discover a degree of misapprehension on the part of the author, which must be afflictive to himself, and may, by his instrumentality, be injurious to others. We shall enter into no controversy here on the question whether all sin is *voluntary*, although we acknowledge that for *involuntary* sin, if such a thing be possible, we see not how a person can feel himself culpable, or deserving of punishment, any more than for the features of his face, or the faculties of his mind. But we must insist that "the position, that holiness and sin belong only to voluntary affections and actions," is not to be regarded as an *innovation*, a *novelty*. To mention but

a single instance, our author knows perfectly well that, by the venerable Spring—a name highly and deservedly honored, not only in Newburyport, but in all New England—this position was strenuously maintained.

We must also insist, that the doctrine in question is not of that dangerous, destructive tendency, "going to undermine the whole fabric of religion and even of morality," which Dr. D. would represent. Of this, the excellent character of those Orthodox ministers in general who have maintained this doctrine, (including all the Hopkinsians, and how many others we know not) their distinguished success in preaching the Gospel, and the abiding, happy results of their labors, are sufficient proofs. If Dr. D. will show us one church, where this and the kindred doctrines were preached fifty years ago, which has relapsed into Unitarianism, we will show him twenty, where the doctrines of an *inert* sinful nature and passive regeneration were then preached, which have since made that dreadful plunge. Persons were first taught that they *could not* (in any sense) change their own hearts; and then, as a natural consequence, that they must do such things as they could;—they must use means and come to the sacrament with such hearts as they had, and wait till God should give them better hearts. In this way, many churches became filled up, in great measure, with unconverted members;—who prepared the way and opened the door for unconverted ministers;—who soon persuaded themselves and others that conversion, in the proper sense of the term, was unnecessary and unmeaning. We state these things as matter, not of speculation, but of sober history, of fact; and we have no doubt, after long and diligent inquiry and observation, that this, in nearly every case, was the manner, in which Arminianism and Unitarianism crept into the churches of New England. And should another crop of these tares (which may God avert!) spring up in the midst of us to trouble us, in all probability the ground will be prepared for them, and the seed sown, in a similar way.

We must further say, before closing, that we know of no Orthodox Christians among us who deny "the doctrine of *native depravity*," or are chargeable with admitting the fearful consequences of such a denial on which Dr. D. has insisted. There may be those, there certainly are, who explain this doctrine differently from our author; but we know of none who profess to deny either its truth, or its importance. Much less do we know of any who "virtually say to sinners, *Without Christ you can do every thing!*"

In some of the concluding sentences of these Notes, we are happy to express our entire concurrence with the author.

"Men should be frequently reminded that their natural faculties, and their means of knowledge, constitute them free and accountable agents, and lay them under immediate and infinite obligations to give themselves to God. Their *inability*, which they are prone to regard as their excuse, is really their sin; for it is an affair of the *heart*. All this, however, does not vacate their dependence on the sovereign mercy of Heaven, for every right thought and feeling. And until this *dependence*, as well as this *obligation* be seen and felt, they will be ill prepared to submit to Christ. Should the period arrive, when the importance and necessity of *divine influence* shall be denied, or overlooked, or little felt, it would be a dark day for our country. The Holy Spirit would withdraw. All our bright and lovely prospects would be blast-

ed. Our churches would languish and die. Adieu, then, to genuine conversions, and genuine revivals of religion. Adieu to religion itself."

2. *The prospects of the Heathen without the Gospel: A Sermon preached in Portland, on Sabbath evening, Feb. 26, 1832.* By BENNET TYLER, D. D. Portland: A. Shirley. pp. 22.

"Several Ministers in Portland and the vicinity have agreed to sustain a Monthly Missionary Lecture, to be preached on the last Sabbath evening in each month, with a view to excite a deeper interest in favor of Foreign and Domestic Missions." The discourse before us was delivered on one of these occasions. The preacher shows conclusively that the heathen will not be saved, because they "live agreeably to the light which they enjoy," for so they do *not* live; nor because "of their sincerity," for they cannot be thought sincere in *all* their conduct, and their sincerity, as far as it goes, is no excuse for wilful ignorance and consequent sin. "We are brought, therefore, to the conclusion that the heathen, if saved at all, must be saved through the intervention of *pardonning mercy*." But mercy cannot be extended to sinners, except through *faith* in the blood of Christ; and "how shall the heathen *believe* on him of whom they have not heard?"—Dr. Tyler does not, indeed, undertake to decide that *none* of the adult heathen have ever been saved; but he insists that to suppose them saved, except possibly in some extraordinary cases, "is inconsistent with the tenor of the Bible, and with the whole history of the heathen world." On the ground of this conclusion, he urges impressively and eloquently "the duty of sending the Gospel to the heathen." We would gladly quote whole pages from this part of the discussion, but our limits will not permit. The reading and hearing discourses such as this cannot fail to increase the interest in favor of Missions, and to "promote the grand enterprize of evangelizing the world."

3. *Biography of Self Taught Men. With an Introductory Essay,* by B. B. EDWARDS. Boston: Perkins & Marvin. 1832. pp. 312.

The public are here presented with more than thirty biographical sketches (some of them short) of men who, by their own enterprise and exertions, and the accompanying blessing of God, raised themselves from humble life to stations of high respectability and usefulness. The object of the compiler (which is to afford encouragement to a large and deserving class of young men in our country, who are now struggling to rise in the same way) is certainly one of great importance. We hope he may be induced still farther to prosecute his plan, and favor the public with an additional volume.

4. *Tales of the Indians; being prominent passages of the History of the North American Natives. Taken from Authentic Sources.* By B. B. THATCHER, Esq. Boston: Waitt & Dow. 1831. pp. 253.

This little volume affords evidence of patient research, and of competent information, on the part of its author. His "tales," he assures us, are not fictions, but have been gleaned from rare works of unquestioned authority. By far the greater part of them will be entirely new to the generality of American readers. The work is designed and calculated to give a fair illustration of the Indian character. We were particularly and painfully interested in his account of "the Christian Indians," (so called) or

those individuals of different tribes who were to some extent civilized, Christianized, and formed into a community by themselves, by the efforts of the Moravians, near the middle of the last century.—Mr. Thatcher is evidently a friend of the Indians; and all who sympathize with him in such friendship should make themselves acquainted with this interesting volume.

5. *Biography of Pious Persons, abridged for Youth.* Springfield: Merriam, Little & Co. 1832. pp. 336.

The lovers of religious biography will be interested and profited in the perusal of this little volume. They have here sketches of the lives of forty individuals, who lived at different periods through nearly three centuries, and were "diversified by every grade of rank and station, from the obscurity of the humble householder, to the pomp of nobility, and the splendor of a throne." Yet "amidst all this contrast of structure and circumstance, one possession was common to them all." It was the religion of the Gospel—the "one thing needful" for them—"the good part which could not be taken away." This "guarded them in prosperity," and "sustained them in adversity;" "gave them the victory over temptation," and "took from the ills of life their power to hurt the soul." We hope every youthful reader of the volume may rise from it with new impressions of the reality and excellency of this holy religion, and with new resolutions to make the pearl of great price his own.

6. *Institutes of Ecclesiastical History, ancient and modern, in four books; much corrected, enlarged, and improved, from the primary authorities.* By JOHN LAWRENCE VON MOSHEIM, D. D. Chancellor of the University of Gottingen. *A New and Literal Translation, from the original Latin, with copious additional notes, original and selected.* By JAMES MURDOCK, D. D. New Haven: Published by A. H. Maltby. 3 vols. 8vo. Vol. I. pp. 256. 1832.

We welcome this new translation of Mosheim for two reasons:—1. The translation by Maclaine, through which alone the work has hitherto been accessible to the English reader, can hardly in strictness be called a *translation*. It is, in many parts of it, more properly a *paraphrase*,—in which the sense of the original is amplified, modified, and in effect altered. Dr. Maclaine admits that he has "taken considerable liberties with his author"—an admission which, of itself, is enough to destroy the credit of his work, as a guide to the actual results and statements of Mosheim. The new translation, it may be presumed, is free from this objection. But 2. Dr. Murdock has enriched the work before us with numerous and valuable original notes, comprising an amount of information derived from Ecclesiastical historians who have written since Mosheim. Of the first volume—the only one yet published—these notes constitute almost a third part.

7. *The Harmony of the Divine Attributes, in the Contrivance and Accomplishment of Man's Redemption.* By WILLIAM BATES, D. D. *With an Introductory Essay* by A. ALEXANDER, D. D. New York: J. Leavitt. Boston: Crocker & Brewster. 1831. pp. 348.

William Bates was one of the "theological giants" of the seventeenth century, and greatly admired among his cotemporaries for the majesty, beauty, and eloquence of his style. Of all his printed works, this on the "Harmony of the Divine Attributes" is perhaps the most valuable. "It would be difficult to mention any single work in which the glorious plan of man's redemption is more fully and clearly exhibited." The public are under obligations to Dr. Alexander for bringing it forward, as well as for his instructive Preface.

THE
SPIRIT OF THE PILGRIMS.

VOL. V.

MAY 1832.

NO. 5.

COMMUNICATIONS.

LETTERS TO YOUNG MINISTERS.

LETTER IV.

BELOVED BRETHREN AND FRIENDS,

To ascertain the best manner of inculcating moral obligation must be regarded by all, especially by ministers of the gospel, as a matter of high importance. And how can we expect to do this, except by a careful study of the Holy Scriptures? What better can we do, than to *speak as the oracles of God*? What more effectual method can we pursue, of impressing the minds of men with their obligations, than that which God himself has chosen? Let us then listen to divine instruction, and by a careful attention to our inspired model, endeavor to settle our minds on this interesting subject.

I have already advanced the sentiment, to which I doubt not you readily accede, that the opinions which have been held and the modes of teaching which have been practised among Christian ministers in any place or at any time, may properly be subjected to a candid, fair, and thorough examination. Indeed, I think they ought to be subjected to such examination, not for the purpose of strife, but for the purpose of determining where the truth lies. We are directed to *prove all things and hold fast that which is good*. The cause of truth can never be injured by diligent and impartial examination; nor, in my view, can it be considered as safe, except where such examination is generally encouraged. This principle of free inquiry is so important, that we ought surely to be willing that our own opinions and

manner of teaching should be reviewed with perfect freedom by our brethren. And when they think proper to enter on such a review, and to charge us with what is incorrect and unscriptural, we ought to receive it meekly, and, if done with a right spirit, thankfully too, remembering that we are fallible at best, and endeavoring to profit by the animadversions which are made upon us.

I have nothing more to add by way of introduction, except to request you to guard against hasty conclusions, and to suspend your judgment in regard to the subject now to be examined, till you shall have carefully attended to all which I have to offer.

One of the ways in which many ministers, at the present day, endeavor to impress the minds of sinners with their obligation to love God and obey the gospel, is to assert, in strong and unqualified terms, that they *can* do this, that they have *ability* or *power* to love and obey God. And there are not a few who generally make this their first and chief argument. Some of the most popular and successful preachers that I have known, have been accustomed to inculcate obligation in this way. Indeed this has in a higher or lower degree been the prevailing practice of those ministers with whom I have had the most intimate connection, and whose intelligence and piety I have regarded with the sincerest esteem and affection. On this account, I would gladly leave this subject untouched, did I not suppose that fidelity to the interests of the church requires me to rise above all personal considerations. The subject, I am well aware, has difficulties, some inherent, and more factitious. But I cannot admit this to be a reason for passing it in silence. And I may perhaps feel a little more bold to speak on the present subject, because the general manner of teaching which I shall undertake to examine, has been my own manner, as well as the manner of those with whom I have been so happily associated.

On this, as well as every other subject relating to the duty of ministers, our first and principal inquiry must be, what saith the scripture? Do the inspired writers inculcate upon the sinner his obligation to repent and obey the gospel, by affirming that he is *able* to repent and obey? Let us, like the noble Bereans, carefully search the scriptures, to see whether these things are so. If Christ and his prophets, and Apostles judged this consideration to be so eminently suited, as some imagine, to impress the mind of the sinner with his obligation to be holy, nothing can be more natural than to suppose that this must be apparent in the sacred records. Doubtless the inspired wri-

ters had as much desire as any of us have, to justify the ways of God to man, and to wake up in the sinner a proper sense of his duty. In various ways they labored to do this. But did they ever labor to do it in the way now under consideration? Did they ever assert that sinners *can* do what God requires? I have found *no place in the Bible where they do this*, though I have searched diligently for such a place, and have sometimes wondered that there was none.

Now if the result of my inquiries is according to truth, it must be a fact worthy of special remark, that those divinely commissioned teachers whom we regard as infallible, never, in any instance, urged the consideration that sinners are *able* to obey the divine commands, as a means of impressing them with their obligation to obey. How can this fact be disposed of by those who frequently urge this very consideration? I can imagine only three things which they would think proper to say.

The *first* is, that the sacred teachers considered the ability of sinners to be so evident, that it did not need to be either proved or affirmed, but might always be taken for granted;—just as I have endeavored in a former letter to show the case to have been in respect to moral obligation.

Here I readily admit that the kind and degree of ability which *really belongs* to the sinner, namely, that combination of powers and faculties which constitute a moral agent, was indeed considered by the sacred teachers to be so evident, that it did not need to be even mentioned by them. And why is it not safe for us in this, as in other things, to copy their example? If it was proper for them to take the sinner's ability for granted, without making any mention of it; why not equally proper for us? If when they omitted to urge the sinner's ability, they omitted nothing which was suited to be profitable to the souls of men; why may not we safely treat the subject in the same manner? And if they are not justly exposed to the charge of denying the sinner's moral obligation, or of denying any ability which the sinner possesses, because they made no distinct mention of such ability; why should this charge be brought against any preachers at the present day, because they do as the inspired writers did?

But, *secondly*, it may be said there are circumstances at the present time which render it necessary to adopt new modes of teaching. There are new errors to be confuted; new false refuges to be exposed; new misapprehensions to be corrected. And though there might be no particular occasion for the in-

spired writers distinctly to mention the sinner's ability, there is much occasion to mention it now.

An allegation of this kind, I acknowledge, deserves very serious consideration. For it is certainly important that our mode of instruction should be adapted to the ever-varying states of the human mind, and the ever-varying circumstances of the world. And if it plainly appears that the sinner at this day makes use of any plea to justify himself, which we have reason to think never occurred to the sinner at any of the times when the inspired writers lived; we must meet the case as well as we can; and having no express precept or example in the word of God to direct us, we must derive what help we can from the general instructions of the Bible, and seek wisdom from above to guide us in the right way.

But would it not be rather strange and unaccountable, if none of the many generations of sinners, addressed by the Prophets and Apostles, ever fell into the particular error which it is so necessary to confute at the present day? In all those former periods, sinners had the same deceitful and wicked hearts as they now have,—hearts inclined in all possible ways to repel the charge of blame-worthiness, and full of inventions to justify or palliate disobedience. The sacred teachers held forth the doctrine of man's depraved, ruined, helpless state, and the absolute necessity of being renewed by the Spirit, and saved by grace. Now can it be believed, that no sinners were disposed to pervert this doctrine, and excuse themselves, in the same manner as they do at the present day? Our Saviour, in the parable of the talents, evidently meant to expose the same kind of plea which is now made. One of the servants accused his Lord of reaping where he had not sown. This wicked servant was manifestly intended to represent those sinners who think that God demands too much of them,—more than he has given them the means of performing. And the Apostle Paul speaks of those who attempt to justify themselves in their sins, on account of their dependence on the grace of God for salvation. I must therefore be slow to admit, that there was not, among sinners formerly, the same disposition as there is now to pervert the truths of religion, and to palliate their own guilt; or that they were less fruitful in excuses and self-justifying pleas.

If sinners in former times did indeed make less of the plea of inability than they do now; was it not probably owing to the fact, that their depravity, and guilt, and dependence on God, were taught in a more plain, simple and earnest manner than they are at the present day? And if we can do any thing towards diminishing the frequency and influence of the plea of inability; must it not be by excluding from the pulpit

all abstruse speculations on the subject; by going back to the serious, plain, practical manner of the inspired teachers; and by employing the very considerations, and, more frequently, the very language, which they employed? If there are any new excuses and pleas among sinners, might we not most effectually remove them, simply by avoiding new and unscriptural modes of teaching?

Thirdly. It may be said that the meaning of words and phrases has been changed, and that in order to teach just what the sacred writers taught in regard to the sinner's obligation, we must make use of other language; that what they taught in other ways, without any mention of the sinners's *ability*, we must teach by expressly *affirming* and *urging* his ability.

To this I reply: If the proper meaning of the words and phrases employed in the Bible to enforce the sinner's obligation, has been changed, and is not now rightly understood; then let those words and phrases be explained, and their proper meaning restored; so that when we would teach the same things which the sacred writers meant to teach, we may safely use expressions and representations of the same kind, and may feel that there is no necessity for any other.

Thus far I have presented only the negative view of the subject. I have dwelt on the fact, that the inspired teachers do not anywhere expressly assert the sinner's ability to obey God. I must now add, *that they expressly assert the contrary.* This fact is as obvious as the other, and it is certainly as important. I have for many years been led more particularly to consider this fact, by attention to the word of God.

What I now undertake is to show, that *the inspired teachers frequently assert the sinner's inability to render holy obedience to God.* Or thus: when the inspired teachers say any thing in relation to the sinner's *ability* to obey God, they often *expressly deny* that he has such ability.

An attempt to explain the language in which inspired men asserted the sinner's inability, or to solve the difficulties in which the subject is supposed to be involved, would not be proper here. I shall attend to these things in their place. The first thing which it is important for us to know is, *the simple testimony of the scriptures.* This testimony I shall now endeavor to state plainly, impartially, and fully, remembering that both in regard to our faith and our practice, we are scrupulously to conform to this as our standard.

I begin with John 6: 44. Jesus had been conversing with the unbelieving Jews, for the purpose of answering their inquiries and objections, explaining his character and work as a Saviour, inculcating the duty of receiving him, and charging upon them the sin of rejecting him. Just before the words referred to were spoken, "the Jews murmured because he said, I am the bread which came down from heaven. And they said, is not this Jesus the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How is it then that he saith, I came down from heaven? Jesus, therefore, answered and said unto them," (an answer which may appear strange to some of us,) "murmur not among yourselves. *No man can come unto me, except the Father who hath sent me draw him.*"—In the next verse he confirms what he here said, by showing from the Old Testament, that a man's coming to him depends on the effectual teaching of the Father. It will be very apparent to you, that in the midst of those objecting, cavilling Jews, Christ had all possible reason to express himself with caution, and to avoid any language which could be a just ground of objection or complaint. We can hardly conceive of circumstances which would render it more important to guard against all expressions, which could fairly admit of a meaning contrary to the truth. Jesus never used any such expressions. And yet, in the midst of those cavilling, self-justifying Jews, he plainly and openly declared; "No man *can* come unto me, (*ουδεις δυναται*, no man is *able* to come unto me) except the Father who hath sent me draw him." Nor did he say any thing afterwards to alter the sense, or to diminish the force of this remarkable declaration. So far from this, that in v. 65th of the same chapter, he repeated the same sentiment in nearly the same words. "Therefore I said unto you, that no man *can* come unto me, except it be given him of my Father."

Matt. 12: 34. Christ said to the Jews; ("πως δυνασθε how are ye *able*,) how *can* ye, being evil, speak good things? for out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaketh." He had just before illustrated the same sentiment by the figure of a tree and its fruit. "Either make the tree good and its fruit good, or make the tree bad, and its fruit bad. For by the fruit, the tree is known." Then follow the words before cited. "How *can* ye, being evil, speak good things? for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." The things which you speak proceed from your heart, as truly as fruit from the tree. And as you are evil—that is, evil in *heart*, you can no more speak what is truly good, than a bad tree can bear good fruit. The interrogative form is chosen for the sake of saying emphatically,

ye *cannot*. He uses the same figure for the same purpose, Matt. 7: 18. "A good tree *cannot* bring forth evil fruit, nor an evil tree good fruit."

John 5: 44. "How *can* ye believe, (*πως δυνασθε* how are ye *able* to believe) who receive honor one of another, &c.?" Here again the interrogative form is used for the sake of saying emphatically, that they who make it their object to seek worldly honor, *cannot* believe in Christ.

John 12: 39. "Therefore they *could not* believe, because that Esaias said again, he hath blinded their eyes &c." They were *not able* to believe, because they were in the blinded, hardened state of those described by the prophet.

John 8: 43. "Why do ye not understand my speech? Because ye *cannot* hear my word."—The language thus far quoted, was the language of the great Prophet, the Light of the world, the perfect pattern of all his ministers. Other divinely authorised teachers made use of the same kind of phraseology. Rom. 8: 7. "The carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed *can* be." The Apostle does not deem it sufficient to affirm it as a certain fact, that the carnal mind is not subject to the law, but says in addition, that it *cannot* be. In the next verse, he expresses the same thing in a personal way. "So then they that are in the flesh," they that have the carnal mind, "*cannot* please God."

1 Cor. 2: 14. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit; for they are foolishness to him: and he *cannot* know them, he is *not able* to know them, because they are spiritually discerned." Here, as before, the Apostle does not stop with asserting the simple fact, that the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit, but goes farther and asserts that he *cannot* know them.

2 Tim. 3: 7. The Apostle speaks of some who are "always learning, and yet never *able* to come to the knowledge of the truth."—Heb. 3: 19. "So we see that they *could not* enter in because of unbelief."—Heb. 6: 4—6. The writer here says of certain sinners, it is *impossible* to renew them again to repentance.—To the same general class of texts belongs Rom. 5: 6. "For when we were without strength, (*ασθενων*, feeble, inefficient, unable to effect our salvation,) in due time Christ died for the ungodly."

It will be pertinent to the subject of our inquiry to consider also the manner in which the scriptures speak of the ability of Christians. For it must be that Christians have as much ability to conform to the divine law, as impenitent sinners have; no one having ever supposed that persons lose any part of their ability to obey God by becoming his children.

See then how this subject is treated by our Saviour, John 15 : 4, 5. Jesus said to his disciples ; " Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch *cannot* bear fruit *of itself*, except it abide in the vine ; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. I am the vine ; ye are the branches. He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit : for without me, (or separate from me,) ye can do nothing." *Ye are no more able of yourselves, without assistance from me, to bear the fruits of holiness, than a branch is to bear fruit, when separate from the vine.*

The apostles remembered this sentiment. There is nothing which they speak of more earnestly, than their own dependence, and the dependence of all believers, on divine aid. 2 Cor. 2 : 16. The apostle here expressed his deep sense of his own insufficiency, and that if the other apostles, for the work to which they were called. " Who is sufficient for these things ?" He recurs to this sentiment again, 2 Cor. 3 : 5, where, after adverting to the successful labors of the apostles, he says ; " Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing (*λογισασθαι τι*, to reason out any thing) as of ourselves ; but our sufficiency is of God." In 2 Cor. 12, the apostle tells us that he labored under a particular infirmity, and prayed the Lord to deliver him from it. But the Lord chose to let his infirmity remain, and to answer his prayer by promising needed assistance. " My grace is sufficient for thee ; for my strength is made perfect in weakness." The apostle therefore glories in his infirmity, as the occasion of making more manifest the power of Christ. In Phil. 4 : 13, we find the same sentiment of dependence. " I can do all things"—how ? of himself ? No. The thought of sufficient ability in himself did not enter his mind. He says, " I can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth me." The power he relied upon was to be derived from Christ. So 1 Tim. 1 : 12. " I thank Jesus Christ who hath *enabled* or *strengthened* me." His direction to Timothy implies the same, 2 Tim. 2 : 1. " Be *strong* in the *grace* that is in *Christ Jesus*." In Ephes. 6 : 10, he says to believers generally ; " Be strong in the Lord and in the power of his might." And in the same epistle, Ch. 3 : 16, he prays that God would grant them to be *strengthened with might by his Spirit*. See also Col. 1 : 11. So Peter prays, 1 Pet. 5 : 10, " The God of all grace make you perfect, stablish, *strengthen*, settle you." And how often did God's people under both dispensations acknowledge their own weakness, and look to God as their strength. " God is our *strength*." " Blessed is the man whose *strength* is in

thee." "This is the man," (speaking of a proud, wicked man) — "This is the man who made not God his strength." "The Lord is our help." "Our help cometh from the Lord." "Happy is the man that hath the God of Jacob for his help." "O Israel, thou has destroyed thyself; but in me is thy help." "The Spirit helpeth our infirmities." "Let us come boldly to the throne of grace that we may find grace to help in every time of need." "Strengthen thou me according to thy word." "Help thou me." "Help thou mine unbelief." Such is the general representation which the Scriptures make of the conscious weakness and insufficiency of the saints, and their dependence on the power of God. And if any one should say that sinners have *as much* power as saints, he certainly would not say, that they have more.

I must also refer you to those passages which set forth the difficulties in the way of the sinner's conversion and salvation. Jer. 13: 23. "Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the Leopard his spots? Then may ye also do good, that are accustomed to do evil?" Our Saviour on a particular occasion represented that it was as difficult for a rich man to be saved, as for a camel to go through the eye of a needle. His disciples, on hearing this, exclaimed with great astonishment; "Who then can be saved?" What reply did Jesus make? Did he tell them, that they had mistaken his meaning, and that the difficulty in the way was not so great as they seemed to think? Did he explain away what he had said? No. He simply answered; "With men it is *impossible*, but not with God: for with God all things are possible."—Other passages, bearing on the same subject, need not be cited.

To this quotation of texts, I shall subjoin a few remarks.

Whatever was the thing which Christ and his Apostles meant by the *inability of the sinner*, we cannot but acknowledge that *they made use of fit and proper language to express it*. What that language was we have seen. The sinner *cannot come to Christ*, except the Father draw him. He *cannot be subject to the divine law*. He *cannot please God*. He *cannot believe*. The inspired teachers do not say this timidly and faintly, but *boldly and emphatically*. They do not say it once or twice, and incidentally; but they say it *generally*, when they have occasion to say any thing on the subject; and they say it *very plainly and directly*. I maintain, *that they had good reason for all this; that what they did was proper; that the case of the sinner was really such, as to render it just and suitable for them to affirm his inability in the ways above described*.

Now if the sinner's inability is such, that it was just and suitable for teachers, divinely inspired, familiarly to describe it in the language above quoted; who can hesitate to allow that the same is just and suitable for us? and if, when they had occasion to say any thing in regard to the sinner's ability, they did expressly teach that he is *not able*, of himself, to believe and obey; why should not we do the same? Is not the sinner in the same state now, as he was formerly? Does not the same obstacle lie in the way of his returning to God? Is he not *unable* to come to Christ, without the influence of the Spirit, in the same sense as he was when Christ and the Apostles preached? How then can we avoid the inference, that it is proper for us to *express* the sinner's inability as they did? In addressing themselves to men, they employed language which was plain and intelligible, and every way suited to enlighten conscience and touch the heart. And, why should not we copy their example in regard to this subject, as well as any other?

But there are many ministers of the gospel at the present day, and some of them very able and successful ministers, who, whenever they say any thing on the subject, labor to set forth man's *ability*; who appear to take as much pains to assert that the sinner *can* believe and obey, as Christ and the Apostles did to assert that he *cannot*. Some of those, to whom these remarks relate, generally avoid all the scripture expressions above cited, and all others which imply that the sinner cannot, of himself, do what God requires. They object to us, if *we* use them. And they sometimes object to our prayers, because we beseech God graciously to influence the mind of the sinner, and to *enable* him to repent and obey the gospel, saying, that such prayers imply, that the sinner *cannot* do this without divine help, whereas *they* believe he *can*.

Now as the ministers referred to, however excellent and useful, are all liable to mistake; nothing can be more proper than that their modes of thinking and preaching should be tried by the infallible word of God. And what can be the result of a fair trial, but that *they do not conform to the Bible; that they do not adopt the manner of Christ and the Apostles*. And if it is a fact that, in their own minds, they have the same *meaning* with the inspired teachers; still they do not express that meaning in the same manner, but in a manner directly opposite. While the Bible says often that the sinner, without divine influence, *cannot* believe and obey the gospel; they say, without any qualification, that he *can*. While the Bible represents it to be a *difficult* thing for the sinner to be converted and saved, and without the interposition of divine power, *impossible*;

they represent it to be as perfectly easy, as any of the common actions of life. Now it can do no hurt for those beloved ministers, of whom I now speak, just to inquire, whether they have not turned aside from their rule. And if to justify themselves, they should say, God requires obedience of us, and this implies that we have power to obey; I can only reply now, that Christ and his Apostles knew perfectly that God requires obedience, and they knew what kind of power this implies; and yet they often and strongly asserted, as we have seen, that the sinner, without God's gracious influence, *cannot* obey.

That setting forth man's ability in the manner I have described, is a wide departure from the standard of God's word, seems to me exceedingly apparent; and this departure, as I well know, is a subject of regret to many Christians. The Bible has taught them, that sinners are ruined, lost, without strength, and cannot come to Christ, unless they are drawn of the Father. Their own experience has confirmed all this, and has made it a practical maxim with them, that without Christ they can do nothing. And as they grow in self-knowledge, and advance in the divine life, they are more and more sensible of their own weakness and insufficiency, and their constant need of being strengthened by divine grace. And experience has taught them also, that when they most deeply feel their own insufficiency for the holy service of God, and rely most fully on divine help, they succeed best in their great work. Now when they hear Christian ministers, who profess to regulate their views and instructions exactly by the word of God, assert in strong and *unqualified* terms, that the sinner is able to come to Christ without being drawn of the Father; that he can change his own heart as easily as he can rise up and walk, and that man has complete power, *in himself*, to do all that God requires; they are confounded, and say among themselves; "We do indeed love these ministers of Christ, and believe them to be sincerely laboring for the good of souls. But this part of their preaching is so contrary to our experience, and to the plain declarations of the Bible, that we cannot believe it, and cannot hear it without pain. If we should believe just what they assert respecting our complete power and sufficiency, of ourselves, for every duty; we should hardly know what to pray for. For why should we pray God to do that for us, which we are perfectly able to do for ourselves? And we find that these preachers forget their own sermons when they come to pray, and that they are no less forward than others to acknowledge their weakness and insufficiency, and to ask God to strengthen them, and to enable them to overcome the world, and be faithful unto death. And we

cannot but think, that the unrenewed sinner is as weak and insufficient as they, and needs the grace of God as much."

In my next Letter, I shall attempt an explanation of the various passages of holy writ above quoted, where the inability of sinners is brought into view.

DR. PORTER'S LETTERS ON REVIVALS OF RELIGION.

NO I.

To the Editor of the Spirit of the Pilgrims,

DEAR SIR,

With this you will receive an article for publication from the pen of Rev. Dr. Porter, prepared for the Revival Association recently formed in this Seminary. It is unnecessary, in the introductory note, to enter into a minute detail of its plan of operations. Suffice it to say, that it was organized for the purpose of collecting information upon the subject of Revivals, and it designs to accomplish this, *in part*, by procuring a series of essays for publication upon practical subjects connected with them. Several ministers, whose praise is in the churches, have engaged to furnish articles for publication upon topics assigned them.

Such arrangements have been made, that there is reasonable ground to expect that the Association will be able to continue its contributions to your pages without much interruption. The Association has felt that the subject of its investigation was properly embraced in the design of your periodical, and has therefore selected it as the organ of communication with the Public.

Very respectfully yours,

In behalf of the Revival Association,

CALEB MILLS, *Vice Pres.*

Theol. Sem. Andover, April 16, 1832.

To the Committee of the Revival Association in the Theological Seminary, Andover,

GENTLEMEN,

Your request that I would give you my remarks "*On the religious revivals which prevailed about the beginning of this century,*" was received some time ago, but indispensable engagements have prevented an earlier attention to the subject. When the plan of forming a Society in the Seminary with a special view to revivals was first mentioned to me, more than

a year since, I welcomed it as probably a suggestion from heaven ; and it is still my prayer and hope, that it may deserve hereafter to be ranked with kindred movements of this wonderful day, which we have seen growing from small beginnings, into an importance surpassing the most sanguine calculations.

When I look upon the condition of this world, lost beyond all hope, except from the redeeming influence of the gospel ; when I look at the accumulated evidence, from the Bible and from experience, that the human heart is utterly alienated from God, and the race who he formed in his own image are combined in hostility against his throne ; and when I consider the evidence, too, that the gospel, with all its motives to holiness, is itself inadequate, without special divine influence upon the heart, to subdue this hostility in any sinner ; I see the cause of human salvation to be altogether desperate, without the interposition of the Holy Spirit. Aside from this, there is a deplorable certainty that no one of our race would ever cordially submit to God.

For the same reason, should this interposition be granted only to one individual in ten, (which has been, perhaps, about the average of saving conversions in our evangelical congregations,) nine tenths of the population, even in New England, would remain "aliens from the commonwealth of Israel." Darker still is the prospect, in those sections of our country, where scarce'y one in fifty exhibits any evidence, or makes any profession of piety. The hope of the church, then, is in revivals of religion ;—continued, powerful, general revivals. With no greater degrees of sanctifying influence, than have been enjoyed during the last half century, which has been comparatively a favored period, the church could scarcely hold her own. The flood of ungodliness, which has been aiming to sweep away her Sabbaths, and blot out her memorial from under heaven, would swell and rage with a more portentous violence. Indeed the best hope, I might say the only hope, of the intelligent Christian patriot, that the civil institutions of our country will be perpetuated, depends on the extent to which vital and experimental-religion shall prevail among its inhabitants, through the influence of the Holy Spirit.

Entertaining these views, I have deemed it all important that ministers, and those who are preparing to become ministers, should be *revival men* ; I mean, men who understand the subject of revivals, who enter into it with a warm and decided interest, and whose preaching and influence in all respects shall be adapted to promote revivals. To cherish the spirit of re-

vals, then, in our Theological Seminaries, is the direct way to multiply revival ministers; and perhaps no better plan could be devised for cultivating this spirit, than by an Association expressly devoted to this object, such as you have organized among yourselves, during the past year. This will lead all the members of the Seminary to read and think more on the special work of the Holy Spirit, than they would otherwise do. It will bring up to view at your regular meetings the history of revivals at different periods, in this country and in others; the means most successfully employed,—the spirit of the men and of the preaching, most signally blessed, at such seasons. It will make you familiar with those methods which experience has approved in treating the careless, the anxious, and the hopeful subjects of renewing grace, and the mistakes to be avoided in regard to these several classes.

Now the tendency, among those who are destined to the sacred office, of habitual reflection and conversation on this wide range of subjects, belonging to the head of experimental religion, is to promote their own personal piety. The same divine influence, which the Christian student feels to be necessary for the salvation of other men, he will deeply feel to be necessary to sanctify his own heart, as well as to prepare him for the sacred work of feeding Christ's sheep and his lambs. This will impart a spirituality and devotion to his motives as a student, without which no strength of talent, no fund of literary acquisition, can qualify him for his great business. Of course, so far as he becomes a revival man, he will be guarded against that liability to be satisfied with an *intellectual* religion, to which literary men are always exposed. Should the Revival Association, as I trust it will, in connection with other devotional exercises, contribute an important influence to render our students warm-hearted Christians, it will directly promote the great purposes for which the Seminary was established.

In compliance with your wishes, the period of revivals on which I shall now remark is that including the two closing years of the last century, and extending into the present, so as to make about ten years in all. The review of this period is attended with circumstances of special interest to my own feelings, having then recently entered the ministry myself, and being allowed to share in the labors of that blessed season, and to witness its scenes of wonder and mercy among my own people. Instead of relying, however, on my own recollections, I have carefully examined the very ample narratives of those revivals, written at the time, and occupying a considerable part

of nine or ten volumes of the *Connecticut Evangelical Magazine*, besides other periodicals and documents of the day.

These narratives were written chiefly by *ministers*, most of whom I personally knew ;—many of them my fathers in the sacred office, whom I regarded then, as I do now, with sincere respect and veneration. Many of them were among the most intelligent and able men of their time ; and all of them were as competent as any other men to tell what they witnessed from day to day, among their own hearers and others around them.

These narratives, too, were written with leisure and deliberation, after the excitement connected with such scenes of thrilling interest had subsided. Generally they were written two or three years, in a few cases four years, after the revivals respectively were at their height, but rarely within the first year. Some importance will be attached to this fact, in the sequel. These papers differ in length, from two or three, to twenty or thirty, close octavo pages ; prepared with evident marks of candor and care, with great simplicity, and with a uniformity of statement truly remarkable as to the main characteristics of the work which they record.

The congregations to which they specially relate are one hundred and seventeen in number ; while some of them, after describing a revival in one place, incidentally mention a similar state of things in a whole section of country,—one says 55 or 60 adjacent towns. Great numbers of the places, thus mercifully visited, were never individually reported in the published narratives. No part of the country, in proportion to its extent, shared so largely in these “times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord,” as Connecticut ; but other parts of New England enjoyed precious showers of grace ; and during the same period powerful revivals prevailed, more or less extensively, in New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Kentucky, Tennessee, the two Carolinas, and Georgia. In no single town, perhaps, was the work so signally powerful, as it was in Northampton, near a century ago, in what has been called by aged people, “the great awakening ;” but in the general amount of sanctifying influence, it surpassed all other experience of the American churches, before or since, unless we are to except the ever memorable experience of 1831, which we devoutly hope may stand on record, as ushering in an era of mercy to our Zion, hitherto without a parallel.

One circumstance in this connexion deserves a brief notice, as to past seasons of revival. I have often seen the remark, that no such seasons were enjoyed for about fifty years after the great revivals, in the time of Whitefield and the Tennants ; but

in examining the documents on which I am now to remark, I perceive, in a number of them, by way of retrospective glance at the history of the churches to which they refer, distinct mention of considerable revivals between 1765 and 1795. Thus the Rev. Ammi R. Robbins of Norfolk, Conn. mentions a work of grace among that people in 1767, in which "the whole town were awed with the presence of the Lord." And in 1783, he describes "a second glorious day of grace," in which fifty were added to the church. Other accounts make similar statements, respecting Killingly and Lebanon, Conn. Lebanon, N. Y. Stockbridge, New Marlborough, and other towns, in Berkshire, Mass. The years designated are 1773, 1776, 1781, 1782, 1783, 1785, and 1788.

The almost entire cessation of revivals for twenty-five years, and their comparative infrequency for twenty-five more, after the powerful revivals of 1740, I have often heard aged ministers ascribe chiefly to two causes; first, the *great disorders* which became mingled in various forms of fanatical excitement with the genuine and glorious work of the Holy Spirit, and which produced a deadly reaction upon the churches; and secondly, the *political asperities*: betwixt the Colonies and the Mother Country, which kept all the bad passions in feverish agitation, till they exploded in the war of the revolution. The distress and perplexity, which that war brought in its train; and the scenes of awful and universal interest which followed, during the formation of new governments for the nation and the several states, did much towards destroying the sanctity of the Sabbath, and prostrating the barriers which the Fathers of New England had erected, to guard the public morals. The religious instruction of children and youth became an object of much less attention than it had formerly been; and this neglect of God's own appointed means stood in obvious connexion with the decline of piety in the churches.

But to return to the glorious period of revivals, which I have undertaken to describe, beginning with the year 1798, and extending into the present century; a few *general facts* attending those seasons of grace can be stated briefly, to which I shall here give a prominent place, referring to them afterwards, as occasion may require. One of these facts is, that the hopeful subjects of conversion were, to a great extent, the children of *religious parents*. One of the narratives says, that nine tenths of the whole, who apparently became pious, had been dedicated to God in baptism, one parent or both belonging to the church. Another estimates the proportion at three fourths. In

some cases, it was considerably less ; but generally, I presume, the average number was not far from two thirds.

The *proportion of males to females*, as subjects of the work in different places, was somewhat various, but amounted, so far as I can ascertain, to nearly two thirds of females. Without stopping to remark here on so great a disparity in the religious character of the sexes, I presume the *fact* accords with the general experience of the church. President Edwards, speaking of those of whom he hoped were savingly renewed, said, "There was about the same number of males as females ; which by what I have heard Mr. Stoddard say, was far from what has been usual in years past ; for he observed that, in his time, many more women were converted than men."

In respect to *age*, the subjects of these revivals were generally in early and middle life ; a small proportion are mentioned as having been subdued by sovereign grace, in advanced years ; and a few rare cases in extreme old age. On the contrary, very young children were often deeply impressed, and in many instances continued to give evidence of a saving change of heart. The scholars of district schools sometimes begged of their teachers the privilege of reading the Bible, instead of their customary lessons, and made a voluntary exchange of their favorite amusements, during intermissions, for prayer and other religious exercises.

The *commencement* of these revivals was, in some cases, attended with overwhelming power. The following statement from Rev. Dr. Griffin respects the people of his charge in Newark, N. J. and illustrates, in a touching manner, the foregoing particular, as well as this. Concerning the beginning of the work in that place, he says, "The appearance was as if a collection of waters, long suspended over the town, had fallen at once, and deluged the whole place. For several weeks, the people would stay at the close of every evening service, to hear some new exhortation ; and it seemed impossible to persuade them to depart, until those on whose lips they hung had retired. At those seasons, you might see a multitude weeping and trembling around their minister, and many others standing as astonished spectators of the scene, and beginning to tremble themselves. One sabbath, after the second service, when I had catechised and dismissed the little children, they gathered around me, weeping, and inquiring what they should do. I know not but an hundred were in tears at once. The scene was as affecting as it was unexpected. Having prayed with them again, and spent some time in exhortation, I attempted to send them away, but with all my entreaties I could not prevail on them to depart un-

til night came on, and then I was obliged to go out with them, and literally force them from me. But this excitement of animal feelings, incident to the commencement of revivals of religion, soon subsided, and the work has ever since proceeded in profound silence."

The Rev. Dr. Cooley, describing a similar work in Granville, Mass., says, "It spread with surprising rapidity through the parish. Christians were animated, sinners were awakened, scoffers were struck silent, at the powerful work of the Almighty. I shall give the reader but an imperfect idea of that surprising change from apparent thoughtlessness, to universal alarm, which took place in two or three weeks." So in Rupert, Ver., a revival in 1804 is thus described, as to its commencement: "On a sudden, the Spirit of the Lord appeared to come down upon us, like a rushing, mighty wind. Almost the whole place was shaken at once; scarcely was there a family in which some were not earnestly inquiring, what they should do to be saved; and scarcely a countenance, without evident marks of solemnity."

But I must not be understood to say, that these revivals were generally either sudden or universal, in the places where they existed. Often they resembled the still, small voice, rather than the wind which rent the mountains, and broke the rocks in pieces. Often they were gradual, as well as gentle. A single youth, perhaps, smitten with an arrow from the quiver of the Almighty, writhed in secret under a wounded spirit, till a brother or sister was smitten also;—then religion became a solemn concern to a family, then to a neighborhood, and finally, perhaps, to a large congregation.

The *continuance* of this work was commonly short, in those cases where its commencement was rapid and overwhelming. In many instances, less promising at first, there was a gradual progress, for three, six, and even eighteen months, before any visible decline; and in some of these, a steady current of divine influence, rising and swelling, amid continued showers of heaven, bore down all opposition. The churches which were visited with these more protracted seasons of mercy generally, perhaps, received the most solid accession to their strength, if not in numbers, at least in the intelligent, shining, enduring piety of those who were added to their communion. It ought to be observed, that while in some places divine influence was continued, for several years, like the dew that descended on the mountains of Zion, in others there was an apparent suspension and renewal of such influence, resembling successive revivals, several times in the same year.

The *number of hopeful conversions* within the period to

which I refer, cannot be determined. In Newark, N. J. during this period, there were two revivals, in the first of which 130 were reckoned, as having passed from death to life; and in the second, 240. I recollect no other place in which the number was so great as in this; but hundreds of churches, some of them with an ample list of communicants slumbering together, and others sunk to the verge of extinction, were renovated in that blessed season, and went onward, shouting the triumphs of their Redeemer.

I am now prepared to enter more fully into a statement of facts, developing the character of these revivals; and this I choose to do in the following method;—*Means employed to promote revivals*;—*Hindrances to their prosperity*;—*Exercises of sinners under legal convictions*;—*Exercises of hopeful converts*, including their views of themselves, of God, and the way of salvation—with their sources and degrees of religious enjoyment;—*Treatment, by ministers and Christians, of those who entertained hopes*, as to the time and manner of announcing their supposed change, and encouraging their early profession of religion;—*General Results* of these revivals;—*Influence on Ministers*, in promoting their humility, and fidelity, and unity of affection among themselves;—*Influence on churches*, in promoting harmony of doctrinal views, Christian zeal, and an elevated standard of experimental and practical religion. This detail of facts will be followed, if God permit, with some reflections, adapted to the present state of our churches.

The subject will be resumed at a convenient opportunity. In the mean time, I am affectionately yours, &c.

E. PORTER.

Theol. Seminary, Andover, April, 1832.

WHY DOES NOT GOD CONVERT AND SAVE ALL MEN?

From the representations of the sacred volume, it is as certain as language can make it, that all men *will not* finally be saved. At death, 'the wicked will be driven away in their wickedness;'—in the last day, they will 'come forth to the resurrection of damnation;'—and in the final judgment, they 'will go away into everlasting punishment,' where 'the worm dieth not and

the fire is not quenched,' and where 'the smoke of their torment ascendeth up forever and ever.'

It is also certain from the representations of the Bible, that God *desires* the salvation of all men. "As I live, saith the Lord God, I have *no pleasure* in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live." Ezek. 33. 11. "*Not willing* that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." 2 Pet. 3. 9. "*Who will have all men to be saved*, and to come to the knowledge of the truth." 1 Tim. 2. 4.

That God desires the salvation of all men is evident, not only from what he has said, but from what he has done. Would he have given his Son to die for all men, had he not been willing that all should be saved by him? Would he have offered salvation to all, had he not been willing that all should accept it? Would he invite and entreat all men to comply with the offers of his mercy, and urge motives to bring them to a compliance, if he were not willing that they should comply? Would he send his Holy Spirit to strive with men, if he were not willing that they should yield to his strivings? No, reader, whatever else is true or false, this is to be regarded as a settled point;—*God is willing that all men should be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth.* He does *desire*, sincerely and earnestly, the salvation of all men.

A serious question then arises, *Why does he not save all? Why do not all come to the knowledge of the truth and be saved?*

The reason assigned in the Scriptures why all men are not saved is briefly this, *all will not repent and return to their duty. All will not consent to receive salvation, as offered in the gospel.* God desires—more sincerely and earnestly than the most affectionate father ever desired the return of a profligate child—that sinners would return to him and be saved; but *they will not.* He is sounding in their ears, 'Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters; and he that hath no money, come ye, buy and eat, without money and without price. Whosoever will, let him come, and partake of the water of life freely.' But, alas, there are multitudes who *will not come.* They might be saved, if they would; but they will not. They do not feel their necessities—have no sense of their lost, starving, perishing condition—and will not listen to the invitations of mercy, or accept the free provisions of the gospel.—This is the plain, obvious reason, lying every where on the face of the Scriptures, why all men are not saved.

But this, it will be said, does not meet the difficulties of the case. The inquiry still remains, as before, why does not God

save all men? If he really desires that all should be saved, why does he not *turn their hearts*, and *bow their wills*, and bring them to the knowledge of the truth?

In endeavoring to answer these questions, so far as they admit of an answer, it may be safe to assume, that the general reason why God does not save all men must be, either that *he lacks the power*, or that *he does not choose to exert his power for this purpose*.

Are we to suppose, then, that *God has not power* to save all men?—This supposition cannot be made but upon the ground of another, viz. that the salvation of all men is in some sense *impossible*. For God is almighty. His power is unlimited. He can do all things *possible*, in the kingdoms of providence and of grace. God cannot, indeed, do that which would be in opposition to his own nature, or which would involve a contradiction, or an absurdity. He cannot do that which is in the nature of things impossible. But his omnipotence knows no other limit. Aside from this, there is demonstrably nothing which does not lie within the compass of his power. The question, therefore, comes to this, *Is it IMPOSSIBLE for God to convert and save all men?*

But in what sense can this be considered as impossible? Is it inconsistent with the nature of the human mind, and with the freedom and accountability of man? Such a supposition is *a priori* incredible; because God made the minds of men, as well as their bodies—made them free, accountable agents—and it is not likely that he would give existence to a being which it was *impossible* for him to control.—Besides, is it not a fact that *God does control* the minds of men, of all men, in perfect consistency with their freedom and accountability? I speak not now of the manner in which this is done, whether by a direct efficiency in view of motives, or by the mere influence of motives;—the fact that it *is done* will not be denied, except by those who deny that God executes his purposes and governs the world.—The *Scriptures* too—by necessary implication, by direct assertion, and in almost every form of representation and expression—exhibit the free minds of men as subject to the control of him who ruleth all.

God's control over the free, responsible mind is also exhibited in every instance of conversion. Every conversion which takes place is the work of God's Spirit, accomplished in perfect consistency with the nature of the mind, and without any infringement of human freedom or accountability. But are not all minds constituted essentially alike? And if it is possible for God

to convert one sinner in the manner above described, why not two? why not as many as he pleases? why not *all*?—It is difficult to see, therefore, how the conversion of all men (more than of a part, or more than the control which God exercises over men in other things) should be inconsistent with the nature and freedom of the mind, and on this account should be an impossibility.*

It may be inquired again,—if it is impossible for God to convert and save all men, and if this is the reason that all are not saved, why he manifests so much *desire* for the salvation of all. What propriety in desiring that, and in using means to accomplish it, which is in the nature of things impossible? What would be thought of a man, who should express habitually the most earnest desires that he might visit the moon, and should spend his days and nights in endeavoring to form some plan, or to construct some vehicle, by which such a visit might be accomplished? And what shall we think of God, who has given his Son to die for all—who is holding out the offers of life to all—who is sending out his ambassadors to beseech all to come and partake the water of life freely—who has manifested and is manifesting in ten thousand ways, in what he has said and in what he has done, that he desires the salvation of all;—if he knows at the same time (and he does know it if it is true) that the salvation of all is an utter impossibility! so finishedly impossible, that infinite wisdom, urged on by infinite power and love, cannot accomplish it!

It will doubtless be said, that the salvation of sinners would not be impossible to God, if *they* would only do their duty; and that the object of all his desires and endeavors is to persuade them to do their duty. But, permit me to ask, is not this representing men as having more power than God? Is it not representing the Creator as subject to the will of his creatures, rather than creatures as subject to their Creator? Is it not reversing a

* The reasoning, thus far, is fully sustained by the authority of President Edwards.—“Every being,” says he, “had rather things should be according to his will, than not. Therefore, if things be not according to his will, it must be for want of power. But this cannot be the case with a Being of infinite power and wisdom. If he has infinite power and wisdom, he can order all things to be just as he will.”—“To this nothing can be objected, unless, that it is not for want of will, nor want of power in God, that things be not as he would have them, but because the nature of the subject will not allow of it. But how can this be to the purpose, when the nature of the subject itself is of God, and is wholly within his power, is altogether the fruit of his mere will. And cannot a God of infinite wisdom and infinite power cause the nature of things to be such, and order them so after they are caused, as to have things as he chooses, or without his will's being crossed, and things so coming to pass that he had rather have them otherwise? As, for instance, God foresaw who would comply with the terms of salvation, and who would not: And he could have foreborne to give being to such as he foresaw would not comply, if, upon some consideration, it was not his pleasure that there should be some who should not comply with the terms of Salvation.” Decree and Election, Sec. 19.

declaration of the Saviour,* made in regard to this very subject, 'With men it is impossible, but not with God;' and saying, 'With God it is impossible, but not with men?'

I would inquire, in the next place, if it is impossible for God to convert and save all men, and if this is the reason why all are not saved, how it is that Christians are exhorted to *pray for the salvation of all*. The Apostle Paul exhorts, "first of all, that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for *all men* ; (1 Tim. 2. 1.) and our Saviour directs us to pray that 'the kingdom of God may come, and *his will be done on earth as it is in heaven*',—which is virtually a prayer that all men may be saved.† Indeed, such a prayer is so in accordance with the best feelings of Christians, that it is doubted whether they ever pray at any considerable length, without offering up what amounts to a petition that *all men may be saved*.‡ But does not such prayer necessarily imply

* Our Saviour taught, that what would be as impossible to men, in regard to the saving of some souls, as for "a camel to go through the eye of a needle," was very possible to God; for "with God," says he, "all things are possible." Mark 10. 23—27.

† The duty of Christians to pray for the salvation of all men may be shown in several ways: Thus, if it is right for God to desire the salvation of all men, it is right for his people to desire the same; and if it is right for them to indulge such desires, it is right that they should express them in humble, submissive prayer.—It follows, also, from the duty of loving our fellow men as we love ourselves, that it is as much our duty to pray for our fellow men, to pray for them all, and to pray that God would have mercy upon all, as it is to pray that he would have mercy upon us. And this is not only our duty, it has been the duty of our fellow men in all past ages, even from the beginning.

The sense given to the passages of Scripture above quoted is conformable to that of the most respectable Commentators.

BURKITT. "We are to pray in general for all men," "because it is the desire of God that all men should be saved, and because such prayers are good and acceptable in the sight of God." Comment, on 1 Tim. ii. 1.

DODDRIDGE. "I exhort, first of all, that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men—for the whole human race, whether Jew or Gentile, Christian or Pagan, friends or enemies."

MACKNIGHT. "I exhort, first of all, that supplications &c. be offered in behalf of all men, for heathens as well as Christians, and for enemies as well as friends."

SCOTT. "I exhort, first of all, that supplications &c. be made for all men, without distinction of nation, rank, or party, and without exception of enemies and persecutors."

The litany of the Church of England beseeches God "to have mercy upon all men."

VITRINGA. "Let thy kingdom come" &c. Let the gospel be preached to all, and be embraced by all. Let all be brought to subscribe to the record God has given in his word concerning his Son, and to embrace him as their Saviour and Sovereign."

WHITBY. "We therefore pray in this petition (in the Lord's prayer) that all men may become subjects to the kingdom of God erected by Christ the minds of all being subdued to the obedience of faith."

‡ The Rev. John Scott, speaking of the ordinary devotions in the family of his father (Rev. Thomas Scott) says, "The prayer was certainly one of the finest specimens of supplication, intercession, and thanksgiving, for those present, and for all men that can be conceived." "From those present, and all the branches of the family, with their immediate connexions and friends, he launched forth, to his parishioners and people; to the various divisions of Christ's holy Catholic Church; to all the minister's of God's word, and all seminaries of learning; to his country, and all orders of men in church and state; to the surrounding nations, with a particular reference to passing events; to the state of the Jews, heathens, and Mohammedans; and so for the whole world of mankind." Memoirs of Rev. Thomas Scott, p. 56.

that God is *able* to save all men. What propriety in praying him to do what he has no power to do? And who can believe that God would direct his children to pray him to do that which is in the nature of things impossible? To *desire* that God would perform an impossibility must, in every case, be a vain desire. And to *pray* that he would perform what is utterly impossible must be, at best, but a vain and useless prayer. Who can believe that God has directed his people to offer such a prayer? Yet he *has* directed them to pray for the salvation of all men;— which shows, as it seems to me *conclusively*, that the salvation of all men is not impossible to God, and that such is not the reason why all are not saved.

The idea that it is impossible in the nature of things for God to convert and save all men can be entertained only by those who suppose that he exercises no *direct* control over the hearts of men, but governs them by mere motives. But this idea may be shown to be absurd, even on this latter supposition.— The theory in question is briefly this, 'If God should proceed upon the principle of converting and saving all men, and if such were the established and invariable method of his administration; he would soon lose the power of saving any. It would soon come to that, that *there would not be motives enough within his reach to turn the heart of any sinner?*

It is obviously implied in this theory, that the only motive which can be made to bear *effectually* on the heart of a sinner, to turn him from the error of his way, arises from the prospect and the dread of punishment; so that if this be weakened or removed, it is no longer possible even for God to convert the soul. But is this true? Is there nothing intrinsically odious, ungrateful, detestable in sin, to lead persons to hate it? Is there nothing intrinsically pure and amiable in holiness, to lead them to love it? Is there not something intrinsically excellent in the holy character of God, to draw forth the affections of the heart? something touching, *subduing* in the dying love of Jesus, to melt the soul into gratitude and obedience? something attractive in the prospect of heavenly joy and glory, to win the sinner to the performance of his duty? Is it true, in short, that were the prospect and the dread of punishment taken away, there would not be motives enough left (on supposition that God operates by mere motives) to render it possible for him, with all his power and wisdom and love, to turn the hearts of men to himself?

But the whole influence arising from the consideration of punishment would not be taken away, even were God to convert and save all men. It would still be true, that he had a

holy and dreadful law, the penalty of which is eternal death.— This declaration would remain good, 'The soul that sinneth, it shall die;' and this, 'Except ye repent, ye shall all perish.' And if sinner's needed to look down into the bottomless pit; that world of unquenchable fire—that place prepared for the devil and his angels, would still be open, to show what the wrath of God, the wages of sin, the penalty of the violated law, is. And nearly all the motives, arising from this source, which now press upon the heart of the sinner, might be made to bear upon him with a scarcely diminished power.*

But I proceed to take another view of the subject which, to my apprehension, is decisive. It is certain that all men are the creatures of God, bound by his law, and under indispensable obligations to love and obey him. They are under so strong obligations to do this, and are urged by so many and powerful motives, that if they fail, they are justly exposed to eternal death for the transgression. But all who *need conversion* have already transgressed, and are in a fallen, ruined, state. And now, I ask, is it possible for persons *to be in this state*—to have sinned against motives and obligations enough to bring them into it—while yet there are not motives enough within the reach of the Almighty, with which to renew them to repentance? By the supposition, there *must be* motives enough, to make the resistance of them expose the soul to a just and endless condemnation; and yet by the supposition, there are *not* motives enough, to render it possible for almighty power and love to draw the wandering soul back to the performance of its duty! There must be motives and obligations enough resisted, to render the sinner a just outcast from all favor and mercy forever; and yet, for lack of motive, his repentance and return, so far at least as God is concerned, is an utter impossibility!

I know not how this supposition may seem to others, but in my view it involves a gross moral absurdity. It implies, on the one part, a *prodigious amount of motive*; and on the other, a *most enfeebling deficiency of motive*; and is clearly inconsistent with itself. It cannot therefore, be the truth; nor can it be the reason why all men are not saved, that the salvation of all is in the nature of things impossible.

But if the salvation of all men is not impossible, then it is

* How often has God manifested that he can change the hearts of men by apparently feeble motives or means. How often has a word, a sentence, a perfectly familiar expression or thought, been set home upon the mind with such new interest and power, that conversion has been the speedy consequence. All such instances go to show that, in a world like this, God can never want *motives* with which to operate in turning the hearts of sinners to himself.

within the limits of God's power to accomplish it;* and the reason why all are not saved must be, that he does not choose to exert the requisite *power* for this purpose. Nor is this conclusion at all inconsistent with the fact already established, that God *desires* the salvation of all. God does desire that all sinners would embrace the offers of his mercy and be saved. They ought to embrace them, and he desires that they would. But this desire is a very different thing from a *determination*, formed in eternity, to *put forth the omnipotent energies* of his grace, and make them willing to submit. Such a determination, in regard to the *whole race*, he did not form. He is furnishing with all abundant inducements to return to their duty; he is calling upon them to return; he sincerely and earnestly desires they would return; and he is having mercy on whom he will have mercy; but, for wise and holy reasons, he has resolved not to put forth his almighty power and pluck *all* as brands from deserved burnings, but to leave a part to their own choice, and to the consequences of their own sins.†

If it be inquired what *these wise and holy reasons are*, or what induces the Supreme Being to withhold his power, and leave a part of mankind to perish in their sins, I freely answer that *I do not know*. It is not necessary we should know, in order to a full and cheerful acquiescence; and I am not aware that God has given us any definite information relative to this deep and awful subject. That he has no pleasure in the sin and misery of his creatures, either in this world or the next, is cer-

* "God unfeignedly willeth the conversion of those that will never be converted, but not as absolute Lord, with the *fullest efficacious resolution*, nor as a thing which he resolveth shall undoubtedly come to pass, or would engage *all his powers to accomplish*." — "If God were so much against the death of the wicked, as that he were resolved to do *all he can* to hinder it, then no man should be condemned." Baxter's Call to the Unconverted, pp. 83, 84.

† "Can you (Mr. Vidler) pretend, that your scheme represents God as doing all he can do, and as bestowing all the mercy which the efficacy of the Saviour's blood has rendered consistent? If so, you must believe that God *cannot convert more than he actually does in the present life*." — "God has made it *our duty*, while sinner's are not his confirmed enemies, to do all in our power to preserve their lives and *save their souls*; but *He* is not obliged to do *all that he can to these ends*, NOR DOES he." Fuller's Works, Vol. ii. pp. 404, 405.

‡ "In the exercise of his absolute, unconditional power, God *could* remove evil out of the way; but he will not always do this, because it is against the order which, from his wisdom, he found it necessary to establish." Knapp's Theology, Vol. i. p. 523.

§ "God still *permits* the existence of natural and moral evil; because if he chose, all things considered, to banish it from the universe, *he could easily do it*." Payson's Sermons, Vol. i. p. 43.

¶ Those who think the salvation of *all men* beyond the reach of Divine power, admit that God has power enough to convert *any particular sinner, or sinners*; and that in taking some and leaving others he exercises his sovereignty. They believe, too, that he *desires* the salvation of those whom he leaves to go on in sin, though he does not determine to put forth his power and save them;—making the same distinction, between what God *desires sinners would do*, and what he *determines to put forth his power and bring them to do*, which is made above.

tain; but why he does not exert his power, and save all his rebellious creatures from their deserved miseries, we cannot tell. Perhaps the salvation of all men would be hardly consistent with their being, in this life, in a state of probation.* Perhaps he leaves some to the just consequences of their sins the better to show the great evil of sin, and to illustrate, and display his justice in punishing it.† Or perhaps he withholds his grace and leaves some of his guilty creatures to perish as they deserve, that the holy and dutiful part of his creation might be the more strengthened and confirmed in their obedience;—not that there would be a deficiency of motives, without this, to lay them under indispensable obligations, and render it possible for God to sustain them; but, he may see fit in this way to increase their motives, and strengthen them, by new considerations, in the performance of their duty.‡ We may conceive of various important purposes which God may answer, by leaving a part of those who choose and deserve death to go on and perish in their sins, and may suppose that these are the reasons on which he acts; but whether they are so or not, we cannot tell. “Secret things belong unto the Lord our God.” It is safest to adopt the language of the Saviour, first used in relation to this very subject, “Even so Father, for so it seemeth good in thy sight.” We know that the reasons of his dispensations, in this case as in every other, are infinitely wise and good, and such as, when explained, will not only satisfy but *gratify* every holy being in the universe.

REFLECTIONS.

1. In view of what has been said, we see the impropriety of affirming, without qualification, that *God does as much as he can* for the salvation of sinners—that *he saves as many as he can*—and that *he would save all men if he could*. I shall not undertake to show, that a sense may not be put upon this

* “Does not the idea of a proper probationary system involve in it the possibility, and even the probability, of some being finally lost? If eternal life were made certain to all mankind, could our present state be, in any proper sense, called probationary?” Dr. Worcester’s Sermons, p. 413.

† “What if God, *willing to show his wrath and make his power known*, endured with much long suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction?” Rom. ix. 22.

‡ Without doubt, the general course of the Divine administration has tended, and will ever tend, to increase the motives in favor of obedience, and in opposition to sin; so that the dutiful part of God’s creation have much stronger inducements now to persevere in holiness than they had at the commencement of their existence, and sin is more inexcusable than it ever was. Still, there must have been motives enough at the first to lay all intelligent creatures under indispensable obligations to obey, and render those deserving of eternal condemnation who disobeyed; and hence their fall cannot be attributed to a deficiency of motives.—But the subject of the introduction of sin will be considered in another place.

phraseology, which is agreeable to Scripture and to the common apprehensions of Christians. If it means no more than this, that God does as much for sinners as he can, and will save as many as he can, *in consistency with infinite wisdom and goodness*, why this the church has always believed. Still, I must think the phraseology exceptionable. It is offensive to the ears of most good people, as seeming to imply a limitation of the power of God.* To ordinary minds, it conveys a sentiment which shocks common sense, and cannot be admitted without difficulty, if at all. Besides, it is exceedingly liable to be perverted. The Universalist and Sceptic will say, of course, 'If nothing is wanting to the salvation of all men but Divine power, we are willing to risk Omnipotence. If our opponents have no other reply to make to our arguments, but that God has not power to save all men, the controversy must soon be decided in our favor.

2. It follows from what has been said, that God is entirely *sincere* in the offers and invitations of the gospel. That he may be sincere, it is necessary that his offers and invitations should express the *real desires* of his heart. And we have seen that they do. He has no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but desires deeply and earnestly that all may be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth. Accordingly, he may, in full sincerity, make the offer of salvation to all, and invite and urge all to come and partake the water of life freely.

3. The view we have taken of this difficult subject affords the highest encouragement to labor and pray for the conversion of sinners. We have seen, not only that God desires their conversion—the conversion of *all*, if they would come and submit to his will, but he is *able*, in the exercise of his mighty power, to bring home to himself whomsoever he pleases. There is no natural impossibility in the way of the conversion of any sinner, or of all,—so that the benevolent heart may have full scope—may go forth in prayers and labors, and pour out all its energies for the conversion of sinners, assured that God is able and willing to bless.

4. The view we have taken lays the blame of the ruin of sinners, where it ought to lie, at their own door. God, in his mercy, has done every thing for them which they could reason-

* "If God meant to use the most powerful means with a fallen world *he possibly could*, and that in every age, why did he send but one Noah to the old world? Why did he raise up but one Moses, and one Elijah, and send them only to the Israelites? Why did he not raise up thousands, in every age and nation under heaven, and make thorough work? And why does he not take more pains with us of this age? raise up thousands as well qualified to preach as Paul? And pour out his spirit on all flesh as he did on the three thousand on the day of Pentecost?" Bellamy's Works, Vol. ii. p. 106.

ably desire—every thing which could be done with propriety. When they deserved to die, he gave his Son to die for them. He has made to them the kindest proposals of mercy. He has waited long for their compliance, and while he has waited, he has been inviting and entreating them, and using the most powerful motives with them to bring them to comply. He has sent his Holy Spirit to strive with them, and has sworn by himself that he has no pleasure in their death, but rather that they turn from their sins and live. They *may* turn; they *ought* to turn; and if they do turn, all is well with them for time and eternity. If then they perish, it must be because they will not turn, and the blame will be wholly theirs.—Dying sinner, think of this; and save yourself, while you may, the cutting reflection, which otherwise will prey upon the heart forever, ‘I have fallen by my own hands—I have been, and am, my own destroyer.’

NOTE.

Some persons have undertaken to account for *the existence of sin* on ground similar to that which has been examined as accounting for the fact that God does not save all men. ‘Sin entered,’ they say, ‘not because God chose, all things considered, to permit it, but because he could not prevent it; and he could not prevent it, not because he is not almighty, but because its prevention was in the nature of things impossible. He had not motives enough at command with which to keep all from falling, and needed the motives arising from the fall and punishment of a part, in order that he might sustain the rest.’* On this mode of accounting for the existence of sin, I have several remarks to offer.

1. If the theory is correct, there is *no mystery* attending the introduction of sin.—The introduction of sin into the universe has usually been considered as a great mystery. But what mystery in the taking place of that which God could not prevent? What mystery in the admission of that into his kingdom, to exclude which was in the nature of things impossible?

* Persons who have differed widely on some theological subjects have agreed in assigning substantially the above reason for the existence of sin. Thus Heylin, an Arminian of the seventeenth century says, “God neither did decree sin, as a means or method of which he might make use, nor did he so much as permit it, in the strict sense of the word, considering that he which doth permit, *having power to hinder*, is guilty of the evil which doth follow on it.” Sum. of Chris. Theol. p. 86. Dr. Bellamy quotes the Chevalier Ramsey, an Universalist, as saying, “God did not certainly know that his creatures would fall; and if he had known it, *he could not have hindered it, consistently with their free-agency.*” Works, Vol ii. p. 106. Chubb argues, that God could not have prevented moral evil, but by “preventing himself from making such creatures as we are.” Works, p. 268. Rousseau says, “Man, be patient. The evils you suffer are a necessary effect of nature. The eternal and beneficent Being would have been glad to exempt you from them. The reason why he has not done better is, *that he could not.*” Letter to Voltaire.

2. On the theory under consideration, there is no propriety in speaking of God as *permitting sin*.—Dr. Bellamy wrote a treatise on “the Wisdom of God in the Permission of Sin;” and this has been the customary language of the Orthodox churches in relation to this subject. But why tell about God’s permitting that which, after creatures existed, he had no power to prevent? As well might our National government be said to permit the sun to rise and to set, or the wind to blow East or West.

3. The theory under consideration supposes that, *without the sight and the dread of punishment*, it would not be possible that perfectly holy beings should be kept from sin. But is this true? Is it conceivable? Could not God—with all the motives arising from the pleasantness of wisdom’s ways, from peace of conscience and joy in the Holy Ghost, from the sweetness of Divine love and of communion with himself, from the joys and glories of the upper world;—could he not, by the various inducements arising from these sources, pressed home by the energies of an omnipotent Spirit, have prevented the sin and fall of the perfectly holy? Was the thing, in the nature of the case, impossible? And was he under the dire necessity of seeing a part of his holy and happy creation plunge into sin, and accomplish their own ruin, that motives might be furnished by which to sustain the remainder? Is such a theory at all probable? Is it honorable to the Supreme Being? Can it be admitted by the candid mind as true?

4. But suppose, in the fourth place, that it is true. According to this supposition, the beings who first fell, fell from the want of motives to sustain them. The universe, as it then was, did not furnish motives sufficient to enable the Almighty to hold them up. And yet, by the same supposition, in the very act of their fall, they brake through so many and endearing obligations, and resisted and overcame so powerful motives, as to render themselves infinitely guilty, and deserving of eternal condemnation.—Here again we see (as we did in testing this theory in a former part of the discussion) that it is inconsistent with itself. If one part of it is true, the other cannot be. If the angels fell through such a deficiency of motives, that it was not possible even for omnipotence to sustain them, they could not, it should seem, be very inexcusable or criminal for the transgression. Or if, on the other hand, their fall was exceedingly criminal, and rendered them deserving of eternal punishment (as was confessedly the fact) then they must have resisted and overcome a weight of motives and obligations with which God, had he seen best to have put forth his energies, could have restrained them.

The reasoning here, as before, proceeds entirely on the supposition, that God governs the hearts of his creatures *only by motives*. As to the correctness of this supposition, I do not now decide. In the system of those who hold to the doctrine of *divine efficiency*, the theory above examined could have no place.

The following authorities show how the subject above discussed has been considered by standard writers in the Christian church.

CALVIN. "That is not done *without* God's will which yet is *contrary* to his will; because it would not be done, if he did not permit it; and this permission is not involuntary, but voluntary: Nor would his goodness permit the perpetration of any evil, unless his omnipotence were able even from evil to educe good." Institutes, Book i. Chap. 18. Sec. 3.

ARCHBISHOP USHER. "God is said to permit sin, because *he could, by his grace, hinder and prevent sins, that none should be committed.*" Sum and Substance of the Chris. Religion, p. 52.

CHARNOCK. "Sin entered into the world, either God willing the permission of it, or not willing the permission of it. The latter cannot be said; for then the creature is more powerful than God, and can do that which God will not permit. God can, if he be pleased, banish all sin in a moment out of the world. *He could have prevented the revolt of angels, and the fall of man. They did not sin, whether he would or no.*" Works, Fol. Edition, Vol. i. p. 520.

BATES. "The Divine Power could have preserved man in his integrity, either by laying a restraint on the apostate angels that they should never have made an attempt upon him, or by keeping the understanding waking and vigilant to discover the danger of the temptation, and by fortifying the will, and rendering it impenetrable to the fiery darts of Satan, without any prejudice to its freedom." Works, Vol. i. p. 212.

JOHN HOWE. "God made man upright, but he must needs fall to his own inventions to mend it, and try if he could not make to himself a better state than God had made for him. It was never to be expected from the Divine goodness, that he should, by almighty extraordinary power, have prevented this;"—necessarily implying that God *could* have prevented it. Works, Vol. vii. p. 120.

RIDGLEY. "*God might have prevented the first entrance of sin into the world* by his immediate interposure, and so have kept man upright, as well as made him so; yet, let it be considered that he was not obliged to do this, and therefore might, without any reflection on his holiness, leave an innocent creature to the conduct of his own will." Body of Divinity, Vol. i. p. 161.

DR. GILL. "God could have kept the serpent out of the garden, and *he could have hindered the temptation from having any influence upon our first parents*; but this he did not; nor did he withhold Adam from sinning, *which he could have done.*" Body of Divinity, Vol. i. p. 464.

PRESIDENT WILLARD. "*God could have assisted Adam and kept him, but he did not.*" Body of Divinity, p. 179.

PRESIDENT EDWARDS. "Objectors may say, God cannot always prevent men's sins, unless he act contrary to the free nature

of the subject, or without destroying men's liberty. But will they deny, that *an omnipotent and infinitely wise God could possibly invent and set before men such strong motives to obedience, and have kept them before them in such a manner, as should have influenced all mankind to continue in their obedience, as the elect angels have done, without destroying their liberty?*" Decrees and Election, Sec. 19.

DR. BELLAMY. "Others have asserted that it was not in the power of God to prevent the fall of free agents, without destroying their free-agency. But it is enough for us to confute this hypothesis, that it is contrary to plain Scripture representations, which teach us that the man Christ Jesus was a free agent, and yet in a confirmed state,—as are also all the saints and angels now in heaven. From whence it appears that it was in God's power to have confirmed all intelligences at first, and left them moral agents notwithstanding." Works, Vol. ii. p. 50.

DR. HOPKINS. "God will do nothing, nor suffer any thing to be done or take place, which is not on the whole wisest and best. Therefore, when we find that sin and misery have taken place in God's world, and under his government, we may be certain that it is on the whole best it should be so." System of Divinity, Vol. i. p. 139.

DR. DWIGHT. "God has actually preserved some of the angels from falling, and will preserve the spirits of just men made perfect; and this has been, and will be done, without infringing at all on their moral agency. Of course, *he could just as easily have preserved Adam from falling, without infringing on his moral agency.*" Theology, Sermon. 27.

DR. KNAPP. "God foresaw the existence of evil and permits it; but so far as it is evil, he can never have pleasure in it, or himself promote or favor it. He has admitted it into his general plan, because he can make it, in its connexion with other things, the means of a good which, without it, either could not be affected at all, or at least not so well as by its being permitted." Chris. Theology, Vol. i. p. 523.

DR. BEECHER. "God loves holiness, and he abhors sin, and *was able to prevent its existence.* He could have forbore to create whom he foresaw would rebel, or *he was able to keep them from falling.* But he did not do it. Abhorring sin with all his heart, and *able to keep it out of his dominions,* he permitted it to enter." Sermon at the Funeral of Obookiah, p. 5.

DR. PAYSON. "Why God should permit angels or men to fall, we cannot tell. That he did permit them to fall, is certain; because, had he thought proper, *he could doubtless have prevented their apostacy.*" Sermons, Vol. i. p. 43.

REVIEWS.

ON THE FORMATION OF THE CHRISTIAN CHARACTER.
Addressed to those who are seeking to lead a religious life. By HENRY WARE, JR., *Professor of Pulpit Eloquence and the Pastoral Care in Harvard University.*
 FIFTH EDITION. Cambridge: Hilliard & Brown. Boston, Gray & Bowen. 1832. pp. 176.

John Bunyan was not aware of the great work to which God had appointed him, when he was thrown into Bedford Prison. To that confinement we are indebted for the Pilgrim's Progress, which perhaps would never have been written but for the Author's interruption in the active duties of the ministry. The persecuted and imprisoned saint proved that the word of God is not bound. The little Book, written in the solitude of a cell, has cheered a multitude whom no man can number on their way to glory. The Pilgrim's flight from the wrath to come, the anxiety of his soul till he had dropped his burden at the cross, his various conflicts, temptations, dangers, joys, with all the variety of his experience, till he reached the celestial City, will be read with thrilling interest by his fellow Pilgrims to the end of time.

The Pilgrim's Progress has probably done more than any other uninspired book to guide Christians to heaven. One great cause of its usefulness is its allegorical manner, which renders it most attractive to children; so that the nature, dangers, and all the peculiarities of a religious life are treasured in their memories, long before they have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the Pilgrim's hope. We remember that when we were young, he was the envy of the rest of the children, who had been before-hand with them in secreting Pilgrim's Progress on Saturday afternoon, that he might have it for his Sunday's reading.—The "Rise and Progress," the "Guide to Christ," the "Come and Welcome to Jesus Christ," and other books of the like nature, are of immense importance to the church, in forming the religious character of young Christians, and bringing many sons and daughters to her privileges in this world, and hereafter to glory.

The book before us was written for a similar object. In our community, the number of those who are seeking to lead a religious life has of late been greatly increased. The spirit of relig-

ious inquiry has not been confined to those congregations, where the instructions are of such a nature as are usually followed by Revivals of Religion. An interesting portion of other congregations, by their intercourse with friends of a different persuasion, and by the pervading influence of religious interest, have had their thoughts turned upon their souls. This book was issued at a time of peculiar attention to the subject of religion, and as a guide to those who ask, "What must we do to be saved?"

We have read the work with uncommon interest, as well from the reputed character of the Author, who stands high in the clerical order of his persuasion, as from the important object of the book itself. It is intended to be placed in the hands of one, at the time when his mind is interested in the salvation of his soul, and everlasting consequences are depending upon the direction which may then be given to his feelings. Those who have themselves been in such a state, and have seen what awful interests are in suspense during those hours when the soul is susceptible of the slightest influence, and those of us who are conversant with minds in this turning of the tide which flows through eternity, can feel that a book for such a purpose should contain nothing but the eternal truth.

There is another reason why it has attracted our attention. Such a book presents the best possible means of judgement, in regard to the religious system which forms its basis. Here is the result of a minister's religious belief, the practical fruits of the system of doctrine which he holds forth to men as the word of life. That which makes a system of religion of any importance, may be expected to be set forth in such a book as this;—we mean its tendency to promote the present and future welfare of the soul. If the teachers and followers of this system had designated one of their number to exhibit its practical excellency, and the internal evidence of its being the power and wisdom of God to salvation, we believe that the Author of this book would have been selected, and that this book is such an one as he would have written for that purpose.

After a careful and, we trust, candid examination of the book, our judgement is, that however it may abound in excellent prudential maxims, it can never turn an inquirer into the way of life. We view it to be defective, first of all, upon the great and fundamental subject of *the natural character of man*. The disease of the soul is overlooked; and as a physician's prescriptions are all wrong, if he has erred respecting the nature or even the extent of the disease, so the directions which are here given will be found inefficacious to the cure and salvation of the soul.

The title of this book would more properly have been, *An Essay on Moral Culture*. It does not recognize the alienation of the soul from God; but commences with directions for the attainment of a spiritual mind, without informing the reader that he has by nature a 'carnal mind, which is enmity against God, and is not subject to the law of God, nor can be.' The complaint might justly be made in this case as of old, 'The hurt of the soul is slightly healed.' A great philosopher has remarked, that error is apt to be inconsistent with itself. We feel this to be the case in what is said in treating upon this point.

"There is an animal life, and there is a spiritual life. Man is born into the first at the birth of his body; he is born into the second when he subjects himself to the power of religion, and prefers his rational and immortal to his sensual nature. During his earliest days, he is an animal only, pursuing, like other animals, the wants and desires of his body, and consulting his present gratification and immediate interest. But it is not designed that he shall continue thus. He is made for something better and higher. He has a nobler nature and nobler interests. He must learn to live for these; and this learning to feel and value his spiritual nature, and to live for eternity; this change from the animal and earthly existence of infancy, to a rational, moral, spiritual existence,—this it is to be born into the spiritual life."

Turning to a subsequent chapter, where the inquirer is spoken of, it is said—

"He looks back to the early and innocent days, when, if his Saviour had been on earth, he might have taken him to his arms, and said, 'Of such is the kingdom of God.' But, alas! how has he been changed! He has parted with that innocence, he has strayed from the kingdom of heaven, he has defiled and lost the image of his Maker."

We cannot understand how the Saviour could have declared that such beings as those who are represented as in animal life were fit subjects for the kingdom of heaven, if such a change is necessary, as the author inculcates, into a spiritual life. The difficulty presented by these two passages arose from the author's belief in the original purity of the soul, and his endeavors (which in no case has proved successful upon this system,) to account for the unfailing aberration of man from God, as life advances. The reason why the soul does not awake in the likeness of its Maker at the dawn of its conscious life, is stated to be as follows.

"As soon as he can love and obey his parents, he can love and obey God; and this is religion. The capacity of doing the one is the capacity of doing the other.

"It is true, the latter is not so universally done as the former; but the cause is not, that religion is unsuited to the young, but that their attention is engrossed by visible objects and present pleasures. Occupied with these, it requires effort and pains-taking to direct the mind to invisible things; to turn the attention from the objects which press them on every side, to the abstract, spiritual objects of faith. Hence it is easy to see, that the want of early religion is owing, primarily, to the circumstances in which childhood is placed, and, next, to remissness in education. Worldly things are before the

child's eye, and minister to its gratification every hour and every minute; but religious things are presented to it only in a formal and dry way once a week. The things of the world are made to constitute its pleasures; those of religion are made its tasks. It is made to feel its dependence on a parent's love every hour; but is seldom reminded of its dependence on God, and then perhaps only in some stated lesson, which it learns by compulsion, and not in the midst of the actual engagements and pleasures of its little life. It partakes of the caresses of its human parents, and cannot remember the time when it was not an object of their tenderness; so that their image is interwoven with its very existence. But God it has never seen, and has seldom heard of him; his name and presence are banished from common conversation, and inferior and visible agents receive the gratitude for gifts which come from him. So also the parent's authority is immediate and visibly exercised, and obedience grows into the rule and habit of life. But the authority of God is not displayed in any sensible act of declaration; it is only heard of at set times and in set tasks; and thus it fails of becoming mingled with the principles of conduct, or forming a rule and habit of subjection.—In a word, let it be considered how little and how infrequently the idea of God is brought home to the child's mind, even under the most favorable circumstances, and how little is done to make him the object of love and obedience, in comparison with what is done to unite its affections to its parents; while, at the same time, the spirituality and invisibility of the Creator render it necessary that even more should be done;—and it will be seen that the want of an early and spontaneous growth of the religious character is not owing to the want of original capacity for religion, but is to be traced to the unpropitious circumstances in which childhood is passed, and the want of uniform, earnest, persevering instruction."

This seems to us entirely unsatisfactory. Since the mind of a child does not immediately recognize the authority of God, as soon as the parent has made it intelligible, we cannot resist the conclusion that the child is destitute by nature of the love of God. It would not be so, were it not for "one man's disobedience." But further. To attribute the irreligious spirit which appears in the young to neglect in their education, seems manifestly erroneous. Pious parents have made the experiment, times without number, watching the first indications of moral action to pour in the holy influence of religious authority, the love of God, and especially the love of the Saviour. The result has not been such as to prove (according to the fair inference from the author's meaning) that all which is necessary to ensure a religious character in men is faithful early instruction. But then the author says, there is another reason to account for this, viz: the abstract nature of God and of the motives of religion. If God could be made as real to the child's mind in his benevolence, in his love of purity, as the earthly parent, it would be otherwise. We ask, How is it that influence of an abstract nature in other things has so great an effect upon a child? You may fill the soul of a boy with the love of military glory, though he never saw the brave man whose deeds you rehearse; and how is it that he is susceptible to such influence, as abstract as the character and love of God? Why is it that

you can set his soul on fire with love to great and good men whom he has never seen, so that the effect of his early feelings lasts till death, when all that is said by the persuasiveness of a mother to wake up in his mind the love of God, produces wearisomeness and is soon forgotten? But we think it a mistake to represent the idea of God and his authority as of an abstract nature, when entertained by a child. He shows by his questions, such as, 'Where does God live? Can he hear me speak?' that he always impersonates the Deity in his thoughts, so that if he had that in him which a holy being possesses, as we see he has an innate susceptibility to impression from the character of great men, the character and authority of God would immediately establish him in a religious life. The first man *was* thus susceptible to the authority of God, but gave his selfish feelings the predominance over it; and ever since, though that authority is brought near to the hearts of the young, they follow his example, and in consequence, as the Bible tells us, of his transgression, are disinclined to the service of God, and love the creature more than the Creator. Hence the dark and dreadful picture in the Bible of the natural character of man, a character possessed by every descendant of Adam, and constituting the necessity of that change which Christ has said must be experienced in order to see the kingdom of God. Our Author seems compelled to acknowledge the necessity of a change; but how it happens that *every one* comes into a condition which forms so sad a contrast to his "early and innocent days," we are not informed; still, it is taken for granted that every one, who can possibly come to this book as an inquirer, has "a sense of sin, and the feeling that his heart is not pure, that his thoughts, dispositions, appetites, passions, have not been duly regulated, that he has lived according to his own will and not that of God." It is certainly interesting to see how candid men will frequently admit *the fact*, while at the same time they oppose *the doctrine*, of universal depravity.

The inquirer is now directed to proceed in the attainment of true religion, with an insufficient knowledge of his condition and wants as a sinner.

"What you are to seek, therefore, is, under the guidance of Jesus Christ, to feel your relation to God, and to live under a sense of responsibility to him; to cultivate assiduously those sentiments and affections which spring out of this responsible and filial relation, as well as those which arise out of your connexion with other men as his offspring; to perform all the duties to Him and them, which appertain to this character and relation; and to cherish that heavenward tendency of mind, which should spring from a consciousness of possessing an immortal nature. He who does all this is a religious man, or, in other words, a Christian."

Such efforts before regeneration are like "the climbing of a sandy way to the feet of the aged." The first part of these directions lead to that sentimentality which is a popular substitute for true religion, and "the consciousness of an immortal nature," as a motive of action, only to a cold, philosophic, lofty pride. Many an amiable friend have we known, who has sought for peace as here directed; but whose experience was like that of Paul before his conversion.* We have heard such an one complain, after all his endeavors to live an upright life, that God still seemed to him at a great distance. There was no "nearness of access." He thought that he loved God, and wondered when told that he was mistaken. But now he sees, that the love which he once had for God was the same which he feels towards natural scenery, when the waterfall, or mountain, or sea, awakens emotions of beauty or grandeur. The reason of the difference in his feelings is, he has undergone a more thorough change in his soul than could be realized from his former efforts. It is evident that the respected author of the book before us disbelieves in the necessity of such a change, that he does not profess to have experienced it himself, and that, in his view, nothing is necessary to establish the soul in holiness, but the culture of the moral virtues and a strict endeavor to live a correct life.

Leaving out of view, the scriptural argument, we call the attention of the reader to an argument from facts. From the earliest age when religious experience was recorded, to the present day, we find a great multitude, speaking of a remarkable and instantaneous change in their religious feelings. In some, it occurred after a long and wearisome struggle; in others, as in the case of the jailor at Philippi, it was preceded by a short period of anxiety. 'There was a time,' they say, 'when a divine influence seemed to be exerted upon us to which we remember no parallel in our previous existence. Suddenly we saw, in a most affecting manner, the evil of sin, the holiness of God, our desert of hell, and our need of the atonement of Christ; our stubborn wills were broken, and we accepted the mercy of the Gospel, as sinners who deserved to die. Immediately there fell from our eyes as it had been scales; a state of mind succeeded, in some cases of calm and delightful meditation, in others of elevated and joyful emotions; and a sense of God's love, of safety through Christ, a hatred of sin, and desire of holiness spread through the soul, and lives there to this day.'—Examine the religious history of the thousands of evangelical Christians from

* Rom. vii. 9, to the end. See a Sermon of Jeremy Taylor's, showing that Paul here describes a state of unregeneracy, and not the *Christian* conflict, as generally supposed.

the Apostles to our time, and you will find that they all speak of this remarkable change, and such feelings as flowing therefrom. Read the memoirs of Howe, Bates, Owen, Edwards, Cowper, Chalmers, and hundreds of others, and you will not fail to find in each case a recognition of these feelings. The same is true of those who were educated in a disbelief of this change; of which Chalmers is a remarkable instance, who now preaches the faith which he once destroyed. It has occurred in our community, as we all know, amongst those who were so situated as to imbibe prejudices against evangelical sentiments, and were once zealous defenders of an opposite faith. You cannot say that the phenomenon is owing to any peculiarity of time, or place, or circumstance: for it is observed in every generation, in almost every congregation of nominal Christians amongst us, and now follows the preaching of evangelical Missionaries in the South Sea Islands and amongst the Greenlanders.* You cannot say, therefore, that this change is experienced only by men of some particular persuasion, or is confined to certain degrees of latitude. You must not say that it is fanaticism; for we profess to be as capable of judging of matters relating to our own consciousness, as our friends. There are men who have recorded their experience upon this subject, after mature reflection, whose intellect stands side by side with the great minds of the earth. You will not assume to say that many of the Laymen, who adorn the several learned professions in our cities, are incompetent to testify to the reality of this change. Their testimony upon matters of experience would be relied upon in any court of justice, and no jury would hesitate to make it the foundation of a verdict. What then can be said of this change by one who disbelieves in its reality? All which he can say is, 'I have never experienced it myself.'

If the reader is one who is seeking to lead a religious life, and has read the book under consideration, and felt that it did not describe his case, or help him to the attainment of that for which he has labored, we think that we can show him a more excellent way. If we could succeed in disabusing him of the impressions which he has received relating to the subject of Regeneration, we believe that he would be filled with admiration at the provision which it makes for his wants, as a sinful erring man. To those who are desirous of attaining to the likeness of God, there is an assistance promised, and a radical change effected, of which we should suppose they would

* See the Journals of the Missionaries of the London Missionary Society, in the *Missionary Herald* for the last three months.

be glad to avail themselves. Indeed the prejudices against the subject of Regeneration are most unkind. It contains the only sure foundation of success in the conflict with sin. Instead of the wearisome, fruitless, unsatisfying, painful strife which some persons now endeavor to maintain, they may, by regeneration, be made free from the law of sin and death. By this change the whole current of affections is turned, and to him who has experienced it, life is not, as before, a constantly distressing effort to urge his way against a stream which sets towards a sinful and ensnaring world. If you would see clearly the evil of sin and the beauty of perfect holiness, you must have this change. If you would feel the power of religious motives, the joy and peace which passeth all understanding, you must have this change. 'We speak that we do know and testify that which we have seen?' We tried the course prescribed in this book through weary years, but, except when conscience had become stupified by worldliness, and the reasonable fears of a destitution of meetness for heaven were lulled to sleep, we found no rest. This has been the experience of multitudes who at last were born of the Spirit.

This change is necessarily preceded by conviction of sin; for as the soul is active and not passive when it takes place, and the change is a voluntary exercise of the faculties in turning from sin to holiness, we never turn until such conviction has been felt. It is not strange, therefore, that the book before us, having failed to give the reader a true and scriptural account of his wretched and lost condition as a sinner, should omit to speak of this change as a necessary part of religious experience, or as essential to salvation. The inquirer is taught that he is an imperfect, erring man, inclined to receive impressions from the things which are seen and temporal rather than from those which are unseen, and that his great endeavor must be to form a habitude of living in the contemplation of spiritual realities, and with an impression of the superiority of the soul to the body. To obtain this "is to be a Christian."

Some time since, a young friend of amiable feelings, and in the judgement of her liberal connections, a Christian, was made to feel that such directions as are here given, and all her corresponding efforts, did not satisfy the wants of her soul. She was convinced that there was need of something more than she had yet experienced in order to prepare for heaven. Prayer and the serious perusal of the Scriptures, accompanied with earnest desires to know the truth, soon produced a most pungent conviction of sin. She told her feelings to her young friends, and they were astonished that so exemplary and excellent a person

should feel anxiety respecting her character in the sight of God. They could not understand what she meant by representing herself as a great sinner, for they had considered her as a pattern of virtue. They asked one another, what made her weep so much; and at last concluded that her mind was impaired by some unknown cause, and advised her to seek relief from a voyage!! Soon, however, she came to them with a countenance full of heaven, and said, 'I have found Christ;' but this language was as unintelligible to them as her previous distress. This is one case out of the multitudes which occur in our congregations almost every month. Under the preaching of evangelical religion, these instances of deep conviction are frequent; but to those of an opposite system they are a stumbling block and foolishness. No one could receive conviction of sin by reading the book before us. We are here taught that we are imperfect and frail, and this is all. Nevertheless we were surprised to find allusions made to individuals in such a state of anxiety as we have described, and could not account for it, until we remembered that we had seen members of other congregations than our own in this state, in consequence of occasionally listening to evangelical instructions, or the faithful admonitions of evangelical friends; and that the book had been frequently given to members of our own societies, who were alarmed for the safety of their souls. The manner in which the whole subject of religious anxiety is treated is well adapted to allay the fears of the inquirer, while it seems to approve of them, and then it directs his eyes away from "the sinner's hope," to his own efforts after moral culture. "If a person," it is here observed, "is in this state of mind, he is to be congratulated upon it."

"We are to be thankful to God in his behalf, that another immortal soul is awake to its responsibility, and seeking real happiness. We would urge him to cherish the feelings which possess him; not with melancholy despondency; not with superstitious gloom; not with unmanly and unmeaning debasement; but with thoughtful, self-distrusting concern, with deliberate study for the path of duty, and a resolute purpose not to swerve from it.

Remember that much depends, I might say, every thing depends, on the way you make of this your present disposition."

The anxious inquirer is then directed to "avoid every pursuit, engagement, company, inconsistent with" his anxiety. "Say nothing of your thoughts and feelings to any but one or two confidential friends." "Apply therefore to your minister." "In this manner, feel your way along quietly, silently, steadily." "Be anxious to establish yourself firmly in the power of godliness, before you exhibit its form." Especially, "Do not spend too much time in public meetings." "It is at times a higher duty

to attend to your family." "Ye wives be in subjection to your own husbands." Thus "form your character in private." The chapter immediately succeeding points out "The Means of Religious *Improvement*," viz. Reading, Meditation, Prayer, Hearing the Word, and the Lord's supper.

In all these directions, there is not one which is not, in its place, important. But oh, how insufficient they are to the wants of an awakened sinner! We are not surprised that it was thought necessary to publish a tract, vindicating this system of Religion "from the charge of not going far enough." The words of Dr. Watts came forcibly to our minds :

" Not the most perfect rules they gavo
" Could show one sin forgiven."

The Saviour of sinners is not mentioned in these directions! There is, however, so much said respecting religious anxiety, apparently to encourage and deepen it, that an awakened sinner, meeting with sympathy in his distress, might possibly be induced to rely upon these directions, though they would be to him for a support only as a bruised reed. We sincerely believe that the author wrote with an honest intention to direct the inquirer according to the light which was in him; that he spake that which he knew and testified those things which he had seen; but there are other things, essential to salvation, which he did not know and had not seen; and therefore could not be expected to testify, as Cecil says, beyond his experience. If conviction of sin has taken *deep* hold of an inquirer, we do not apprehend any danger from his perusing these directions; they will be to him like the advice of one who turned "Pilgrim" aside to seek help from Mr. Legality; but as Pilgrim passed near a mountain at the entrance of the town, the lightnings flashed out before him, and the mountain and earth heaved, and a voice as from the Law, cried, 'The soul that sinneth shall die,' and drove the trembling sinner once more to seek refuge from the Cross.—To one, however, who had received only slight impressions of his sinfulness, we should fear 'he book would in in this respect be a voice crying, *Peace, Peace*.

In order to a faithful discharge of the duty which we have undertaken in reviewing the book before us, we are obliged to refer to another circumstance which makes it, in our opinion, of an injurious tendency. The author, by interweaving Orthodox terms into his composition, gives it a savour of evangelical piety. Having attended upon Unitarian preaching for a period of four years, we have several times listened to Sermons from Mr. Ware; and no preacher produced a greater effect upon

the congregation with which we worshipped, than he. But the terms and phrases which we all knew to be peculiar to another denomination of Christians were so frequent, that there was often an interchange of significant looks amongst a portion of the hearers during the sermon; and the inquiry was made more than once, in a very serious manner, whether the preacher was changing his sentiments. From all we have heard, we have no doubt that such a manner of writing does injury, as well as good; the first, by deceiving, (we do not say, *intentionally*) those who cannot discriminate, and infusing error into their minds with a seasoning of truth; and the second, by unconsciously awakening so much solemnity and fear in the minds of hearers, that a greater number of them have been compelled to leave their places of worship and seek relief to their disturbed consciences from evangelical ministers, than has been the case under the more liberal and tasteful exhibitions of the Gospel. The author, in the book before us, uses intimations of the future eternal punishment of the wicked, which we must presume grew out of his actual belief in that awful truth, and were not inserted merely to make the style pathetic and impressive. He says, for instance, as the effect of irreligion, "the soul enters eternity without having secured its salvation." p. 14. "They wish to be assured that their souls are safe." p. 25. "Will be left to perish in their sins." p. 30. "Speechless and hopeless," in the judgment. p. 35. "You will do your soul an everlasting injury." p. 41.—It is well known that the great majority of this denomination reject the doctrine of the eternal punishment of the wicked. We must conclude from these expressions, which no considerate or serious man would use lightly, that the author differs from his brethren upon this point. If this be the case, and the reader is made to believe that the soul who goes into eternity "without having secured its salvation" must be "hopeless" forever, how affecting is it to find that the book provides no Saviour from this wrath to come but moral culture, and to him who is without Christ, the uncovenanted mercy of God.

We come now to state our great objection to this book, and to the system of religion upon which it is based, viz, that it contains no Saviour. We feel it to be *without Christ*. We were astonished to find how few allusions there were in this book to the Saviour. Nothing is said of Christ, as we have shown, at the time when the soul oppressed with guilt and danger feels its need of a friend. The sinner is directed to be a philosopher, and by retiring into himself and forming good resolutions, to fix the religious principle deeply, and attain to a spiritual

mind. Socrates perhaps might have appreciated these directions, had he been in such a state of mind, and might have practised upon them; or any one else, who had habituated himself to reflective acts, and by discipline had become *esoteric* in his mental habits, provided, however, that his conviction of his inability to work out his own righteousness were not so great as to force from him the pathetic cry, 'O that there were a days-man or Mediator betwixt us, who might lay his hand upon us both!' If we have not mistaken the prevalent character of our world, and the wants of human nature, such a religion is not adapted to be universal. When Christ said, "To the poor the Gospel is preached," he had in mind, without doubt, the schools of philosophy, in which the benefits of wisdom were shut up from common people; and the excellency of his religion, and the great sign by which he gave the Baptist to know that it came from heaven, was, that it was suited to the apprehension of the uninstructed. We defy an angel from heaven so to preach this system of Mr. W. to a poor man scripturally convinced of his sins, as to dry one tear, light up one ray of hope on his face, or put the new song into his mouth. It is a cold abstraction. We have ourselves proved its inability to bless the soul. If any one says that it has made him happy, we will engage to produce the same sensations which he calls happiness, by reading to him from the Theory of Moral Sentiments, or from the Excursion, or by showing him the sunset, or procuring the performance of his favorite music. The sublime contemplation of God is not religion; nor the philosophical admiration of the character of Jesus; nor the sentimental love of virtue, more properly called pride of character. The world at large are not capable of such happiness. Now if Paley's grand a priori argument for a revelation be true, namely, that we may suppose that a benevolent God would have given that which men so much needed, we may with strict propriety extend it and say, If a benevolent God gave a revelation, it must be one which is adapted to the majority of mankind. But the majority of men cannot, and (so long as the pursuit of the arts of life is necessary) will not intellectualize, or be sufficiently contemplative, or so refined in their perceptions of moral beauty, as to understand and feel this religion. It needs incarnation. Man wears flesh and blood, and is not capable of being so etherealized out of those principles which belong to his compound nature, as to be affected by those truths and sentiments alone which have experienced a moral sublimation. We see this in the appointment of the rites and ceremonies of the Jewish religion, which were in merciful condescension to that principle of our nature, which requires sensi-

ble objects to make an impression upon us. It is a very illiberal notion of Judaism, that its ritual was wholly of a gross and low nature, because it was addressed to sense. We need it. Else why did the the *visible* symbol of the Almighty's presence rest at the door of the tabernacle? Why was not the moral law written in the stars and flowers, and breathed into the soul by summer winds, like this modern religion, instead of the glory of God descending upon Sinai, with the voice of a trumpet and the sound of words? It will be said, perhaps, that such manifestations were necessary in the infancy of the world, and amongst a rude people. But mankind, with all their improvements in knowledge and cultivation, have not lost their susceptibility to impression through the senses; else the voice of the living preacher, and dramatic representations, and the thousand ceremonies which men throng to behold, had given place to silent contemplation.

Is it still said that it was the object of the Most High entirely to dispense, in his intercourse with men, with all appeals to the senses? We do not believe it. The Apostle says these things were only "a shadow" of the coming dispensation. Of course, there must be as much substance in the antitype, as in the shadow; but according to the book before us, Christianity itself is only a shadow, a spirit, no tangible shape, all etherealized, airy, beautiful, and sentimental. But where is that principle of human nature, which craves impressions from sensible objects? This religion overlooks it, and therefore it is not a religion suited to human nature. Is it asked, what have you in your system which marks it as superior in this respect to ours? We reply, "The word BECAME FLESH." This is the grand central truth of our religion: *God in Christ*. It is not God, the Infinite Spirit merely, pervading heaven and earth, whom no man hath seen at any time: it is God in Christ, wearing human nature like a soft cloud on the brightness of his Godhead, and putting forth before his awful majesty the sympathies and feelings of a man to attract our feeble and sinful spirits. An unbeliever must certainly acknowledge this to be a wonderful provision of Jehovah for our benefit, if it were only true: and to us *it is all true*. Christ comes to us as a friend and brother of whom we are not afraid; and still when we commit the keeping of our souls to him, we feel that the fulness of the Godhead is in him; so that God comes to us, not as a "Divine Idea," or a Great spirit, but as the man Christ Jesus. We have been rebuked so often for making a parade (as it is called) of our religious exercises, that we shall not attempt to describe the joy which fills the soul, when the character of God is pre-

sented for the first time to a sinner in this light. If, however, the reader is one who is dissatisfied with that faith which provides no Saviour, (except as the word is used metaphorically) we can assure him that God (literally) in Christ affords a consolation for which he will seek elsewhere in vain. We cannot be dispossessed of our belief, when it is corporated with our consciousness. We read Greek quotations from Justin Martyr and Plato, and books upon (against) the Logos, intended to show us the folly of our faith—with an assurance that “we know whom we have believed.” This faith meets the wants of our whole nature by addressing us, not as pure, intellectual, spiritual substances, but as *men*, with feelings and passions which cannot be satisfied, as God has constituted them, without an incarnation of religion, something brought near to the senses, which we can, as it were, “see with our eyes, and look upon, and our hands handle of the word of life.” The other system goes back to Aristotle, and makes God like the vast, secret power, which gives motion to a machine; and judging from many of their most accomplished writers, they love Him, not personally, but through his works, and are obliged (as that most unchristian Poet, and author of the Universal Hymn,—that cenotaph to the Deity, expresses it) “to look through nature up to nature’s God;”—whereas by worshipping and loving “God in Christ,” we become acquainted with God first of all, and look through Him to His works. When we think of heaven, there is Christ wearing our glorified nature in union with the divine; and how is it possible for man to be brought nearer to God? Let those who talk so emptily of the dignity of human nature come and learn this great truth, if they would see *how truly great man is*. Then we remember that this exalted Saviour is not only our example, teacher; but, “he died for us,” and “delivered us from the wrath to come.” His blood, His stripes, His cross, His dying agonies mean something with us; they go to our hearts; they fill our souls with joy which is unspeakable and full of glory. When we speak of his *sufferings*, we are not obliged to slip the word in merely because the Bible uses it, and pass over it hastily; we dwell upon those sufferings, and rest all our hopes there, and are not ashamed of the cross. Observe the following allusion to Christ in the book before us.

“And it is not to the example alone of the Saviour that you are to have reference in your prayers. You are also to regard him as the Mediator through whom they are to be offered. It belongs to the system of our religion, that the thought of its Founder should be associated in the minds of its disciples with all that they are and do; with their sense of obligation, and their sentiments of piety.”

It chills the soul, to think that when we come to God in prayer, we are directed to ask for blessing because Christ was the Founder of our religion. This is like feeding on dew. It is indeed a beautiful thought to carry with us in prayer, that Christ was the great Founder of our religion,—but if we are not wholly ignorant of human nature, no one is capable of deriving pleasure from it, but those who can also understand and relish Alison on Taste, or Burke on the Sublime and Beautiful; and how large a proportion does such a class bear to the community? This religion is too scholastic and subtle to reclaim a lost world to God. Could you make a poor heathen in his ignorance love God by such means? No wonder that the plan for missionary enterprise among the promoters of this system, has been to make civilization and the arts and sciences the pioneers of their religion; but then it would take years of “moral culture” to make a Hottentot sufficiently sentimental to understand it. See the power of the opposite faith. A heathen in India had driven nails into his sandals, and had walked several miles on the sharp points to appease his conscience. Faint with the loss of blood and exhausted with pain, he drew near to a little group who were listening to one of our missionaries beneath a tree. He was preaching from these words—‘And the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.’ The heathen leaned upon his staff, in fixed attention, till at length he cried out, ‘This is just what I want—just what I want;’ and threw away his bloody sandals in the presence of the natives, and embraced Christianity. Oh what power is there in atoning blood to affect the soul! and what sensations are those when, instead of thinking of Christ as a “public exemplar,” and “Teacher,” we can say, “He loved ME, and gave himself for ME.”

The next thing which we observe in this book, is the very peculiar manner in which the subject of prayer is treated. There are directions given such as we had never before seen. The very nature of prayer requires that it be spontaneous. But the sentences which follow made us feel, that the religion which this book teaches does not inspire the soul with such emotions as David expresses when he says, ‘As the hart *panteth* for the water brooks, so pants my soul after thee, O God.’

“First of all, when the hour has arrived, seek to excite in your mind a sense of the divine presence, and of the greatness of the act in which you are engaging. Summon up the whole energy of your mind. Put all your powers upon the stretch.” “In this way make an effort after a devout temper.”

We need nothing more to convince us of the insufficiency of this system, as it regards the life of piety in the soul. These

rules will be in vain so long as the soul is destitute of the love of God; and where the love of God exists, they will be useless. We conceive it to be easy for a minister of this religion, and for a few of the more serious amongst its followers, who spend their lives in sober contemplation, to practise secret prayer; but the very fact that such prescriptions as those above quoted are given, shows that, as a general thing, those who embrace this religion, find prayer a toilsome exercise. With us, the first evidence of piety is the almost involuntary pouring forth of the soul before God. This was adduced by the Saviour himself as the proof of Paul's conversion—"Behold he prayeth." Did Ananias need to give the young convert rules for obtaining a devout spirit, or direct him to "make an effort after a devout temper?" We judge no man upon the subject of secret prayer; we dare not look into that place of which Christ has commanded that the door be shut; we reason merely from the directions which it was deemed necessary to give in such a book as this, intended as an assistant in forming the religious character. We should never give such rules to young Christians in our congregations. If we perceived that they were in a state that called for them, we should preach to them from a solemn question which was asked to try the spirit of a suspected self deceiver, 'Will he always call upon God?' We teach that there is no such test of real religion as the inquiry, 'Do you love secret prayer? Is it easy or constrained?' If the latter, all 'efforts after a devout temper' when the hour has arrived, we should fear would be without effect.

This system of religion presents another great difficulty. The Bible makes a Mediator necessary in order to acceptable prayer. In the book before us, as already quoted, Christ is spoken of once as Mediator, as an Advocate, and as Intercessor. It always seems to us as if the writers upon this system were troubled, when obliged to speak of Christ in these offices. We cannot see why they might not entirely dispense with these names. For if God requires no atonement for the forgiveness of sin, and no atoning Saviour on whose account we may be accepted and pardoned, what need is there of an Advocate to "appear in the presence of God for us?" And if Christ has done nothing which God looks upon as the ground of a sinner's salvation, with what propriety can he be called an Intercessor? Does the man Christ Jesus plead, to make the Father propitious? This is too much like old, misrepresented Calvinism. Our system makes these terms of great meaning. Christ having atoned for our sins, may with great propriety and beauty be called our Advocate; for when a penitent pleads for mercy,

the remembrance of what Christ has done constitutes the reason why that sinner should be forgiven. Thus Christ is our Advocate; just as if, in the legal sense of the word, he produced such considerations from the law of God, and from the fact that he had become the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth, that God can justify and yet be just. And thus, in like manner, when a sinner acknowledges his guilt, and strict justice requires his punishment, Christ, having done that which enables the Lawgiver to suspend the operation of the law, is to the soul what an *interceding friend* would be in the time of peril. But how unmeaning the terms, if no atonement is admitted! What is the advocacy of Christ "the Teacher," Christ "the Exemplar?" Suppose that a king should send an officer of state to proclaim his clemency to a number of rebels, and having set before them the benefits of subordination and good government, they should repent: does this officer become their advocate and intercessor by what he has done? Or, in other words, does the fact that he has been on an embassy constitute the great reason why they should be forgiven? Surely not. But if he had paid a ransom for these men from his own resources, and had a place at court to see that their pardon, whenever they applied, was signed and sealed, he might well be called their advocate and intercessor. But it will be said in reply, Christ is our Mediator, because he was the internuntius between God and man. True, when he was on earth; but now that his work on earth has ceased, of course, according to this system, *his Mediatorship has expired!* But our views of the Mediatorship of Christ are more in consonance with those of the Bible, which represents that "he *ever liveth*" for this purpose, and that he will not cease to administer between God and man, till the end:—when he will give up the mediatorial kingdom, and no such distinction will any more be known between God as Lawgiver and Christ as Mediator, but the purposes of redemption being accomplished, God, the undistinguished Deity, will fill every relation to the universe, and be "All in All." We observe here, that our views of the mediatorship render it easy to explain every passage which speaks of the inferiority of Christ to God. So that when he says, "The Son can do nothing of himself but what he seeth the Father do;" and, "I can do nothing without the Father," we are warranted by the context to understand him as saying, that their will and purposes are inseparable, and not that he is an inferior being. 'You say,' addressing the Jews, 'that I speak these things in my own name, and dishonor God; I hereby profess my subjection to God in the work which I am engaged, and own him

as my superior in the kingdom of grace.' Would a mere man have dared to say, 'My Father is greater than I?' There is not a passage in the Bible respecting Christ which we cannot easily explain, retaining our present views of him; every thing is obvious and natural on the supposition of his two natures; but rejecting his deity, we are troubled on every side with passages which speak of a pre-existent nature, divine attributes, and the atoning efficacy of his blood. Amongst conflicting systems of philosophy, men choose that which explains the greatest number of existing phenomena. As philosophers, then, we embrace the Evangelical System.

We have often asked, with what feelings our friends of this religious persuasion celebrate the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper? With their views of Christ, it would be to us a mere matter of sentiment, provided we could keep out of mind the awful significance of the symbols. We should prefer that the minister would dispense with these symbols, and read those parts of the Saviour's history which present the moral beauty of his character. Or, it would be interesting, if he would bring before us his pure precepts, and let us spend the time of Communion in meditating upon some one of them, to make it the rule of our life till the next Sacramental season. All this we might and should be willing to do "in remembrance" of Him, if we had their views of Christ. But oh! that blood! that blood! The awful consciousness of a mysterious meaning in it which we did not believe, but which ever and anon would wake up in the soul, would fill us with agony. And that broken body! Oh! there is something here, we should say, more than precept and example. 'This blood,' a voice would whisper, 'was shed for many, for the remission of sins.' This ordinance, so impressive and sublime from its very simplicity, must be something more than to remind us of a Martyr to the cause of truth. And then passages of corroborating import would come into the mind; how that "he *died for us*, that we might not perish, but have everlasting life;" that "he delivered us from the wrath to come;" that in him "we have redemption *through his blood*;" and there would be a constant effort during the whole service to persuade conscience that these passages were all figurative. Thus the Communion season would always be anticipated with feelings of no pleasant nature, till we had seared ourselves against the love of Christ.—Gladly would we be excused from bringing forward a passage in the book before us relating to this subject. We wonder that it could have been written; but we should suppose that it would remove every re-

maining doubt in the mind of a serious inquirer respecting the ability of this system, to satisfy the soul. The writer is speaking of the opportunity which the Communion season affords for contemplative worship.

"Many persons, I am aware, find it difficult so to control their minds as to render these silent moments profitable. But to such persons the very difficulty becomes a useful discipline, and the occasion should be valued for the sake of it. To aid them in the use of it, and to prevent its running to waste in miserable listlessness and idle roving of the mind, it might be well that they should have with them some suitable little book of meditations and reflections, which they may quietly consult in their seats, as guides to thought and devotion."

What a secret is here betrayed respecting the feelings of communicants under this system! But is it strange, when we consider that the Sacrament with them must of necessity be a disproportionate and overacted representation of the "Teacher?"

It has been a great object with some ministers of this persuasion to open the doors of the church, and invite the whole congregation to the communion. We do not wonder at this. We should do the same, if we were ministers of that religion. The sacred and awful rite would oppress us with a sense of something mysterious and supernatural. As our views of Christ and love to his atoning character would not be proportioned to the impressive greatness of the scene, it would be a relief to have it made only a common service, by which all its mystery would be removed, and we released from the responsibility of doing that by ourselves, which would be easier to bear when shared by a multitude. Thus the ancient chieftain, who entered the recesses of a temple with a small band, was overawed by the silence and imposing solemnity of the scene, and was not at ease till he had brought in his troops, and thus relieved himself from his dread of the place, by the sight of a multitude and the voice of a festival.

Such is the tendency of this system—such its want of adaptation to the nature of man, its inability to redeem a fallen world, to comfort and bless the soul. Its "scanty creed" leaves unexplained a great portion of that word of God which, it is boasted, is their only creed. It dishonors Him who is *worthy* "to receive power and riches and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and blessing." It is deficient in breathing a spirit of prayer into the soul; and the great Memorial of Redeeming Love is brought before the mind with such feeble influence, that extraneous means are sometimes necessary to prevent "the miserable listlessness" of a communicant's feelings! Reader, is this your faith? Are you sure that the 'Corner Stone' is in

the foundation of your building for Eternity? And are you ready for the rains to descend, for the floods to come, and beat upon your house? We know how common it is to evade these questions when put by a friend, and to quiet conscience and the rising doubt, by pointing to the excellent characters of a few who preach this system, saying, 'Do you believe that *such an one* is not a Christian?—and *that man*—look at his life! Go with us and hear his solemn sermons, and melting prayers! I am willing to risk my soul wherever he considers it safe to rest his hopes.' Therefore, you are in dreadful danger. Your minister is your idol—we fear, your life-boat, which you cling to instead of Christ. You are going to heaven, because he who preaches the faith which you embrace is such an affectionate, serious, engaging minister! But it is written, "Every one of us shall give account of *himself* to God." Besides, your minister may not be a fair specimen of the tendency of the system which he preaches. "There are instances, a physician has just told me, of persons who had been crowded together in prisons so ill ventilated as to breed an infectious fever, yet having themselves escaped it, from the gradual adaptation of their constitutions to the noxious atmosphere which they had generated. This avoids the inference so often drawn as to the real harmlessness of apparently mischievous doctrines from the innocent lives of the men with whom they originated. To form a certain judgement concerning the tendency of any doctrine, one should rather look at the fruit it bears in the disciple, than in the teacher. For he only made it; they are made by it."

The Book is written with unaffected simplicity and ease; exhibits the most amiable feelings; contains many precepts of wisdom which we could wish were in the heart of every Christian; and in many respects affords a good model for a book of a similar nature, founded on the essential truths and doctrines of the Gospel. The fact that it has gone through five editions shows the great demand for practical instruction occasioned by an all pervading interest in the subject of Religion; and he who with the good taste and talent of this book shall combine the more interesting and thrilling views of Evangelical Religion, for the inquirers of this age, will from heaven read his name with that of Bunyan, and Baxter, and Doddridge; and be surrounded there with multitudes who will call him blessed.

MEMOIRS AND CONFESSIONS OF FRANCIS VOLKMAR REINHARD, S. T. D. *Court Preacher at Dresden. From the German.* BY OLIVER A. TAYLOR, *Resident Licentiate, Theol. Seminary, Andover.* Boston: Peirce & Parker. 1832, pp. 164.

PLAN OF THE FOUNDER OF CHRISTIANITY, BY F. V. REINHARD, S. T. D. & C. *Translated from the fifth German Edition.* BY OLIVER A. TAYLOR, A. M. New York: G. & C. & H. Carvill. 1831, pp. 359.

Reinhard was born in 1753. His father, a poor but pious and worthy minister of Vohenstrauss, watched with peculiar care over the early growth of his character, and sowed even in his childhood the seeds of his future eminence as a man, a scholar, and a preacher. His religious education was strictly evangelical; and his early habit of perusing the Bible every day, and making it "the man of his counsel," and the guide of his conduct, contributed much to the excellence of his entire character, and eventually proved his only safeguard against the doubts and dangers which assailed him in a subsequent period of his life.

Respecting the origin and influence of this habit, so worthy of being imitated by every youth, we quote his own language, in stating the reason why he did not subsequently resort to sermons for his personal edification.

"It is impossible for any one to be accustomed at an earlier age, to look upon the Bible as the book of all books, than I was. I commenced learning to read with the Proverbs of Solomon, which were printed with distinct syllables for the sake of children; and scarcely had I attained to any degree of skill in reading, when my father, to whom the Scriptures were every thing in matters of religion, presented me with a Bible. Hence, when a child of five years of age, I began to read the Bible. I read it in course, as I found it, from the beginning to the end, and did it more than once; never suffering a single day to pass, without having completed my task in this respect. This was indeed a childish notion. I felt so, and therefore never told my father of it, but read my Bible in silence, and altogether for myself. In the mean time, however, I derived increasing delight from reading it; embraced every opportunity which presented, to ask my father questions respecting it; and, as I advanced, made many useful reflections of my own, until I gradually acquired the habit of using it for purposes of personal edification, without calling any thing farther to my aid, than a spiritual song. This habit I carried with me to Regensburg. As I was always able, while there, to read the New Testament in the original, reading the Bible presented me with new attractions. I ran to my Bible, therefore, whenever I wished for instruction, animation, or comfort; and as I found every thing in it that I wanted, in great abundance, I never once thought of seeking after other means of edification."

It is extremely interesting to follow the developement of Reinhard's mind, and trace the permanent, all-pervading influence of his father's instructions. He gave early promise of his future eminence; and the hope of the fond father, "that he could make something out of his son," may have roused his youthful spirit, and stimulated his subsequent exertions. His father excited in him a curiosity that devoured even in childhood all kinds of books that came in his way, and thus was created that eager, insatiable

thirst for knowledge, the invariable concomitant and characteristic of genius in embryo, which accompanied him through life, and enriched his mind with the varied treasures of ancient and modern learning. He was, when a child, remarkably fond of poetry; but the loss of his father's library by fire restricted him to the Sultzbach Hymn-book, and a tame translation of Pope's Essay on Man, both which he soon got by heart. His brother-in-law, a young clergyman, perceiving the bent of his mind, and his want of the works best fitted to gratify and improve his taste, furnished him, in the thirteenth year of his age, with the poems of the celebrated Haller. He soon became as familiar with this elegant poet as he was with his old hymn-book; and from Haller's poetry, so rich in matter, and chaste in manner, he acquired such a relish for the genuine beauties of style as guided him in all his subsequent reading, and ultimately led to the formation of that easy, terse and nervous diction for which he is so justly celebrated above most of his countrymen. He afterwards became enamored of Klopstock's Messiah; but the influence of Haller, his still favorite author, kept him from imitating, or unduly admiring, the florid beauties of Klopstock. His acquaintance with the ancient classics, begun in his boyhood, and continued through life, was the principal means of producing that refinement of taste, and elegance of style, for which he was so highly distinguished. His father, himself a good linguist, commenced teaching him the languages in a way happily calculated to make him appreciate their peculiar and pre-eminent excellencies. He first turned his attention solely to grammatical minutia; and after familiarizing these, he proceeded to select the finest passages of Virgil and Cicero, to explain their latent beauties, and kindle the boy into a glow of enthusiastic admiration. Thus prepared, young Reinhard was sent, in his sixteenth year, to the Gymnasium Poeticum at Regensburg, where he spent four years and a half principally in studying the ancient languages. Under Topfer, a teacher of taste and skill, he pursued his study of the Classics with much success, and greatly increased that relish for their beauties which subsequently gave such a charm to his style. He also made himself master of several modern languages, and read with much pleasure and profit the finest productions of Italy and France, especially Fenelon's exquisite Telemachus, the comedies of Moliere, and the tragedies of Corneille and Racine.

We cannot refrain from quoting here, as an instance of the imprudence which too generally characterizes the *genus irritabile vatum*, an anecdote which shows his early enthusiastic fondness for poetry. He went to Regensburg furnished by his mother with a few guilders to defray his necessary expenses.

"But scarcely, says he, had I taken up my abode in Regensburg, before I disposed of almost all this money at a bookseller's shop for some German poets, particularly Klopstock's Messiah, of which only the ten first books were then published. The last attracted me with an irresistible power which operated equally strong upon my imagination and my heart. In it, I discovered the

German language in a richness, strength, and, I may say, magnificence, of which I had previously had no conception. In regard to sentiment, sublimity, and train of thought, what a resemblance there was between Klopstock, and my Haller, and how welcome therefore must the former have been to one, whose feelings had been excited and moulded by the latter! Hence, I read my Messiah so often, and with such interest, that in a short time I knew it by heart as well as I did my Haller."

From Regensburg Reinhard went, at the age of twenty, to the University of Wittemberg. His scanty resources, now well nigh exhausted, compelled him to resolve on spending only two years at this ancient and far famed seat of learning. Not having determined to what profession he should devote himself, he attended to those general subjects which would be most likely to qualify him for any sphere he might select. Thus he neglected the regular course of study preparatory to the ministry; but, as his acquaintance with the various departments of philosophy and literature did much to supply this deficiency, and his subsequent familiarity with the Hebrew and its kindred dialects opened to him the pure, inexhaustible fountain of all knowledge respecting divine things, he found eventually less occasion than he had expected, to regret this chasm in his professional education.

Reinhard, however, did regret very deeply this deficiency of his theological education; and in his Confessions he warns young students for the ministry to guard against the errors which he had himself committed, and earnestly begs them to attend to the acquisition of the theological sciences in as perfect and methodical a manner as time and circumstances will permit.

He laments also his want of instruction and exercises in the department of pulpit eloquence; but he had pursued a course of collateral studies which did much to supply this defect in his preparation for the ministry.

"I had early made myself acquainted with the old systems of eloquence, particularly those of Cicero, at school. When at the university, I not only read them again, but with them connected Quintilian and Aristotle. With the theories of the ancients respecting eloquence, I compared their discourses, particularly those of Isocrates, Demosthenes, Aeschines, Lysias and Cicero; and I have always thought, that the study of these proved of more use to me than lectures upon homiletics would have done.

"I spent some years at the university before I became acquainted with the Grecian orators. Until then, my notions of eloquence were drawn chiefly from Cicero's works. I looked upon him with admiration as the greatest master in this department, excepting, that, on comparing him with the concise Haller overflowing with thought, I could not avoid occasionally pronouncing him somewhat verbose.

"Excited by him I finally began to read the Grecian orators; and how astonished I was on finding in the most celebrated orator of all antiquity, a man, who, for accomplishing his object and producing the greatest effects, never used a single flower or far-fetched expression, a conceited and remarkable phrase, or any thing that bears the least resemblance to poetical prose;—who, on the other hand, says and delivers every thing in those terms which are the most natural, correctly distinguishing and strikingly descriptive,—and hence, a man, in whom are to be discovered no traces of affectation or struggling after wit and surprising turns, or of that audacity so pleasing to many, and said to be the companion of genius;—a man, on the contrary, who chains the attention of his hearers by a diction, strong, manly, and unincumbered with

a single superfluous word; who overpowers, as it were, the understanding by the strength of his thoughts, the force of his reasons, and the superiority with which he develops them; and finally, bears every thing away with him by means of an eloquence which rolls forth in periods, which are perfect in themselves, are harmonious, and fill the ear.

"The more I read this orator, the clearer it appeared to me, that true eloquence is something entirely different from an artificial fluency of speech; something entirely different from playing with antitheses and witty expressions; something entirely different from poetical prose, or as Kant calls it, prose run mad; and finally, something entirely different from that storminess and vehemence, that sputtering and foaming, and that bombast and turgidness, at which the great mass of the people are astonished because of their ignorance. If then, said I to myself, for this was the inference which I drew, if then I can so speak in the pulpit that my discourse shall always constitute a well arranged whole, firmly united in all its parts, and continued in the most natural order; if I can always bring forward such matter as stands in close connexion with the most important concerns of my hearers and is of utility to them in practical life; if I can do this so that every thought shall always be clothed in those words, which, of all the treasures of the language, distinguish it in the best and most striking manner; if consequently, I can in teaching always find the most intelligible, in writing the most obvious, in admonishing the most powerful, in warning the most terrific, in consoling the most comforting, expressions; if I can avail myself of language so that every shading of the thoughts, every turn of the feelings; every climax of the passions, shall be rendered manifest by it, and always made to touch those cords of the heart which they ought to do; finally, if I can procure for my discourse a fulness without bombast, an euphony without artificial rhythm, and an easy uninterrupted current which overflows, pouring itself as it were into the ear and the heart;—if I can do all this, it will constitute the eloquence which is adapted to the pulpit. Then my discourse will be clear for the intellect, easy to be remembered, exciting to the feelings and captivating to the heart. Then I shall speak of religion with that perfect simplicity, exalted dignity, and benevolent warmth, with which we ought always to speak of it."

We should be glad, if the design of this brief notice would permit, to follow the career of Reinhard, and gather from it lessons of instruction and encouragement for the poor, but enterprising student. His poverty compelled him, even after he became a teacher, to live occasionally on bread and water; but no obstacles, no discouragements could cool his ardor, or check his progress in the pursuit of his studies. Knowledge was the aliment of his soul; and often, while his body must have been suffering from want of food, and contracting the seeds of future and well nigh fatal diseases, his mind was feasting on a banquet of science and taste.

He was enabled, however, to complete the usual course of study, and was then invited to remain as a private teacher in the University. He accepted the invitation, and delivered lectures from 1777 to 1780, on various subjects in Philology and Philosophy. He was appointed in 1780 Professor Extraordinary of Theology and Philosophy; and in 1784 he was chosen Professor of Theology and Homiletics. He remained at the University till he was appointed, in 1792, Court Preacher at Dresden, and continued for twenty years to discharge the duties of that high office with great diligence and success, until his death in 1812.

Reinhard was one of the most accomplished scholars that Ger-

many has ever produced. His learning was various and profound, his taste pure and refined; his mind acute, vigorous, and ever on the wing. He was cast in a very finished mould. His mind was perfectly balanced, and his whole character had a peculiar symmetry, compactness and perfection. He seems to have drunk from the unadulterated fountains of classical taste, and imbibed a large portion of their spirit. His Latin resembles the ease, perspicuity and copiousness of Cicero himself, and is scarcely excelled even by that of the incomparable Lowth. We are acquainted with no German whose Latin is equal to that of Reinhard; and he wrote his own language with a purity and elegance, a perspicuity, precision and force, which have deservedly placed him well nigh at the head of all his contemporaries in Germany. His popularity as a preacher was unrivalled; and his sermons, of which thirty-nine volumes have been published, are said to be the best specimens of pulpit eloquence that Germany has furnished since the days of Luther. Beside this library of sermons, he gave to the public a brief system of Theology, a very valuable work on Christian Ethics in five volumes, his Plan of the Founder of Christianity, and two volumes of minor pieces on a variety of important topics in theology, philosophy and sacred literature.

Reinhard, though evangelically educated by his father, doubtless acquired, in the progress of his studies, some bias towards the Rationalism which was then creeping into all the Universities of Germany; but his religious sensibilities, and his profound reverence for the word of God as our only and sufficient rule of faith and practice, enabled him to withstand that popular tide of degeneracy which drifted so many of his contemporaries upon the rocks and quicksands of a baptized infidelity. The history of his internal struggle is so full of interest and admonition, that we give a brief extract to show its nature, and the means which, like an anchor, held him fast by the pure principles of the gospel.

"About this time, disputes became more and more general in the theological world, and not only threatened to shake doctrinal theology in particular, but actually to overturn it. These greatly added to the perplexity of my internal fermentation, and sometimes increased it to the most painful disquietude.

"Neither my conscience nor my heart, however, would suffer me to remain ignorant of these disputes and discussions. The question, What connexion has philosophy with revelation, and how can the two be reconciled together? had always been an interesting and important one to me, and it became increasingly so, from the moment I was called to deliver lectures upon theology. It is in vain for me to attempt to give you a description of the sad struggle in which I saw myself involved every morning;—a struggle which was renewed with every preparation I made for lecturing, and as often accompanied with the greatest helplessness and embarrassment. The idea of saying any thing which should infect the youth with pernicious error, filled me with trembling; and yet I had to speak of a thousand things respecting which I was obliged to explain myself with such problematicalness, as to render conviction of the truth impossible. Accordingly, the striking of the clock which called me to the lecture-room, often found me walking up and down my chamber with tears in my eyes, engaged in earnest prayer to God, that he would guide me at least in such a manner, as not to suffer me to do any thing detrimental to religion and morality; and not unfrequently was it difficult for

me to conceal my internal commotion from my hearers. Notwithstanding the uncertainty, however, in which all my knowledge, even that which I had considered as resting upon a solid basis, was, about this time involved, two principles remained by me unshaken: *First*, never to permit myself to indulge in any explanations in philosophy which did violence to my moral feelings; and *second*, never to assert any thing in theology which was at variance with the obvious declarations of the Bible.

"The principle, not to approve of any thing in theology which was at variance with the obvious declarations of the Bible, confined me to a middle course, in which, with sufficient freedom for examination, I was restrained from running off too far into error. It was a matter of conscience with me not to involve myself in any contention with a book which originated with God, and constitutes the instruction of so large a portion of our race; the divine power of which I had so often experienced in my own heart, and for which all my feelings had ever declared in so decided a manner. In addition to this, I was born in a church, which is the proper kingdom of the Scriptures, acknowledging as it does no other unlimited authority, and deriving its system of doctrines entirely from them. This system appeared to me to be far more agreeable to the Scriptures, provided they are received without any human refinements or perversions, than that of any other religious party of Christians. Hence, notwithstanding the greatness of my internal fermentation, and the length of my struggles with doubts of every kind, I could, from the very beginning, not only teach the system of doctrines embraced by the Evangelical church, but, if I acted conscientiously, was obliged to do so. Of course, I afterwards did this with increasing delight and thoroughness; as I became more and more convinced, that the essential parts of this system are contained in the Scriptures and too deeply founded upon them, ever to be mistaken, or by any of the arts of interpretation, entirely explained away."

But these views could not be preached without strong opposition even among the professed followers of Luther; and the sketch given by Reinhard of the treatment he received for his adherence to "the faith once delivered to the saints," and incorporated in the creed of his own church, so finely illustrates his religious character, and so fully develops the spirit and tendencies of Rationalism on both sides of the Atlantic, that we cannot refrain from giving a few extracts from the ninth Letter.

"On account of my adherence to the doctrines of our church, or rather to the doctrines of the Bible, which have always been recognized in my sermons, I have, on the one hand, been bitterly censured, and in reality calumniated; and, on the other, tenderly apologized for and defended; and I will frankly confess to you, my dear friend, that the latter has grieved me far more than the former.

"I commenced preaching at a time in which our illuminating theologians had succeeded in rendering the doctrines of Christianity so clear and intelligible, that nothing was left but pure Rationalism. Then, for any who wished to get applause and obtain journal approbation, it was an almost indispensable condition, that he should have declared some book of the Bible spurious, or have attacked some established doctrine. He who ventured to make his appearance in public without doing homage to the spirit of the age, might calculate upon being received with ridicule and contempt. That I did not escape this fate; that, on the other hand, my adherence to the ancient doctrines was pronounced incomprehensible by the reviewers, treated with injustice and severity, and spoken of with bitterness and sarcasm, is a matter with which you must have been acquainted.

"Permit me then to explain to you in a few words, how I arrived at those views so offensive to our reforming theologians. In my struggles after the truth, I could not fail to perceive, that strict and systematic connexion, unity of principle, and consistency of thought in religion, could be acquired only by adhering entirely to reason, or entirely to the Scriptures; and hence, in reality, only by the

Rationalist or Supernaturalist. With the former, reason alone decides. What she does not comprehend and approve of, he utterly rejects from his creed. His knowledge therefore is connected and homogeneous. With him, the Scriptures have no more authority than any other human production. He listens to what they say only when it agrees with his own opinions; and then, not because he supposes it affords any decisive proof of what he believes, for in this respect he trusts alone to reason, but merely for the purpose of illustration, and showing that others have thought and believed as he does.

"In like manner, consistent with himself and in every respect faithful to his own principles, is the Supernaturalist. To him in matters of religion the Scriptures are, what reason is to the Rationalist. He makes use of the latter indeed, for the purpose of examining the claims of the Scriptures, and the arguments in favor of their high origin; but as soon as this is done,—as soon as he is convinced that the instructions they contain originated with God, he receives their authority as decisive in every thing pertaining to religion. Thenceforward, reason has nothing to do but to explain the Scriptures and endeavor to ascertain their meaning; and the doctrines to which this process leads her, however strange they may seem, or far they may lie beyond the reach of her discovery or ability to prove, she is by no means at liberty to reject, unless they contain some things contradictory in themselves. On the other hand, she is bound to recognize them as from God, and yield obedience to them as of divine authority.

"It is perfectly evident, that a man will reason inconsistently, and fail of fighting upon any satisfactory and determining principle for the regulation of his knowledge, so long as he pursues a middle course, and makes reason and Scripture co-ordinate, instead of making the one subordinate to the other.

"In this middle course,—a course which never can lead to any thing more than to rhapsodical knowledge composed of heterogeneous materials, and hence, always disconnected and indefinite,—I thought I discovered the most of those theologians who were laboring for the purification of the system of Christian truth. With due consideration I say *the most*. That there were men among them who knew well what they were about, and were genuine Rationalists, but thought it advisable not to let it be known, was a fact too obvious to escape the notice of attentive observers. But, by far the greater part of these illuminating theologians in reality knew not what they were about, and had no idea of the tendency of their efforts. Believing they were doing no small service to the cause of truth, and elevating themselves not a little above the common mass of the people, they rejected now this, now that, dogma from the old system, while at the same time they retained a multitude of others, as true, which, for the same reasons, ought likewise to have been rejected. By this means, the whole of doctrinal theology was rendered so fluctuating and insecure, that nothing could any longer be said of it, as a system. Very few knew where they were. Having taken away confidence in the old system, in which the Scriptures decided every thing, without being sufficiently resolute to reject all Scriptural authority, and follow the dictates of reason alone, they fell into a strange kind of capitulation with the two; at one time, sought to abate something from the Scriptures in order to satisfy reason, at another, rendered it so obliging as to admit the validity of some things which stood too obviously on the face of Scripture to be rejected; and by means of this mediation and negotiation, now looked upon reason as the rightest, and then the Scriptures, according as the mediator and negotiator felt inclined to act the interpreter or the philosopher, and the other circumstances in which he was placed seemed to call for caution, or to authorize licentiousness.

"Here, however, I must give you a glance into my heart, which will, perhaps, fill you with great surprise; but which will completely solve for you the riddle of my unshaken adherence to the Gospel in general, and to the doctrines of our church in particular. To do it in a few words; in the relation in which I stand to God, I need a *Saviour* and *Mediator*, and just such an one as *Christ is*. That the guilt of sins once committed can never be di-

minished, much less taken away, by any subsequent reformation, is as clear as the sun. On the other hand, it will only be rendered so much the greater thereby, inasmuch as the fact, that the man acts differently now, shows that he might have done so before, if he had earnestly desired to. And as to this reformation, however real and thorough, what is it? O! I appeal to every one possessed of tender, susceptible moral feelings, and acquainted with the qualities of a good action, to tell me, whether it can meet with the approbation of the Supreme and Omniscient Judge. Will the best of men be able to extol their virtue before him? Will not all their courage fail when examined in the presence of their Maker? Will they not be obliged to confess, that the very best actions they ever performed, are not only entirely destitute of merit, but in addition thereto, so very defective and so far below every thing which God may and must require, that, instead of expecting complete justification, or, perhaps, a reward, they will have to entreat for connivance and forbearance? This humiliating feeling of personal unworthiness has not only not been diminished in me, as I have advanced in goodness, but been rendered stronger and more vivid. Indeed, the defectiveness of human virtue must necessarily become more striking, in exact proportion as the moral sensibilities are purified and quickened by the progress of reformation; for he, who has made advances in goodness, will be more pained at little faults and impurities, which the unreformed and beginners in virtue do not even perceive, than the latter are at gross errors."

But we have lingered much longer than we intended on the delightful theme of Reinhard's life and character. To his countrymen and contemporaries, these Confessions, written with so much ease, elegance and naivetè must have been an extremely interesting piece of autobiography. Some degree of familiarity with his writings may have prepared us to devour this part of the little work before us with a relish somewhat peculiar; but we can confidently commend it to the attention of all, especially of Christian ministers, and still more particularly of those who are preparing for the sacred office, as full of admonition, encouragement, and practical wisdom. It suggests a great variety of topics which call for thorough discussion; but our limits will not permit us now to mention them. The work is necessarily quite miscellaneous. We should, at first view, find some fault with the arrangement which Mr. Taylor has adopted; but, on examining the contents more minutely, we doubt whether the compiler could have arranged his heterogeneous materials in an order less exceptionable. The Memoirs, so called, come last, but merely because they are in fact supplementary to the confessions; and for the same reason, they begin with an account of Reinhard's death, and are filled up with additional sketches of his life. This order may, after all, appear faulty to some; but it is of no great consequence either way; and for ourselves, we rather wonder how Mr. Taylor contrived to manage the dry and perplexed materials of Böttiger so well.

(To be continued.)

THE
SPIRIT OF THE PILGRIMS.

VOL. V.

JUNE, 1832.

NO. 6.

COMMUNICATIONS.

LETTERS TO YOUNG MINISTERS.

LETTER V.

BELOVED BRETHREN AND FRIENDS,

The remarks made in my last Letter were meant to be in strict conformity with the principle before laid down, namely, that *the Bible is our standard both as to the matter and the manner of religious instruction*. We are under sacred obligations to conform to this standard, because it is divine and infallible. I am persuaded that you feel this obligation, and that you will cordially and unitedly utter the pious sentiment, *Whatsoever the Lord saith, that must we speak*.

Since I wrote the last Letter, and the substance of the following, I have re-perused Dr. Smalley's Discourses on the sinner's inability to comply with the gospel, Dr. Griffin's Lecture on the plea of inability, and the sermon of Rev. Mr. Christmas on the distinction between natural and moral inability. I coincide with those excellent writers in regard to the grand positions which they labor to establish. As to the manner of drawing out the important distinction between different kinds of inability, I shall have occasion to offer some remarks in another place.

My present object is to inquire for the true meaning of the various texts, which were cited in the last Letter, and which affirm, in different ways, that sinners *cannot* comply with the divine requisitions. By what means can we arrive at the sense which the sacred teachers meant to utter in those texts?

It may contribute something to a right understanding of those texts, or, at least, it may help us rightly to qualify their

meaning, to notice that the inspired writers, in the most unequivocal terms, *require* the sinner to comply with the divine commands, and charge it upon him as *his own fault*, and as what exposes him to *just condemnation*, that he does not comply. This is a very important consideration; and if we had nothing else, would be sufficient to satisfy us *that the sinner's inability is of a peculiar kind*, and that it does not in the least exempt him from his obligations to obey the divine requirements, nor diminish the guilt of disobedience.

But we have other and more direct means of understanding the nature of the inability spoken of; the most important of which is, an examination of the passages themselves where this inability is brought into view. In several of these passages, there is something which clearly indicates what kind of inability is intended. First; take Matt. 12: 34. "How *can* ye being *evil*, speak good things? for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." Why could they not speak good things? Because they were evil. As Jesus had just said; "an evil tree *cannot* bring forth good fruit?" What prevents? Simply the badness of the tree.

Next examine John 5: 44. "How *can* ye believe, who receive honor one of another?" *Why* could they not believe? Because they received honor one of another, and sought not the honor which cometh from God. In other words, it was their worldly, ambitious disposition which kept them from believing. The reason why those spoken of, John 12: 39, could not believe, is also suggested in the passage itself; namely, that their hearts were hardened and blinded. So Rom. 8: 7, 8. What is the reason why those of whom the Apostle speaks, *cannot* be subject to the divine law, and *cannot* please God? Because they have the *carnal mind*; or, as expressed in v. 8, because they are *in the flesh*. Why cannot such as are spoken of, 1 Cor. 2: 14, receive the things of the Spirit? Because they are *natural men*, men in a state opposite to *spiritual*. The impossibility of renewing to repentance those mentioned, Heb. 6: 4—6, is the hardened, degraded state of mind belonging to apostates. In Jer. 13: 23, the reason is clearly suggested, why it was so difficult for the persons addressed to do good; namely, that they were *accustomed to do evil*, or had a habit of sinning. The obstacle to the salvation of the rich man is clearly brought into view; that is, his *love of riches*.

In all these instances, and in others which might be mentioned, the kind of inability and difficulty referred to is plainly suggested in the passages themselves. In other cases, it may be inferred from the nature and circumstances of the subject.

For example, John 6 : 44. "No man can come unto me, except the Father who hath sent me draw him." Jesus said this to unbelieving, murmuring, caviling Jews; and he said it to them *as such*. Being of *that character*, they *could not* come to Christ. And then as to that divine influence which he represented to be so necessary; it was an influence to be exerted upon men in respect to their believing; an influence, accordingly, which was to affect their moral dispositions. But why was this necessary, except because those dispositions were wrong? What but a bad heart could hinder them from loving and obeying the holy and benevolent Saviour?

An examination of John 8 : 43, would lead to the same result. "Why do ye not understand my speech? Because ye *cannot* (ye are *not able* to) hear my word." And why could they not hear Christ's word? What immediately follows will show. "Ye are of your father the Devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do.—He that is of God heareth God's words: ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God." The possession of such a character was the reason why they could not receive divine truth.

The nature of the inability may be gathered also from those texts, which speak of the same general subject in other language. I shall particularize John 5: 40; "Ye *will not* (*οὐ θέλετε*, ye are *not willing or disposed*) to come unto me, that ye might have life." Such a passage as this would naturally lead us to think, that the *inability* spoken of in other places must consist in an *unwillingness or disinclination* to do what is right. And we should also be led to adopt this conclusion by the general fact, that the sacred teachers charge it upon man as his sin, for which he deserves the wrath of God, that he refuses to do those very things, which he is said, in the passages quoted, to be *unable* to do. Their treating the subject in this manner evidently implies, that the sinner's inability consists in something which is morally wrong and blame-worthy. And what can this be, but *wickedness of heart*, or *disinclination to do the will of God*?

It is then perfectly evident from the Scriptures, that the sinner has an inability to obey the gospel, and that this inability consists in his entire moral corruption, or wickedness of heart. Has he any other inability? The passages which teach that he has this kind of inability neither assert nor imply any thing more. The depravity of the unrenewed sinner is so deep and total, and so effectually hinders him from forsaking sin and becoming a follower of Christ, as fully to justify the sacred writers in affirming that he *cannot* do this. Such is the obstacle to

faith and obedience, arising from the corrupt, selfish heart, that it becomes perfectly natural and proper for any unrenewed sinner, who truly knows himself, to say, not in the way of self-justification, but of penitent, humble confession, that he *cannot* believe and obey; that unless he is renewed by the Spirit of God, it is impossible for him to cease from sin, or to do that which is spiritually good. And as the existence of an inability of this kind is sufficient to justify all the language which the inspired writers use in relation to the subject; what reason have we to suppose that they meant to speak of any other kind of inability? For example; when Jesus put the cutting question to the self-righteous, ambitious Jews; "How *can* ye believe, who receive honor one of another, and seek not the honor which cometh from God only;" he pointed out an inability, a hinderance to believing, of a particular kind; that is, a *worldly, ambitious heart*; but he referred to no other. This was all that he represented as an impediment in the way of believing. Surely he did not mean to signify that the unbelieving Jews labored under any such inability as the Apostle had in view, when he said of those who had not been instructed in regard to Christ; "how can they believe on him of whom they *have not heard*?" And surely he did not speak of an ability arising from any such deficiency or disorder in the faculties of the mind, as either takes away or diminishes moral agency, or moral obligation. We are satisfied of this, because he speaks to the unbelieving Jews as the proper subjects of the divine law, and charges unbelief and disobedience upon them, as a sin for which they were justly condemned. The same is evident in all the other instances in which the sacred writers say, that the sinner *cannot* do what God requires. They plainly refer to an inability belonging to those who are completely moral and accountable agents. This we learn from the general current of Scripture, and from our own consciousness. Whatever attributes of mind, whatever intellectual or moral faculties are necessary to constitute men proper subjects of law, and justly accountable to God for their actions; these attributes and faculties sinners possess, notwithstanding their inability to obey God; i. e. notwithstanding the desperate wickedness of their hearts. Nay, it is evident, that the existence of this kind of inability not only consists with unimpaired moral agency, but necessarily implies it. There can be no *such* inability without it. If any one should cease to be a moral agent, he could not be the subject of moral evil; and of course there could be no place for that inability which consists in the sinfulness of the heart. We must have "the heart and soul and mind and strength," mentioned in the first and

great command, or we cannot be charged with a *culpable inability* to obey. We must have ears and eyes, the organs of hearing and seeing, or we cannot be charged with a criminal deafness and blindness.

Here I cannot but remark on the perfect simplicity and artlessness of the inspired teachers. Concerning the subject now under consideration, they had clear conceptions, and strong emotions; and they wished to make a deep impression of the truth respecting it on the minds of others. Of course their language became more or less figurative. And in the use of such language, they unsuspectingly followed the promptings of their own honest hearts, under the guidance of heavenly wisdom, always relying upon us to attend to their instructions with candor and docility. If we study the word of God with the same honesty and simplicity which the sacred writers exhibit, we cannot fail to understand it aright. We find, according to the representations of Scripture, that the sinfulness of the heart is very great. Man's natural disinclination to holiness is so strong and so obstinate, that no arguments which we can use, are able to overcome it. The word and providence of God and the strivings of the Spirit unitedly urge them to forsake their wicked ways; but this united and powerful urgency proves unavailing. There is a hinderance in the way of their conversion to God, which nothing but omnipotence can overcome. Now how shall this hinderance which consists in the desperate wickedness of the heart, be justly and adequately represented? The sacred writers sometimes say that the sinner does not obey the voice of God, and will not come to Christ; and they say truly. But this language has not all the force which they deem necessary. And accordingly they proceed to say, and they say often, that the sinner *cannot* obey the voice of God, and *cannot* come to Christ. And most certainly they say right. In my view, there are no words which could so justly and adequately express the truth on this subject, as those which are used in the passages cited in my last Letter. In those passages, the words originally denoting want of power in the literal sense, are indeed used somewhat metaphorically. Be it so. Metaphorical language is always resorted to, when words, employed in a strictly literal sense, are not sufficiently strong to express adequately our conceptions. This I apprehend to be precisely the case here. Were we now for the first time to have a just impression of the deep depravity of sinners, and the utter inefficacy of all human means to cure that depravity; and were we now for the first time, with becoming earnestness and fidelity, to express ourselves

on the subject; we should, without doubt, naturally resort to such language as I have quoted, and should say; the hearts of sinners are so lost to all that is good, and so fully set in them to do evil, that they *cannot* of themselves turn to God, and obey his commands. This we should say, with nothing in view but the desperate wickedness of their hearts. Such language would be the genuine expression of our conceptions and feelings. And it is generally the case, that when sinners come to be thoroughly convinced of sin, they spontaneously use this language respecting themselves. If any call in question the correctness or the suitability of this language; I refer them to Christ and his Apostles for satisfaction. Surely I need not take pains to convince gospel ministers, that the language of Christ and his Apostles was just and suitable. Were they not wise and honest men? Did they not know what belonged to good sense, and to a safe method of teaching? Did not the divine Spirit, whose infallible guidance they enjoyed, know what mode of instruction would be of the best tendency in all future ages? Their manner of teaching was founded on the principles of human nature, and accordingly must be suitable, so long as human nature remains the same. The disposition of men to pervert it and to turn it into an apology for sin, may require, and does require, that it should be clearly explained, and that the hurtful errors occasioned by it should be exposed. But we cannot object to the language of the Bible, or doubt its propriety, or give the preference to that which is different, without dishonor to the *Author* of the Bible. Dr. Smalley says,

“There is a real necessity for using such words as *capable, incapable, cannot, &c.* in that diversity of signification in which we see they are used in common speech, as well as in the Scriptures. For whenever any thing, whether in ourselves or without us, is absolutely inconsistent with our doing a thing, we have no way fully and strongly enough to express that inconsistency, but by saying, we are *unable, we cannot, it is impossible, or using some word of like import.* And now it is certain that want of a heart or inclination to do a thing, may be, and is as inconsistent with our doing it, as any thing else could be. Covetousness is as inconsistent with liberality, as poverty is. It may as effectually hinder a man from doing deeds of charity. Indolence is as inconsistent with industry, as bodily weakness. The want of an upright heart and a public spirit is as inconsistent with the character of a good ruler, as the want of wisdom. And the want of all principles of virtue must be as inconsistent with acting virtuously, as even the want of those intellectual faculties which are necessary to moral agency. And so—as to doing *evil* things. There is no possibility of doing them, i. e. knowingly and designedly,—without an evil disposition. Our free and moral actions are, and must be, as invariably guided and dictated by our minds, as they are bounded and limited by our natural power. That is, every one must act his own nature and choice; otherwise he does not act himself; *he* is not the agent. And if, when we would express this sort of necessity, we should not use the same phrases as are made use of in cases of natural necessity, but, for fear of a misunderstanding, should carefully avoid saying a man *cannot,*

whenever we mean only that he has not such a heart as is necessary, and only say that he *will not*;—our language would often sound odd, being out of common custom, which governs the propriety of words: and not only so, but it would not be sufficiently expressive. Should we be afraid to say it is *impossible* for a man to love God, or come to Christ, while his heart is altogether wicked and full of enmity against God and Christ; people would be ready to think we imagined this might sometimes happen, and that there was no real impossibility in it of any kind, whereas there is as real and as absolute an impossibility in this case, as in any supposable case whatever. To be more guarded, therefore, than the scripture is, in this matter, would be to be *unguarded*. The Apostle demands; “Can the fig-tree bear olive-berries? or a vine, figs?”—And our Saviour says; “a good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit; neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things; and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things.” There is *as certain* and never failing a connexion in this case, as any natural connexion whatever: which ought by no means to be dissembled, but openly maintained. But then it is certainly of a *quite different* and even directly opposite nature, to all intents and purposes of moral agency. And it is of the last importance, in my apprehension, that this also should be maintained, and manifested to every man’s conscience.”*

For the purpose of vindicating the language above mentioned in the case before us, I shall suggest one more consideration, namely; that, without objections from any one, such language is used in other cases, where its meaning depends on the same principles.

It is said, Heb. 6: 18, to be “*impossible* for God to lie.” The writer is not speaking in regard to *power* taken in the literal sense, but in regard to *moral character*. To honor God and excite confidence in his word, he says, it is *impossible* for God to lie. Now who ever objected to the word *impossible* in this case? Who does not see that it is perfectly adapted to express the thing intended, and that no other word could do it so well? And yet there is no impossibility in this case, but that which arises from the moral character of God.

It is said of Christ, 2 Tim. 2: 13, that he *cannot* deny himself. What prevents? Not the want of power in the literal sense, but his immutable uprightness and goodness. And Peter said of himself and fellow apostles, Acts 4: 20, “We cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard.” The only necessity which lay upon them was their love to Christ and their conviction of duty.

This language is used very familiarly also in common discourse. Of a man whose character stands high in our esteem, we say, he is incapable of any thing mean or dishonest. If you go to a just Judge, and attempt to secure his favor by a bribe, he will immediately say to you, “I *cannot* listen to your proposal.”

* See Dr. Smalley’s two sermons on man’s inability to comply with the gospel: pp. 7—10, English Edition.

If you ask a covetous rich man to contribute to a Bible Society, he will quickly express his feelings by saying 'I *can't* do it.' The tender mother, amid all her cares and trials, says, 'I *cannot* forget my dear infant child.' And parents, governed by excessive fondness, will say, 'We *cannot* consent that our dear son should leave us and spend his life among the heathen.' When we find a man, whom no arguments can dissuade from lying, and stealing, and whose habit of wickedness has been confirmed by long practice, we sometimes say of him, that he can no more cease to do wickedly, than he can cease to breathe; and we say this for the very purpose of showing how abandoned he is, and how deserving of punishment. And the man of whom you would naturally say this, would be the one whom every court of justice in the world would deem worthy of the severest penalty.

Plainly then, the language under consideration is the genuine language of feeling and of common life, and is familiarly used in other similar cases, without any thought of its incorrectness, even by those who object to it in the case now in hand. In favor of this manner of speaking, I have cited the language of Christ and his Apostles, applied to the self-same thing, and used frequently, with perfect freedom, and without the least check or qualification, except what arises from the nature of the subject, and from the exercise of common sense. This free and frequent scripture use, joined with common use in other similar cases, must be regarded as a full justification of the mode of teaching referred to, unless there are peculiar and valid reasons at the present day for an entire departure from the example of the inspired writers. We must then inquire, whether there are such reasons.

The chief reason which is urged, in addition to those considered in the last Letter, is, that sinners will take occasion from such language to excuse themselves from the duty of repentance, and to justify themselves in sin. They will say; 'If we *cannot* believe and obey, how are we under obligation to do it? How can that be justly required of us as our duty, for which we have not the requisite power?'

I am free to acknowledge that sinners, destitute of true conviction, do often and very wickedly pervert the language above mentioned, taking occasion from it to rid themselves, more or less, of the feeling of obligation, and to harden themselves in impenitence. On this account, great pains should be taken to give them clear and faithful instruction, and to guard them against supposing that their inability to obey the divine commands is of such a nature as to furnish the least excuse for

sin. And I will suggest one thing which I consider to be specially important, as a means of preventing that wicked perversion of divine truth, to which I have just alluded. The pulpit is a place where we are to discourse on subjects of infinite moment to the souls of men, and where, accordingly, we should labor to be as intelligible and plain as possible, and for this purpose should use the language of common feeling and common life. Now if we forget the special object of preaching, and introduce philosophical and metaphysical subjects, or treat the subjects of religion in a philosophical or metaphysical manner; we shall, in all probability, produce in our hearers a habit of thinking and feeling, very unfavorable to right impressions; shall render them disputatious or speculative, and thus deaden their conscience, and fortify them against conviction. And if there is such a proneness as we have seen in unconverted sinners, to pervert the scripture representation of their inability to their own hurt, I beg you to consider whether this may not be owing in a measure to the prevalence of those modes of preaching which deviate from the simplicity of the gospel, and whether it would not contribute essentially to remedy this evil, if we should all confine ourselves to the great subjects of revelation, and go back to the modes of teaching, and to the kinds of phraseology, which are found in the Bible.

But the weight of the argument above stated against the use of scripture language ought to be considered more particularly.

Suppose then you do as some distinguished ministers do, that is, studiously avoid every expression which implies, or seems to imply, that the sinner *cannot* do what God requires. From Sabbath to Sabbath you exhort him to repent and to flee from the wrath to come, and tell him he *can* do it. You urge upon him his immediate obligation to obey the gospel, and tell him he is *able* to obey, perfectly able now, in his unregenerate state, without any help from God. You tell him, if he were not *able* to obey, he could not be in duty bound to obey. And you direct him to search the Scriptures to see whether these things are so. The sinner, thus instructed, ponders the subject, and in compliance with your direction, searches the Scriptures. After a while he comes to you, and says: 'In the instructions of the pulpit you inform me that, if I am *unable* to believe and obey, I am under no *obligation* to do it; and so I understand the subject. Now when I look into the Bible, I find no text which declares that I *can* do what God requires; but I find many which expressly declare that, while unrenewed, I *cannot*. Thus taking what you teach, namely,

that I am under no obligation to obey God unless I am, of myself, *able* to obey, and what the Bible teaches in connection with it, namely, that while unrenewed I *cannot* obey, I come to the conclusion, that I am in fact under no *obligation* to obey, and that your efforts to make me feel my obligation are all misapplied.'

Another sinner comes to you, and makes known *his* difficulty. He says: 'You profess to receive the word of God, as a sure and infallible guide, and to derive all your instructions from it. But how to reconcile your instructions with that divine word, I know not. You frequently affirm, and make the affirmation very prominent, that we *can, of ourselves, believe and obey*. But the inspired writers, whenever they have any thing to say on the subject, affirm that we *cannot*. Now this appearance of disagreement, and of contradiction too, between your preaching and the word of God, is a source of painful perplexity to my mind, and must occasion a diminished respect either for your preaching, or for the Bible.'

Such things as these, sinners may say; and such things, substantially, they do say. The question then is, whether avoiding the language of the Bible, and using that which appears so contradictory to it, must not generally fail of answering the purpose intended, considering that the sinner has the Bible, and is capable of reading it for himself, and that he can urge in his own favor the plea of that inability which Christ and the Apostles so often assert, and which he is led by one part of your preaching to regard as an excuse for impenitence. Is not the difficulty and the danger as great, at least, in this way, as in the other? And must it not bring an influence specially hurtful upon the sinner's mind, to notice so much appearance of contradiction between what he reads in the Bible, and what he hears from ministers, particularly from those who are wanting in maturity of understanding, and who seem to think it an honor not to be afraid of inconsistency or rashness? Must not the sinner's situation be attended with peril, when his religious teachers constantly assert one thing, and the inspired writers another? And is it not, on the whole, safer and better for us to keep close to our commission, and to honor God's holy word by using freely the very representations which are so often found on its pages, and then endeavoring to give a just and faithful explanation of them; and such an explanation as will show, that the sinner's inability to that which is spiritually good is indeed a dreadful reality, but that it consists, not in the want of any faculties of mind, or of any advantages which necessarily belong to moral and accountable beings, but in that

strong propensity to sin and aversion to holiness, which yields to nothing but the act of omnipotence? As this is the plain truth, what better can we do than to teach it? What better, than to show men, that when the Bible represents them as *unable* to believe and obey, it represents them as in a most humiliating and appalling condition, fixing upon them the heaviest possible charge of depravity and guilt? Our business is to call the sinfulness of man by the very names which God gives it, and then to lay open to view its ill-desert, its malignity and hatefulness, in all its length and breadth. We should labor to make sinners feel, when we describe their guilty, ruined state, that we have the word of God on our side;—to make them feel, that their inability is their sin; so that the more *unable* they are to love such a Being as God, the more inexcusable and guilty they are. We should strive to guard sinners from danger, not by denying or concealing their spiritual disease, nor by palliating the evil involved in it, nor by refusing to give it the name which the word of God gives it, but by bringing it out fully and clearly into the light. If we can effectually persuade sinners to look with open eyes at the nature of that evil, in view of which the Apostle says, they *cannot please God*, we shall not fail to produce in them a deep sense of their sinfulness, and of their dependence on sovereign grace for salvation. So important is it to teach the doctrine of the sinner's inability to spiritual good, in scriptural language, and for scriptural ends.

Other remarks on this subject I shall reserve for the next letter.

DR. PORTER'S LETTERS ON REVIVALS OF RELIGION.

NO II.

To the Committee of the Revival Association in the Theological Seminary, Andover,

GENTLEMEN,

According to my promise, I now proceed with a more particular account of the revivals, which prevailed about the beginning of this century. There was but one sentiment among the ministers of those times respecting the indispensable

importance of *using means* for the conversion of sinners; though it was often said by cavillers against the Calvinistic doctrines, that these rendered means altogether useless. To such cavillers it was customary to reply in the following manner: 'The natural and moral worlds present before us a universe of means. The God of this universe is not dependent on instruments. He was able to divide the sea, or bring water from the rock of flint, without the rod of Moses; able to heal a leprous man, without the waters of Jordan; or a blind man, without the aid of clay. He could fill the world with Bibles by a word,—or give every inhabitant of the globe a knowledge of the gospel by inspiration. But he chooses that human agency should be employed in printing, and reading and explaining the Scriptures. God is able to sanctify the four hundred millions of Asia, in one instant, without the agency of missionaries; but we do not expect him to do this without *means*, any more than we expect him to rain down food from the clouds, or turn stones into bread.'

With such views as to the importance of means, the ministers of that time were agreed, I presume, in the following points;—that means have no independent efficacy to renew the hearts of men; that the unholy man, while God is using means with him, does nothing which God accepts as holy obedience; that he does not *gradually* become holy, by the influence of means,—regeneration being an instantaneous and not a progressive work; that this renovation is not produced by any direct *instrumentality* of means, it being a supernatural work, not effected, like ordinary events, by the laws of nature. The old doctrine of *regeneration by light* or by *moral suasion*, was universally rejected by those revival preachers, as implying that the depravity of sinners is no fault of their hearts, but merely a *mistake*, respecting God and his law, which instruction and motives will rectify.

If it be inquired *why* those preachers regarded the use of means with the impenitent sinner as indispensable, I answer,—because God has appointed them to be thus used; because the intellect of the sinner not being the seat of depravity, his reason, memory, conscience, &c. are directly accessible by means; because, of course, he may be *instructed* in religion, and while his heart is still unsanctified, he may make great attainments in doctrinal knowledge, and have deep and solemn conviction of the truth. All this, according to the most usual operation of the Holy Spirit, is *prerequisite* to the conversion of a sinner; so that we do not scruple to say of any one who remains altogether uninstructed and uninterested on the subject of religion, that there is no present prospect of his salvation.

Besides, in respect to what follows regeneration, as well as what precedes it, means are necessary. God is a God of order. Should he renovate the heart of a heathen who had received no knowledge of the gospel, that heathen could not exercise the Christian graces, till he had been instructed in the truth. God surrounds the blind sinner with light, not because light has any inherent efficacy to cure blindness, but because light is essential to vision after blindness is removed.

But among the ministers to whom I have referred, *what* means were deemed most important, in promoting revivals of religion? To this I answer, that the first place, in point of importance, was assigned to the *preaching of the gospel*. That this ought to be regarded as the prime instrument which God has chosen for the conversion of sinners, is evident from the example of Christ in his own ministry; from his commission to the Apostles, and their example in executing that commission; and from the universal experience of the church.

Besides the two sermons which ordinarily were delivered in each pulpit on the Sabbath, a third was very common during a time of revival. On week days, too, with more or less of regularity, according to the state of a congregation, lectures were attended. For example, in some cases, the pastors of two adjacent churches, or more, preached at occasional meetings, attended successively within each other's limits, at the church or at more private places. In other instances, two ministers visited five or six towns in the same vicinity, during the same week, preaching in each congregation several sermons. The time of their coming was announced beforehand, as the occasion of special prayer on the part of the church to be visited. The sermons delivered in this manner were generally attended with a manifest blessing from heaven; sometimes the effect was immediate and remarkably powerful. I can never forget an interesting meeting of about ten ministers, at my house, in which, after the lamentable fact had been ascertained that no one of the number could mention a single revival of religion, as then existing in any part of our country; the resolution was taken, after a solemn season of prayer, to renew the system of preaching, by two and two, in the manner abovementioned. These efforts were followed, at once, by a shower of divine influence on the congregations where they were employed; and the work of grace became extensive over that part of Connecticut.

In some cases, a people among whom a revival was in progress were visited by perhaps two ministers, from the distance of thirty or fifty miles, who continued their visit for a week or

more, preaching two or three times in a day, to crowded assemblies. Such a visit was made to the people of my charge, in the revival of 1805, by Rev. Messrs. Mills and Hallock, whose labors on that occasion were greatly blessed. A letter of Judge Boudinot, describing the revival in Newark under the ministry of Dr. Griffin, says, that during that season, he preached seven times in a week, including the sermons of the Sabbath. And in the revival of the same year among the people of Dr. Strong of Hartford, six sermons a week, besides the Sabbath, were preached, chiefly by the two Congregational ministers of the city.

At this period, one instance is mentioned of what is now called a "protracted meeting," of two days continuance, holden at Rupert, Vt. Five sermons were preached, besides many exhortations and prayers. About 3000 persons were present, and the exercises were attended with evident manifestations of divine power. The scene closed with the administration of the Lord's supper to about eight hundred communicants. This seems to have been a season of refreshing to the people of God, and of solemn conviction to others, many of whom, from neighboring towns, "smote on their breasts, and returned with a wounded spirit."

But you will probably ask, for it is reasonable that you should,—*how* did ministers preach at that period, as to spirit, manner, sentiment, &c. To this inquiry I answer generally, that the prevalent strain of preaching was essentially the same as that of the Puritan Fathers in this country, and of the English dissenting preachers of the 17th century. I say *essentially*, for in the circumstantials of preaching, there was certainly considerable difference. The two individuals who had a primary influence in giving to the New England pulpit the character which it retained to the period of which I am speaking, were President Edwards and Dr. Bellamy. Under the direct instruction of those luminaries, especially the latter, many of the elder ministers who were prominent on the stage at the close of the last century, were trained for the sacred office. A considerable number of those who were active pastors in the revivals of 1800, &c. studied theology with Dr. Bellamy; and some of these were teachers of theological students in their own time. After the triumphant conflict of Edwards and his associates with the Arminianism of that day had subsided, an almost perfect unanimity of views on doctrinal and experimental religion prevailed among those ministers of New England, who had any pretensions to personal piety. Accordingly there was a greater uniformity in the character of preaching for some

time, at this period, than perhaps at any other, since the first years of the New England churches. This uniformity, indeed, did not supersede that variety, which always marks the intellectual efforts of different men, according to the taste, talent, and temperament of individuals.

A few ministers customarily preached from short notes, or with a mere skeleton of their subject, sketched on paper; and I recollect one at least, who preached in this manner, with great effect. But sermons were generally *written*; were rarely less than thirty, or more than forty minutes long; and were delivered, not from memory, but from the manuscript; and this was often a process of reading so closely as much to impair the elocution of the preacher. Especially was this the case, when the sermon was written in a hand so small and abbreviated, that he must stoop over the cushion to read it, or employ his hands in holding it up before his face. All these difficulties were aggravated by a little decay of the preacher's sight, which rendered the manuscript worse than useless.

This is not the place to discuss the question, whether the habit of writing out sermons has been carried to an extreme. But of the two eminent men named above, while the mere manner of President Edwards was far less popular and impressive than that of Dr. Bellamy, his influence on the New England pulpit has been far greater in amount, than that of the latter, who published almost no sermons, and left none that could be published after his death.

The general characteristics of sermons at the period I am reviewing, were the following;—they were decidedly *evangelical*,—Christ crucified being kept prominent in every pulpit, where the spirit of revivals prevailed. They were *methodical*,—often, indeed, the *scholastic* mode of division was carried to an extreme, in mechanical uniformity, and multiplication of heads. They were *biblical*,—the word of God being made the grand source of argument and illustration. To a good degree they were *fervent* and *pungent*,—often making solemn appeals to conscience; and, to a still higher degree, they were *instructive*. It scarcely need to be said, that, in point of *style*, the preachers of that day were *plain*; with little pretension to elegance of diction, and scarcely any regard to the requisitions of taste, beyond simplicity and perspicuity. They commonly spoke a language easy to be understood, but often very defective in classical purity and precision, in choice of words, and lucid arrangement. In these respects, there has been a most obvious improvement in the style of the pulpit within twenty-five years; as there has also been in the freedom with which sermons are

delivered, instead of that rigid confinement to notes which formerly prevailed. How far the influence of theological seminaries has contributed to these changes, others can judge as well as myself.

I said that the sermons to which I have alluded, were *instructive*; but I do not mean that they were written in a strain of metaphysical, nor of merely didactic discussion. Generally, the preacher aimed to spread before his hearers some important evangelical subject,—and to do this in a method and style so lucid as to be understood. He aimed, also, unless greatly wanting in skill, to exhibit divine truth in *its connexions*,—and in *its practical* bearing on the heart and life. In other words, the prevalent strain of preaching was *doctrino-practical*. It successfully inculcated the moral duties of Christianity, by giving prominence to its *cardinal truths*; and thus kept on the high road of apostolic precedent, between the precincts of a sterile, heartless morality on one hand, and of a useless speculation on the other.

I am aware that you may wish to be informed more particularly, what were the *doctrines* which those ministers preached, and which God was pleased so signally to bless, for the conviction and conversion of sinners. This inquiry I might best answer by extracts from the printed narratives of revivals; but there is room only for a specimen or two. One of these narratives says,—

“The soul-humbling doctrines of our Saviour,—which exalt God and stain the pride of human glory, have been made use of in carrying on this work. The holiness, extent, and inflexibility of the moral law,—our depravity and dependence on God,—his sovereignty and universal government,—the special agency of the Holy Spirit,—and mere grace through Christ,—the only ground of pardon;—these truths have proved like the fire and hammer that break the rock in pieces. Often, indeed, they were opposed at first by awakened sinners, who afterwards came, on full conviction, to regard them as their only hope. To the people generally, the most plain, pungent preaching—and the most thorough experimental preachers have been most acceptable.”

Another faithful and able preacher, who was accustomed to teach awakened sinners that the only reason of their not finding relief was the stubbornness of their own hearts; according to the words of Christ, “Ye will not come to me that ye may have life,”—says,

“No preaching seems so effectual to drive them from their hiding-places, as to tell them plainly, that they are eternally undone, if the unpromised mercy of God is not displayed in their favour; that they have not the least claim on God, and if he does not have mercy, they are gone forever.”

The experience of these ministers as to the most successful

mode of preaching, corresponded with the following statement of Pres. Edwards respecting the great revival among his own people.

"No discourses have been more remarkably blessed, than those in which the doctrine of God's absolute sovereignty with regard to the salvation of sinners, and his just liberty, with regard to answering the prayers, or succeeding the pains of mere natural men, continuing such, have been insisted on. I never found so much immediate, saving fruit, in any measure, of any discourses I have offered to my congregation, as some from those words. Rom. iii. 19. 'That every mouth may be stopped;' endeavoring to show from thence that it would be just with God forever to reject and cast off mere natural men."

In this connexion, I ought to state explicitly a concurrent and nearly universal sentiment of the pastors, who were most instrumental of revivals, that the doctrine of *election* is the only adequate ground of encouragement in preaching the gospel. They reasoned thus; "The carnal mind is enmity against God." Sinners left to themselves, without special, divine influence, will never repent. The best means in themselves are utterly ineffectual, and, without the Holy Spirit, will bring no one to comply with the terms of the gospel. Were it not revealed, then, that God has determined to render his truth efficacious in bringing some to faith and holiness, every minister who believes the Bible would see no encouragement to preach the gospel, and every sinner who understands his own depravity would be in total despair.

But I ought to state with equal distinctness, that these preachers did not restrict themselves to the doctrine of election, nor to any one doctrine of revelation; for it was their object to "declare the whole counsel of God." While, in one form and another, they often and very distinctly brought into view the discriminating grace of God, this was made the entire subject of a discourse no more frequently than other kindred truths. Thus, the entire alienation of the sinner's heart from God;—his voluntary, inexcusable, and yet certain rejection of the gospel, till his heart is subdued by divine influence; his complete obligation, as a moral agent, to repent and do all that God requires of him, and to do it immediately; his need of an infinite Saviour to make atonement for him, and an infinite Sanctifier to renovate him, and take away his only obstacle to obedience, the guilty opposition of his heart; and his dependence on free grace through faith to justify and save him,—were truths constantly inculcated in the pulpit.

I never expect to hear more pungent and awful appeals to conscience than I sometimes heard from those revival preachers,—who arrayed before their hearers the solemnities of a

coming eternity, and told them their duty to love God supremely and immediately; told them too their awful enmity to God for which they deserved his endless wrath,—and finally told them, that nothing could save them from this wrath, but the blood of Christ, applied to their souls by the washing of regeneration, and this by the mere “mercy of God.”

The distinction between *natural and moral inability* was taught from the pulpits of that day, just as it is taught by the Bible and common sense. Men were represented as guilty;—Why? Not because they could not repent if they would; but because, with perfect powers of moral agency, they *refuse* to do their duty. The truth on this subject was deemed too plain to require formal *proof* in sermons, though it was often exhibited by way of *illustration*. An example of this kind is still fresh in my recollection, from a discourse of Rev. S. J. Mills on repentance. Having impressed on his hearers, with great solemnity, the truth that all who remain impenitent under the gospel for a single moment, are without excuse, he paused near the close of his discourse and said; “Probably some of my hearers are disposed to reply, ‘No, we are not without excuse. We *cannot* repent. God tells us that we cannot; and ministers tell us that we cannot; why then are we called upon to do it?’ I will suppose,” said he, “that this house is a fortification, and we are the garrison. A powerful army comes and surrounds us, and hems us in, so that all supplies from abroad, and all hopes of retreat, are cut off. They send a flag, and summon us to surrender. We call a council of war, and deliberate. What is to be done? The case is clearly a desperate one;—no escape is possible, no resistance, no compromise. We send back for answer,—We should rejoice with all our heart to surrender, but we are not *able*. Now, who ever heard of such a dilemma? Many a garrison has been unable to *stand out*, and *resist*; but who ever heard of one that had not *power to surrender!*”

I have seen sinners in those assemblies agitated with awful anxiety, and crushed down with conviction of their guilt, under the pressure of two truths;—one, that heaven is now offered to their acceptance, as a free gift, and that they have no excuse for remaining impenitent a single moment;—the other, that their hearts are so desperately wicked, that their only hope is in the sovereign mercy of God.

I have dwelt so long on preaching, that I must touch very briefly on several other means, which were instrumental of producing or prolonging the revivals of that day.

The most common among these were *religious conferences*.

The exercises at these meetings consisted of prayers, singing of hymns, reading parts of sermons, extracts from magazines, &c. exhortations, and free conversation on religious subjects. In some cases, the pastor made these meetings the occasion for discussing important Christian doctrines; and the more intelligent of a congregation attended them for years, as a school of improvement in religious knowledge. In the devotional exercises on these occasions, lay brethren were usually called on to take a part, and also in free discussion of religious subjects, when they were qualified to do it with judgement. I have before me several lists of subjects discussed at such meetings, which must have been admirably adapted to promote knowledge and piety in a congregation. Indeed it seems to have been a cardinal maxim in these revivals, that nothing effectual is accomplished, unless the people are thoroughly instructed in the great truths of the gospel.

In a multitude of cases, where the Spirit of God had come down with special power, conferences were crowded, so that there was not room for the people, "even about the doors." Obstacles to attendance, from storms and cold were easily surmounted, so that the usual gathering was scarcely diminished by violent weather; nor did very frequent attendance on such meetings prove a hindrance to success in the ordinary business of life.

Prayer-meetings, in which the exercises were almost wholly *devotional*, were often found more directly conducive to the spirit of revivals, than conferences. Their whole purpose and tendency was to humble Christians, and lead them to look away from every other reliance to God alone. In this view, prayer is not so much one particular, among a system of means, as it is the soul and substance of all; namely, that laying hold on eternal strength, without which all human instrumentality is vain.

On the common prayer-meetings of that day you will need no remarks, being familiar now with those of the same character. *Special* prayer meetings derived their chief interest and efficacy from occasions and circumstances. When a church, mourning the absence of divine influence, was brought to bow down before God, with fasting, and sackcloth, and supplication, then was there reason to hope that deliverance was at hand. I say with *fasting*; for lightly as this religious ordinance is regarded by many, experience demonstrates its adaptedness to give intensity to *special* prayer.

About 1795, a *quarterly concert* of prayer, originating I believe in New Jersey, began to be observed by a number of churches in Connecticut. It never became general, and lasted

but a few years. At a later period, a *family concert* was adopted somewhat extensively, and attended *weekly*, from September to March, on Saturday evening, the hour after sun-setting; and from March to September, on Sabbath evening, the hour before sun-setting. And later still, the circle of churches with which I was connected, to the number of fifteen or twenty, observed a *sacramental concert*, which returned with the regular seasons of preparation for the Lord's Supper. Then these churches met at the same hour, each in its own sanctuary; and after a sermon, or other solemn service appropriate to the communion, the children of the church, who had been dedicated to God in baptism, and who were brought together at the time, were commended to the divine blessing by the united prayers of the whole church. These were among the most solemn, delightful, profitable prayer-meetings I ever witnessed. They were a practical commentary on the significance of household dedication to God.

At this period commenced, as I suppose, the *female prayer-meetings*, which are now so common, and which have been attended with most important results to the church. I shall be understood, of course, as referring to societies of pious women, whose meetings were restricted to their own sex, and not to such gross irregularities, as have been encouraged of late (though encouraged, as I presume, in but few places) where females pray and exhort in mixed assemblies.

These meetings for prayer, in all the forms above mentioned, were adapted to inspire Christians with that spirit which father Mills so often enjoined, "*Let us live, looking upwards.*" There was one more kind of special prayer-meeting, which I will describe only by an extract from the narrative of the revival at Newark.

"A society was formed, to meet at nine o'clock on Sabbath morning, and spend an hour, previous to engaging in public worship, in prayer to God for his blessing on the word. They styled themselves the Aaron and Hur Society, as supporting the hands of their minister. The second Sabbath, the numbers were doubled; and the third, the school-house in which they assembled was crowded, and has continued so since; besides others in different parts of the village. It was not long before the blessed work pervaded every part of the society."

Just such a Sabbath morning meeting was attended by the church of which I was pastor, and the practice I suppose to have been somewhat extensive amid the prevalence of revivals, and certainly with a direct tendency to promote their prevalence.

I can only add, in the briefest manner, that among the interesting facts which have strongly impressed my own mind,

in reviewing the printed sketches of these revivals, this is one ; that special outpourings of the Spirit often *began in obvious connexion with some new efforts of a church for the spiritual good of children and youth*. This is another,—that these seasons of mercy, in repeated instances, followed the *faithful exercise of discipline*, by which a church promptly cut off from her communion some incorrigible offender against the laws of Christ. Affectionately yours, &c. E. PORTER.

Theol. Seminary, Andover, May 1832.

DR. TAYLOR'S THEOLOGICAL VIEWS.

Hitherto, our pages have been chiefly occupied in the discussion of subjects, in regard to which Orthodox Christians are generally agreed ; and there has been less of debate by our contributors, than has been common in similar periodical works. We trust it may be so in future. Still, as there are differences of opinion among our brethren, which are known deeply to interest some of the first minds in the community, and as a good understanding may perhaps be better promoted by an interchange of views on disputed points, than by endeavoring to prevent discussion ; we have thought that we ought not longer to exclude articles relating to these subjects, if prepared with ability and candor. We hope the discussion, so far as we are concerned in it, may be carried on by men of experience and wisdom, and *under their own proper names* ;*—that it may be conducted with Christian courtesy and charity, and with a tender regard to private feelings and character ;—that it may be, and may appear to be, an honest inquiry after truth, and not a mere struggle for victory. Communications should be of a moderate length. An article of twenty or thirty pages had better be published in a pamphlet, than crowded into a monthly magazine. We must be understood, also, to be our own judges in regard to particular articles, whether to exclude or insert ; and as we have opened our pages to discussions of this nature, in hope that the public good may thereby be promoted, whenever it shall seem to us that this end is not likely to be attained, we shall feel not only at liberty, but under obligations, at once to close them.

For the Spirit of the Pilgrims.

MR. EDITOR—

The following remarks on the letter of Dr. Taylor to Dr. Hawes, which was published in the number of your work for March, and which has been published in most of the religious journals in our land, are submitted to your disposal.

Portland, April, 1832.

B. TYLER.

* The following communication was sent to us with the expectation that it would appear anonymously. At our suggestion, the writer consented that it should be published under his own name.

The object of this letter is to satisfy the Christian community that the writer is sound in the faith, and has not renounced any of the great doctrines which are commonly received by the Orthodox in New England. It is well known to the public, that his previous publications have excited no inconsiderable alarm. They have been thought by many to contain principles which are erroneous and of dangerous tendency. I acknowledge myself to be one of those who have felt solicitude in regard to the tendency of Dr. Taylor's speculations; and I am constrained to say that my solicitude is not yet entirely removed.

To the eleven articles of his creed, contained in this letter, I do not object. I should not, perhaps, on every point, express my belief in exactly the same terms; yet I see nothing in these articles, "which may not be understood in a safe sense;" and if this creed were the only document to which we are referred to ascertain his theological views, I presume no fears would be entertained, in regard to his soundness in the faith. It would, indeed, be gratifying to know that Dr. Taylor's present sentiments are correct, whatever may have been true in regard to the past. But the Christian community, knowing what are the precepts of the Gospel, and how evidently a Christian minister will be led by feelings of piety to acknowledge his mistakes, have a right to expect that Dr. Taylor will readily retract whatever he has published which he now thinks to be erroneous; and, so long as he refuses to retract any thing, we are obliged, out of respect to him, to consider him as still maintaining all that he has advanced in any of his publications. Besides; in this very letter, he refers us to "the repeated and full statements of (his) opinions which (he has) already made public;"—nor is he satisfied with giving us his creed in the aforesaid eleven articles, but he proceeds to make various explanations which materially modify his statements. Now, if in these explanations, and in other things which he has published, he has virtually contradicted some important articles of his creed; there is still cause for solicitude.

I have never supposed that Dr. Taylor *intended* to deny any of the leading doctrines of the Calvinistic System. I have always supposed that he would be willing to subscribe just such a creed as that which he has given us in this letter. Is it asked, then, what are the grounds of my fears? I will frankly state them.

Any one at all acquainted with ecclesiastical history must have observed, that the great errors which have infested the Christian church, have usually *crept in unawares*. They have originated in speculations, and "philosophical theories,"

which, at first, were not intended to call in question the commonly received doctrines, but to explain them, and relieve them of difficulties. The process has been a gradual, undermining process; and such, it has appeared to me, is the tendency of Dr. Taylor's speculations. While he professes to believe (and I have no doubt, does *really* believe) the doctrines stated in his creed; yet, in illustrating some of these doctrines, he has, in my apprehension, adopted principles, which lead to the total subversion of them. If this is true, there is certainly cause of alarm; and more especially so, considering the important and responsible station which he occupies as a teacher of theology. For if Dr. Taylor himself should, by a happy inconsistency, retain his Orthodoxy; yet, if his theories are adopted by his pupils, there is reason to believe that many of them will follow them into their legitimate consequences, and thus be led to renounce some of the fundamental doctrines of the Gospel. That his theories do involve principles subversive of some of the most prominent and important articles of his creed, I shall endeavor to show in the following remarks.

I. *The doctrine of decrees.*

Dr. Taylor says, "I believe that the eternal purposes of God, extend to all actual events, sin not excepted; or that God foreordains whatsoever comes to pass, and so executes these purposes, as to leave the free and moral agency of man unimpaired."

Yet, in this same letter, Dr. Taylor says,

"I do not believe that sin can be proved to be the necessary means of the greatest good, and that, as such, God prefers it, *on the whole*, to holiness in its stead; or that a God of sincerity and truth punishes his creatures for doing that which, *on the whole*, he prefers they should do.—But I do believe, that it may be true, that God, *all things considered*, prefers holiness to sin in all instances in which the latter takes place."

How are these two parts of his creed to be reconciled? If it "be true that God, *all things considered*, prefers holiness to sin in all instances in which the latter takes place;" it cannot be true that God has purposed or foreordained whatsoever comes to pass. For, according to this representation, it was, from eternity, God's will or choice, *all things considered*, that sin should not exist in a single instance. Consequently, it could not, in any sense, be his purpose, or his choice, that it should exist. To say that God prefers, *all things considered*, that sin should not exist; and at the same time to say that he has purposed or foreordained that it shall exist, is a palpable contradiction. It is the same as to say, that God chooses and does not choose the same thing at the same time.

Again; the Supreme Being is infinitely wise and infinitely

good. It must, therefore, have been his design, from eternity, to bring to pass the greatest possible amount of good. Consequently, we cannot suppose that he has foreordained the existence of any thing which will not, in some way, conspire to the accomplishment of this end. If, then, the existence of sin is not, *on the whole*, for the best, and in this sense, "the necessary means of the greatest good," God would not have foreordained its existence. To suppose that he decreed that sin should exist, when he foresaw that it would be, *on the whole*, a detriment to the system, is to suppose that he acted without wisdom or goodness. For what end did he decree its existence? It must be for a good end, or a bad end. If for a good end, then it is "the necessary means of the greatest good." If for a bad end, then, he is a malevolent being. If, then, it cannot be proved, as Dr. Taylor says, that sin is "the necessary means of the greatest good;" it cannot, in my opinion, be proved that God has foreordained whatsoever comes to pass.

Again; the Scriptures teach us that God punishes men for their sins. Now, Dr. Taylor says he does not believe "that a God of sincerity and truth punishes his creatures for doing that which, *on the whole*, he prefers they should do." But if his "purposes extend to all actual events, sin not excepted," then he does, *on the whole*, purpose, or *prefer*, (for these words here mean the same thing) that they should do the very things for which they are punished.

Again; Dr. Taylor says that God, "for wise and good reasons, permits, or does not prevent, the existence of sin." And yet he maintains that "God, *all things considered*, prefers holiness to sin in all instances in which the latter takes place." Here he represents God as having wise and good reasons for not decreeing that state of things which he prefers; and, of course, as preferring that, against the existence of which there are wise and good reasons.*

Again; It is a part of Dr. Taylor's theory, that "God could not prevent all sin, or the present degree of sin, in a moral system." "He *would* have prevented all sin in his moral universe, but *could not*." Yet he foreordained whatsoever comes to pass: that is, he foreordained that which he would have prevented, if he could. What can be a plainer contradiction? To say that God purposed the existence of sin, because, foreseeing that he

* It is obviously absurd to talk of God's permitting what he cannot prevent. What would be thought of a man who should say that he permitted the pestilence which walketh in darkness to sweep away his children, and the fire to consume his dwelling, and the tornado to desolate his fields? To permit an event to take place, implies the power of preventing it; and especially is this true, when we speak of a *purpose* to permit.

could not prevent it, he suffered it to come into being, is an unwarranted use of language. If God did, *all things considered*, PREFER that sin should not exist, then it was not in any sense his purpose that it should exist. Consequently, it has come into being, not *according* to his purpose, but *contrary* to his purpose. So far as he had any purpose in regard to it, it was his purpose that it should not exist. He PREFERRED, *all things considered*, that it should not exist, and resolved to do all in his power to prevent its existence. Consequently he did not foreordain whatsoever comes to pass. Thus Dr. Taylor's theory saps the foundation of the second article of his creed.

II. *The doctrine of original sin.*

Dr. Taylor says, "I believe that all mankind, in consequence of the fall of Adam, are born destitute of holiness, and are by nature totally depraved; in other words, that all men, from the commencement of moral agency, do, without the interposition of divine grace, sin, and only sin, in all their moral conduct."—"I also believe, that such is the nature of the human mind, that it becomes the occasion of universal sin in men in all the appropriate circumstances of their existence; and that therefore they may properly be said to be sinners *by nature*."

To these statements, understood according to their plain and obvious import, I can most cheerfully subscribe. But how are these declarations to be understood, when taken in connexion with other things which Dr. Taylor has said on this subject?

I have always supposed, that when it is said, that in consequence of the fall of Adam all have become sinners; the language is intended to convey the idea, that there is a real connexion between the sin of Adam and that of his posterity:—and that when it is said, all are *by nature* sinners, the meaning is, that there is something in our nature which is truly the cause or reason why all men become sinners. Consequently, that human nature is not what it would have been, if sin had not existed, but has undergone some change in consequence of the original apostacy. When we say it is the nature of the lion to eat flesh, and the nature of the ox to eat grass, we mean that their natures are not alike. And when we say, that one moral being is *by nature* sinful, and that another is *by nature* holy, we must mean, if we mean any thing, that their natures are not alike. If they *are* alike, their *nature* is, in no sense, the cause or reason that one is holy, and the other sinful. To say that it is, would be to ascribe two directly opposite effects to the same cause. Now; the question is, is the nature of man different from what it would have been, if sin had never entered the world? Is there any thing in human nature which is *hereditary*, and the *consequence* of the original apostacy? Or is every thing pertaining to the nature of man the immediate pro-

duction of creative power? And do mankind come into the world now, with the same nature as that with which Adam was created, and which the child Jesus possessed? If so, then mankind are not *by nature* sinners. Their *nature* is in no sense the cause or reason of their sinning; for Adam was not *by nature* a sinner; nor was the child Jesus. They were by nature holy. Nor is it possible to perceive, according to this view of the subject, that there is any real connexion between the sin of Adam and the sin of his posterity.

Now, unless I have entirely mistaken the import of Dr. Taylor's speculations, he does maintain that the moral nature of all accountable beings is alike, and is the very nature which God has given them. In the Review of Taylor and Harvey, (See Chris. Spect. for 1829, p. 348,) which was intended to give a correct view of Dr. Taylor's sentiments on this subject, it is said:

"By moral nature we mean the power of choosing or refusing in the view of motives, and with a knowledge of right and wrong. *Such a nature every accountable being receives from the hand of his Creator.* Angels use it aright in his service; men uniformly abuse it to purposes of rebellion."

If this representation is correct, the universal sinfulness of mankind is not to be attributed to their nature as its cause, but to the circumstances of temptation in which they are placed. Accordingly, in assigning reasons for the fact that all do sin, the Reviewer refers us to their circumstances; and accounts for it in the same way in which he accounts for the sin of Adam, and of the apostate angels. He says,

"Angels sinned. Was the cause which led to their first act of rebellion in itself sinful? Eve was tempted, and fell. Was her natural appetite for food, or her desire for knowledge, to which the temptation was addressed, a sinful feeling? And why may not our constitutional propensities *now* lead to the same result at the commencement of moral agency, as was actually exhibited in fallen angels and our first parents, even when advanced in holiness? A child enters the world with a variety of appetites and desires which are generally acknowledged to be neither sinful nor holy. Committed in a state of utter helplessness to the assiduity of parental fondness, it commences existence, the object of unceasing care, watchfulness, and concession, to those around it. Under such circumstances it is, that the natural appetites are first developed; and each advancing month brings them new objects of gratification. The obvious consequence is, that *self-indulgence* becomes the master principle in the soul of every child, long before it can understand that this self-indulgence will ever interfere with the rights, or intr trench on the happiness of others. Thus, by repetition, is the force of constitutional propensities accumulating a bias towards self-gratification, which becomes incredibly strong, before a knowledge of duty or a sense of right and wrong can possibly have entered the mind. That moment—the commencement of moral agency, at length arrives. Does the child now come in a state of perfect neutrality to the question, whether it will obey or disobey the command which cuts it off from some favorite gratification? If the temptation presented to *constitutional propensities* could be so strong in the case of Adam, as to overpower the force of established habits of virtue in the maturity of

his reason, how absolute is the certainty that every child will yield to the urgency of those propensities, under the redoubled impulse of long cherished self-gratification, and in the dawn of intellectual existence." pp. 366, 367.

According to this representation, the reason that all men become sinners, is not, that they possess *constitutional propensities* different from those which Adam possessed, or from those which they would have possessed, if they had been born of holy parents; but it is owing entirely to the circumstances of temptation in which they commence their moral existence. The Reviewer indeed denies, that there is in man any such thing as a natural propensity to sin. He says,

"There are many who have a confused idea, that there must be in man some *distinct* and specific *tendency* to sin, previous to all acts of choice; as there is a tendency to food, to drink, and to the pursuit of happiness."—"This tendency, if it exists at all, is a positive existence, a real entity."—"How has it come into being? The alternative is again before those who hold this doctrine, viz. it either has no cause, or God is its author."—"But is it really so? Is there in man a specific *craving* for sin, as there is for food or drink?"—"Is it not certain, then, that there is in our nature no specific tendency to sin, corresponding to our natural and constitutional propensities?" pp. 364, 365.

But I would ask, what inconsistency is there in supposing that there is in man a native propensity to evil, propagated from parent to child, like other natural propensities? We know that there are constitutional propensities which are hereditary. There are traits of character, which (to use a common expression) run in the blood of particular families. Some are constitutionally mild, gentle, meek;—others are constitutionally peevish, fretful, irascible. In some way or other, properties of mind, as well as of body, are propagated from parent to child. And what inconsistency is there in supposing that there is in every child of Adam, a native, hereditary propensity to evil? Unless there is in man some such native bias, or tendency to sin; I see not that there is any real connexion between the sin of Adam and the sin of his posterity. Nor do I see that our nature is, in any sense, the cause or reason of our sinning. To what purpose then are we told that, in consequence of Adam's fall, all mankind have become sinners,—and that they are sinners *by nature*,—when the whole is virtually denied?

III. *The doctrine of regeneration.*

Dr. Taylor has expressed his belief in relation to this doctrine in the fifth, sixth, seventh, eighth, and ninth articles of his creed. In these articles, he affirms that the change in regeneration is a moral change—that it is produced, not by moral suasion, but by the influence of the Holy Spirit—that the necessity of this divine influence results solely from the voluntary

perverseness of the sinner's heart—and that the renewing grace of God is *special*, inasmuch as it is designed to secure, and does infallibly secure, the conversion of the sinner.

All this is very good ;—but this is not all which he has written on this subject. He has adopted theories which, in the judgement of many at least, tend to sap the foundation of this fundamental doctrine of the Christian faith. Although he explicitly admits the influence of the Holy Spirit in regeneration ; yet in view of many things which he has written, it is difficult to see what necessity there can be for this divine influence. In this letter, which contains his creed, he says,

“ I do not believe that the grace of God can be truly said to be *irresistible*, in the primary, proper import of this term. But I do believe that in all cases, it *may* be resisted by man as a free moral agent ; and that when it becomes effectual to conversion, it is *unresisted*.”

I am not disposed to vindicate the use of the term *irresistible*, as applied to this subject. But that the idea intended to be conveyed by it, by those divines who have been in the habit of using it, is correct, I have no doubt. They meant by it the same as *efficacious* or *invincible*. They taught that sinners do always resist the Holy Ghost ; but that in regeneration their resistance is overcome or subdued, by the almighty energy of the Holy Ghost. They called renewing grace, *irresistible* grace, because it overcomes the utmost resistance which the sinner makes. But this idea, if I understand him, Dr. Taylor discards. He says, when grace “ becomes effectual to conversion,” “ it is *unresisted* ;”—that is, the sinner ceases to resist, before the grace of God converts him. But I would ask, what necessity is there for the grace of God to convert him, after he has ceased to resist ? That I do not mistake the meaning of Dr. Taylor in this passage, will appear by comparing it with some other passages of his writings. Observe the following.

“ But how obviously does the sinner, entertaining such views, overlook or disregard the decisions of eternal truth ? How obviously do such desires, and all acts dictated by them, proceed on the assumption that God *may* interpose to save, while the sinner holds the affections of his heart still rivetted to earth ; and this when the plainest annunciation of God to him is, renounce that idol or perish forever ; and this when God in his word and providence forbids the hope of any saving interposition, while the sinner's heart still clings to the forbidden object. Whence comes this delusion ? The world—his idol—his God, the sinner will not renounce ; and now to avoid the power and pressure of the truth that, continuing to cherish the love of it, perdition is inevitable, he vainly dreams in the face of God's testimony, that he may, and even *must* continue to cherish the idol of his heart—and yet that God may interpose to save :—And thus he desires that it should be. And what is this but assuming that God *may*, and *desiring* that he would, so depart from the

immutable principles of his government, as to interpose to save him, while in heart a rebel, and still resolved to be so?" Christ. Spect. for 1829. pp. 29, 30.

Dr. Taylor here assures us, that the word and providence of God forbid the hope that he will interpose to renew the heart of the sinner while he clings to his idols—that it is “the immutable principle of his government,” not to interpose in the sinner’s behalf, “while in heart a rebel, and still resolved to be so.” According to this representation, before God will interpose to renew the sinner’s heart, he must give up his idols—he must submit to the divine authority, and cease to be a rebel. But when all this is done, what necessity is there for divine interposition?

Why is it necessary that the sinner should be renewed by the power of the Holy Ghost? This necessity results solely from the perverseness and obstinacy of the sinner’s heart. But according to Dr. Taylor’s theory, the perverseness and obstinacy of his heart are removed antecedent to regeneration. The selfish principle is suspended. He ceases to sin and ceases to resist. Everything, indeed, which can be rationally supposed to render the agency of the Holy Spirit necessary in renewing the heart, is removed.

Again; Dr. Taylor says,

“This self love or desire of happiness is the primary cause or reason of all acts of preference or choice which fix supremely on any object. In every moral being who forms a moral character, there must be a first moral act of preference or choice. This must respect some one object, God or Mammon, as the chief good, or as an object of supreme affection. Now, whence comes such a choice or preference? Not from a previous choice or preference of the same object, for we speak of the *first* choice of the object. The answer which human consciousness gives, is, that the being constituted with a capacity for happiness, desires to be happy; and knowing that he is capable of deriving happiness from different objects, *considers from which the greatest happiness may be derived*, and AND AS IN THIS RESPECT HE JUDGES, or estimates their relative value, so HE CHOOSES or prefers the one or the other as his chief good. While this must be the process by which a moral being forms his first moral preference, substantially the same process is indispensable to a change of this preference.” Christ. Spect. for 1829, p. 21.

According to this representation, every moral being chooses what he judges will be most for his happiness. The reason, therefore, that the sinner prefers the world to God, is, that he has mistaken the true way of securing his highest happiness. What then is necessary to effect his conversion? Nothing but light to correct his mistake. So soon as he shall be *convinced* that more happiness is to be derived from God than from the world, self-love will at once prompt him to change the object of his preference. Where, then, is the necessity of the influences of the Holy Spirit to renew the heart?

This subject might be pursued to a great length. There are very many things in Dr. Taylor's writings relating to the doctrine of regeneration, which I am constrained to regard as erroneous, and of dangerous tendency. But I cannot dwell upon them now.

IV. *The doctrine of election.*

Dr. Taylor says,

"I believe that all who are renewed by the Holy Spirit, are elected or chosen of God from eternity, that they should be holy, not according to foreseen faith or good works, but according to the good pleasure of his will."

This is a full and satisfactory statement of the doctrine of election. But how is this to be reconciled with other statements of his? If it be true, that God, *all things considered*, prefers holiness to sin in all instances in which the latter takes place, then it must be his choice, *all things considered*, that all men should become holy and be saved; and his infinite benevolence will prompt him to *do all in his power* to bring all men to repentance. What then becomes of the doctrine of election?

Who maketh thee to differ? Not God surely; for if he prefers, *all things considered*, holiness to sin, in *every instance*, he will, of course, do all in his power to make every individual holy. It cannot be true that he *hath mercy on whom he will have mercy*; for he would have mercy on all if he could. The reason that part only of the human race and not all are saved, is, not because God did not choose, *all things considered*, that all should be saved; but because he was unable to save all. "He *would* have prevented all sin in his moral universe, but *could not*." What, then, I ask again, becomes of the doctrine of election? Has God done more for the conversion of one man than for the conversion of another? If so, he has not done all in his power for the conversion of the other. Consequently, he has not done all in his power to prevent, in *every instance*, the existence of sin; and it cannot be true that he does, "*all things considered*, prefer holiness to sin, in all instances in which the latter takes place."

The Christian Spectator, of which Dr. Taylor is one of the conductors, in the number for Dec. 1831, contains a Review of Dr. Fiske's Sermon on Predestination. In this article will be found the following statement.

"God offers the same necessary conditions of acceptance to all men; desires from the heart, that all men, as free agents, would comply with them and live; brings no positive influence upon any mind against compliance; but on the contrary, brings all those kinds and all that degree of influence in favor of it, upon each individual, which a system of measures best arranged for the success of grace in a world of rebellion allows; and finally saves,

without respect of kindred, rank, or country, whether Scythian, Greek, or Jew, all who, under this influence, accept the terms and work out their own salvation, and reprobates alike all who refuse." p. 635.

This does not differ at all from the view which is generally given of this subject by the Arminians. According to this representation, the purpose of election is simply God's determination to save those who he foresaw would accept the terms of pardon. This is still more explicitly expressed in the following passage.

"The means of reclaiming grace, which meet him in the word and spirit of God, are those by which the Father draws, *induces*, just such sinners as himself voluntarily to submit to Christ; and these means all favor the act of his immediate submission. To this influence he can yield, and thus be drawn of the Father. This influence he can resist, and thus harden his heart against God. Election involves nothing more, as it respects his individual case, except one fact—the *certainty*, to the divine mind, whether the sinner will yield to the means of grace, and voluntarily turn to God, or whether he will continue to harden his heart till the measures of grace are withdrawn." p. 637.

Now what is this but the Arminian view of election founded on the foresight of faith and good works? God employs the best means which his wisdom can devise to bring all men to repentance. He *draws, induces* them to submit to Christ. Every sinner can yield to these means—or he can resist them. "*Election involves nothing more—except one fact, the CERTAINTY TO THE DIVINE MIND,*" that is, the *divine foreknowledge*, "*whether the sinner will yield to the means of grace,*" &c. In other words, the purpose of election is God's purpose to save all who obey the Gospel. It is not a purpose to make some willing to obey the gospel, while others are left to choose the road to death; but a purpose founded wholly on a foresight of the sinner's obedience. The reviewer says again,—

"The purpose of election, rightly interpreted, then, in our view brings the God of justice and grace into immediate contact with our rebellious world, staying the execution of justice, and urging gracious terms of reconciliation on men, on purpose to bring the matter to a speedy issue, and to gain whom, in the methods of his wisdom, he can over to his authority and kingdom." p. 638.

Here, again, we are brought to the same point, which has been repeatedly noticed. It is God's purpose to save as many of the human race as he possibly can. But what *election* is there in such a purpose. If God did, *all things considered*, desire the salvation of Judas, as much as the salvation of Peter; and if he did as much to effect the salvation of the one as of the other; how can it be said that Peter was elected, in distinction from Judas? Who made them to differ?

The reader will perceive that each of the topics brought into view in the preceding remarks, might be made the subject of extended discussion ; but my object has been to present a brief, general view of what I conceive to be the tendency of Dr. Taylor's speculations. I have felt it the more important to do this, on account of the attempts which have been made to convince the public that the points on which Dr. Taylor differs from his brethren are of trifling consequence ; as they relate chiefly not to the doctrines, but to the philosophy, of religion. But if his philosophical theories, as I have attempted to show, do tend to sap the foundations of some of the fundamental doctrines of the Gospel, they are not to be regarded as harmless ; nor ought the Christian community to slumber, while such strenuous efforts are making to give them currency in the world.

REVIEWS.

MEMOIRS AND CONFESSIONS OF FRANCIS VOLKMAR REINHARD, S. T. D. Court Preacher at Dresden. From the German. By OLIVER A. TAYLOR, *Resident Licentiate, Theol. Seminary, Andover.* Boston : Peirce & Parker. 1832. pp. 164.

PLAN OF THE FOUNDER OF CHRISTIANITY, BY F. V. REINHARD, S. T. D. &c. *Translated from the fifth German Edition.* By OLIVER A. TAYLOR, A. M. New York : G. & C. & H. Carvill. 1831. pp. 359.

[Continued from p. 304.]

The mind of Reinhard, acute, vigorous, versatile, stored with the treasures of ancient learning, and trained in the severest discipline of philosophy and logic, was peculiarly qualified to discuss such a subject as the plan formed by our Saviour for the improvement of our race. The circumstances which called forth this work, like the history of every controversy respecting the claims of Christianity, prove our holy religion to be under the care of an Almighty Guardian, able to make the rage of man subserve his own purposes, and cause all things to work together for good to his people. He has apparently permitted opposition to the Gospel only to arouse its slumbering friends ; as it is an undoubted fact, that every attack upon Christianity has resulted in estab-

lishing its claims on a still firmer foundation. The objections of Porphyry, Celsus, and other early writers against the religion of the cross, called forth a multitude of able and eloquent champions. Origen, Jerome, and other Fathers of the Church, met those early assailants of the Gospel on their own ground, and drove them from the field.—Little had been done, before the Reformation, to prove the Bible a communication from heaven; but after lord Herbert, near the commencement of the seventeenth century, had aimed a deadly blow at revelation, by asserting the sufficiency of Natural Religion, and furnished in his works, *de Veritate, de Causis Errorum, Religio Laici*, and *de Religione Gentilium*, a thesaurus of infidel objections and sophistries, sufficient for all his followers from that day to this, the friends of Christianity were compelled to bring forward the proof of its authenticity and truth. Against this patriarch of modern infidelity, the incomparable Baxter entered the lists, in his "Reasons of the Christian Religion," and thus became the first writer in our language on the evidences of Christianity. This production, full of good sense and powerful thought, prepared the way for Halyburton's unanswerable work on the Insufficiency of Natural Religion, and the Necessity of Revelation. Baxter had before published (1655) his "Unreasonableness of Infidelity," in answer to an obscure, but virulent scribbler, who seems to have thought, as Hume did after him, that "no man is bound to believe in Christ who doth not see confirming miracles with his own eyes;" and whom Edwards, in his *Gangrena*, represents as a "Materialist and Mortalist," and characterises, in his usual style, as "an arch heretic, an old wolf, and a subtle man." Herbert was followed by a long succession of copyists from his works; but the splendid sophistries of Shaftesbury, the insidious subtleties of Hobbes, and the less powerful, though more open and virulent attacks of their followers, called forth from the Lelands, the Lardners, and Paleys of the last century, such vindications of the Bible as place its claims to divine authority on a foundation too firm ever to be shaken. They have developed the internal marks of its truth, and explored all antiquity for testimonies to its having come from God. Infidelity is thus entirely driven from the arena of fair discussion; and though a few of the viler sort may still be seen gathering up its broken weapons, and venturing, in their Parthian retreat, to throw them back on the triumphant champions of Christianity, yet no man of any respectability now presumes to hazard his reputation, by maintaining any one of the points once so boldly assumed, and so warmly contested by the abettors of infidelity.

Thus vain have been the assaults of the enemies of the cross. The Apostate Julian wielded against the Gospel all the resources of his vast empire; but "he who sitteth in the heavens," frustrated his impious designs, and made them recoil in righteous retribution on his own head. Voltaire threatened "to crush the Wretch," and demolish, by his single arm, the fabric which

twelve fishermen and their followers had spent seventeen centuries in rearing; but little did the proud and unprincipled philosopher of Ferney dream, that the very press from which he was pouring his infidel tracts over Europe, would ere long be employed in printing Bibles to be gratuitously circulated by thousands. Little did Hume imagine, that the room where he wrote his attacks on the Gospel would, in a few years, be occupied by the agents of an association designed to spread its blessings through the world. Little have the infidels of any age foreseen how soon all their opposition to Christianity would be overruled for the advancement of the very cause which they vainly sought to destroy.

It is also worthy of remark, that nearly all the writers against Christianity were once its professed friends. Julian was educated in its very bosom; Tindal was for a long time a member of the Church of England; Morgan was once a minister of the Gospel; the infidelity of Herbert and Hobbes was rather covert than avowed; and even Hume intermingles with his sophistries many insidious expressions of respect for the Christian Religion.

The origin of Reinhard's Plan corroborates these statements. Germany remained for a long time comparatively free from the incursions of open infidelity; but near the middle of the seventeenth century, Edelmann, a sort of religious chameleon, passed, like Priestly and Morgan, through a variety of sects, and after becoming an atheist, and finally a pantheist, was at length banished for his violent attacks upon the established religion. Since that time, a spirit of scepticism, or of bold and reckless speculation, has diffused itself like leaven through a part even of the Lutheran clergy; and so deeply has this spiritual palsy penetrated the very vitals of the church, that not a few Doctors of Divinity, and Professors of Theology in the Universities, look upon the Bible very much as they do upon the fictions of ancient mythologists, and are often applauded for exciting the laughter of their pupils—candidates for the Christian ministry! at the alleged blunders of Jesus and his Apostles!!

To Edelmann succeeded Reimarus, a man of talent and learning, who, like Hume and Gibbon, scattered the tares of scepticism through his literary works. He did not *publish* any thing *directly* against Christianity; but, at his death in 1765, he left some manuscripts which were afterwards brought before the public by the well known poet Lessing, under the title of "Wolfenbittel Fragments." They profess great respect for the moral precepts of the Gospel, but accuse its divine Author of being a deceiver, and boldly assert, that he did not teach the doctrines there ascribed to him; that he never intended to abolish the law of Moses, but merely to establish an earthly kingdom among his countrymen; that his disciples, during his life-time, expected nothing more, and did not dream of a spiritual kingdom till the death of their leader had blasted their ambitious hopes; that he and John the Baptist deceived the people, by countenancing their expectations

of a worldly prince in the person of their promised Messiah; that, under the cloak of religion, he formed the design of overthrowing the government then in existence, and raising himself to power upon its ruins; that he restrained his disciples from disclosing his purposes only to mature his plans, and insure their ultimate execution; that his last entrance into Jerusalem, amid the acclamations of the multitude, was designed to prepare the way for striking the first decisive blow; that he then formed, like a shrewd political aspirant, an estimate of his resources, and the next day made an inflammatory harangue with the vain hope of exciting the people to rise with him in rebellion against the magistracy; that he was taken and crucified to prevent his making further disturbances; that, disappointed in these manœuvres, he finally relinquished his schemes of ambition in despair, and on the cross gave himself up in pious resignation to the will of God, but not without an expression of deep regret at the failure of his efforts to rear a throne for himself on the ruins of the Jewish state.

Such were the strange views of Reimarus, who was soon followed by a swarm of inferior, but bolder and more desperate assailants of the Christian faith. Wünsch, Mauvillon, Paalzow, Bahrdt, and others, outstripping their leader, and catching the phrenzy of the French Terrorists, aimed at no less than the entire extermination of Christianity itself. Bahrdt, superficial, but more flippant and popular than the rest, published a number of works, in which he called in question all the prophecies and miracles recorded in the Bible, ridiculed the idea of a revelation from God, and endeavored to discredit the Gospel by inventing a variety of fables respecting the early education of Christ, and imputing to him the formation of a secret society for the spread of his doctrines.

These views, though apparently too wild to deserve a serious refutation, began to exert on certain minds such an influence as called forth Reinhard's vindication of the plan devised by Christ for the benefit of the whole human family. Though elicited by local circumstances, the work is not a formal reply to Reimarus and his followers, but an independent discussion of the general subject, and contains very few direct references or even passing allusions to what they had written.

The reader must not expect in this work a system of theology, or a full view of Christ's character as Mediator between God and man. The design of Reinhard is professedly limited. He takes only a general survey of Christianity, in order to prove that its Founder designed and adapted it for the moral improvement of all mankind, and devised the best means of securing the final and complete accomplishment of this purpose.

Reinhard commences by inquiring what the plan of Christ actually was. He considers its *extent, its character, and the means devised for carrying it into effect*. As Jesus lived and died among the Jews, some have supposed that he confined his views to his

own nation; but from his conduct, the compass of his plan, and a multitude of explicit declarations, our author proves that he aimed at the improvement and happiness of *all* mankind.

The character of Christ's plan is shown, from his actions and his doctrines, to be *moral* and *spiritual*. It is asserted in a variety of ways—in plain language, in figurative descriptions, and often, especially by John, in terms too explicit and unequivocal to be misunderstood. This kingdom of God, established in the hearts of individuals, is designed and wisely adapted to promote the general welfare of mankind by purifying *religion*, *morality* and *society*. Under these three heads, the plan of Christ is discussed at some length, and its influence on all the interests of men in this world shown to be salutary and powerful.

Reinhard proceeds next to consider *the method proposed by Christ for carrying this plan into effect*, and fully proves from his private life, from his express declarations, from the whole tenor of his conduct and instructions, from the language of his friends, and all the enterprises undertaken after his death by the Apostles and early Christians, that he did not think of employing power, or a secret society, but selected the bland and gentle means of instruction and moral suasion.

That Christ designed to employ power for the accomplishment of his purposes, was a conception of Reimarus; Bahrdt resorted to the supposition of a secret society, like that of the modern Jesuits; and Kestner, unable to fasten on our Saviour either of these charges, ascribed the formation of a secret society to Clemens Romanus, who is so honorably mentioned in Paul's Epistle to the Romans. As a specimen of German speculations, we give, for the amusement of our readers, an outline of this strange and groundless supposition.

"Clement, a Roman patrician, after the death of those zealous apostles, Peter and Paul his instructors, devised a plan for effecting a revolution of the state of things in the world. By means of a secret society throughout the Roman empire, the strict discipline of which should accustom irregular and unrestrained people to order and the performance of duty, this acute, political man supposed he should be able to obtain a decisive triumph for the Christian cause, and one which would conduce to the welfare of the human race. The destruction of Jerusalem gave the first signal for the establishment of this Christian confederacy embracing the whole world, and, under the despotic reign of Domitian, when all nations and countries were sighing after an improvement in the state of things, it was easily put into operation. By a multitude of writings fabricated agreeably to the spirit of the age and the object of the confederacy, and attributed to the names of Christians every where honored; by the introduction of a new mode of interpreting the genuine books of the prophets and apostles, invented for the purpose of favoring the cause of the confederacy, as well as by wise, faithful, and powerful aids in many regions, Clement was enabled, in the first place, to unite the different apostolical sects into one body, and regulate and discipline them all agreeably to his will, and in accordance with the requisitions of the so called Apostolical Constitutions of his confederacy. At the same time, the extension of Jewish and heathen prophetic writings, either interpolated by Christians or newly fabricated for the purpose, gained many Jews and gen-

titles over to the interest of the Christian cause. Then, some of the Clemen-
tinian confederates by their cunning, purloined the records and private books
of the so called Secret Society of Theologians established by John the Evan-
gelist; and the founder of the confederacy connected the consecrating ritual
of John's mysteries, with Jewish and heathen ceremonies and mystical sym-
bols of a masonic character, and thus, after establishing a Christian priest-
hood, ordained a mysterious worship of God, which was introduced by its
missionaries and abettors, into all parts of the then civilized world.

"Domitian discovered the existence of this secret confederacy without be-
ing able to touch it. The hoary Nerva was raised to the throne by its mem-
bers, and he suffered them to act for a long time in quiet.

"Trajan persecuted them according to military regulations as state crimi-
nals, and his political measures succeeded in enabling him to seize the authors
and heads of this confederacy and punish many thousands of its members
with exile and death.

"The confederacy of brethren, being shaken by this persecution, contrived,
under a mask of societies of operative mechanics, in which they concealed
themselves, to obtain the favor of Hadrian, who was a lover of the mechan-
ical arts."

Reinhard endeavors, in the second part of his work, to prove that
no man ever formed a plan like that of Christ. After showing from
the known character and circumstances of all ancient nations the
improbability of finding among them any system designed for the
benefit of the whole world, he examines the claims of legislators
and founders of states, like Lycurgus and Romulus;—of heroes
and defenders of their country, like Leonidas and the Roman
Scipios;—of such kings and statesmen as Timoleon, or the fabu-
lous Osiris;—of such philosophers as Pythagoras and Socrates;—
of founders of religions, like Zoroaster and Confucius;—and after
a somewhat protracted discussion, he forces upon us the convic-
tion that none of those illustrious men ever conceived of a plan to
promote the improvement and happiness of all mankind, but invari-
ably limited their views each to his own countrymen, or at most
to a very small fraction of the human race.

The third part of the work before us is occupied in showing,
that Christ's plan is not chimerical, and that its author must have
been the most exalted of men, and a teacher sent from God to
bless the world. The practicability of his plan is inferred from
the nature of his religion, from the means devised for spreading
it over the whole earth, and from a variety of similar considera-
tions. Our author then considers the elements which composed
the character of Christ, proves that the circumstances of his edu-
cation and life were inadequate to produce such a character, and
draws very triumphantly the conclusion, that the Founder of
Christianity must have been at least the most exalted ambas-
sador that ever came from God on an errand of mercy to our
world.

The conclusion contains a number of eloquent passages. It is
difficult to transfer from one language into another the most ex-
quisite beauties of an author so idiomatic; but the translator has
preserved so much of Reinhard's elegance and spirit, that our

readers will be gratified with a few extracts from this part of the work.

"The plan with which Jesus occupied himself, whether we look at its purport or its extent, was perfectly new, and one, of which no human being had ever had the least conception. Many plans had been formed before Christ for the improvement of single nations and states, and many efforts had been made to carry them into execution, but none of them struck deep enough. Their projectors satisfied themselves with checking the grossest abuses and disorders, and never thought of radically curing the evil in existence. The founder of Christianity alone reached an elevation to which no reformer before him had ever approached. He conceived the exalted, and, in the most appropriate sense of the word, the divine idea of in reality new creating and regenerating the whole human family. It was not his intention to attack a few vices, denounce a few abuses, and rectify here and there a disorder. It was his intention to create mankind anew, and stop up the very sources of wickedness." p. 225.

"Consider also what a freedom from prejudice, what a knowledge of the human heart, what a survey of all the circumstances, conditions, and civil relations in which men are to be met with, was exhibited by Jesus in the directions which he gave his friends respecting the extension of his doctrines, and in the means which he employed for carrying his plan into execution. In these respects also, he avoided all those by-paths into which the greatest geniuses before him fell, and those of the present age do still fall, whenever they speak of effecting important improvements. How often has power been brought to the aid of virtue and truth, and made use of for the purpose of urging them upon the world. Jesus intended to avoid every thing that might have the appearance of constraint. Others, who perceive the unsuitableness of a compulsory mode of proceeding, think they may guide the world and render it happy, by the aid of secret associations, without being noticed. Even this means of doubtful propriety Jesus treated with utter neglect. He intended to accomplish every thing that he did, in the most candid and open manner. It has been peculiar to the founders of religions almost universally to fall into the mistake of forming regulations, instituting ceremonies, and laying down positive precepts, which will not admit of being observed every where. In this way they have proved beyond question, that they were confined to limited spheres, and had but little acquaintance with the circumstances of different nations, and the characters of their respective countries. In this respect also Jesus conducted with a wisdom that took a survey of every thing. His religion contains absolutely nothing which cannot be practised every where." p. 232.

"That he was also the greatest of men in respect to *benevolence* and *goodness of heart*, is beyond all doubt. Such a benevolence as that which he exhibited is no where to be met with in history. The most exalted spirits of antiquity were deficient in nothing so much as a benevolent extension of thought. We have already been compelled to remark, that the whole of antiquity was disfigured with a certain want of humanity. Here we find the opposite. The founder of Christianity in the formation of his plan unveiled a goodness of heart, a philanthropical benevolence of boundless extent, and absolutely unique in its kind. No human mind, before or since, has approximated so near to the *Deity*, or soared so near to his high and perfect pattern of holy goodness, and all-comprehensive love, as Jesus did. His love, like that of the great Creator, which flows forth in constant and boundless streams of kindness to every being, flowed forth to all mankind; and aimed to make them all happy without exception. Come ye, who dare despise the founder of Christianity, and perhaps even revile his name, come gaze awhile with steady aspect upon this picture. It is one that should thrill you with admiration! The heart which you misapprehend is the purest, noblest, tenderest, most benevolent, that ever beat for the welfare of others. He whom you calumniate and contemn, is the most zealous, universal, and venerable Saviour

and friend that can be named by our race. Is it rational, is it noble and just, to rail at those dispositions and feelings which ought to be an object of the deepest, most respectful attention, and the tenderest emotions of gratitude, even if unaccompanied with any results, and ending in fruitless efforts and a useless exhibition of kindness?" p. 239.

The devout Christian will probably rise from a perusal of Reinhard's Plan disappointed at finding so partial a view of the scheme which Christ formed for the benefit of a fallen race; and the same objection, along with others of a very different character, was urged against the work by some of his own countrymen; but we ought not to overlook the object and circumstances which required him to consider Christianity, not as a system of redemption from the power and everlasting penalties of sin, but merely as an institution designed for the general improvement and happiness of mankind in the present life. The work is an apology, a reply to a specific class of objections; and its design thus restricted the author to such a view of Christ's plan as would obviate those objections. He must meet his skeptical antagonists on their own ground. They were not prepared to examine the mysteries of redemption; and before they could be brought to view Christ in the glorious and endearing character of Mediator between God and man, they must be led by arguments which minds like theirs can appreciate, to respect him as the author of a wise and all-comprehensive plan for the benefit of mankind. Thus Reinhard would fain allure these skeptics across the threshold of Christianity, and prepare them to discover and admire its internal glories. On those glories he was himself wont to dwell with peculiar pleasure; and the views scattered through the thirty-nine volumes of his sermons, and very distinctly avowed in his own autobiography, prove him to have been, not only near the close of his life, but at the time of writing the work before us, strictly evangelical. He was one of the first to sound the alarm against the Rationalism of the Lutheran clergy. His elevated office, as well as his high reputation for talents, learning, and general excellence of character, gave weight to what he said, and a sermon in which he attempted to prove the departure of his brethren from the creed of their own church, produced a wide and deep sensation, and led to the controversy which is now going on in Germany between the Rationalists, and those who still adhere to the doctrines of the Reformation.

We cannot expect that Reinhard's Plan will be as useful in this country as it was in Germany; but it may still do much good, by preparing those who are set for the defence of the gospel, to meet the cavils which a busy and evil-eyed skepticism is now gathering from every quarter, and spreading among all classes, with a zeal worthy of a better cause. It takes a view of Christianity that will be new and interesting to most readers. It contains a variety of incidental hints and discussions that will start in reflecting minds many novel and important trains of thought. To one altogether

unacquainted with the gospel, or prejudiced against its general character, it gives a view well calculated to prepare him for a favorable consideration of its internal claims. We are informed, that German missionaries generally furnish themselves with it as an exhibition of Christianity best adapted to disarm the heathen of their prejudices, and conciliate their candid and respectful attention to its peculiar truths. The main drift of the work, representing the plan of Christ as designed for the whole world, harmonizes well with the spirit of the age, and tends to aid the various enterprises of benevolence by showing that the Gospel is a system of missions for the salvation of all mankind, and that every disciple of Jesus ought to do all in his power for the accomplishment of a consummation so devoutly to be wished.

The translator has acquitted himself with fidelity and judgment. Aware how difficult it is to put an English costume on an author so idiomatic as Reinhard, we are prepared, by some experience, to appreciate the perplexities of such a task, and are happy to find it executed with so much accuracy and taste. He copies, perhaps unconsciously, too many German idioms, but not more than most translators. Dr. Johnson called "translation the great pest of speech," and almost wished for an "Academy to stop the license of translators, whose idleness and ignorance, if suffered to proceed, will reduce us to babble a dialect of France". In the time of Johnson there was a rage for translations from the French; but among us there is now a stronger predilection for the German; and the disposition of a certain class of scholars to *Germanize* (if we may coin a name for this new and growing species of barbarism) threatens ere long to mar our language with such a multitude of new-fangled terms from Germany, that we have long waited for some able and judicious critic to expose the fault, and arrest the evil. The Andover press has sent forth a large number of invaluable works; but their *literary* value would often have been enhanced by pruning them of Germanisms. We cannot now dwell on this topic; and we hope that our German scholars and translators, to whose industry we are indebted for much learned lore, will take the hint in season to avert the lash of criticism, which surely awaits the intruders thus smuggled into our language. We can excuse the wish of a foreigner, retaining strong predilections for his mother-tongue, that "we may burst the shackles of English lexicography, and with a set of new words for new ideas, give the results of the pious and learned efforts of German scholars;" but such a course would utterly destroy the purity of our language, sweep away all its landmarks, and set us adrift on a sea of uncertainties. It would be a species of literary Vandalism, against which the shades of Addison, and Johnson, and Campbell would rise and remonstrate. We trust there is good taste enough among us to frown on such barbarisms. Our tongue has already suffered too much from this cause; and should we go on adding a few words and idioms from one language after another, we shall

ere long make it a perfect medly of all the three or four thousand dialects spoken on the globe, and thus reduce it to a predicament worse than even that of poor Cowper's "patchwork counterpane."

Should every maiden come
To scramble for the patch that bears
The impress of the robe she wears,
The bell would toll for some.

And O! what havoc would ensue!
This bright display of every hue
All in a moment fled!
As if a storm should strip the bowers
Of all their tendrils, leaves and flowers,
Each pocketing a shred.

Thanks then to every gentle fair,
Who will not come to pick me bare,
As bird of borrowed feather.

PUBLICATIONS OF THE MASSACHUSETTS SABBATH SCHOOL UNION.

- I. *History of the Pilgrims*, or a Grandfather's Story of the first Settlers of New England.
- II. 1. *Philip Everhard*, or History of Baptist Indian Missions, in North America. 2. History of the American Baptist African and Haytien Missions.
- III. *Conversations on the Burman Mission*.
- IV. 1. *Conversations on the Sandwich Island Mission*. 2. Conversations on the Bombay Mission. 3. Conversations on the Ceylon Mission. 4. Conversations on the Choctaw Mission. 5. Conversations on the Mackinaw and Green Bay Missions. 6. Letters on the Chickasaw and Osage Missions. 7. Letters and Conversations on the Cherokee Mission. 8. Letters and Conversations on the Missions at Seneca, Tuscarora, Cattaraugus, and Maumee. 9. Hugh Clifford; or Prospective Missions. 10. Naval Chaplain; or a View of Efforts for the benefit of Seamen. 11. Claims of the Africans, or History of the American Colonization Society.
- V. 1. *The Stanwood Family*; or History of the American Tract Society. 2. Louisa Ralston; or What can I do for the Heathen?

"A little boy seven years old had been sitting long silent one evening, when he suddenly spoke; 'Mother, I know one thing,' 'What is that?' said his mother. 'I never will, while I live, drink a drop of ardent spirits, or make a bet, or buy a lottery ticket;' and his face flushed with earnestness as he spoke. 'That is a good resolution,' said his mother, 'but what made you think of it now?' '*Something I read in my Sabbath-school book; and I shall never forget it.*'"

We are willing to adopt this as a text, while presenting a few thoughts on the subject of Sabbath-school books, and particularly on those placed at the head of this article. We could wish it printed on letters of gold on every hand that moves a pen for the

readers a Sabbath-school library. Writers and publishers of books, and managers of Sabbath school Unions, depositories, and libraries, occupy stations of great responsibility, as the manner in which they discharge their duties must materially affect the character and condition of great numbers of their fellow-beings, both in time and in eternity. He who puts into the hands of the young a book of immoral or corrupting tendency, not only inflicts wounds which cannot be healed, but scatters infectious pestilence, which will be fatal in proportion to the reputation of the author, the attractions of the work, and the peculiar circumstances of those who come within its influence. Let such a book be circulated under the real or implied sanction of the Sabbath school, and its power of doing mischief is increased beyond computation. The friends of this Institution naturally look to its depositories as storehouses of knowledge, suited to the wants of the opening mind, and safely guarded from the contaminating influence of perverted genius. It is in the power of Sabbath school Unions to deserve and secure this confidence, by furnishing books in such numbers and variety as shall meet the wants of the community; and every friend of Sabbath schools has an interest at stake, and a duty to discharge in relation to this matter. As friends of the institution, we claim the privilege of suggesting a few thoughts for the consideration of the writers, publishers, and purchasers of Sabbath school books.

The three following questions should be ever present to the mind of an author: *For whom* do I write? *For what object* do I write? And *how* shall I best accomplish this object?

It should be borne in mind that Sabbath school books are to be read by the *young*;—by those whose tender and pliant minds are easily susceptible of impressions which they will never lose. But these readers are not always to remain young. They will soon cease to be children, and rise up to occupy responsible stations in life. Their books, therefore, should not have a tendency to keep them children, but should assist and encourage them to put away childish things. It should also be remembered, that these young readers are to be American citizens. They are soon to wield the destinies of their country; and the writers of their books are assisting to mould the character of the rulers, the writers, poets, orators, statesmen, ministers, and missionaries of this nation; nor those of one generation of this nation alone, but through them the character and destiny of future generations, and of all lands where the influence of American freedom, civilization and enterprise shall be felt, or where Christianity shall be extended.

But Sabbath school books should not be written *exclusively* for children. They are not the only readers. These books are carried by the children to their homes, and furnish no inconsiderable portion of the reading of parents and teachers, and other members of families. Nor is this all. The time we have no

doubt is near, when the idea that the Sabbath school is intended merely for *children* will be looked upon with astonishment. The discovery is already made, that the exercises of these schools can be adapted to the circumstances of every class of learners; and it is truly surprising that it should have required forty or fifty years to discover so plain a truth, and one of so much importance. Could the early friends and conductors of the institution have witnessed the operation of a school composed of children, and parents, and grandparents—persons of all ages, from lisping infancy to the man of gray hairs, of all ranks and professions, all varieties of intellectual cultivation, to be found in a flourishing village (and such scenes have been often witnessed), they might have spared themselves the labor of devising new plans for securing and instructing “scholars who *become too old to attend the Sabbath school*,” and might have escaped the mortifying disappointment of seeing their plans so often defeated. It is impossible to estimate the mischiefs which mistaken views on this subject have occasioned. Multitudes have considered the Sabbath school, its instructions and books, as altogether childish concerns. Boys of twelve or fourteen years have supposed it a necessary indication of manliness to abandon them; and have left the school just at the age when they most needed its instructions and restraints. Besides, two or three of the last years spent in school have probably been rendered nearly useless, by such ideas of manliness. Teachers, too, have neglected to qualify themselves beyond certain limits; and there is reason to believe that many books have been prepared under the mistaken impression that the Sabbath school is only for children. It is high time these mistakes were corrected. Sabbath schools will never develop their full powers of doing good, till better views prevail. There will never be a supply of well qualified teachers, till they *grow up* in the Sabbath school; and parents can never aid the teachers to the full extent of their power, till they shall mingle with them in the exercises of the school, and engage their own thoughts and feelings in the lessons which are taught to their children. Let it not be said, that the plan of uniting persons of all ages for the study of the Bible, must necessarily fail for the want of teachers. The same argument would lie against schools for children. It requires more skill to teach a child than to teach one of mature age. The instruction in adult classes may be mutual. All may teach; all can learn. The power of conversation in acquiring and communicating knowledge is almost unlimited, and can be applied to the study of the Bible as successfully as to anything else. Let it then be henceforth understood, that the Sabbath school is adapted to the circumstancedness of all ages, classes, and conditions in the community; and let those who write books, or conduct periodicals, or make speeches for the Sabbath school, remember that they are acting for our whole population.

Sabbath school books are to be read by those who are to exist

forever. Let no writer of books or conductor of plans for educating immortal beings ever lose sight of this consideration. All systems of education which do not look to the whole extent of our existence are essentially defective, and can never meet the wants of men. The writers of books may be exerting an influence upon their readers as lasting as the immortal mind—an influence like precious balm, fitted to heal the diseases of the soul, or like poisoned arrows, inflicting wounds which no art can cure.

The *objects* to be aimed at by the writers of Sabbath school books next claims our attention. One object should be to impart *instruction*. An author in this department should never prepare a book for the mere purpose of amusing either himself or his readers. If there are persons who will not read except for amusement, no friend of the Sabbath school should dare assume the responsibility of increasing their number. The fields of knowledge are boundless, and with all the aids which can be furnished, we are only able to explore imperfectly some minute portions. The young need no temptations to check their progress in the acquisition of knowledge, or to allure them in the chase of phantoms.

These books should have a tendency, not only to impart instruction, but to *awaken holy feeling and excite to action*. It is not enough that men possess knowledge and understand their duty. A man might possess the intellect of an angel, and yet, if his heart was opposed to God, and he was unwilling to do his duty, his superior powers and acquisitions would only make him the more terrible scourge. It is not, indeed, the legitimate tendency of intellectual cultivation, to corrupt the heart, and prepare men for mischief. Such an imputation would reproach the Author of our being. But the most precious gifts of God may be perverted. That which is fitted to make men wise and good, may become the occasion of infamy and ruin. This thought should lead the writers of Sabbath school books to desire, not merely to enlighten the understanding, but to influence the heart, to mould the character, and to form their readers into a preparation to serve God and their generation in the most efficient manner.

It should be a leading object with the writers of Sabbath school books to make their readers *Christians*. This would be true if men were not immortal. There are no principles but those of religion which can safely guide men through the dangers and trials of this life; and surely nothing else can fit them for the society of holy beings in eternity. Nor is it sufficient to make men Christians, in the ordinary import of the word. It is too easy a thing to be a Christian in this popular sense. The spirit of Christianity must be elevated to something like its primitive standard. The command, "Go preach the Gospel to every creature," will never be obeyed, till Christians as a body more closely follow their divine Master, and bear more perfectly his heavenly image.—Sabbath school books must assist in correcting the false

impressions so prevalent at this day, in relation to Christian character and enterprize, and in arousing the followers of Christ to those efforts which are needed to evangelize the world. They must assist in training and marshalling the sacramental host for a mighty conflict with ignorance, idolatry, infidelity, and sin. They should be fitted to inspire holy courage, zeal, and persevering activity; and at the same time to cherish prudence, humility, charity, a childlike simplicity and dependance, and a cheerful spirit of obedience to all the requirements of the Captain of Salvation.—The authors of Sabbath school books should write both for time and for eternity, and aim, through their readers, to check and remove guilt and wretchedness, and increase holiness and happiness wherever human influence can be felt.

Our third inquiry relates to *the means* of accomplishing these important objects. It is doubtless desirable that Sabbath school books should be written in a style which *children* may understand, and read with pleasure; but it is not necessary that the study of them should require no effort, or that all words should be excluded the meaning of which children do not comprehend. This would be as idle and unreasonable as for a mother to use only the broken dialect of her infant, because it had not learned the import of more correct language. It would be to encourage children to grow up with habits of childish imbecility.

One object of reading should be to discipline the mind, to develop its energies, and increase the power of concentrating them for worthy pursuits. Books for young readers, therefore, while they should be intelligible and interesting, ought at the same time to require intellectual effort, and even occasional assistance from others, in order to be fully understood. They should be fitted to cultivate the taste, form habits of reasoning and reflection, and call into exercise the various faculties of the soul.—It is not the part of wisdom to cultivate one faculty, to the neglect of others; but all should receive that share of attention which is best calculated to form a well balanced mind. Much as we deprecate the influence of novels, we are not prepared to pass sentence of proscription upon every book which exhibits truth in the drapery of fiction. The imaginative faculty was given us for wise purposes, and is designed to be cultivated in common with others. Such seem to have been the views of our Saviour. His inimitable parables are a demonstration of his knowledge of the human mind, and the means of influencing it through the medium of language. The immortal author of *Paradise Lost*, holds much of his power over the minds of men, by the brilliant workings of a vivid but chastened and sanctified imagination. The same may be said of the author of the *Pilgrim's Progress* and the *Holy War*. To what extent the genius of fiction shall have scope in Sabbath school books is a very nice and difficult question, and one on which our limits forbid us to enter. We have no hesitation, however, in expressing the conviction, that an undue proportion of

Sabbath school reading approaches nearer than is desirable to the character of fiction; and that several books of this stamp might with propriety give place to others better calculated to do good. Still we would not see the expunging process carried to that extent, which would shut out works rich in thought and fitted to exert a good moral influence, merely because of their fictitious character.

Subjects and materials for Sabbath school books are as numerous, as the causes or influences which affect the interests and happiness of our race. We shall notice but a few of them, intending to keep within the limits which Sabbath school unions usually prescribe to themselves.*

Subjects connected with *the study of the Bible* are, perhaps above all others, appropriate and important. Books which illustrate the geography, history, natural scenery, manners and customs, civil and religious institutions of countries and nations alluded to in the Bible, are always valuable. Books which unfold the doctrines and duties of the Bible, and bring them to bear with weight upon the character, are still more valuable. There are already several important works designed to assist in the study of the Bible; but there is room for more. There are precious materials in the sacred volume for books yet to be written.

Biography is a suitable subject for the Sabbath school library. This branch of history would be more useful, especially to the young, if the writers were more skilful in analyzing character, and could make their readers better acquainted with the process by which the characters they describe were formed.

Books which point out the modes of gaining access to the minds of others, and of communicating knowledge in the best manner, are exceedingly needed. The business of instruction is involved in much obscurity and difficulty, which cannot be removed without a knowledge of the human mind, as well as a thorough acquaintance with what is to be taught. Manuals which prescribe a mechanical course for the instructor to pursue, can be of but little service, where this knowledge is wanting.

Another subject deserving the attention of the writers of Sab-

* It seems to have been the intention of S. S. Unions to publish only such books as are suitable for Sabbath day reading. Without expressing an opinion as to the propriety of these limits, we would submit a few inquiries. Does not the current impression occasioned by this restriction cause the reading of these books to be too much confined to the Sabbath, and thus engross the time so much as to prevent the study of the Bible, and family instruction, on that day? Do not books often find their way into S. S. libraries, totally unfit for Sabbath reading, and thus impair the confidence of many good people in the managers of Sabbath schools, and occasion other serious injuries? Does not this restriction shut out from the young many subjects of vital interest, which might be brought within their reach by such libraries? Does it not have the effect to produce an undue degree of sameness in books, and prevent that variety which is desirable? Would it not be well to have it understood, that Sabbath school books are not designed exclusively or chiefly for Sabbath reading, but that the study of the Bible, with such books and instructions as may help to understand it, is more appropriate for this day?—We might question the expediency of exchanging books on the Sabbath, and of exchanging them so frequently as is common; but this is not the place to discuss the abuses of S. S. libraries.

bath school books is *the moral condition of the world*. The researches of travellers are rich in materials, relating to the situation of our race; and these should be spread before the thousands of Sabbath school readers without unnecessary delay. Children and youth should become acquainted with the sufferings of the heathen, before a selfish, worldly spirit has "shut up their bowels of compassion," and shielded their hearts against the claims of dying men.

Another subject with which Sabbath school books should make their readers acquainted, is *the efforts of modern benevolence*. The benevolent institutions of the present day have been in existence long enough to develop their true character and tendency; and the rising and the risen generation cannot become too thoroughly acquainted with the results of their operations. What is the design, and what the practical influence, of the Bible, Tract, Missionary, Education, Sabbath School, Seaman's Friend, Prison Discipline, Colonization, Temperance, and Peace Societies? Intelligent men in this community have no right to be ignorant of these subjects, or to withhold the needful information from their children. The past operations of the societies which have been named, notwithstanding the imperfections, indifference, and opposition with which they have been checked, need only to be known, in order to secure the confidence and co-operation of all good citizens. Let the rising generation become thoroughly acquainted with these operations, and a host will be raised up, to carry them forward, when those who commenced them shall be sleeping in the dust.

We are happy to find the Massachusetts Sabbath School Union engaged in the publication of books with so much energy and skill. Those we have selected are only a part of their publications; but they are sufficient, when their merits shall be known, to secure to the Union the confidence and patronage of an enlightened Christian community. We have ranged them in five classes, as they seem to have been written by the same number of authors."

The history of the Pilgrims is in the conversational style. It exhibits a pleasant family circle, in which Father Allerton is the principal speaker, although his story has frequent interruptions from the questions of his inquisitive grandchildren, and from the author of the book, who was a visiter in the family. Perhaps a critic might be a little disturbed by the too frequent occurrence of such phrases as "Said I," especially in the first part of the book; but faults of this nature cannot materially diminish the pleasure of a reader who seeks instruction rather than faults. The story is fitted to exert a good moral influence, as well as to impart correct information in relation to the character, toils, and sufferings of the Fathers of New England.

Philip Everhard, the son of Mr. George Everhard, while preparing to enter the counting room, was numbered among the converts in a revival of religion, which blessed the institution at

which he was pursuing his studies. His parents are represented as pious people, "but the concerns of a prosperous business and the cares of a rising family so occupied their thoughts, that they had never deeply interested themselves in the spiritual condition of their fellow men."

It was after returning to his father's family, "with affections glowing with all the warmth and freshness of his first love to Christ," and "with intense desires to pursue a regular course of study, in the hope of one day becoming a herald of salvation to the distant heathen," that Philip related the history of the Baptist Indian Missions in North America. The narrative is interspersed with the questions and conversation of his parents and sisters, and presents a lively and interesting view of all the principal missionary efforts of the Baptists among the Indians. We regretted seeing an occasional expression which seemed unnecessarily to betray sectarian partiality. The following is a specimen. Speaking of the success of efforts, the writer observes, "At this time eight of the hired men, eleven of the scholars, and a Putawattomy woman had *followed their Lord in the ordinance of Baptism.*" It is difficult to perceive in what sense believers *follow their Lord* in the ordinance of baptism. Was Christ baptised unto repentance? The supposition seems almost irreverent. Was he baptised into the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost? No one supposes this. Was he baptised on making a public profession of religion? No; for he was a professor of religion long before. To us, there is a manifest impropriety, not to say absurdity, in the phrase above quoted. A fault of this nature should not be permitted to diminish the usefulness of the book.

The history of the African and Haytien Missions are from the same pen, and may be considered as a continuation of the same agreeable narrative. Philip Everhard has returned to school, and the narrative is given in a series of letters to his sisters at home.

The Conversations on the Burman Mission were written after some of the books in the fourth class, and, if we mistake not, the style exhibits slight marks of imitation, and a want of that ease and naturalness which distinguish the author of those books. Still it is a style which is easily understood, and the conversations contain, in a condensed form, a variety of information respecting this important mission.

The fourth class contains eleven books, mostly in the form of Conversations, written in a pleasing familiar style, and furnishing authentic histories of the missions and other subjects to which they relate. It is a recommendation of these books, that while they are easily intelligible to children, they will be read with interest and pleasure by persons of mature and cultivated minds. The facts going to illustrate the wretchedness of heathenism, and the toils, sufferings, and successes of those devoted brethren who are laboring to remove this wretchedness, are judiciously selected, and arranged in a manner well fitted to excite a missionary spirit.

These volumes are but a part of the publications of the industrious authoress, who deserves well of the friends of missions and of Sabbath schools.

The Stanwood Family and Louisa Ralston are written in good taste, and will well reward the attention of the reader. The first gives us a history of the American Tract Society; and the second a definite answer to the question, "What can I do for the heathen?" when asked by a young lady whose "means are limited." Each of these volumes exhibits the internal regulations of a well conducted religious family, in a manner which will be useful to parents.

We cherish the hope that the Christian community are prepared to welcome books such as these, and that they will be introduced extensively into Sabbath school and family libraries. We hope, too, that the several writers will not lay aside their pens. They have already conferred a favor upon the rising generation, and through them upon the heathen world, which cannot be estimated, till writers, and readers, and all who have been benefitted through their instrumentality, shall meet together in the kingdom of their God.

We cannot close this article, without urging the managers of the Massachusetts Sabbath School Union to persevere in the good work they have so happily commenced. Enlist the best hearts and hands, and pour into our Sabbath school libraries, facts and arguments, which shall convince and arouse this whole population, and kindle up a spirit of holy enterprise which shall dispel the darkness and misery which now prevail, and fill the earth with the knowledge and glory of the Lord. And we would affectionately urge parents, teachers and superintendants of Sabbath schools, the pastors of our churches, and all instructors of youth, to aid this enterprise, by *making themselves acquainted with the facts* brought to view in the volumes we have noticed, and introducing them without delay to the attention of those under their care. It is of immense importance that the rising generation have correct views of the condition and claims of the heathen, of the benevolent operations which are designed to enlighten and purify them, and of the duty and ability of every individual to aid in relieving human wo.

MISCELLANEOUS.

ON THE CONNEXION OF ADAM'S SIN WITH THAT OF HIS POSTERITY.

Extracted from Dr. Austin's "Dissertations upon several Fundamental Articles of Christian Theology."

'How do mankind universally become sinners by virtue of the relation which subsists between Adam and them, or as the consequence of his first transgression?'

Several modes of explanation, to solve this question, have been proposed by theological writers. They are principally the following:—

1. Some have adopted the notion of the seminal existence of all the posterity of Adam in his person, and have considered them as sinning in him, by virtue of being so many parts of him.

Against this mode of explanation there are strong, and, as it seems to me, unanswerable objections. It is not an explanation which has any warrant in the scripture, even by a remote implication. The doctrine philosophically considered is, to say the least, doubtful. It is doubtful whether all mankind did exist in this seminal manner in the person of Adam. It is doubtful whether they did in regard to their bodies, which are material substances, having an earthly origin, and being supported by earthly productions. It is still more doubtful whether they existed in him in regard to their souls, which are spiritual, immaterial, and thinking substances. It is doubtful whether the souls of all men were created at the same moment in which the soul of Adam was created, and lodged in him as a kind of casement. There is nothing in the scripture which conveys such an idea; and there is nothing among the analogies of nature which proves it, or even makes it probable.

But suppose the hypothesis, that mankind did exist seminally in the person of Adam, were philosophically admissible; to make them partakers in his transgression in this way, they must have been so many different personal agents, acting in and with him at the moment, and not subsequently, at their birth or afterwards. For at their birth, if not before, their mere seminal existence is lost. Is this rational? Is it conceivable how, in this embryo seminal state, they could have had any knowledge of moral objects, any consciousness, choice, or agency, as consenting moral agents, and by such a consenting agency be partakers in his transgression?

But, if this could be admitted as a possible thing, their sin could not in any respect place them on equal ground with him. They would have an existence so extremely below, and so unlike

to, his, as to be comparatively nothing, and their criminality would be comparatively nothing. Whereas, as they stand charged with sin in the scripture, they are considered as so many separate, personal existencies, moral agents, as really as Adam was.

There is another objection to the notion of a seminal existence in the person of Adam, and a participation in his disobedience by virtue of it, and that is, that upon the same principle mankind may be, and indeed, for aught that appears, must be, considered and treated as partaking equally in all the sins he committed, subsequently to his first transgression. Nay, they who follow must be considered as acting in that succession of ancestry by which they have descended from Adam—in the persons of all of them, and to have participated in all their sins; for the seminal tradition, upon the hypothesis, actually passed through them all. But this is the extreme of absurdity.

2. Some have supposed that there was a deleterious quality in the fruit of the tree which was interdicted to our first parents; that the fruit of this tree was forbidden, partly at least, on account of the deleterious quality of it; and that the fruit of the tree of life had a contrary quality—that it was salutary, and if partaken of, would have been an effectual antidote to the tendency of the noxious quality of the interdicted tree, and secured immortality. They suppose that the noxious quality of the forbidden tree was to extend, and does in fact extend, to the whole race. They suppose that, in its operation, it generates a feverish appetite, animal restlessness, and mental want, and so becomes the excitement to the commission of sin. They seem to suppose that all the diseases that oppress poor human nature are to be traced to this cause, and that its influence terminates in natural death.

Whatever currency authority may have given to this notion, it is not a sentiment which the scriptures exhibit. It is a mere hypothesis, and formidable objections are arrayed against it. It makes the sin of mankind a necessary effect of a physical power in nature, and of want, restlessness, and distress, of which Adam was not a subject before his first transgression. Nor is there any necessary connexion between bodily appetites and sinning. Holiness consists as well with want, as with fullness; with a diseased, as with a healthful state of body. In Christians, bodily infirmities are made to have a morally purifying influence.

3. Another manner of explaining the derivation of sin and guilt from Adam to his posterity, and which has been extensively received and taught, among divines in the main orthodox, is, that his first sin is imputed to them by virtue of a covenant which is supposed to have been instituted between God and Adam, which, in all the force of it, comprehended them. They were to stand or fall, remain innocent or become guilty, be entitled to reward or obnoxious to the death denounced, as he should keep or violate the covenant.

On this I remark, that there is no evidence in the scripture

that such a covenant was ever made, or such a representative responsibility ever ordained. No such covenant is expressly set before us in the scripture. If there are any appearances of it, they are faint indeed; and it requires no little ingenuity to work them into such a form. Nothing of the kind is found in the narrative given of the original transaction; and nothing of the kind is distinctly presented in the paragraph in Romans.

In the nature of things, moral actions are personal, and cannot be done representatively. 'The righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him; and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him. The soul that sinneth, it shall die.' No creature can vest in another the right or the obligation to act morally for him. The law of God presents to our view no such thing. Upon this scheme, a man might personally, that is, in regard to his own conduct, be as innocent as the Lord Jesus, and yet be held guilty to an indefinite extent, and liable to punishment, as the most atrocious offender.

Besides, neither has this a parallel on the part of Christ, as his mediation and obedience affect his redeemed people. He is their head, indeed, as Adam was the head of his posterity; but it does not appear that he so acts the part of their moral and covenant representative—that his obedience becomes their obedience, or is ever properly imputed to them. If it were, they would have an obedience strictly legal. Their claim in justice to the acceptance and blessing which the obedient enjoy would be valid, and grace, operating to save them from sin and death, would be precluded.

4. Another mode of explaining this matter is, that all men are made sinners, as their sinning, though personal, is in part the execution of the penalty incurred by the first transgression. The penalty is death. "In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." This death, it is asserted, is of three kinds—death spiritual, death temporal, and death eternal. And the threatened penalty is supposed to go over, in all the extent of it, to the posterity of Adam, as really as to Adam himself, on grounds which have been already mentioned. The doctrine that spiritual death, which is nothing more nor less than a continuance indefinitely in a course of sin, that is, adding sin to sin actively in an unbroken series, was a component part of the penal evil denounced, is not taught in the scripture, is a mere human figment, inconsistent with law, obligation, accountability and grace. Or if spiritual death could be understood to be comprehended in the penal sanction addressed to Adam, it must have been exclusively personal. It could not pass over to his posterity as penal evil, constituting them sinners; for they could not be penally liable for an action limited altogether to him. Reason cries out strongly against this; and reason must be heard, where the scripture is silent.

If the question before us cannot be satisfactorily answered, let it remain among the secret things which belong to God, which

we cannot comprehend, because he has not thought it proper to give us the necessary explanation. He is not bound to explain to us every part of his procedure. It may be enough, if nothing appears which is obviously repugnant to equity and wisdom, However, the obscurity which there may appear to be upon this, and some other subjects, may arise, and it is believed does arise, very much from the adventitious and false notions that have been attached to it. It is not conceivable that an intelligent agent should sin or be obedient but by a personal act. He must, if he sins, transgress a law which obliges *him*. This is the precise definition which the scripture has given of sin.—‘Whosoever committeth sin, transgresseth also the law; for sin is the transgression of the law.’ It is his transgression to whom it is imputed. I cannot be chargeable with a transgression of my neighbor, of which I know nothing, and in which I do not in the least partake.

But sin, though it be personal, may have community attached to it. It may act by confederation, or coalition, among a number, a class, a race of moral agents. This coalition, or coagency, if I may be allowed the term, may begin in an individual, and from him, as a kind of moral contagion, spread through the multitude, be they more or less, who partake in it. And the supposition may be fairly made, that if that individual had not sinned, the rest would not have sinned, but would have continued with him in a state of innocence.

All this is exactly in accordance with fact. In this simple view of the subject, a subject which has created immense perplexity, and infinite altercation, presenting a doctrine, which, as Scott remarks, ‘the proud heart of man is prone to deny or object to, with blasphemous enmity,’ the scripture, reason, and fact perfectly harmonize. The proud heart of man is undoubtedly hostile to all truth which respects the moral government of God. But the advocates of orthodoxy are not without their errors. And they should be careful that they do not invest the lovely form of truth with horrible appurtenances, to make her appear disfigured and loathsome even in the eye of piety itself.

It is not necessary, in order to the admission of this simple statement of the manner of the transmission in question, that we be able to assign the cause of it. Facts remain undeniable, whether we are able to assign the causes of them or not. They cannot be altered one way or the other by the assignment of any cause, whether it be the true or a false one.

Let the cause be placed in a divine constitution, or an efficient decree, according to one system; or in a self-determining power, and the abuse of liberty, according to another,—it affects not the matter of fact. There is no more difficulty in accounting for a following sinful act, than there is in accounting for the first sinful act. There is no more in accounting for sinful action in an indefinite series, and amongst a multitude of individuals, than in accounting for the first sin, or for any one of the series. There

is no more in accounting for it in a child, allowing him to be a moral agent, than in a man.

The apostacy of the angels that fell, and the apostacy of mankind, seem well enough to compare together, though circumstances are different. He who is now called Satan, led the way in the former, and the rest followed. Adam led the way in the latter, and his posterity follow. How did the revolt of Satan pass upon the rest of the angels that kept not their first estate? Evidently by their sinning personally, but connectively—by coalescing with him and with each other in this revolt. How did one man's disobedience pass upon many, so that they were made, constituted, or became, sinners? Evidently in the same way: it could be in no other. Though mankind come on in succession, generation following generation, as to the time of their existence, it is the same thing to God, to whom the past, present, and future are one, as if they had co-existed with Adam at the same time that he transgressed, and rose together, as one great mass of revolters, and gave their personal amen to his disobedience.

UNITARIANS OPPOSED TO A STATE RELIGION.

We record with pleasure the following extract from a Sermon by Rev. F. W. P. Greenwood of this city, delivered at the Installation of Mr. Thompson at Salem. In showing that it is best for religion to stand upon its own merits, and have no dependence on the state for support, Mr. Greenwood remarks,

She thus escapes the degrading associations, compliances, pollutions and assaults to which a political alliance must inevitably subject her. She is not saved from all abuses, but she is saved from a great many. Her forms are not worn so often as cloaks by ambition, by selfishness, and by laziness. She is not herself obliged to wear a state livery. She is not so often wounded in the house of her friends, real or pretended. She is not called to lend her countenance and support to younger sons and retainers of great families, let their qualifications and characters be what they may. She is no longer, when she stands alone and by herself, liable to the accusation, too often justified by appearances, of being a solemn trick of the government to keep the governed in order. When the government, as such, has nothing to do with the outward support of religion, it will be plainly seen that religion, if it be a trick, is, at any rate, not a government trick, and the accusation, thenceforward, will be idle, and will soon cease to be made. And it is a poor and false notion of religion that she cannot stand as well without the support of government as with it. I am persuaded that she stands much better without it, than with it. Her support is better, when she is thrown wholly upon the hearts of men, and the nature which

God has given them, because its foundation is a broader and deeper one than the favor of princes or legislatures. She may lose in splendor, but, even if that be a real loss, it will be more than supplied by an increase of respectability. The very fact that she stands alone is an increase of respectability. Independence is always respectability. Religion was better supported before the time of Constantine than after, because she was supported by each faithful disciple's faithful heart. There is true support, and there only. When religion is supposed to require the aid of the civil arm, and the public chest, the next supposition may very naturally be, that she is weak of herself. That has been the supposition, and she has been injured by it. Another supposition has been, that the tyranny, and the fraud, and the rapaciousness which have so often been the consequences of the connexion of religion with human governments, are to be imputed to religion herself; and much has she been injured by that also. Tests, oaths, punishments, qualifications and disqualifications miscalled religious, with all the temptation, venality, and hypocrisy, and misery to which they have given rise, have all been connected with and charged upon the religion of the immaculate Saviour, and his poor, simple, honest apostles. All this sin, for it deserves no milder name, is justly to be referred to the erroneous and interested views and principles of those who profess this religion, especially to their great error, that it needs the patronage, and the protecting, and compelling, and excluding processes of worldly authority, in order to be properly supported; but the religion itself is accountable for no such perversions of its real and original constitution and spirit. She does not need those worldly aids; she is stronger, happier, and healthier without them; and the proof that she is so, is, that they have always served as grounds of attacks against her. In fact, by encumbering her with these aids, her best and purest power over the spirit has been virtually called in question, and clogged, restrained, and impeded in its exercise.

TERMS OF ADMISSION TO THE THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY, ANDOVER.

Mistakes having often been made by persons at a distance, respecting the terms of admission to this Seminary, the Trustees, at their late meeting, voted, that seasonable and extensive public notice respecting these terms should be given by the President. To those who wish to apply for membership in the Seminary, information on the following points may be sufficient.

1. The *regular time* for admission is five weeks after the anniversary, which will be hereafter the *second* (instead of the fourth) Wednesday of September.
2. The laws require that every candidate for admission into the Seminary shall, *previously to his examination*, produce to the

Faculty satisfactory testimonials from persons of information and respectability, and of reputed piety, that he possesses good natural and acquired talents; that he has been regularly educated at some respectable college or university, or has otherwise made literary acquisitions which, as preparatory to theological studies, are substantially equivalent to a liberal education; and that he sustains a fair moral character, is of prudent and discreet deportment, and is hopefully possessed of personal piety. He shall also exhibit to the Faculty proper testimonials of his being in full communion with some church of Christ; in default of which he shall subscribe a declaration of his belief in the Christian religion.

3. Every candidate thus introduced, is to be examined by the Faculty, with reference to his personal piety, his object in pursuing theological studies, and his knowledge of the learned languages. He must also be prepared to sustain an examination in Hebrew Grammar, and in the Hebrew Chrestomathy of Professor Stuart, so far as the extracts from Genesis and Exodus extend.

4. No candidate will hereafter be examined on any of these particulars, with a view to partial admission to privileges, such as lectures, room, and use of the library, till he is prepared for examination *on the whole*. Nor can any one apply for charitable assistance, the first year, who is not thus examined and approved *within the first three weeks* of the year.

5. In every case of application for admission *after the regular time*, the candidate, besides the usual requisitions at the opening of the year, will be examined on all the studies gone over by the Class.

E. PORTER, *President*.

Theol. Sem. Andover, May 22, 1832.

Editors of Newspapers and Periodical Journals throughout the country, friendly to the cause of sacred learning, are respectfully requested to insert the above notice.

RECENT PUBLICATIONS.

1. *Saturday Evening*. BY THE AUTHOR OF 'THE NATURAL HISTORY OF ENTHUSIASM.' *From the London Edition*. Boston: Crocker & Brewster. 1832. pp. 340.

The author of this volume assures us in his Advertisement that "although he dedicates his pen to the service of Religion, he would not seem (layman as he is) to trench, either upon the season, or the office of public instruction.

But there remains open to him the SATURDAY EVENING, which devout persons, whose leisure permits them to do so, are accustomed to devote to preparatory meditation."

Were it not for this premonition, the book might well enough be taken for a volume of sermons. We have the texts, and the discourses, and very extraordinary discourses too, notwithstanding the author thus disclaims the character and office of a preacher.

These discourses, twenty-nine in number, are of a very elevated intellectual and spiritual character. They are altogether above the tone of ordinary practical religious instruction. The author seems to dwell in a region almost peculiar to himself—towards which he beckons congenial spirits;—and happy they who are able to follow him *passibus æquis*. We have not yet sufficiently studied the work before us (for it requires to be *studied*) to speak of its merits, as compared with the previous productions of the author. The Eclectic Reviewers have decided—perhaps with truth—that it "is in some respects adapted to be the *most popular* of his productions, as it is certainly the *most powerful*."—The following extract will show in what light he regards Unitarianism, and what are the present prospects of the doctrine in the mother country.

"Were it asked how far the Socinian error *now* checks the promulgation and progress of the gospel, it would be impossible to make so small a matter palpable in our reply. To affirm that the great principles of religion are at present endangered by the feeble and expiring remains of Socinianism, were much the same as to say that the throne and constitution of Britain are in jeopardy by the lurking attachment of the people to the house of Stuart! Socinianism no more makes us afraid for our religion, than Jacobitism does for our liberties.

"The contrary is the fact.—We are strengthened by the puny heresy that yet gasps, here and there about us.—The modern history—the fate, and the present actual condition of the doctrine, absurdly called Unitarianism, is quite enough to convince any man of sense that the sceptical argument is a mere sophism, even if he knew nothing of the merits of the question. And this edifying history, and spectacle, does in fact produce a proper effect upon the minds of men, and does actually seal the theological argument, as it ought. Is Unitarianism Christianity?—Read the story of its rise in modern times, of its progress and decay, and look at the meagre phantom as now it haunts the dry places it has retired to! Is this pitiful shadow Christianity?

"It might be well if certain valiant persons among us could find more profitable employment than that of hunting a spectre!"

2. *A Dissertation on the Scriptural Authority, Nature, and Uses of Infant Baptism.* By RALPH WARDLAW, D. D. First American Edition. Boston: Peirce & Parker. 1832. pp. 158.

In our number for January, we announced this volume as in press, and presented an extract of several pages on "the Nature and Uses of Infant Baptism." The work is now before the public, and we have no doubt will be regarded as a very acceptable offering. After a long Introduction, the whole is divided into three Sections. In the first, the argument is stated thus: "Before the coming of Christ, the covenant of grace had been revealed; and under that covenant there existed a divinely instituted connexion between

children and their parents; the sign and seal of the blessings of the covenant was, by divine appointment, administered to children; and there can be produced no satisfactory evidence of this connection having been done away." In the second, the author adduces "abundant evidence of the fact, that, instead of any change, exclusive of children, having taken place under the New Testament Dispensation, the children of converts to the faith of the Gospel were actually baptised along with their parents, in the time of the Apostles and the Apostolic Churches." The third treats of "the Nature and Uses of Infant Baptism, from which our previous extracts were given. The style throughout is forcible and eloquent, and the work will be instructive and useful in our churches.—We have room but for a single extract. It is the last of the author's arguments in support of the baptism of the children of believers.

"I have only one other particular to add to this series. It is the remarkable fact, of the entire absence, so far as my recollection serves me, of any thing resembling the baptism of *households* or *families*, in the accounts of the propagation of the Gospel by our Baptist brethren. That the Apostles baptised families, no believer of the Scripture history can doubt; and we have seen, that the manner in which such baptisms are recorded, or referred to, indicates that it was no extraordinary thing. Now it surely is an extraordinary thing, that in the journals and periodical accounts of Baptist Missions in heathen countries, we should never meet with any thing of the kind. I question, whether, in the thirty years of the history of the Baptist Mission to India, there is to be found a single instance of the baptism of a household. When do we find a Baptist missionary saying, "When she was baptised and her family"—or, "I baptised the family of Krishnoo," or any other convert? We have the baptism of individuals; but nothing corresponding to the apostolic baptism of families. This fact is a strong corroborative proof, that there is some difference between their practice and that of the Apostles. If the practice of both were the same, there might surely be expected *some little* correspondence in the facts connected with it."

3. *Evening Exercises for the Closet, for Every Day in the Year.* By WILLIAM JAY. Two Volumes. New York: Daniel Appleton. 1832.

The volumes of Mr. Jay, entitled "Exercises for the Closet," two editions of which have been published in this country, were published in England as "*Morning Exercises for the Closet.*" These have been followed by the volumes before us, prepared on the same plan, and intended for the evening. They contain three hundred and sixty-five meditations, commonly of two or three pages length, on select passages of Scripture, written in the usual lively and interesting manner of the author. In his advertisement he expresses the hope "that this second series of Exercises, to aid the Christian 'at even-tide to meditate,' will be no less approved and useful than the former." In this hope we cordially unite, and have no doubt that the object of it will be realized.

The following extract is from the third Meditation, entitled "Angelic Students," founded on 1 Pet. i. 12.

"Angels are the flower of the creation; they are always spoken of in Scripture as proverbial for their knowledge; they are the first beings in the universe for intelligence; and are as much above men in their powers as the heavens are higher than the earth. If to these principalities and powers in

heavenly places is made known by the church the manifold wisdom of God ; if the Gospel can teach them—if it can enlighten and enlarge their views—if it draws forth their wonder and astonishment ; how well may it be called “ the deep things of God ;” “ the wisdom of God in a mystery !” If after having been employed in the works of God, and the administrations of his providence, from the beginning ; if after all the scenes which have passed under their review for so many ages ; if after seeing dispensation succeeding dispensation, in the Patriarchal, the Jewish, and the Christian economies ; if after seeing the fullness of time, and the divers miracles and gifts of the Holy Ghost ; if after all this they were still, as Peter asserts, diligently exploring the Gospel, how does it aggrandize the system ! This is the system whose bounds some imagine they can easily reach, and whose depths they can perfectly fathom ! But were they angels, they would exclaim, “ O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God ! how unsearchable are his judgements, and his ways past finding out !”

We learn also the excellency as well as the vastness, the value as well as the immensity, of the Gospel. Would such beings as these trifle ? Does not their attention prove that the subject is worthy of all acceptance ? Why do they study it, but because it is “ the Gospel of our salvation ;” but because it is “ the glorious Gospel of the blessed God ;” but because, in redeeming Jacob, he has glorified himself in Israel ; but because they find displayed in this scheme more of all his perfections than is to be seen in all his other works ? We cannot justly infer the worth of a thing from the attention paid to it by men. They may be compelled by authority, biassed by interest, governed by vanity, or led astray by novelty. Even great men have had their follies. Nothing has been brought forward so absurd as not to have attracted to it some names of distinction. And we have always proof enough that to be learned and knowing is not always to be wise. But no objection can lie against the inference we here draw—If angels desire to look into these things, the things deserve to be looked into.

“ Let us therefore turn aside from the little, the vain, the vexing, the degrading, the defiling things of the world, and contemplate the great mystery of godliness. Let us never be weary in reading, in hearing of it. And let us not rest in a speculative acquaintance with it ; but taste that the Lord is gracious ; and walk in the truth.—Is it not to own them and confess them and glory in them before men ? I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ—angels are my companions. Is it not to pray that the knowledge of them may be extended, and that all the ends of the earth may see the salvation of our God together ?”

A. The Daily Commentary ; being a Selection from the Exposition of Matthew Henry. Compiled and arranged by Rev. JOSEPH WILSON. New York : J. P. Haven. 1832.

“ In Dr. Alexander’s preface to Henry’s Exposition, he thus expresses himself:—‘ It has occurred to the writer many years since, that an excellent and useful little volume of choice sayings might be collected from Henry’s Commentary alone ; and if any reader of this work would take the pains to make such a collection for his own use, and that of his children or friends, he would never have occasion to repent of his labors. The exuberance of our author’s mind in composing such apothegms, or his diligence in collecting them, gives a peculiar stamp to his work, which distinguishes it from all other expositions ; and will ever render it valuable, as the repository of a most useful species of learning, not to be found in such abundance any where else.’ ”

The volume before us is an attempt to meet the Doctor’s recommendation, and to furnish the Christian community with some of the most striking and

beautiful passages in Henry's Commentary. The extracts are so presented as to constitute a regular system of theology and ethics, and so divided into sections as to furnish a portion for each day in the year. The volume will be exceedingly useful, especially to those who are not possessed of the Exposition, and have not the means to purchase it.

5. *Lectures on Revivals of Religion.* By WILLIAM B. SPRAGUE, D. D. Pastor of the Second Presbyterian Church in Albany. With an Introductory Essay, by LEONARD WOODS, D. D. Also an Appendix, &c. Albany: Webster & Skinner. 1832.

Besides the Introductory Essay, this volume contains nine Lectures on the following subjects: Nature of a Revival; Defence of Revivals; Obstacles to Revivals; Divine Agency in Revivals; General Means of producing and promoting Revivals; Treatment due to awakened Sinners; Treatment due to young Converts; Evils to be avoided in Connexion with Revivals; Results of Revivals. In the Appendix will be found Letters (some of them of considerable length and of great value) from twenty clergymen—among the most distinguished in our country, and of six religious denominations—bearing their united testimony to the value of Revivals, and suggesting important hints as to the best mode of promoting and conducting them.

To those acquainted with the author of these Lectures, we scarcely need say that they possess strong attractions, and will be read with interest and pleasure. The following is the concluding paragraph:

“Pause now for a moment on the eminence to which we are brought, and so far as you can, let your eye take in at a glance the results of revivals, as they respect both worlds. Under their influence see the cause of moral renovation advancing, until this earth every where brightens into a field of millennial beauty. Behold also the inhabitants of heaven kindling with higher rapture in view of these wonderful works of God! Not only those who have been subjects of revivals, but those who have not, not only the ransomed of the Lord but the principalities and powers in heavenly places, and even Jehovah who is over all blessed forever, rejoice, and will eternally rejoice, in these triumphs of redeeming grace. And this joy and glory is not only to be perpetual, but to be perpetually progressive. Say, then, whether such results will not justify the church even now in beginning her song of triumph? Which of the angels will think she is premature in her praises, if, when she looks abroad, and sees what God has wrought for her already in her revivals, she should begin to ascribe blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, unto him that sitteth upon the throne and unto the Lamb? Be this then the song of the church as she travels on here in the wilderness, while she rejoices in the smiles, and leans upon the arm, and looks forth upon the gracious triumphs of her living Head. Be this her song on the morning of the millennial day. Let that bright jubilee be ushered in by the echoing and re-echoing of this hymn of praise all round the arch of heaven. Let the church on that glorious occasion count up if she can all the revivals which have contributed to her enlargement, and brought glory to her Redeemer, and say what so well becomes her as to take this language of thanksgiving upon her lips. Let this be her song when her enemies have all gone into confusion and taken up an eternal wailing; when she is herself glorified and enthroned on the fields of immortality, and privileged to walk in the full vision of God; when the complete triumph of redemption shall every where be acknowledged, and shall awaken joy or agony that is to endure forever. From the most distant point in eternity which an angel's mind can reach, let the church, when she remembers these scenes of mercy through which she is now passing, still shout forth her high praises in the same noble song; and let seraphim and cherubim, and the whole angelic choir of the third heavens, join to increase the melody:—Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb forever and ever, Amen!”

THE
SPIRIT OF THE PILGRIMS.

VOL. V.

JULY, 1832.

NO. 7.

COMMUNICATIONS.

LETTERS TO YOUNG MINISTERS.

LETTER VI.

BELOVED BRETHREN AND FRIENDS,

In the last letter, I attempted an explanation of those passages of Scripture which represent the sinner as *unable* to believe and obey. It was, if I mistake not, made evident, that the inability spoken of, consists wholly in man's sinful, perverse disposition; in the wickedness of his heart; in his criminal aversion to spiritual good. This deep and desperate wickedness of man's heart, which is a thing of a moral or spiritual nature, not physical, is the obstacle, and the only obstacle, which stands in the way of his faith and obedience, and effectually prevents his return to God. In view of this obstinate depravity of the sinner, the inspired writers declare that he *cannot* believe; that he *cannot* please God. I remarked on the perfect simplicity with which they use this language; and endeavored to shew that such language is necessary, in order to express the thing intended justly, and with sufficient force. Considering this language to be the language of feeling and of common life, I concluded that, in imitation of the inspired writers, we may and ought familiarly to use it at the present day. Some of the reasons for departing from Scripture example I examined; and in doing this I remarked freely upon what I considered the natural results, and, to some extent, the *actual* results, of giving up the kind of phraseology found in the Bible, and substituting a phraseology which is of a different and

opposite import. Let me just add here that, without taking these results particularly into view, I cannot but wonder that any ministers of Christ should think it suitable for them to set aside the words which the Holy Ghost teacheth, and prefer those which man's wisdom teacheth. It is our duty and our privilege to sit at the feet of Christ and his apostles, and learn of them. But who are we, that we should think ourselves competent to mend their instructions, either as to matter or manner?

But there is still one particular view to be taken of the subject, in addition to what I advanced in the last letter. Those ministers who avoid the phraseology of Scripture as to the sinners' inability, do it professedly for the purpose of guarding him against mistake, and bringing him to know the truth. They allege that, if you tell the sinner, he cannot come to Christ unless he is drawn of the Father, and that he has a carnal mind which is not subject to the divine law, neither indeed can be; he will be disposed at once to pervert this representation, and to make it an occasion of justifying himself in sin.

The allegation, I acknowledge, is too true. It is a common fact, that the sinner is inclined thus to pervert the doctrine of his inability, to the ruin of his immortal interests. Perhaps there is no one of his refuges of lies, which he is with more difficulty brought to abandon. But have we a right to suppress a truth, clearly taught in the Bible, because the unrepenting sinner will pervert it? Is it left to our discretion, to declare, or not, as we may judge expedient, any of the doctrines made known by revelation? Or are we at liberty to new-model any of those doctrines, so that, as preached by us, they shall be, or even appear to be, essentially different from what they are, as set forth by the word of God? When, in the general account of their instructions, the inspired writers give a particular representation of a subject; are we at liberty, when we judge it best, to give a different and opposite representation? And when, in relation to a particular subject, they use a word uniformly in one sense; is it safe and proper for us to use the same word in relation to the same subject, in a sense widely different? If in these respects we consider ourselves at liberty to act as we judge expedient, and if in the business of preaching we exercise this liberty; how fearful will be the consequences! If we may thus use our discretion in regard to one doctrine, we may in regard to another. Accordingly, if we find that the Scripture doctrine of man's depravity, of the atonement, the influence of the Spirit, the divine purposes, divine sovereignty, the endless punishment of the wicked, or any other doctrines of the Bible, occasion

difficulties and objections in our own minds, or in the minds of others; we may curtail them, or new-model them, for the purpose of avoiding those difficulties. Ministers, who have not been very scrupulous as to the authority of revelation, have acted on this principle. They have felt, and have seen that others have felt, strong objections to the doctrines of religion, as they are set forth in the word of God; and to remove all occasion of such objections, they have, some in one way, and some in another, given up the peculiar doctrines of Christianity, and substituted their own reasonings or fancies in their stead. If we act on this principle, it will be in vain for us to pretend that we receive the Bible as our guide. We do in fact follow the guidance of our own reason and our own feelings; and we do this even in those cases of difficulty, in which we most need to be guided by that wisdom which is from above.

Those who are invested with the ministerial office, are under sacred obligations to declare all the counsel of God, whether men will hear, or forbear. The disposition of sinners to take offence at any doctrine of the Gospel, or to pervert it in such a manner that it will be to them a savor of death unto death, is certainly no reason why that doctrine should be withheld, or why it should be so shaped as not to agree with the Scriptures. I maintain all this in regard to the present subject. We are not at liberty from any consideration whatever, to avoid the representation which the Bible makes respecting the sinner's inability, and certainly not to make a representation which is contrary.

But I will suppose that, from benevolent motives, you tell the sinner, in language which contradicts the language of the Bible, that he himself can do all that is necessary to his salvation; and I will suppose that in this way you succeed in taking from him one occasion of self-justification, one refuge of lies; will he not, unless prevented by divine grace, quickly find another, and that as false and fatal as the one you have taken away? The sinner's heart, when pressed with the obligations of the law and the Gospel, is exceedingly fruitful in evasions and excuses. There is no divine truth which he may not turn to his own hurt. If you assert the infinite benevolence of God; he can say; 'if God is so benevolent, surely he will not cast me into a state of endless misery.' If you declare the divine *justice*, and show from the Scriptures how it will manifest itself; he can say; 'such justice would be so inconsistent with goodness, and would invest the divine character with so dreadful a severity, that I cannot admit the idea of it;' or he can say; 'a character marked with such severity can never be

regarded as an object of love.' If you preach the doctrine of God's eternal and immutable purposes, and affirm, according to the Scriptures, that God doeth all things after the counsel of his own will, and makes even the sins of men the means of glorifying himself; the sinner can say; "why doth he yet find fault?" If you tell him, Christ died for the sins of the world; he can make that the ground of hope, though he lives in sin. If you tell him, that God often chooses to show the abundance of his grace by saving the chief of sinners; he can say; 'let us then sin that grace may abound.' Indeed you can hardly name a doctrine of revelation which the careless, or the half-awakened sinner may not turn into an apology for sin, or a ground of objection against the divine character. The same will be found true in regard to the representation which is so often made at the present day, of the sinner's ability, and which, for the present, I will admit to be correct. Is it certain that this representation will always have the influence intended by those who make it? However true it may be, is it not liable to be misapprehended and perverted? And may it not occasion, and does it not sometimes actually occasion, the most dangerous consequences? If you tell the sinner, in strong and unqualified language, that, without the influence of the Spirit, he is fully able to repent, and obey the Gospel; he can ask, and, if he believes you, he will be likely to ask; '*why should I then pray for that influence? Why should I ask such a favor of God, when I am perfectly competent to work out my own salvation without it?*' And if believing and obeying the Gospel is attended with no difficulty,—if it is *so exceedingly easy* as some represent; the sinner may comfort himself with the thought, that he can quickly do that work at any time when he pleases; that he has no occasion to give himself any trouble about it, and may safely postpone it to some future opportunity. Such is the disposition of the sinner to pervert or evade whatever may be said to induce him to put away his sins. This must not be forgotten. Our own experience has taught us how hard it is to convert men to God, even by a faithful exhibition of the most momentous truths of revelation. And surely we cannot hope to succeed better in this work by a mode of preaching which is of questionable propriety, and which differs even in appearance, from the word of God.

I have already dwelt long, perhaps too long, on this subject. I consider it very possible, that the circumstances of the present day may have led me to give it too high a place in my thoughts, and to attach too great consequence to it. In this matter I must cast myself upon the forbearance and candor of my breth-

ren. My mistake, if I have committed one, has arisen, I think, from the reverence which I feel for the word of God, and my earnest desire that all men, especially ministers of the Gospel, may never fail to regard it as the only infallible standard.

As so much is said about the practical tendency of different modes of preaching, I wish a little more particularly to compare the two modes which I have had in view; one, the recent mode, adopted by those who affirm directly, and in terms generally unqualified and unexplained, that the sinner is perfectly able to do all that God requires, and who take pains to make this doctrine of the sinner's complete ability, without the influence of the Spirit, as prominent as possible; the other mode, the one adopted by those who more exactly conform to the inspired teachers as to the matter and manner of the instruction they give on this subject.

So far as the results of past experience are concerned, whether in former times, or more recently, I maintain, that no argument can fairly be made out in favor of the first mode of preaching above mentioned. Those whose preaching on the subject under consideration has been more in accordance with the word of God, have, to say the least, had as much success in promoting true conviction of sin, and in winning souls to Christ, as those who have been so fond of discoursing on moral agency, and of setting forth, in a strong light, the power and sufficiency of the sinner. What uninspired men ever preached in a more impressive manner, or with more success, than Whitefield and Edwards? Formerly indeed, as readers of ecclesiastical history well know, the view of man's ability on which I have animadverted, was peculiar to Pelagians and Socinians. I do not mention this in the way of reproach, or for the purpose of denouncing any man who sustains the office of a Christian minister; but as a historical fact, which deserves serious consideration. Pelagius and Socinus and their followers were the men, who roundly asserted, that the sinner is fully able to believe and obey, that he has in himself all the power which is necessary to accomplish the work which God requires, and that the divine requirements would not be just, if the case were otherwise. It affords me unfeigned satisfaction to say, that many of those who, of late years, have used a phraseology somewhat similar to that which I have just described, have evidently had a meaning widely different from the views of those ancient sects, and have shown that they are attached to the general system of doctrines embraced by the churches of the Reformation. And it is with pleasure I add, that some who have carried their notion of human ability to a high point, and

have in strong terms represented the sinner as perfectly able of himself to do whatsoever God requires, have been very impressive and successful preachers. But they have been no more successful than others. And in my opinion, the success they have had in promoting true religion, has not been owing to this part of their preaching. In respect to this, I apprehend, they have been in an error, an error in language, if not in thought. But this is not the only thing they have preached. They have held forth the doctrine of man's fallen, guilty, ruined state, the atonement of a divine Redeemer, the necessity of being renewed by the Holy Spirit, justification by the grace of God through faith, divine sovereignty in the salvation of sinners, and other evangelical doctrines. And God, who is of great forbearance and mercy, has, I believe, passed by what has been erroneous, and has blessed the sound and scriptural part of their preaching as the means of saving many sinners. Thus graciously does God deal with us, and carry on his work in the midst of our imperfections. Now when some ministers of the Gospel have confidently, and, as it has seemed, rather boastingly, attributed their own success, or that of their brethren, to certain *peculiarities* in their preaching, particularly to the one just mentioned, I have thought it a little strange, that it should not occur to them, that this is a subject on which they are very liable to mistake, and that the success, which they are so fond of attributing to their *peculiarities*, may much more probably be owing to the blessing of God upon those plain Scripture truths, which they preach in common with others. Far be it from us to ascribe even to our most wise and faithful efforts, much less to our errors, that usefulness of ours, which we ought to ascribe to the forbearance and grace of God.

A word more as to the natural tendency of the representation referred to. A feeling of *independence and self-sufficiency* is one of the most common feelings in the heart of the unhumiliated sinner; it is one which is very hard to be subdued, and very hateful in the sight of God. Consider now the unqualified assertion, *that the sinner has complete ability, unaided by divine grace, to work out his own salvation.* Is such an assertion as this suited to humble the sinner's pride, or to take away the fond conceit he has of his own sufficiency and independence? The means which the sacred writers use to produce humbleness of mind, are very different from this. They teach the sinner that he has destroyed himself, and that his help is in God, and in God alone; that he cannot see the kingdom of heaven, unless he is born again, "not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God."

The work of God's Spirit conspires with his word, in teaching the sinner the same thing,—in bringing him to feel, that he is dead in sin, that he can of himself do nothing spiritually good, and that repentance, faith and love, though manifestly his duty, can never spring from his unsanctified heart. It may be said, that the doctrine of the sinner's ability, if rightly preached, and if received and applied by the sinner as it ought to be, will bring him to the same state of mind as has now been described; that, by taking away the plea of inability, it will take away all idea of excusing himself in sin, and that it will produce in him self-condemnation and self-despair, and lead him to pray as the publican did, "God be merciful to me a sinner." I answer, it may be so indeed if the preacher in other respects holds the doctrines of grace,—if he clearly exhibits the divine law in all its extent, and the sinfulness of man in all its hatefulness and aggravations, and other essential truths of Christianity, and if these truths are made effectual by the influence of the Spirit. But I must be permitted to doubt whether the *unqualified* declaration of the sinner's complete ability has ordinarily any influence at all favorable to such a result. In my view the *Scripture* representation, faithfully explained and enforced by the preacher, and rightly understood and applied by the sinner, will have an influence far more favorable. Under this influence, the sinner, so far from making his inability an excuse for impenitence, will see that the very declaration of Scripture that he cannot come to Christ, and cannot please God, is a declaration of nothing but the desperate wickedness of his heart, and the righteousness of his condemnation.

We ought never to forget, that any mode of preaching, even the most Scriptural, will, in some way or other, always be converted to a bad use by the unhumiliated sinner; and certainly, that it will never be productive of any saving good, unless it is accompanied by the special operation of the Spirit. That God has promised the Holy Spirit to convince the world of sin and to renew the heart, is the only ground we have to hope that sinners will be saved from their false refuges, and persuaded to repent. And when sinners pervert Scripture truth, and make it an excuse for disobedience; it is because they love disobedience and dislike the truth, and not because Scripture truth has any thing exceptionable in it, either as to matter or form. How then is a remedy to be obtained? Not from concealing or new-modelling what the Bible teaches, but from clearly explaining and earnestly inculcating it, as the appointed means of enlightening and converting sinners, and from that effectual influence of the Spirit which alone turns the heart to love and obey the

Gospel. Only let sinners attend in serious earnest to the truth, and have this effectual influence of the Spirit, and how quickly, without the help of any contrivances of ours, will they cease to plead their inability as an apology or palliation for their sins! Yea, how quickly will they regard their inability as their own fault, and make it a subject of the most sincere and penitent confession before God!

After animadverting so freely on the bold and unqualified language which has of late years been used respecting man's ability, and which I most seriously believe to be at variance with the word of God, and of a very hurtful tendency, I cannot content myself without making a few additional remarks, —remarks prompted by candor and justice, as well affection, towards a large number of men distinguished for their intelligence, piety, and usefulness. Calvinistic ministers in New England generally, and many in other parts of the country, and some in Great Britain, have, during the last fifty years, often represented the sinner as *able*, in an important sense, to comply with the divine requisitions. I am well satisfied that the notion of man's ability, *as it has lain in the minds* of those excellent men, and as it has been received by many others, has been essentially correct, and that the object at which they have aimed has been one of vast moment. They have observed the general propensity of the sinner to justify himself by pleading his inability to obey the Gospel. They have seen this perversion of the Scripture doctrine of man's depravity and impotency to be of fatal tendency, producing the most fearful insensibility, and rendering their labors in the ministry a savor of death unto death. Influenced by feelings of benevolence, they have wished to take away from the sinner this delusive plea, and to make him feel that he is under a perfect obligation to repent and obey all the divine precepts, and that he is without excuse, if he continues in sin or delays repentance a single moment. And this they have attempted to do in various ways, and particularly by maintaining that man, as a moral agent, has an *ability* to comply with the divine requirements. They have labored, and with evident success, to prove, that there is no *such inability* as the sinner pleads, that is, none which is inconsistent with his obligation, or which furnishes the least excuse for his impenitence. They have thus exposed the fatal deception which every one who makes this plea practises upon himself.

New England divines have taken great pains to mark very clearly the difference between that kind of inability which excludes obligation and ill-desert, and that which consists in

the depravity of the heart, and which constitutes blame-worthiness. When they assert the sinner's ability, they do it, not in opposition to the inability attributed to him in the Bible, but in opposition to *an inability which would exempt him from blame*. They apply to the subject of religion a maxim which is acknowledged to be true and important in the common affairs of life, namely, that no man is under obligation to do what is beyond his ability. Their great object is to clear up the notion of obligation, and to make a strong impression of it on the conscience and heart, and so to produce conviction of sin, and prepare the way for evangelical faith. But they do not stop with declaring the *ability* of man as a *moral agent*. They teach also that, as a *sinner*, he is, in a very important sense, the subject of an *inability*. Not that there is an ability and inability in the same sense. This would imply a contradiction. But it is no contradiction, to say, that in one sense a man is *able* to do the will of God, and in another sense *unable*. The writers and preachers here referred to, are careful, however, not to leave us in ignorance what these different senses are. They give us definite information. They call the ability which man has to obey God, *natural ability*; and by this they mean, that he has such a constitution of mind, or such powers and faculties, as constitute him a moral and accountable being, a fit subject of law; in other words, that he has all which is necessary to obedience, *if his heart were right*. The want of a right heart, or a total disinclination to what is spiritually good, which is an effectual obstacle to repentance and faith, is what they understand by the inability of the sinner, so frequently spoken of in Scripture; and to distinguish it from an inability which would be incompatible with obligation, they call it *moral inability*,—that is, an inability of a *moral kind*, consisting in the depravation of man's *moral disposition*, and not in the want of natural faculties or opportunities.

Such as I have now briefly described is the doctrine advocated by Edwards, Hopkins, Bellamy, Smalley, West, and Dwight, and by the majority of ministers in New England since the time of Edwards and Hopkins, and by many out of New England.

Now men have a right not only to think for themselves, but to express their opinions by such words and phrases as they judge most suitable. And I think it will be difficult for us to find any better way than that above mentioned, to make the distinction which is intended in this case, *unless we resort directly to the Holy Scriptures, and are content with merely*

using and explaining the language of inspiration. In this case, as well as in others, *making the word of God our rule, both as to the matter and manner of religious instruction,* is what I have been led to consider as most consistent with our character as Christians, and fitted in the highest degree to promote the object of the ministry. Why should we not be satisfied with that precious volume which was given by inspiration of God? Why not give our cordial "consent to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ," and of those holy apostles who spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost? Who is more competent to teach than the Spirit of God? Suppose all which Edwards and others mean by *natural ability* to be essential to moral and accountable agency; (and of this I have no doubt;) still it is more important and necessary in the case, that we should labor to prove to men that they are *moral agents*, or, to convince them that they are *sinners*? If it is replied, that the first of these is important in subservience to the other; then I say, be sure to let this subservience be made to appear.

I say again, that I think the view of the subject which New England ministers generally have had in their own minds, and which they have, with a good degree of success, communicated to the minds of others, has been agreeable to the word of God. But I beg leave to suggest it as a subject of inquiry, whether they have not, in some instances, substituted abstract, metaphysical language in place of that which was familiarly used by the inspired writers, and which was undoubtedly best adapted to common apprehension; and whether they have not, to a considerable extent, introduced discussions relating to human power and agency, which, besides being unprofitable in themselves, have led on to a comparative neglect of the peculiar doctrines of the Gospel. Far be it from me to speak disrespectfully, or with unbecoming freedom, of those, to whom I ought ever to look up with veneration, as well as love. I regard it as a privilege to set at the feet of Edwards and Hopkins and Bellamy and Smalley and Dwight, and other divines, who have been ornaments and blessings to New England and to the world. Still it is to be kept in mind, that no uninspired man is infallible. And while I am impelled by my conscience and my heart to say all that may be said in honor of the New England clergy; and while I thank God that I have been born and educated among them, and that I have the happiness of being so closely united with them in feeling and action; if nevertheless I apprehend that they are in any respect chargeable with deviating in ever so small a degree, or even in appearance, from the

word of God, and if I see, as others have seen, that the method which has for a considerable time been adopted, and more especially of late, of setting forth human ability, has a tendency to lead men to confide in themselves, and to undervalue the gift of the Holy Spirit, and the greatness of his work in the soul; what am I to do? And what are others to do, who have similar apprehensions? Clearly we ought honestly and faithfully to *express* our apprehensions, and to give the reasons why we have them. We ought openly to declare what we believe to be *the truth*, and to do it in love,—“laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings.” It may be that a gracious God will help us to do something to honor his holy name, to check any departures from “that form of sound words” which the Scriptures contain, and to promote the influence of the Gospel. Or it may be that, if we are wrong, some further discussion, conducted in a Christian manner, will help to convince us of our mistake, and to bring us to a more perfect agreement with the word of God.

A few words more as to the most able and judicious advocates of what is called, the New England Theology. They maintain the sinner's *natural ability* for the single purpose of representing him as a fit subject of law, and entirely without excuse for his sins. The sinner's ability, as they represent it, avails only to make out his moral agency, and his ill desert. They never mention it as what can avail in the least degree to the renovation of the heart. Dr. Smalley says: “Even better natural abilities than sinners have would not be of the least service to them;” (i. e. in bringing about their conversion.) “If ever they come to good, it must be by strength that is under a better direction than theirs is. Greatness of capacity has not the least tendency to produce holiness in one who is altogether destitute of it. Sinners of the most exalted genius and strength of mind are no more able to make themselves new creatures, than the very weakest are. And the reason of this is as obvious, as the fact is certain; viz. because whatever strength any one has, he always lays it out according to his own heart, and not contrary to it. Consequently all the strength of men and angels, yea, even Omnipotence itself, if the sinner had the direction of it, would never make him good.—If therefore sinners only knew what hearts they have, this alone would bring them to despair of help from themselves, let their natural powers be ever so good.”

In this view of the subject, all the writers above named agree. They never bring into view the ability of the sinner, as what ever did or ever will avail to his conversion, or as what can be

at all relied upon to effect his deliverance from sin. They do not consider the power which he possesses as furnishing any ground of hope that he will turn to God, or as in the least degree superseding the necessity of his being created anew by the Holy Spirit. The whole use they make of the doctrine of natural ability is, to impress on the mind of man his complete obligation as a subject of God's law, his blame-worthiness as a sinner, the divine justice in his condemnation, and the abounding grace displayed in the work of salvation.

I know not that I differ in any respect from the generality of New England ministers, in regard to the reality, the nature, or the greatness of the difference which exists between what is called *natural* and *moral inability*. The inability of a man to walk, when his limbs are palsied, or to see without the organ of seeing, and the inability of the sinner to obey God, are things totally different from each other, and ought in some way to be clearly distinguished. My question is, whether the metaphysical language which has been used to mark this difference is best adapted to illustrate the truth, and to impress it deeply on the minds of men. And another question is, whether there are not manifest inconveniences and difficulties, both philological and metaphysical, which attend the notion of power commonly entertained, and the manner of describing the different kinds of it. Inquiries like these will be pursued in my next letter; not however because I like to animadvert upon the language or the opinions of others, but because I am solicitous that a subject, which has been made so prominent of late, and has been brought into so close a connection with evangelical doctrines, should be very carefully examined, and as far as practicable, well understood. And it may be, that going a little into the perplexities and difficulties which attend a metaphysical investigation of this subject, will effectually convince us of the folly and danger of venturing out of our province, and greatly increase our love to the plain and precious truths of God's holy word.

For the present permit me, dear brethren, just to say, that, according to the view which I entertain with my present degree of light, you will do most towards accomplishing the great end of preaching, by following, as exactly as may be, the method of the inspired teachers. Those who mix discussions, more or less abstruse, about ability and moral agency, with the essential doctrines of the Gospel, may do well. But in my judgement, there is a more excellent way. *Begin and end with the truths contained in the word of God.* Set forth, as the inspired writers do, the deep depravity of the sinner, his enmity

against God, and his total aversion to that which is spiritually good. Tell him, he has a carnal mind which is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be; that while unrenewed, he cannot please God; and that he must be born again. Show him that the inability which the Scriptures attribute to him, and which he is inclined to plead as an excuse, consists in the wickedness of his heart. Make your appeal directly to his conscience, whether a sinful disposition, a heart to hate what is good, and to love what is evil, can be regarded otherwise than as exceedingly blame-worthy and inexcusable. The sinner is at war with his Maker. Though a worm of the dust, he dares to contend with the Almighty. He hates a law which is holy, just and good,—and a Judge who is perfectly righteous and benevolent. He rejects a Saviour altogether lovely, and a salvation infinitely precious. Show the sinner that this is his case, and urge him to repent and obey the Gospel without any delay. Endeavor with all tenderness and fidelity to set divine things before him as they will be set before him at the judgement day. If, through the influence of the Spirit, you can bring him to turn his thoughts seriously to the glorious character of God, to the excellence of the law and the Gospel, to his own heart and life, and to the coming judgement; his mouth will be stopped. He will feel himself to be utterly undone and will cry, *Lord save me, or I perish*. To enlighten the understanding, convince the conscience, and humble the heart, and effectually to persuade the sinner to repent, and believe in Jesus Christ, is the great object at which we should constantly aim. And as a means for the accomplishment of this, the simple, unadulterated truth, contained in the word of God, is sufficient. Truly, there is no need of adding any thing to it; and no one has liberty to take any thing from it. This I adopt as my standard. I invite a free examination of the views exhibited in these letters by this rule. If what I have written is conformed to the Scriptures, it will stand. If not conformed, *let it be cast away*. Lord, help us to think and judge and speak according to thy word.

DR. PORTER'S LETTERS ON REVIVALS OF RELIGION.

NO. III.

To the Committee of the Revival Association in the Theological Seminary, Andover,

GENTLEMEN,

I will proceed now to some remarks on the *hindrances* of revivals. It cannot be doubted that there is sometimes a sovereign withdrawal of divine influence from a church, when no special reason is apparent to us why it should be so, at that time, rather than another. But I have reference now to those hindrances of revivals which may be traced to *something wrong in the church*. And in addressing you who expect to be ministers, and whose daily prayer to God, I doubt not is, that he will qualify you to be skilful and successful ministers, you will see the propriety of my glancing briefly, though with great frankness, at some of the ways in which the sanctifying influences of the Holy Spirit on the hearts of men may be obstructed by their spiritual guides.

You are aware that there are men, even in the sacred office, so constitutionally *indiscreet*, that in whatever they undertake, they will choose the wrong way, if there is one. You are aware, too, that notwithstanding the charge which Paul gave Timothy, in most emphatic terms, that a bishop should not be "a novice," (literally an *infant*,) there always have been individuals rushing into this office, who are lamentably deficient both in native and acquired powers for the discharge of its duties. An illiterate man, if he have good sense and true humility, may do good in revivals; but if he is proud, and rash, and censorious, as well as ignorant, he will probably do much more hurt than good, especially by revolting the sensibilities of intelligent men, who think that religion should promote sobriety, decorum, and amiable temper in its subjects. The ministers with whom I was associated in the revivals of 1800, &c. were nearly without exception, *educated* men, who were preserved from the most common mistakes of ignorance and fanaticism. But theological knowledge and skill in winning souls to Christ, they possessed in very different degrees. Without exception too, perhaps, they were *pious* men, but with very different degrees of piety, so far as this was evinced by fervor of Christian spirit and unreserved devotedness to their work. I can recollect more instances than one within the compass of my observation,

where a congregation, amid surrounding showers of divine influence, were passed by; and if I had been called to give the reason, I must have said frankly, the *pastor* is the greatest obstacle to a revival among his people. And this might have been truly said of him, though he was not chargeable with any heresy, or immorality, or hostility to revivals. But how can this be? It can be in various ways.

A.— was one of those good men, who was under the dominion of a *sluggish temperament*. To him the maxim, "Expect great things, attempt great things," however proper in secular enterprises, seemed little short of presumption, as applied to the ministry. Effort, beyond the most obvious claims of official duty, he dreaded. To travel from one side of his parish to another, especially to travel half way across a county, to attend a meeting of ministers or churches, cost him as much self-denial, as it cost Cesar to cross the Alps, and subdue a kingdom. In fulfilling his pastoral appointments, he was always behind the time, he always made on his hearers the impression of languor and inefficiency in his movements, and imparted to them too much of his own spirit. No revival, or none of much power and extent, was witnessed in his congregation.

B.— was a man of *literary taste*, an idolater of books. He was so fond of reading, especially works of genius and popular literature, that the spirituality of his heart was gradually impaired; he laid down his favorite authors with reluctance, to attend a prayer-meeting;—went, to fulfil an engagement, with little of pastoral feeling; and returning to his study, became absorbed in his intellectual pursuits, instead of his appropriate work, as one appointed to "watch for souls." Rare instances of conversion, but no revival occurred under his ministry.

C.— was fond of *social avocations*. Lively in temper, he easily persuaded himself that both his health and usefulness would be promoted by associating with cheerful company, and by mingling, at times, in fashionable visits and scenes of amusement. On these occasions, deeming it proper to show the opposers of religion that it requires no austerity of manners, and that a Christian minister need not always maintain the aspect of gravity, he often passed to the other extreme of levity and even frivolity in conversation. Though he was an able and sometimes a powerful preacher, and irreproachable in general morals, the habit of *jesting* and *story-telling*, which he had insensibly acquired, destroyed the savor of godliness in his pastoral intercourse, and exerted a deadly influence on his ministry. His witty anecdotes more than counteracted the good tendency of his sermons. He saw no revival among his people.

D.—impaired his pastoral usefulness by the voluntary multiplicity of his *secular cares*. He was not merely provident and frugal in all his domestic arrangements, as Christian duty requires every minister to be, but he gradually acquired a passion for gain. This led him to engage in transactions incompatible with the absolute consecration which he had made of himself to his holy calling. If he did not descend to any of those sordid expedients, denominated by the Apostle, love of “filthy lucre,” he became proverbially an adept in bargains and business, till these engrossed his time, and rendered him *in spirit a secular man*. When a revival which prevailed around him, seemed to have begun among his own congregation, it soon ceased, because the pastor could not find time to help it forward.

Besides the above hindrances to revivals, through some fault in the character of ministers, there was another class of obstacles, at which I can only glance, arising from *defective preaching*.

One, for example, was so ambitious of a classical style, that he sacrificed pungency and power to rhetorical embellishment. Or perhaps, from delicacy, or dread of giving offence, the vital truths of the Gospel which he fully believed, he exhibited in a phraseology so covert and indefinite, as that virtually he did not preach the truth at all.

I need not extend my remarks here, as I have already stated what the general strain of preaching was among revival ministers; and every sort of preaching that was of essentially different character was a *hindrance* to revivals. There was then, as there is now, a kind of sermons, which seem to be like certain medical nostrums, the chief merit of which is said to be, “That if they do no *good*, they will do no harm!” But eternity will sanction no such maxim in the awful business of preaching the Gospel. Mediocrity in the circumstantials of this business, there may be; but in the spirit, the sentiment, the tendency of a sermon, there is no *half way*. It is *good*, or it is *bad*.

There were a few instances then of what are sometimes called “moral preachers,” who condemned certain vices, and urged external duties, but never aimed to make any great truth of the Bible bear with solemn impression on the conscience. There were a few who preached the sovereignty of God in such a way as to provide a refuge for sloth, in ministers and Christians. But the obstacle to success which has been the most fatal, and by far the most frequent, within the compass of my observation, especially among ministers who have had little

experience in the school of Christ, is *too much reliance on themselves*, and *too little on God*. But as I must touch on that topic hereafter, I dismiss it now, and simply add, that when there were no revivals at the period to which I have referred, it was generally the fact, either that the *whole* truth was not exhibited, in the pulpit, at least with pungency and fidelity,—or that the proper tendency of preaching, though good in itself, was frustrated by something decidedly amiss, in pastoral influence.

We may advert now to several hindrances of revivals, arising from more general causes in the church. In many places, it was a prevailing sentiment among Christians that revivals of religion must be *transient*. Accordingly they expected their minister, at a season of special divine influence, to be specially animated and active; and afterwards to relapse into comparative indifference in discharging his duties. Their own conversation too, and prayers, and efforts, were all accommodated to this paralyzing expectation, that sinners would soon cease to be awakened and Christians to be fervent in spirit; and that, after a few weeks or days, in which religion should be the all-absorbing subject of thought to a whole people, all would of course relapse into insensibility. Where this sentiment among Christians prevailed, the *continuance* of a revival, though it had begun with most promising appearances, was fatally *hindered*. At that time, however, when it was not unusual for a work of grace to last two or three years in the same church, this practical error in Christian feeling, was much less prevalent than it is now, when we often see what are called powerful revivals terminated in as many months or weeks, and sometimes even in one week. I cannot stay to discuss this point, but must say in passing, that there is nothing in the character of God—nothing in the fearful condition of sinners, or the obligations of Christians, nothing in any doctrine or promise of the Bible, limiting to a brief continuance the special work of the Holy Spirit among a people. Sloth and unbelief are at the bottom of this error in our churches. What!—shall the Christian persuade himself that it is excusable or unavoidable in him to be lukewarm through nine-tenths of his life, because he is sometimes zealous for a month or two? *Transient* revivals! Shall our prayers and hopes rest satisfied with these? We are drawing on apace to a revival that will last a *thousand years*; and to another that will be *eternal*.

Another hindrance to revivals, was such a *neglect of discipline* in a church, as tolerated within its fellowship openly irreligious men. Rarely have I known a church of this de-

scription to be visited with a season of refreshing from the divine presence.

Another, was the spirit of *controversy*. At no period perhaps, have political animosities raged more fiercely in our country, than about the year 1800, embittering social intercourse, and invading the peace of families and churches. Sometimes this baneful spirit extinguished a promising revival. In cases not a few, it was itself subdued and expelled by the Spirit of God. But where the demon of political strife gained ascendancy among a people, the sanctifying influence of the Holy Ghost either did not come, or did not abide.

But no form of controversy, during that period of revivals, was so fraught with deadly mischief to the cause of religion, as the clashing of rival Christian sects. If I were to exhibit a tenth part of the facts which lie before me on this subject, they would administer solemn admonition to Christians, against that narrow sectarian zeal, which would sacrifice the salvation of sinners, and the honor of Christ to the interests of a religious party. I will cite only a single specimen, from the narrative of a revival which was in full progress in New Cambridge, Conn., and was suddenly arrested in this way. "At that time a sectarian controversy about certain sentiments, little connected with the essential truths of religion, unhappily arose, and for a time engaged much attention and conversation. This produced disputes and ill feelings, and seemed greatly to divert from that anxious concern for the salvation of the soul, which had before prevailed. And although in a few weeks this dispute in a great measure subsided, yet this revival never recovered its former life and power. And there has appeared to be very few instances of conviction or conversion since that time." This shows the pernicious tendency of such controversies to check religious awakenings, and quench and grieve away the Spirit of God.

I will only add under this head, that in a few instances, the Holy Spirit was hindered among a people, by decided opposition on the part of the pastor, or leading members of a church. As there is a sin "which shall never have forgiveness"—when committed by obdurate contemners of God and his grace,—a sin that is unpardonable, not because it transcends the mercy of God or the merits of Christ,—but because the sinner will be left to himself, and therefore will never repent; so a church whose minister or members revile the special work of the Holy Spirit, ascribing it to fanaticism, or Satanic agency, are sometimes left to wither under a judicial dereliction, like the mountains of Gilboa, on which there was neither rain nor dew.

Some awful examples of this sort are upon record in the history of New England, especially after the time of Whitefield, in which there was more bitter opposition to revivals, than there has been at any other period before or since. I have in my eye, as an illustration of these remarks, a church of Connecticut, which not only refused to admit the revival preachers of 1740 into their pulpit, but publicly censured such of their members as went abroad to hear these preachers. Christ offered them a gracious visit, but they desired him to depart, and he departed, leaving them to a seventy years captivity. God never again appeared to visit this place by his Spirit, in any thing like a general awakening, until the whole of that generation, which virtually forbade him to come, were in their graves.

The next general topic on which I promised to remark, is—*The exercises of sinners, under legal convictions.* Concerning these, ministers were accustomed to discriminate between *impressions* and *convictions*. The former were often produced by sympathy, by solemn appeals to the passions, by alarming providences, or by dread of punishment. The animal or social instincts, or self-love, were at the bottom of these excitements; and under their influence sinners sometimes exhibited very hopeful appearances; seemed to be very anxious;—“resolved to lead a new life,”—“made up their minds,” as they said, “to attend to religion as their immediate and great concern,”—but *soon they were as careless as ever*. These were mere *impressions*, sometimes serious indeed, or even distressing, for the time, but more commonly slight and evanescent.

Conviction of sin, on the other hand, has a deeper origin. It is a vivid sense on the sinner's conscience, not of his *danger* chiefly, but of his *guilt* as a transgressor against God. This, conscience arrays before him, in the light of the divine law, shows him its curse, righteous and dreadful as it is, falling upon his own head, and no escape or remedy but through Christ. Now ministers who were skilful as guides to inquiring sinners, deemed it of vital importance to keep the above distinction prominent in all their instructions and encouragements; whereas men of impetuous temper, and little experience, often treated *anxiety* in different sinners, as amounting to just the same thing as *conviction of guilt*, and thus attempted to apply the remedy of the Gospel to hearts that had never been wounded for sin.

But as you feel this to be a subject of special interest, I cannot in any way satisfy your inquiries so well as by pretty free extracts from the narratives to which I have so often referred.

The Rev. Jonathan Miller of West Britain, Conn. speaking of the exercises of anxious sinners, during a revival among his people in 1800, says; "They have at first generally, though not universally, been principally affected with a sense of their danger of the wrath of God, and all have resorted to their own works to conciliate his favor, without that submission to him and reliance on Christ, which the Gospel requires. While pursuing this course, their painful apprehensions of divine wrath have been gradually over-balanced, by successive and increasing discoveries of their guilt and obstinate depravity of heart, until they have felt their entire dependence, on the sovereign, uncovenanted mercy of God, to renew their hearts. While in this situation, they have generally been sensible of dreadful heart-risings against God, and his government; their distress of soul has often become so great, as very much to interrupt, and sometimes wholly to destroy their sleep, labor, and appetite for food."

The venerable Samuel J. Mills, describing a similar work in Torrington, the same year, says; "The subjects of it, in the first stages of their concern, have generally been filled with surprise and astonishment at their past lives. And, seeing themselves in danger, have formed resolutions and entered on measures to amend their situation. When led to a more full discovery of their own hearts, and to an increasing conviction of the impossibility of ever obtaining relief in their own way, they have felt very sensibly disturbed. They have been ready to plead in their own defence, when they have dared to do it, that they could do no more than they could—that they never made their own hearts—and that it was out of their power to change them. They have contended also against God, for showing mercy to others while they were left; and even for giving them existence. But no sooner were they led to a discovery of the justice of God in their condemnation,—to see and to feel that the law was right, and holy, and held their proper place, than they found their mouths shut, and their complaints at an end."

The next extract is from the narrative of Rev. Joseph Washburn of Farmington. "The views and exercises of those under conviction, were *essentially the same*, though very *various* as to the means and manner of their *beginning*—and of their *degree*, and *continuance*. The greater part were for sometime in a state of thoughtfulness, before they were subjects of much distress or conviction of sin. Several were awakened, and experienced great concern of mind before they knew of any others in the society being in a similar situation, and before any thing unusual had been done to call up their attention. Some would point out what they supposed the means of exciting their concern. Others could recollect nothing in particular, as having been the means of this. Yet, so it was, that religion now appeared of infinite importance to them; and those things which a little before they could not fix

their attention upon, they were unable to banish from their minds. Some were suddenly alarmed and affected, chiefly from sympathy, or the impressive scene of the meetings, and the solemn things they heard; and in this way were excited to an examination which issued apparently in a genuine conviction of sin. And some few, after having been proof against the power of sympathy, and passed, unaffected, through the most likely time, in a human view, were afterwards arrested, and caused to tremble at the bar of conscience. The commandment came, sin revived, and they found themselves in a lost and wretched state.

"In the first stages of concern, the subjects were generally most affected with particular sins; and not so deeply sensible of the plague of their hearts. They considered themselves transgressors, and condemned by the divine law. Innumerable sins of omission and commission, would rise to the view of their mind, with the aggravations of having neglected divine calls and warnings, and abused great mercy; and a sense of danger, and fear of divine wrath, greatly affected them.

"While in this situation, and being yet 'ignorant of God's righteousness,' or the perfect purity of his nature,—the extent and spirituality of his law,—and the impossibility of salvation by their own doings, they have 'gone about to establish their own righteousness,'—fled to external duties,—to prayer,—to resolutions of amendment, and various schemes to recommend themselves to the divine favor; and thus refused to submit themselves to the righteousness of God—the way of acceptance and peace by Jesus Christ.

"As the work of conviction proceeded, they were driven from their various false refuges, and obtained a clearer view of the spiritual nature and extent of the divine law, and a more realizing sense of the corruption of their hearts—the fountain of iniquity and pollution within, from which all actual sins flow."

The Rev. Timothy M. Cooley of Granville, Mass., describing the feelings of anxious sinners, in his congregation says; "They encouraged themselves that by a few weeks' seriousness and diligence in duties, they should *prepare themselves for regeneration*. After persevering for a while in these external duties, they thought their prayers and cries had been sufficient to prevail with God to show mercy. They secretly found fault with God for withholding his grace. The heart arose against divine sovereignty. Some thought hard of God for giving comfort to others, while he denied it to them. The enmity of the heart rose up, like a venomous serpent against the Almighty. Such exercises as these discovered to them the total depravity of their hearts. They felt convinced that the garment of self-righteousness, which was so pleasing to them, covered a heart full of opposition to God's character. They were before convinced that they had been guilty of many outward acts of sin, but now they saw something of the fountain of pollu-

tion within. They were convinced that they had never prayed, read or cried as God required. They still persevered in duties, but seemed, as they expressed it, 'to grow worse and worse.' They discovered that God's law justly condemned them, and that they must be rescued by sovereign mercy, or suffer its awful sanction."

One more extract I shall add from a narrative of a revival in New Haven. "The causes, which first impressed and awakened the subjects of the work, were almost as various as the character which they previously sustained. One was awakened by reflecting on the past; another by anticipating the future: one was impressed while trying to pray, in consequence of a resolution which had been previously made for the purpose. Some were excited to serious consideration by dangerous sickness, from which they afterwards recovered. Some were driven to seek consolation in religion by the pressure of heavy and painful trials. Some were arrested by a particular passage or paragraph in Scripture, which they had often seen and read before. Some were first affected by a particular discourse, or some part of a discourse. Some were taken hold of by a word spoken at random, or by conversation carried on with the design to produce such an effect. Some have been softened by an affectionate, fervent and importunate prayer. Some have been impressed by an exhortation at a conference or prayer-meeting. Some were first wrought upon by natural sympathy, and were themselves deeply distressed, merely because they saw others in deep distress. Some had an apprehension that they were left to perish, while others were chosen to salvation; and this had an effect to alarm them. Some could recollect the particular cause which first stirred them up; others could not tell what it was which first awakened them to think seriously on these things. They found this indeed to be the case, that their former repose was broken up, and their souls anxious on the subject of salvation; but what the cause was which first produced in them these feelings they could not tell. Some were deeply impressed by seeing others come forward, and enter into solemn covenant with God. This indeed, was the cause of seriousness to many.

"The views and feelings of the subjects of this work, were in many respects alike, and in many respects dissimilar. Some, during the former part of their convictions especially, were principally disturbed from an apprehension of the wrath of God, and the dread of future misery. They knew that they had greatly sinned, and saw nothing before them but a certain fearful looking for of judgement, and fiery indignation, which shall devour all the adversaries of God and of Christ. This stared them in the face, deprived them of peace, and filled them with terror. Others were softened and grieved, instead of being amazed and terrified. They were cut to the heart, to think that they had sinned against a being of such infinite goodness, purity and truth; one who had sent his Son into the world, to die for guilty, lost, and condemned sinners,

and who had loaded them with favors all their days, while they had requited him nothing but ingratitude, rebellion, and an obstinate persistence in a course of iniquity. This was their most trying reflection; it pierced their very souls, and rent their hearts with anguish. Some could not tell what was the matter with them, and yet something within, filled them with agitation and alarm: so that their souls were literally like the troubled sea when it cannot rest."

In the accounts of these revivals, it appears that the anxiety of sinners more commonly arose at first from apprehensions of *danger*, or from *sympathy* with the excitement of others around them. In respect to such as held out to be anxious, these feelings, in the progress of their seriousness, were generally succeeded by such views of God and his law, and their own hearts, as produced genuine conviction of sin. In respect to this stage of their exercises, the Rev. Joseph Washburn, whom I before quoted, remarks, that while there was great variety among anxious sinners, as to the degree and continuance of their convictions;

"Yet with respect to the points of conviction, or the truths in view of which the mind was affected, there was a very great uniformity. They were, almost without exception, brought to feel and acknowledge, previous to any permanent relief and hope,—that they were wholly evil, and perfectly helpless in themselves;—that all their strivings and resolutions, had been in such a manner, and from such motives, that they were not merely in vain, but were a practical rejection of the way of acceptance by Christ;—that it was not in their hearts, and never would be, without divine influence, to ask for mercy aright, or to embrace Jesus Christ, as he is freely offered in the Gospel;—that they were, therefore, in the hands of a sovereign God, whose law and Gospel they had abused."

As an example of those cases in which the enmity of the heart to divine truth was most conspicuous, the same narrative states the feelings of an individual, in his own words:

"I had a clear sense of my guilt, and experienced sensible opposition of heart against God, and against the doctrines of the Gospel, which I heard preached. The Bible also, was to me a most painful and odious book. I could not endure to read it—every page appeared to be against me. While in this situation, I looked on every side for relief.—I fled to every thing for refuge, but to God. For a time, I strove hard to disbelieve the doctrines of the Gospel. I searched diligently to find arguments against them,—particularly the doctrine of the endless, future punishment of the wicked. I listened to the arguments of the Universalists.

But all was in vain—the Scriptures were decisive—and I was obliged to admit the necessity of religion, and an interest in Christ, in order to any true peace in this, or another world. Accordingly I set myself very earnestly, as I thought, to obtain it—labored hard to make my heart better, and to recommend myself to the Saviour. But finding all attempts of this kind fail, and that the opposition of my heart continued, I fled for refuge to Antinomianism. I thought it must be impossible for a sinner to love God, as long as he supposed that his sins were not forgiven, and that God was his enemy. I therefore endeavored to think that Christ had died for me in particular, and that my sins were all pardoned;—hoping that if I could persuade myself of this, it would give me peace, and be unto me according to my faith—or as I now view it, my own self-flattery. But I was not suffered to wrap myself up in this delusion. I next attempted to persuade myself that there was no such thing as free moral agency, or accountability,—but that mankind were mere machines, actuated by a blind and fatal necessity. But I was unable to reason myself into a belief of this. I had a consciousness of sin which I could not throw off. I felt my desert of misery and the perfect reasonableness of my being required to give my heart to God. My heart however was still opposed—his character and conduct I did not love—especially his leaving me in this situation when he was able to deliver me, and did deliver others, and give them hope and comfort; and whenever I heard of any particular instance of this, it caused the opposition of my heart to rise very high. I was told that I must submit. I attempted to do it—and to flatter myself that I did submit—but my submission would last no longer than 'till the character of God came clearly into view again. After these things, I had a lively sense that in all my strivings, I had had no sincere regard to God—but had been actuated in every thing by perfect selfishness. That all my cries to God had been mere mockery—flowing from a heart totally opposed to him. Never before, had I such an idea of the plague of my heart—or of the sensible enmity against God, which an awakened sinner may be the subject of. My distress was now such, that I thought I could not endure it. I slept but little, and whenever I awoke from sleep, my distress and anguish came upon me in a moment. I had no relief—and what added exceedingly to my distress, was the thought that it would probably not only be constant, but forever.”

As to the nature of those convictions that appeared to be genuine, it may be remarked that the subjects of them manifested a deep sense of their entire alienation from God, and opposition to his character. They saw that an amiable temper and a moral life are of no account, if the heart is supremely in love with sin. They saw that they were justly condemned

by the divine law, which they had continually broken, in thought, word, and deed; that they were utterly without excuse, as transgressors of that law; that though repentance is their indispensable and immediate duty, they never should repent, if left to themselves, without special, divine influence; and that if they should ever be saved, it must be through the merits of Christ, applied to them by the Holy Spirit, through the grace of that God who has mercy on whom he will have mercy.

That such views among anxious, unrenewed sinners, were so distinct and uniform, in different congregations, is to be ascribed, under God, to the fidelity with which these congregations were *instructed*, from the pulpit, and in private religious meetings, as to the elementary truths of the Gospel. The great revival at Northampton in 1734, &c., began with a sermon on the old doctrine of justification by faith alone. And though great fault was found, as President Edwards says, with the introduction into the pulpit of this subject, designed to counteract the "Armenianism which about this time seemed to appear with a very threatening aspect upon the interests of religion; yet it was most evidently attended with a very remarkable blessing of heaven to the souls of the people in the town." Thus it was in the revivals of 1800, &c.; different kinds of preaching made serious impressions on the hearers, but no sinner was brought thoroughly to feel his guilty and lost condition, and his need of salvation by grace except by being clearly instructed in the primary doctrines of the Bible.

The *degrees of excitement* attendant on legal convictions were very various in the cases of different individuals. There were some examples of extreme suffering. One who had for some time been in this condition, on being asked what were his feelings towards careless sinners said, "They are to be pitied. An eternity of such torment, as I experienced for a time by a view of the divine character, and the happiness of others in serving God, would be intolerably dreadful." That these intense feelings of terror and despair were a reality, was apparent to all who saw him. 'His friends feared that if his distress should continue and increase, he could not live. They trembled lest they should see in him the awful example of a sinner plunging into eternal wo, rather than submit to God. He was therefore a subject of the earnest prayers of God's people.'

Another man of middle age, and strong, native sense, in hearing a sermon was smitten with a deep conviction of his guilt. He said at once to himself, "The salvation of my soul

is of immediate and infinite importance ; I now resolve that I will delay it no longer, but will immediately reform, and lead a new life." In this resolution he considered himself as immovably fixed. But in walking home alone, two difficulties came upon him. He had made this resolution in mere reliance on *himself* ;—and only a *part of himself* had consented to it. His *understanding and conscience* were for it ; his *fears and hopes* were for it ; his 'vile, ungodly, obstinate heart,' was against it. His decision and the comfort derived from it were dashed to atoms, when he came to look into himself. The whole of the following night he spent in horror,—without a moment's sleep. The next day, was a day of anguish, in view of his own guilt, and exposure to everlasting ruin. He tried to labor, but could not ;—he heard another sermon, but found no relief. Instead of having his heart melted and mended, it became more obdurate still ; for he had been relying on his own selfish resolutions and on the *means* of salvation,—and not on the God of salvation. A second sleepless night, and a second day of anguish ensued. The third night, being exhausted, he had a little broken sleep, but awaked to keener sufferings. About the dawn of day a new train of thoughts engrossed his mind concerning the absolute perfections of God and his administration, and the duty of unreserved submission to his will. All was right on the part of God and the Gospel.—The fearful agony was over ; and the conflict was followed by a serenity which he afterwards hoped was the peace of God, passing all understanding.—In this case the substance, without the exact phraseology, is taken from one of the revival narratives. Repeated instances are mentioned in these narratives, of mental distress so intense as to destroy sleep and appetite, to produce paleness and emaciation, and seriously to impair bodily health, for a time. But of such cases it is proper to say in passing, that they were exceptions to the general course of facts, and that comparatively, they were few.

In a considerable proportion of the above cases, there was some derangement of the animal system, involving a predisposition to melancholy, and exposing the subject of it to great temptations. "One knows not how," says President Edwards, "to deal with such persons ; they turn every thing that is said to them the wrong way ; and there is nothing that the devil seems to make so great a handle of as a melancholy humor, unless it be the real corruption of the heart."

Having thus adverted to cases of extreme distress, it is necessary to add, as a remarkable characteristic of these revivals, that there were no instances of *outcries*, or of any *public dis-*

orders in religious assemblies. You will recollect that concerning such things which greatly prevailed in his time, President Edwards in the early part of his ministry, speaks rather the language of encouragement than of censure. At a later period, indeed, when he wrote his work on Religious Affections his views seem to have been somewhat different.

The degree of regularity which will prevail in public assemblies under excitement, will depend chiefly on usage and public sentiment; and in *religious* assemblies, this public sentiment will depend chiefly on the *known views* of those who are accustomed to lead in these assemblies. At a public funeral in New England, no one of sound understanding, even amid the keenest trials, is expected to break forth into clamorous expressions of grief. Whence then the loud wailings and howlings at a heathen funeral? *Custom* requires this in the latter case, and forbids it in the former. In the early Christian assemblies, it was a common thing for the preacher to be interrupted in his discourse by loud applauses, clapping, stamping, and waving of handkerchiefs. But the men thus interrupted were understood to be pleased with these things, and to invite them. Whereas men of solid dignity, like Chrysostom and Augustine, who frowned on these excesses, suffered no interruption. Now apply this principle to revivals. You know that about thirty years since, there was a powerful work of grace in the Western States, which resulted in the saving conversion doubtless, of multitudes. But this work was attended with disorders, which the best men condemned at the time, and which have been the subject of their growing lamentation, till now. How did these disorders begin? and why did they increase?—till simple tears and silent moans, were exchanged for loud groaning, screaming, barking, howling, swooning, and every form of violent convulsions. Preachers, to a considerable extent, approved of these irregularities; and if they did not directly encourage them, they were known to rejoice in them, (and doubtless they did so with sincere zeal,) as tokens of the mighty power of God.

Look now at the revivals of about the same period in New England; in which hundreds of different places were visited by copious showers of divine influence; and in which thousands of sermons were preached to crowded assemblies, solemn as eternity; in which hundreds of thousands listened to these with a deep, fixed, silent attention, while among these multitudes, were many hearts bursting with agony, and many eyes streaming with tears; and yet throughout these scenes of overwhelming and awful interest, not one instance is stated in

which the order of the sanctuary or of the conference-room was interrupted by any irregularity. Why, I say again, was God worshipped, in one region as the God of order, and in another, as the God of confusion? Let ministers think of this. Let elders in the churches, and all men who are called to give direction and character to revivals, especially where there is a tendency to disorder in religious assemblies, think of this.

It was my intention to remark on the *length* of convictions, and the causes by which this was apparently influenced in different cases. But this letter ought not to be farther extended.

Affectionately,

Yours, &c.

E. PORTER.

Theol. Sem. Andover, June, 1832.

LETTER FROM DR. BEECHER TO DR. WOODS.

DEAR BROTHER,

You are aware of my uniform aversion to personal controversy between brethren, who are agreed in the fundamental doctrines of the Gospel, and differ only on minor points. Not because I fear the consequences of calm discussion, but because I regard the differences in many instances imaginary, and the result of misapprehension; and those which are real, as differences which have already been discussed without agreement, and which have been tolerated without alarm through successive generations, and which it were worse than useless to revive in this day of revivals and Christian enterprise. Our united efforts have not been wanting, as you know, to avert this evil, which for a time seemed to be successful, and were followed by one of the most glorious revivals of religion which ever blessed our nation, and yet there is still a sensitiveness and febrile action which forebodes little good and much evil from the continuance of controversy. The more I examine, the more I am persuaded that this state of feeling is not the result of any peculiar obliquity of heart; but of a change in the condition of the church, occasioned by those movements in the providence of God, which are beginning to act on all minds and things preparatory to the millennium.

In confirmation of this opinion, I would submit to your con-

sideration some of those providential causes, which may account for the existing phenomena of excited mind and indicate the means of safety.

It is not to be forgotten, that the great defection from evangelical doctrine in this city and region, through the carelessness and negligence of former generations of ministers and churches, has created a salutary fear of the recurrence of such an apostasy again creeping in at unawares. The fear is healthful and just; and yet it implies a state of feeling which, without carefulness, may be easily perverted to purposes of unfounded and excessive alarm. The power and action of public sentiment on theological subjects, are also greatly increased by its vast extension, and consequent liability to dangerous agitation. Once it was limited to States between which bad roads and a feeble press and no mail, created a non-intercourse. So that controversies arose and died away, without rolling their chafed waves beyond the circumference of an inland lake. But now by rail-roads, and steam, and the press, and the post office, we are all thrown into one great ocean of mind; every inch of whose surface feels the wind of every great controversy; and where the same anger and imprudence which once might have agitated the waters of a pond, may now roll up mountain waves. This is a consideration of great magnitude, and should cause us to look well to our ways, and make haste slowly when about to do a deed which may compromise the peace of the entire church.

The origin of this change in our condition is not of recent date. The reformation was a new *era*, not to the church alone, but to the human mind, and all the future interests of man. It was the commencement of that emancipation from force, civil and ecclesiastical, which had chained down the mind and cramped the energies of our race. But from the moment the power of mind was unchained, it has like a giant rejoiced to run its race.

From that day the Bible has been the religion of Protestants, and fearless free inquiry for the most part, their practice; guided however by a somewhat jealous supervision of their creeds, which contain to this day "the great system of doctrine taught in the Holy Scriptures;" and if their supervision should seem to any to have pressed somewhat too closely on free inquiry, it was no more than what the tendencies to excess and the exigencies of the opposition may have demanded. It is not improbable, however, that in New England, where the condition of the church was entirely changed, and not only protection, but the support of law was enjoyed, an implicit confidence in

formularies and civil protection, may have occasioned a theology of the memory, and an unharnessing of the mind for intellectual action and original investigation, and a consequent lassitude and carelessness, which may have opened the door to the very heresies which it was the object of the creeds, and the church and state, to prevent. For it seems to be a point settled by the providence of God, that it is only by the careful study of the Bible, by each generation of ministers for themselves, that intellectual vigor, and pure and undefiled religion, can be maintained on the earth.

The bursting out of Arminianism in New England, roused up the energies of the immortal Edwards—the power of whose intellect broke in upon the apathy of mind which preceded him, and gave an impulse to intellectual action, which has not ceased to be felt with growing power to the present day. Without subverting the creeds, he gave to theology the illumination, and discrimination and precision of his powerful mind, guided by as great an amount of meekness and holiness of heart, and sound discretion, as were ever probably entrusted to man. In his train arose successive generations of ministers, men of powerful and discriminating minds, who sustained the light, and kept up the impulse, which the great master spirit had given, and superintended the revivals which every where characterized the Edwardean school; whose theology, though shaded by circumstantial difference, has been comprehensively denominated **NEW ENGLAND DIVINITY**.

We must now turn to another cause which has lent a modifying influence, both to the theology, and the theological sensibilities of the nation. It is the instruction of the ministry by theological seminaries, and the introduction of the study of the Bible, without reference to any philosophy or theory, but that of the language of the Bible, interpreted according to the established principles of exposition.

This change has created, and justly, a great solicitude, and a holy vigilance, which have rendered ministers and churches more alive to what is taught in the seminaries, and more easily excited to suspicion and alarm, by the very appearance of evil. And so long as this fear does not cramp free inquiry, and a correct exposition of the Bible, it is to be hailed as a safeguard, instead of being lulled into a false security; for while the opportunities of these institutions to raise up a learned and pious ministry are undoubtedly increased, their perversion would be proportionably baneful; against which a sleepless vigilance of the churches is the best, if not the only remedy.

Edwards was undoubtedly one of the ablest expositors of

the Bible, who had ever lived; and more than any man who preceded him, drew all his arguments, both of faith and practice, from that sacred fountain. The age of what may be denominated the scientific interpretation of the Bible, had not come, and the habit of its interpretation, in some measure, by the light of consecrated theories, had not entirely passed, when the constellation of great and good men, the disciples of Edwards, left the world for heaven, but left behind a generation both of ministers and churches, strongly indoctrinated in their views. By all these the attempt to expound the Bible without reference to established theories, was, you know, feared as an innovation which might subvert foundations. But for twenty years the doctrines of the Bible, as epitomized in our creeds, and illustrated by Edwards and his disciples, have been passing through this ordeal, only to brighten their lustre, and arm them with new power upon the consciences and hearts of men. It may have varied their lights and shades a little on some points, and pushed a little in advance some consequences from acknowledged premises; and it may have grazed the corners of our several theories, and compelled us sometimes perhaps, to take our choice of those conflicting propositions, where we had thought prescription entitled us to both. But on the whole, they have come out, as I believe, unchanged, and as gold purified by passing under the blazing supervision of the Bible.

To the preceding causes of excited interest in the religious public on theological subjects, must be added the very great increase of readers and thinkers by the generation of Sabbath School teachers and scholars, who have at length come into our churches and on the stage of action, as well qualified to expound the Bible as some generations of ministers who have passed away. A new reading generation on theological subjects is extended and extending over the nation, correcting the evil which we feared, of the decline of doctrinal discrimination, by the augmentation of zeal and action, and alarming us by that extended interest in theology, for the production of which we have so earnestly preached and prayed. Under the influence of Bible Classes and Sabbath Schools, are rising up a large body of intelligent laymen, between the clergy and the more confiding class of the community, occupied in searching the Scriptures by the best lights, and in proving all things, to hold fast, and to communicate, that which is good.

This, there is reason to hope and believe, is the visible beginning of that government of the human intellect and heart by the Bible, as read and understood by every person, when

the knowledge of the Lord shall cover the earth as the waters cover the sea; when unthinking confidence shall cease, and a universal understanding and heartfelt approbation of the Bible shall characterize and bless the world.

I have only to add, that the furious assaults upon all systems of evangelical doctrine by learned and expert, as well as by ignorant and vulgar men, of acute minds and native talent, is an ordeal calculated, and no doubt in providence intended, to detect any alloy, and burn up any wood and hay and stubble, which we, in our unskilfulness, may have mingled with the true materials. An assault which, nevertheless, is calculated to make the truth very precious to good men, and to make them not only valiant for the truth, but pained at parting with some materials which may well be spared, especially when our very errors, consecrated by time, make us, as Edwards says, alarmed when opinions are presented which are somewhat aside from our accustomed mode of thinking.

In respect to the measures which are best adapted to avert the evils, and secure the good which may attend this providential movement of mind and holy action, it is plain that we must not attempt to stop it. Original investigation and free inquiry by fair biblical exposition and argument, must go on. It was the want of it in the primitive church, which left the mind to fall into the slumber of ages. It was the resurrection of it which shook the papal throne, and is now agitating the world with premonitions of that earthquake, in which Babylon will sink, and principalities and powers be brought low, and intellect and holiness triumph in the emancipation of the world.

It *cannot* be stopped, for it is of God. It is that action of his Spirit and providence on mind, which is passing through all nations, dividing them between the doctrines of passive obedience and non-resistance to old opinions, and the government of the people by their own intelligence, virtues and laws; and which is passing also through all churches and all denominations, dividing them in two parts, the one, tenacious to the letter of doctrines and forms, as they have descended, the other guided by the indications of providence, attempting to adapt instruction and action to the exigences of the day. And though the effort may be environed with danger and attended with some mistakes, can there be any doubt of its necessity or success? Is the past lingering, limited instrumentality, to be made effectual by the mere sovereignty of God for the conversion of the world? Must there not be new vigor and new ardor applied to the work of God? And though Satan should attempt to ruin

the cause by excess, when he can no longer do it by apathy, must we therefore fall back to the regions of frost? Was there ever any great movement of the human mind, political or religious, without human defect? And may we not believe that what is now witnessed with fear, may through faith and prayer, be hailed with hope, as the sign of the Son of man, coming in his kingdom with power and glory? Do the signs of the times indicate as much danger of retrocession from the faith to heresy, as is apprehended by some most sincere and most excellent men? When was the interest in truth ever more intense, the fear of heresy greater, watchfulness more wakeful, or the power of truth and the Holy Ghost in revivals more terrible to the powers of darkness? And when since the Gospel day, were there ever so many minds, with such ample means, transferring their confidence from human theories to the Bible, that they may learn to do the divine will, and know the doctrines which be of God?

And when we consider that, in all the departments of God's wonder-working providence, the march is evidently onward; in temperance, in Bibles, in tracts and their distribution, in Sabbath Schools, and Bible Classes, and domestic and foreign missions, and revivals; (though we should not cease to watch and to pray that by our very prosperity we enter not into temptation through a false security;) may we not hope that the combined influence of truth and action is falling with such light and power on public sentiment, as will leave scant materials for heresy, on any middle ground between evangelical Christianity and open infidelity. To me it appears that the time for heresy, baptized with Christian names, is short, and its departure at hand.

Still it becomes us to guard against the immemorial and always abortive effort to secure the entire agreement of good men, on those various topics which are not vital to the system. This has always been the debatable ground in the church, and the theatre of the enemies triumph. The fundamental doctrines of the personality of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, in one divine essence; the fall of man, and the universal and entire depravity of the race as the consequence; the incarnation and death of the Son of God, as a propitiation for sin, to sustain the law and reclaim to holiness and favor the guilty; the doctrine of regeneration by the sovereign and special influence of the Holy Spirit, and justification by the merits of Christ, through faith, and several others, are so plain, as that all who have pretended to belong to the great evangelical body, have in all ages held them; while on other points of no small

importance, but not vital to the system, there have always existed shades of difference, and always divisions, and subdivisions subdivided, just in proportion as the effort has been invidiously pressed for entire agreement. Especially when, in the heat of zeal, these secondary points are made primary and fundamental, and the invidious epithet of heretic is thrown back and forth, till the temper is chafed, and the meaning of language is confounded, and fear is excited, and confidence is undermined, and anger at injurious treatment is roused, and parties, inspired with mutual suspicion are formed, and occupied with plans for mutual counteraction,—then indeed has the glory departed, and the enemy triumphed.

Nor is sincerity in the beginning any more a safe-guard against these evils, than it is a justification of them; for who does not know that close upon the confines of honest zeal for the truth, lie the territories of twilight and suspicion, and fear, and imagination, with its magnifiers, and whisperings, and rumors, by which the enemy drives the friends of Christ against one another, and employs them in their panic to maim, and impede, and beat down, one another, more injuriously to the cause of Christ, than by any other means it could possibly be done.

The strength of the church depends on concentrated action, and this, like credit in the mercantile world, depends on confidence. Whatever therefore, propagates suspicion and distrust among brethren, who have long felt and acted together, scatters the Lord's host, and breaks their power; as the failure of great capitalists in cities destroys, for a time, commercial confidence, and sends out alarm, and paralyzes business.

There is no engine against which the good man is more defenceless, than the setting in upon him, like a mist from the ocean, of fear and suspicion: and though, if in patience he possess his soul, he will live it down; there is nothing so provoking to the temperament of the old man, or the graces of the new;—nothing which inflicts on human sensibilities so deep a wound, rouses in depraved nature such indignation, or draws such an impassable gulf between very friends, as unmerited suspicion; or is more efficacious to turn aside, if it were possible, the very elect, to heresy. And hence, it has always come to pass, that when the friends of Christ united, have become too powerful for the wicked one, it has been his expedient to ease himself of his adversaries by dividing them.

But admonished as we have been by the past, we shall not be permitted, I trust, to fall into the snare and condemnation of the devil; for should we, what a movement of intellect,

of charitable institutions, and of revivals, would be stopped, and what a wreck would ensue of prosperity already achieved, and of hopes on the confines of fulfilment.

I must repeat, that there are some truths so plainly revealed, that no man who denies them can give evidence of piety, or have a claim to admission to any church, whose object it is to propagate and defend them. But, on other points which are not fundamental to the revealed system, and which fade into relative minuteness by almost imperceptible gradations, until the human mind shall be made so capacious that it can take in and compare at one steady coterminous view, all the parts and relations of a complicated system, and all its evidence; and the temperaments, and habits of education, and hearts, and passions, and interests, and circumstances of men shall become so much alike, as to bring the truth before all minds exactly through the same medium, and in the same condition and preparation for calm and correct judgement; and until the ablest jurists, with the law and the evidence and the argument on both sides before them, and without interest to bias, or passion to blind, can be brought to see and decide alike, it is not to be expected that good men, though ever so good, and ever so orthodox, can be drawn, or driven, into an exact agreement, on the relatively minor points of theology.

I must now add, that all hope of perfect agreement by dint of controversy, is taken away. I never had any confidence on this subject, and every year of my life has deepened the conviction, that controversy among friends, is not the way for them to grow in grace, or knowledge, or brotherly love, or peace and joy in the Holy Ghost. There may be instances when, in self-defence, it may become indispensable, as the lesser of two evils; and a few men may possibly be found with grace enough to give and take without detriment. But I desire to bless God, that I have never as yet been placed in circumstances of such temptation, and pray fervently that I never may be. For the Bible itself, and its great and fundamental doctrines, which experience evinces to be indispensable to the work of the Spirit in the great change of human character from sin to holiness, I would stand ever in my lot and contend earnestly for the faith. But against my brethren, my well-beloved friends, I fear to lift up the spear. I fear for myself, I fear for them, and I fear for the cause. In the record of the past, is it not more than doubtful, whether the evil of such controversy has not, in the great majority of instances, overbalanced the good?

The great points in which Baxter and Owen agreed shine down upon us in mingled radiance in their works; but which of us have been benefitted by the controversies in which they spent their time and wasted their strength?

But especially, since controversy has gone down to the newspaper, and the arena is the nation; and so much has appeared already of the frailties and sins of good men, for which Christianity and all her friends, beyond the wind of the commotion, have blushed and wept—ought we not, thus admonished, to make haste slowly in putting on the harness: we need attraction and approximation, but controversy creates repellency, and increases our distance: we need patience, but it increases our sensitiveness—meekness, but it creates excitement. The truth is beautiful and powerful in its symmetrical proportions and delicate shades, which controversy is apt to destroy, and to throw out points in opposite extremes, around which a feverish heat gathers, by the vitality diverted from other parts; while all between languishes, or is neglected, or trodden down. The truths of the Gospel, like the prescriptions of the physician, need to be rightly divided, and a portion given to every man in due season;—but by the spirit of controversy, we are liable to prescribe the same portions in all seasons, to all patients, in the same quantities, to the neglect of the various symptoms of the disease, and indications of cure.

I am perfectly aware that no general rules can be prescribed to reconcile those different shades of thought which result from free inquiry. But of one thing I am satisfied, and that is, that controversy between brethren ought never to commence without the intervention of a friendly conference, to ascertain, first of all, whether they do in fact differ, and wherein they differ, and whether the points of difference are of sufficient magnitude to justify a public discussion, with all its liabilities to evil.

This single precaution would, in my opinion, prevent most disputes; and why should good men waste their strength, and endanger their spirits, and divert and agitate the public mind, only to discover that, for the most part, they are agreed; that in some things they misunderstood one another, that they differ but on few points, and those such as might have been safely let alone? Years of controversy between ourselves would not have produced, I am persuaded, so desirable a result, as the few short interviews we have recently had.

Should there be found points of difference, demanding public discussion, touching matters not fundamental, they ought to be distinctly recognised as such, that however important, they shall occasion no breach of charity, and no sus-

picion of heresy. A vigilant eye is doubtless to be kept open on the tendencies of things, but it can never be wise to plunge into actual hostilities to prevent possible evils. Sufficient to the day is the evil thereof.

There is another point on which, I doubt not, our views will accord, and that is, that we should carefully avoid the drawing of exact lines, and the formation of parties to sway theological opinion by other means, than those of fraternal intercourse and fair argument; an influence which should always be preserved in the church of God, while other and injurious influences pass away.

I cannot doubt that I understand the principles and shades of difference which are comprehended within the limits of Evangelical Orthodoxy. And while I admit, as I believe all do, the liability of human nature to extremes, and the propriety of vigilance, and, in some form, of discussion which may try our views, and secure the safe and judicious balance of the system; I am still persuaded, though some men much better than myself may think otherwise, that there are among evangelical men no differences in principle, on any fundamental point, and no shades of difference, which do not admit of an easy and peaceful comprehension within the acknowledged limits of sound Orthodoxy; and that nothing is needed to bring out the most cheering evidence of the fact, but time, patience, kind explanations, and brotherly love; while nothing is so much to be feared, as a hasty commitment, and a controversial spirit, which in a moment may tangle, inextricably, the skein, whose thread, with a little patience, God would help us to unwind with perfect ease. O that he would preserve us, my brother, and all whom we love; that the generations to come, when they read of our perils, may witness our deliverance, and give glory to God.

You can easily perceive, that with my present views, I would not trust myself in a controversy with my Christian brethren for the specific defence of any particular point on which we may differ. But I am willing and even desirous, if it should meet your approbation, of going over some of the topics of supposed difference, for the purpose of a calm comparison of our particular views, that we may perceive, as I presume we shall do, our general agreement, and that we may avail ourselves of each other's experience and most matured thoughts, without the forms and responsibilities and temptations of a polemic discussion.

I may not be able to fulfil my own expectation, and the results may fall far short of my hopes, and my devout supplication to God. But so painful are my convictions of the consequences now of a chafing controversy, that, without making an at-

tempt for peace, I could not carry with me to another field of labor, the testimony of a good conscience;—and, should my efforts fail, I had much rather fall a sacrifice on the altar of peace, than to triumph in an angry controversy, amid the ruins of the Church.

May the Lord grant us that wisdom from above, of which we both, I trust, feel the need, and the promise of which, I doubt not, we endeavor daily to lay hold upon; and may the Lord Jesus Christ hold us in his right hand, and make us radiant, instead of wandering stars; and unite with ourselves the whole household of faith in that charity which is the bond of perfectness—till all symptoms of painful disagreement shall disappear, and all our discussions eventuate in a resolution of holy forces, which shall throw the waters of life into one channel, full, and clear as chrysal, and resistless as that river above, which flows from the throne of God and the Lamb.

Boston, June, 1832.

LYMAN BEECHER.

REVIEWS.

DECISION OF THE SUPREME JUDICIAL COURT OF MASSACHUSETTS, in a case relating to the *Sacramental Furniture of a Church in Brookfield; with the entire Arguments of Hon. SAMUEL HOAR, JR., for the Plaintiff, and of Hon. LEWIS STRONG, for the Defendant.* Boston: Peirce and Parker, 1832. pp. 48.

The facts in the case before us are briefly these: In April, 1827, the contract existing between the Rev. Michael Stone and the South Parish in Brookfield, was by mutual consent dissolved. During the summer following, Unitarian ministers were invited to preach in the meeting house of the parish, and in August a call was given to Mr. George R. Noyes, a Unitarian, to settle there in the work of the ministry. Upon this, a minority of the parish, including all the male members of the church except two, withdrew, and formed themselves into a new religious society, under the statutes of 1811 and 1823. In November of the same year, the church, as a body, voted to unite with this new society in the support of public worship, and Mr. Stone, whose relation to the church had not been dissolved, was invited to act as min-

ister of the new society. In this change of relation on the part of the church from one society to the other, the deacons took with them, as might have been expected, the sacramental furniture.

After the secession of the church from the parish, the two male members who continued behind affected to consider themselves the church, holding meetings, admitting members, attending on the communion, &c. Of this branch of the church (if branch it can be called) the plaintiff in this action was elected sole deacon, and an action was brought against the deacons of the church for the recovery of the sacramental furniture.—The facts, as in substance above stated, were agreed at the Oct. term, 1829, and the case having been argued in writing by S. Hoar, Jun. for the Plaintiff and L. Strong for the Defendant, and continued *nisi*, judgment was given for the Plaintiff, at the term of the Court holden at Worcester, Oct. 1831.

The object of the Pamphlet before us seems to have been twofold; first, to bring the subject before the community at an earlier day than it would appear in the Term Reports, and secondly, to present the *entire* argument of Mr. Strong in support of the rights of the churches. This argument is admitted, both by Mr. Hoar and C. J. Shaw, to be "very elaborate and able." Mr. Strong goes into an examination of most of the points which have been agitated in the late discussions respecting the rights of the churches, and presents the case "to the consideration of the Court frankly, fully, and without any other constraint, than that imposed upon every citizen by the relation he sustains to the highest Judicial tribunal of the Commonwealth."—His plan is to show,

I. That "*the Congregational churches of Massachusetts, regularly gathered, are, and always have been, entirely distinct from the towns, parishes, and congregations with which they have been associated in public worship.*"

II. That "*to some extent and for some purposes, at least, the churches sustain a corporate character.*" This is shown, 1. "Because of the authority given for their establishment and self-perpetuation." 2. "Because of the exclusive power they possessed, for more than half a century, in the election of ministers for themselves and the towns in which they were planted, and the controlling influence they were authorised to exercise in reference to the same subject, for nearly a century afterwards." 3. "Because the great civil privileges exclusively enjoyed, in early times, by their members." 4. "Because, certain powers having been granted to them, the right of holding such property as was requisite to the exercise of those powers must have been given them by implication." 5. "Because, the deacons of certain churches being constituted by law a body corporate for certain purposes, the body by which that class of officers is to be appointed, advised, and brought to account, must of necessity, have a perpetual, and to some extent, therefore, a corporate existence." And 6. "Because their proceedings are matter of record, and

may be proved by a certified copy of their votes, under the hand of the proper recording officer, or at least by the production of the record itself." To this array of argument, is added *the authority* of some of our most distinguished citizens, from the first settlement of the country to the present time, as Gov. Winthrop, Mr. Wise, C. J. Dana, Judge Lowell, Gov. Sullivan, and Mr. James Savage, all speaking of churches, without hesitation, as in some sense incorporate bodies.

III. The third and last general proposition in the Argument before us is the following: "*A church may be dissolved by the death of all its members, or the destruction of an integral part, as perhaps the death of all its male members, or its own voluntary determination to that effect; but, except in case of a forfeiture of its privileges by non user, in no other way.*"

"These seem to be the only modes in which, according to the rules of the common law applicable to bodies of this nature, a dissolution can be effected. (2 Kyd on Corp. 447, 448, 463, 474.) Having been established under a general law of the government the rights of each and all of them are vested rights; and as well might even the legislature constitutionally abrogate the charters of our private corporations, as the charters of our churches,—both being alike secured, as well by the principles of natural justice, as the barrier which the constitution has wisely thrown about the property, immunities, and privileges of the citizen. (9 Cranch's Rep. 52.)"

"But perhaps it may be objected, with a view to disproving the identity of the church, or the truth of our position as to the dissolution of the churches, or both,—either 1, that persons once members of the church, when ceasing to be members of the parish with which the church is connected, cease also to be members of the church;—2, that it is essential to the existence of a church that it should be connected with a parish, or some other distinct religious community;—or 3, that when a church withdraws from a society with which it has been connected, it loses its civil character and legal rights, as a church, although at the same moment it joins another society."

The first of these allegations is disproved, on the authority of C. J. Parsons, who says (9 Mass. 297) "*the members of a church are generally inhabitants of the parish, but this inhabitancy is not a necessary qualification for a church member;—and on the authority of the Cambridge Platform (Chap. xiii); and on the ground of the general, perhaps universal understanding and practice of the churches.*"

The second of the objections above mentioned, viz. "that it is essential to the existence of a Congregational church that it should be connected with a parish, or some other distinct religious community," is discussed by Mr. Strong with much clearness and force.

"Were it not," says he, "that a sentiment of this sort has been advanced by the C. J. in Baker and Fales, (16 Mass. 504,) we should have considered the objection as without any manner of foundation in the history of the church, and introductory of a principle which the legislature alone, and even that branch of the government is restricted to its constitutional limits, would be competent to establish. (9 Cranch 52.) No church except in connection with some other society! Whence could such a principle have been

derived? Is it to be found in any of the ordinances of the colonial government?—or the statutes of the provincial legislature?—or legislative enactments since the establishment of the constitution? Can a trace of it be discovered in any judicial decision, until it was first announced in the case of *Baker and Fales*? And is this silence of a whole people, for nearly two centuries, and upon a subject connected, not only with the independence, but with the very existence of the churches of Massachusetts, to be accounted as nothing? If such a connection be essential to the existence of the churches, then their independence, of which our fathers confidently felt themselves secure, was but a dream, which the light of a more enlarged intelligence has dissipated."

"Let a parish, with which a church thus stripped of her supposed rights is connected, become ever so regardless of the Christian faith, or the duties it enjoins;—let the teachers it sustains be ever so corrupt in principle or in practice;—the church must submit—there is no possible redemption. If she utters her complaints, her voice is drowned by the shouts of her foes; for even in this land of the pilgrims, the law has given them, and deliberately given them, the ascendancy! And if she attempts to fly, the very flight to which she is compelled will induce a forfeiture of every species of property she may possess, and furnish such conclusive evidence of guilt as will be followed by the extinction of all her civil and legal rights!

"Is this the body, we would gravely ask, which had such 'full liberty to gather her members into a church estate?'—such 'free liberty to exercise all the ordinances of God according to the Scripture?'—such 'free exercise of the discipline and censures of Christ according to the rules of the word?' (Col. law, 1641.) Are these the churches, which are entitled 'to use, exercise and enjoy all their accustomed privileges and liberties, and to be encouraged in the peaceable and regular enjoyment thereof?' (Prov. law, 1692 and stat. of 1800.) And is this a practical illustration of the value of that great principle of the *Bil. of Rights*—that 'every denomination of Christians, demeaning themselves peaceably, and as good subjects of the Commonwealth, shall be equally under the protection of the law?' (Art. 3.)"

"The only circumstance," says C. J. Parker, (16 Mass. 504) "which gives a church any legal character, is its connexion with some regularly constituted society." In reply, Mr. Strong observes, "There seem to be four arguments, and four only as we can discover, urged in support of this doctrine. 1. 'That the case of churches is analogous to that of towns and parishes, where, a parish being set off from a town, the remaining part of the town is deemed the principal or first parish.' 2. 'That the case of churches is analogous to that of numerous fire societies, and other voluntary unincorporate associations, in which the refusal of a majority of the members to act might devolve all power over the subject upon those who might choose to persevere.' 3. 'That the principle that a church cannot subsist without some other religious community to which it is attached is not new, but has been the understanding of the people of New England from the foundation of the colonies.' And 4. 'That a church may exist in an ecclesiastical sense, without officers or members possessing any civil capacity.'—Each of these arguments (the same used by C. J. Parker in the *Dedham* case) to show the dependent existence of the churches, and their indissoluble connexion with societies or parishes, is discussed by Mr. Strong at length, and shown to be without foundation; and the conclusion is drawn

with great confidence, "that it is" *not* "essential to the existence of a Congregational church, that it should be connected with a parish, or with any other distinct religious community."

The third objection, viz. "that when a church withdraws from a society with which it has been connected, it loses its civil character and legal rights, as a church, although at the same moment it joins another society," is refuted, by the numerous removals of churches which have taken place in our country, without losing their existence or their rights;—and on the ground of a late decision of the Supreme Court of Massachusetts, which is described as follows :

"In *Gridley and Clark* (2 Pick. 403) the Plaintiff had been installed as pastor of a church and settled as a minister of the Gospel in Granby, in 1797. In 1821, his connection with the society over which he had been settled was dissolved, and the church having previously voted to join a new society, formed within the town, and that society having given him a call to be their minister, he accepted the call. The question was, whether he was still settled, and exempted from taxation. In delivering the opinion of the Court, the Chief Justice says—"He had been once installed over the same people, making part of a body politic or corporation. He has now, by consent of all parties, become the minister of a portion of that people within the same town, and the church of which he is pastor is the same church over which he was installed in 1797. Thus establishing, if the views of the Chief Justice were correct, two points:—1st, that a church may exist in a legal, as well as ecclesiastical sense, after its secession from the society with which it was first connected;—and 2d, that the identity of a church is not at all affected by its removal."

We have thus gone through with this elaborate argument, at least so far as it is of general concern; and the Christian community, we have no doubt, will unite with us in the opinion, that the churches are under *great obligations* to Mr. Strong for the attention which he has given to the subject. We have here, not the deductions of ecclesiastical, unprofessional men, or the pleadings of a mere lawyer, but the *deliberate conclusions* (so we are authorized to understand it) of one of the most esteemed and distinguished Jurists in the Commonwealth; and however they may be regarded in certain circles at present, the time, we cannot doubt, is coming, when misapprehension and prejudice will be removed, and opinions such as these will be duly appreciated.

We now turn from the argument of Mr. Strong to examine some of the positions of Mr. Hoar, and of C. J. Shaw, as expressed in the decision of the Court. And our first remark is, that the ground of discussion respecting the rights of the churches is *materially narrowed*. Many points which were once disputed, and which the friends of the churches felt themselves called upon to establish, are now virtually given up; or at least they are no longer drawn into the discussion. For instance, we were formerly told, judicially, (16 Mass. 499) that there was no distinction in *primitive times* between the church and the congregation, but all the assembly were considered as the church, and all were invited, without distinction, to come to the "communion table and

receive the sacrament." But of this we hear nothing now. We were formerly told (16 Mass. 404) that in the *early settlement of the 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 that time, church members; and a grant to the church, under such circumstances, could mean nothing else than a grant to the town." But the defence of these strange positions is now abandoned. "It may be very true," says C. J. Shaw, "that churches in this Commonwealth are, and *always have been*, distinct from the towns, parishes, and congregations with which they are associated." Indeed, so far from denying this distinction, C. J. Shaw labors to define and establish it.

"A congregation may be imagined, every individual of which may be a church member. In this case, the same body of individuals would possess two distinct capacities, having certain rights, duties, and obligations in each. To illustrate this, suppose ten young married men procure from the government the grant of a township of land and settle upon it, get incorporated as a town, and settle a minister, all with their wives being members of the church in full communion. Here the town, parish, and church are all composed of the same individuals. They are however to be regarded as three distinct bodies for different purposes known to the law; or what is in effect the same thing, a body with three distinct capacities. This familiar instance may serve to illustrate the point, that there is no incongruity in saying that a religious society and a church are to many purposes distinct bodies, associated for distinct purposes, and having distinct rights, and yet be composed of the same individuals. When thus composed, which case rarely happens in fact, though these distinctions may exist only in contemplation of law, they are nevertheless plain and real; but when one or more individuals are members of the society, but not of the church, the distinction becomes practical, and relates back to all grants, contracts, and other acts done and rights acquired, when the same individuals were associated in different capacities."

Formerly it was deemed of great importance to establish the *corporate* character of the churches; or to show, that to some extent and for certain purposes at least, the churches are to be regarded as civil corporations. But it is now said that, were this point ever so clearly proved, the rights of the churches, according to *our* understanding of them, could not be maintained.

"Should the defendant incontrovertibly prove churches to be *quod* corporations, or even corporations in the strictest sense of that word, and should he clearly establish all the other general propositions advanced in his very elaborate and able argument, he will wholly fail to establish the right for which he contends," &c.

"Were it proved ever so clearly," says C. J. Shaw, "that to some purposes churches are corporations, with power to hold property, it would tend very little to establish the conclusion that therefore they may secede from the religious societies in which they are formed, and be capable of subsisting and acting without dependence on or connexion with such societies." "It is impossible to imagine a case more strongly illustrative of this point than one arising immediately out of the subject before us. Deacons of churches by statute are made corporations, with all the legal powers and qualifications of corporations, capable of taking and holding property in succession, and of suing and being sued. Both the parties in this suit are such corporations,

suing and defending in that character, and without it would have no standing in Court. But can it be imagined that deacons could separate themselves from the churches by which they are chosen, and as corporations subsist and act independently of them? How then could it be concluded, if churches were corporations, that in consequence of holding that character they could subsist and act independently of the parishes and religious societies in which they are formed."

In order that the case here referred to—the most strongly illustrative, we are told, that can possibly be imagined—may *truly* illustrate the point in question at all, it must be shown that the *nature of the connexion* between a church and its deacons, and between a parish and church, is substantially the same. Without doubt, there may be dependent corporations. The deacons of a church are a corporation of this character. But it will not follow that churches (if corporations at all) are equally dependent, and equally incapable of a separate existence, unless it can be shown that the nature of the connexion between the supposed principal and its dependent is in both cases the same. Let us then look at this point a moment. The church, by vote, appoints its deacons; and to the church they are directly and constantly amenable. For misconduct, they may at any time be impeached, tried, deposed, and excommunicated. For misappropriation of the funds of the church, they may be called to an account, and compelled by legal process to make restitution. Will C. J. Shaw, or his friends, undertake to point out any thing in the connexion between church and parish, which bears the slightest resemblance to this? Do the parish, by vote, appoint the church-members? Or are the church-members amenable to the parish, so as to be liable to be impeached, tried, and excommunicated by them? The most ardent sticklers for parish rights, and for church annihilation, have never yet advanced such claims as these. It follows, therefore, that the case of a church and its deacons—the most strongly illustrative of the point in debate of any that the invention of the Chief Justice could furnish—fails altogether to illustrate it to any good purpose. It goes only to show that there *may be* dependent corporations, a fact which no one ever called in question.

C. J. Shaw, however, does not regard the churches as in any proper sense incorporate bodies; and before proceeding to the precise point in debate, it may be proper to examine some things which he has advanced in relation to this subject. In opposition to the corporate character of the churches, he urges, first, that corporate powers are not *necessarily implied* in any of the rights and privileges granted to these bodies. He admits, indeed, that the rights and privileges granted to them would imply the existence of corporate powers, were it not for their necessary connexion with incorporated societies; but being thus connected, corporate powers are not needful for them, and of course are not implied.

"The power given to churches by some of the colonial and provincial

laws to act and vote in the choice of a minister, either exclusively or concurrently with the society, required, while it existed, nothing more than that there should be a church in each religious society, duly organized and perpetuated; besides, this power has been expressly abrogated by the Constitution.* Again; "Corporate powers are not attributable to churches by implication, from the supposed necessary existence of those powers in order to maintain a perpetual succession of deacons, because by the corporate character and powers of the religious societies to which such churches are incident, the perpetual succession of deacons can be preserved."

It will be seen, that here is *no proof* offered of the dependent existence of the churches, and of their inseparable connexion with religious societies. This is assumed without proof,† and in opposition, as we shall show hereafter, to the most convincing evidence. We intend not to go into the subject here. We would just in-

* If C. J. Shaw only means here that the church has no longer power to choose "a minister" for the parish, we admit the fact, and rejoice in it. If he means that the churches now have no power to elect their own *presiding officers*, their *pastors*; we deny that the Constitution has ever abrogated this power. But we shall have occasion to touch farther upon the subject before we are through. For a full and *unanswered* discussion of it, see *Spirit of the Pilgrims*, Vol. i. pp. 69—73, Vol. ii. pp. 374—384.

† A distinguished Lawyer of Massachusetts, after carefully attending to the decision before us, has politely favored us with the following remarks. They are too valuable to be withheld from our readers.

"APRIL 2, 1832.

"The principle of the dependence of the churches upon the religious societies, with which they are associated in public worship, seems to have been assumed without proof:—and then, either the churches are not corporations, because, being dependent upon such societies, they may well exist without corporate powers;—or else, if they are corporations, they are subordinate ones, and cannot exist but in connection with their principals, because of the same dependence.

"If this principle of dependence be correct, there is an end of the controversy;—and yet an obvious difference exists, between showing it to be so, by a reference to historical facts, or a consideration of the nature of these bodies, as originally established, and pointing out the beauty and harmony of the system, which the principle may put in operation, upon the hypothesis of its truth.

"But whether true or false, if the churches would otherwise be deemed corporations by necessary implication of law, I am at a loss to understand, how the fact of their being associated with other bodies, which, though sustaining a corporate character, have no agency in their establishment or continuance, at all diminishes the necessity of such an implication.

"Suppose the legislature were to pass a law, authorizing any number of the inhabitants of Boston, with the approbation of the Mayor, to associate for the purpose of piloting vessels into the harbor, with power to appoint a treasurer, competent to take and hold all real and personal estate belonging to the body, in perpetual succession, and also to elect new members to supply the place of those dying or withdrawing, to choose all necessary officers, and especially a committee from time to time to bring the treasurer to account, and if need be to prosecute actions for that purpose. Now suppose such an association to be formed, and to have accumulated, by its own industry or the donations of others, a large estate;—would it not be deemed, for the preservation of its rights, a corporate body? or would it be sufficient, for the protection of these rights, and for the identity and perpetual succession of the body itself, that the city was expressly constituted by its charter a corporation? But what connection had the city, as such, with this business of pilotage! having had no agency in the creation of the body originally, or in continuing its existence afterwards. Under these circumstances, might it not well be said, this association was a voluntary one, authorized by law;—every principle of justice requires it should be sustained;—and the law will sustain it, whether the city desires its preservation or not, by deeming it a corporation.

"And if the churches are corporations, it by no means follows, that because they are incidental and subordinate ones, *even if they are so*, advantage can be taken of any abuse of their powers, amounting to forfeiture, before judgement of forfeiture has been pronounced."

quire of C. J. Shaw in what light he would regard the churches of Massachusetts, *previous to their connexion* with any incorporated societies. In what light would he regard these bodies when, *before there were any parishes in the land*, they raised money, by "rates" and "compulsion by levies" to build their houses of worship, and "by way of taxation" for the support of their ministers? In what light would he regard the first church in Plymouth when, in 1644, while yet there were no parishes, and before parochial power was committed to the towns, it purchased of the natives "in the name of the church," and the Court of the colony "granted unto the church," all the territory now included in the towns of Eastham, Wellfleet, and Orleans? Did not these and the like acts, which at that time were common to the churches, imply the possession of corporate powers? And if the churches then were corporations, when, and by what act, have they been disfranchised? When did they become *unincorporate*?

But C. J. Shaw insists, in the second place, that the act of 1754, incorporating the deacons, necessarily implies that the churches are not themselves corporations. Mr. Strong draws directly the opposite conclusion from this act, and, as it seems to us, with infallible sequence.

"Upon any other hypothesis, the language of the title and preamble and other parts of both statutes is utterly inexplicable. Had churches, at the passing of the first statute in 1754, been other than corporate bodies to some extent, how naturally would the act have been entitled "an act for the securing and rendering effectual"—instead of "better securing and rendering more effectual" donations to pious and charitable uses; and how obviously, too, would that clause in the preamble,—"but doubts have arisen in what cases such donations and grants may operate so as to go in succession," either have given place to some other form of expression, or have been expunged altogether. The very frame and fashion of the act, therefore, induce a violent presumption, that the legislature regarded the churches, at the time of passing it, as sustaining for some purposes a corporate character.

"But that this must be the true construction of the statute of 1754 is evident also from another consideration. The deacons of the several churches are authorized to take in succession, and are made a body corporate for this purpose. But how are they to take in succession, without the existence of some body in which is supposed to be vested the power of making successive appointments to that office? They cannot have the power themselves of appointing their successors, and their successors are not to be appointed by the government, or any judicial tribunal, as trustees may sometimes be by a Judge of Probate, or a court of chancery. By whom then are they to be chosen or appointed? Manifestly by the churches. The churches then are supposed to have a perpetual existence, and having no new powers given them for this purpose by the act, they must, in the contemplation of the legislature, have possessed those powers, viz. the power of self-perpetuation and appointment to office, before the act was passed."

"In confirmation of this principle, if any confirmation be at all requisite, we would call the attention of the court to other parts of the same statute.

"The churches have power to call their deacons, or the new corporation, to an account. These deacons take property, divided or granted to them in

* See Winthrop's Hist. Vol. ii. pp. 31, 93.

† Hist. Coll. Vol. viii. p. 165.

perpetual succession, and the grant of the power to choose a committee to call them to an account, if it mean any thing, must confer a power, corresponding, in its extent or duration, with the extent or duration of the estate vested in those who are to render it. But that is an estate in perpetual succession—and the power given, therefore, must be perpetual, and the body by which it is to be exercised must have a perpetual existence.

“But the committee thus chosen are authorized not only to call the deacons, or other church officers, to an account, but if need be, to *commence and prosecute any suits, touching the same*. Here then authority is given by law for the prosecution of suits for the benefit of the church, and by agents of its own appointment; and it will hardly be doubted, whatever may be the form of action, that the power conferred is a power conferred upon the church. But *how* are such suits to be commenced? In the name of the church? Then the church must be a corporation. But if in the name of the committee—a committee of what body? chosen by whom? The church. Their character must then be disclosed upon the record, and the church, to this extent, must possess corporate powers.”

To the reasoning in these last sentences C. J. Shaw replies, by resorting to his favorite assumption of the dependent existence of the churches, and their indissoluble connexion with some organized society. “The corporate character of the religious society ascertains the church, the election of this body constitutes the committee, and the power to sue vests in the committee, by force of the statute.” As the point here assumed is manifestly the hinge on which the whole case turns, we really think there ought to have been some effort made to support it. It ought to have been clearly proved.

C. J. Shaw says that, in the early times of this Commonwealth, “churches were respected for their piety and utility, and their rights were recognized and acquiesced in by general consent, *without being defined or secured by law*.”—Now it is easy to show that this assertion is without foundation; and in showing it, it will be made to appear, that the act of 1754 produced no real alteration in the legal state of the churches, but was intended, as expressed in the preamble, “for the *better securing*” of what was comparatively secured before, and secured in much the same way. No one, who has read the Cambridge Platform, can doubt that the rights of the churches are there “defined;” and none who know the history of that instrument can reasonably doubt that, by means of it, the rights of the churches were intended to be “secured by law.” The Synod which framed the Platform was not a mere voluntary association of Ministers and Delegates;—it was constituted by *order of the General Court*;* the members were supported, while in session, at the public charge; the Platform, when framed, was “presented to the Court for consideration and acceptance;” and the same “was most thankfully *accepted and approved*.”† “It passed the test,” says Hubbard, “of the *whole General Court*, both magistrates and deputies, and the practice of

* “The order was sent to the churches within this jurisdiction; and to the churches in other jurisdictions, a letter was sent withal.” Winthrop’s Hist. Vol. ii. p. 269.

† Mather, Vol. ii. p. 182.

it was commended to all the churches of the jurisdiction." Hist. p. 550. This act, or order, 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. Accordingly the Platform has been customarily denominated our "religious charter," "the religious constitution of the colonies," the "constitution of our Congregational churches," &c.* But the Platform secures to the churches, through their deacons, in like manner as the act of 1754, 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 [there were no parishes in these days to provide for ministers] and of such as are in necessity." Chap. vii. The act of 1754, so far as it relates to Congregational churches, was little more than a confirming or re-enacting of this provision of the Platform. It was simply defining and confirming rights which had been legally secured to the churches more than a hundred years before.

We are now prepared to look at the precise point in question respecting church rights, as narrowed down by the recent discussions in regard to the subject. It is simply this: *Does the church possess an independent existence? Can it exist, separate from a parish or religious society? Or can it separate itself from a society with which it is connected, and still retain its existence and identity?*—C. J. Shaw answers these questions in the negative.

"The identity of a Congregational church, used in the sense already explained, must be considered as depending upon the identity of the parish or religious society with which it is connected. In this view, its identity may or may not depend upon locality. If the religious society with which it is connected may change its place of meeting and worship, without affecting its identity, as most societies may, at least within certain limits, the same change might take place in regard to the church, and yet it would continue the same church. It is sufficient for the purposes of the present inquiry to say, that when a parish or religious society is, by its constitution, limited to any place, the church of such society, by whatever terms designated, is equally limited, being necessarily associated and indissolubly connected with

* See Hutchinson's Hist. Vol. ii. p. 13. Trumbull's Hist. of Conn. Vol. i. p. 289, and Mass. Term Reports, Vol. iii. p. 165. A noted Unitarian "Layman" of Boston, speaking of the Platform, says, "A law was necessary to call the Synod which framed it, and their proceedings were considered of no account, till adopted by the Legislature." THE PLATFORM "WAS DULY PASSED INTO A LAW BY THE LEGISLATIVE ADOPTION." In the same connexion, he speaks of a church as "a body corporate." See "Inquiry into the Right to change the Ecc. Constitution of the Cong. Churches of Mass." pp. 28—30. Notes p. ii.

such religious society, and incapable of subsisting independently of it.—Again, “If a church is rightly described as an association of all or part of the members of a religious society, and united for the celebration of Christian ordinances, it is necessarily incident to and inseparably connected with such parish or religious society.”

In support of these positions, which go to the determination of the whole point at issue, there are really *no arguments* in the decision before us. The positions are *assumed* in the *definition* given of a church;—but not a word is said to show the correctness of this definition,—its *accordance with the Platform*, or with the *established usages of the country*. It will be easy to show that it is not in accordance with either. The definition is as follows: “The church is composed of those persons, *being members of “a particular” parish or religious society*, who unite themselves together for the purpose of celebrating the Lord’s supper.” Or thus; “a church is rightly described as an association of *all or part of the members of a religious society*, and united for the celebration of Christian ordinances.” According to this definition, as in both instances expressed, and according to the use made of it in the argument, it is essential to the existence of a church that it should *grow out of some religious society*; and it is essential to membership in a particular church, that *the individuals belonging to it should also belong to the society with which the church is connected*. But can either of these positions be sustained?—The first is refuted by the fact, that *the church*, in this country, was the *original* institution—that churches existed here long before there were any parishes out of which they could grow, or with which they could be connected. And in forming new religious establishments in later times, it has been more common, as well as more in conformity with ancient usage, first to gather a church, and then organize a society to co-operate with it, than first to organize a society, and then gather a church out of it.

As to the second of the positions involved in the definition above given, viz. that it is essential to membership in a particular church, that *the individuals belonging to it should belong to the society with which the church is connected*; it is plainly in contradiction, both to the Platform, to the general understanding and usage of the churches, and to previous decisions of the Supreme Court. In the definition of a church, as given in the Platform and in our old ecclesiastical writers, nothing is said about the connexion of the church, or of its members, with any particular religious society, nor is there the least intimation that any such connexion was thought to be necessary. “A Congregational church,” says the Platform, “is, by the institution of Christ, a part of the militant visible church, consisting of a company of saints by calling, united into one body by a holy covenant, for the public worship of God, and the mutual edification one of another in the fellowship of the Lord Jesus.” Chap. ii. Suppose C. J.

Shaw had adopted this ancient and acknowledged definition of a church, instead of framing one for himself. It obviously would have deranged and defeated his whole argument.

The thirteenth Chapter of the Platform from the sixth section to the end, which treats of "the removal of church members from one church to another," is in direct opposition to the *main principle* of this decision. According to the decision, when church members leave the society with which the church is connected, they cease to be members of the church. And even if a majority of them leave the society, and leave it by solemn vote as a church, this alters not the case at all—they still leave the church behind. But according to the express provisions of the Platform, when church members leave a parish or a religious society, they *retain* their connexion with the church from which they remove, until they are dismissed, and recommended, and *actually received* into some other church. And these provisions of the Platform are according to the understanding and usage of the churches of Massachusetts, from their first planting to the present time. It may well be doubted whether there is now a church in the land, which has not more or less acknowledged members, who do not belong to the society with which the church is connected. Nothing is more common than for members of the churches in the city to reside in the country; or for the members of a church in one town to reside in another. Committees are often appointed by churches to visit and confer with their non-resident members;—and the transfers of church relation by dismission and recommendation, which are continually taking place, are all directly in face of the principle, that a person cannot be a member of a church any longer than he is a member of the society with which the church is connected. Indeed, C. J. Parsons says, in a sentence already quoted, "The members of a church are generally inhabitants of the parish; but *this inhabitancy is not a necessary qualification for a church member.*" (9 Mass. 297.) And Mr. Strong says, with truth and propriety,

"There is not a church in the Commonwealth, in which any of the leading formalities prescribed by the Platform in the admission of members are observed, (and the number of those abandoning them is exceedingly small,) which considers continuity of connection with the congregation in public worship, or with the parish associated with the church for that purpose, as at all essential to the rights of her members, or an interruption in that connection as at all absolving the church from the duties she owes them."

* Even the two members of the church in Brookfield, who remained with the parish, forgot for the time, or did not know, that the majority of their brethren, who had left the parish, were no longer members of the church; for C. J. Shaw tells us that they have "passed *some censure* upon" these seceding brethren. p. 5. So hard is it for persons, when they begin to wander, to wander straight! or to avoid, in time, crossing their own track! These seceding brethren were either members of the church, or not. If they were members, they certainly were a great majority of the members, and (according to all the rules of voluntary associations) must have constituted the *body*. And if they were not members, why did the two brethren and their associates undertake to *censure them*?

In the course of discussion, C. J. Shaw throws out a sentiment which perhaps he intended as an argument in favor of the principle assumed in his definition, that in separating from a society, a church necessarily loses its identity and its existence. "Otherwise," says he, "the anomaly would be presented of a society, competent to settle a minister and to support public worship, and yet *incapable of having a church or celebrating the Christian ordinances.*" p. 46. In reply to this we need only inquire, whether—in a society thus deserted of its church—a *new church* might not be gathered? and whether this has not often been done? When the first church in Dorchester removed to Windsor, Conn., a new church was soon after gathered. The same was done, after the removal of the first church in Cambridge to Hartford; and has been done in many other cases.—C. J. Shaw sees no difficulty, when church members are dissatisfied, in their withdrawing as individuals, and organizing themselves anew as a church and society; and we see no more difficulty (to make the worst of it) in case a dissatisfied church are permitted to withdraw, in gathering a new church from among those who remain. Perhaps it may be objected to such a measure, that the *name* of the seceding church might not, after the separation, be any longer appropriate. But in such case, it might easily change its name. "We know not," says C. J. Parsons, "why corporations may not be known by several names, as well as individuals." (7 Mass. 444.)

We now proceed to offer arguments to show, that *our churches have an independent existence*—that they can exist *separate* from parishes—or that they *can withdraw* from the religious societies with which they are connected, and still retain their existence and identity.

I. The pious founders of these churches intended to form them after the model of the *primitive* Christian churches. This no one can doubt, who is at all acquainted with the writings of the fathers of New England. The subject of church government was in their time an engrossing topic of inquiry and discussion, not only in this country, but in Europe. It was on the subject of church government chiefly, that our fathers dissented from the church of England. It was on this account that they were persecuted, and obliged to wander to these shores. Here, they professed and intended to organize their churches agreeably—as they used to express it—to "the pattern in the mount"—according to the model of the Apostles and primitive Christians.* But who supposes that the primitive churches had no independent existence—that they were so connected with precincts and par-

* "I beg," says President Oakes, in an Election Sermon preached May 7, 1673 "that we may keep the *King's highway*, the way that *Christ himself hath cast up for us*, and that our worthy predecessors have travelled in before us; the way that hath been stated, not in the private models of some fanciful and conceited men, but in the *Platform of Church Discipline*. The truest understanding of these things is from the Platform deduced out of the word of God."

ishes, with mere worldly corporations—that they could not break away, and live? With what parish was the church at Rome originally connected! or the church at Corinth! or the church at Antioch! The very idea of such a connexion is preposterous. Yet our fathers professed and intended to form our churches after the model of those which have been named. Can we suppose, then, that they did not intend to give to the churches an independent existence? that they intended to make them the mere appendages of a parish, and not capable of acting or existing by themselves? The supposition is wholly inadmissible. But many of the churches of Massachusetts have continued without interruption from the days of our fathers. What they were then, they are now. They have surrendered none of their independence, or of their original rights.

2. It is impossible that the doctrine now inculcated from the bench, respecting the dependent condition of the churches, and their inseparable connexion with incorporated societies, should have been the doctrine of the early settlers of this country, because, as we have already stated, the church here was the *original* institution. It existed and flourished many years before there were any parishes in the land, and before parochial power was given to the towns. C. J. Parker dates the commencement of "legal obligation" on the part of the towns to provide for the support of religious institutions, in 1652. (16 Mass. 516.) In the oldest edition of the Colony Laws, the date is 1654. Previous to this, not a few of the churches now existing in Massachusetts had been many years established. But how established? Not in connexion with incorporated parishes; for there were no such bodies in existence, and the support of public worship devolved directly on the churches.*—It behoves those who hold the new doctrines respecting our churches, to show *when* their independent existence ceased—to show when and how they became so connected with the parochial incorporations, as to be incapable of existing without them.

3. There is nothing in the *nature* and *constitution* of a church, which implies the necessity of its connexion with a parochial incorporation, but much to the contrary. The parish has no concern in originating the church; or in its continuance; or in determining who shall, or shall not be members. It has no

* It has been common in every period of our history, and is so now, for Congregational churches to be gathered, previous to the formation of any society with which they are to co-operate.—The proof that during the first 20 years after the settlement of Massachusetts, the support of religious institutions devolved directly on the churches, is conclusive. Gov. Winthrop informs us that, in his time, some churches raised money, for the building of meeting houses, "by way of rates," and "compulsion by levies;" and for the support of their pastors, "by way of taxation." This "was very offensive to some," particularly to those that were taxed who were *not* church members." (Hist. Vol. ii. pp. 31, 93.) Hubbard gives us the same account (Hist. p. 412), and Emerson the same. (Hist. of the first Church in Boston, p. 77.) It is further evident from the Platform that, at the time of its formation, in 1648, the church had "to provide for the table of the ministers." Chap. 7. Sec. 8.

power to compel a person to join the church; or the church to receive one against its will; or to hinder the church from receiving whom it pleases; or to control the church in any of its appropriate acts or concerns. If the church is disposed to censure or excommunicate a disorderly member, or to put an end to its own existence by a voluntary dissolution; the parish has no preventive power. Where, then, is the necessary, indissoluble *connexion* between these bodies?

We find nothing of this connexion in the Platform, but every thing working the other way. The Platform every where takes for granted, that the church is an independent association, capable of subsisting and acting by itself.

That which forms or constitutes a church is its *covenant*. (See Platform. Chap. IV.) And where is the church covenant in which it is implied, that this spiritual body is the mere appendage of a parish, and cannot exist in a state of separation? We know not how some Unitarian churches may have lately modified the language of their covenants; but we challenge inquiry into the *ancient* covenants of our churches, and hazard nothing in asserting that not one will be found, in which the idea of a necessary dependence upon the parish is expressed or implied. Individuals associate, on the ground of a common understanding of the Scriptures, for mutual watchfulness, and edification, and for celebrating the ordinances of the Gospel. They worship, perhaps, or the most of them, in connexion with some parish or religious society; but they have never given themselves up, as a body, to this society, nor is there any thing expressed or implied in their articles of agreement, which bind them to it. How then do they become bound? They have not bound themselves, and who else has power to bind them? They have not covenanted with one another, or with the society, that they would take it for *better or for worse*, and would not separate themselves from it; and if they are pleased to vote a separation, who shall hinder them? Who shall say that, in so doing, they have forfeited their existence as a church?

4. The new doctrines in regard to the legal dependence and vassalage of the churches have already resulted, and will result, in cases of great injustice and oppression.—Here is the church, a spiritual body, intended to be formed according to the institutions of Christ, and professing subjection to him alone; but really subject to a body of men “who neither indulge the hopes, nor submit themselves to be controlled by the faith and obligations of Christians.”

“Let a parish, with which a church thus stripped of her supposed rights is connected, become ever so regardless of the Christian faith, or the duties it enjoins;—let the teachers it sustains be ever so corrupt in principle or in practice;—the church must submit—there is no possible redemption. If she utters her complaints, her voice is drowned by the shouts of her foes; for even in this land of the pilgrims, the law has given them, and deliberately

given them, the ascendancy! And if she attempts to fly, the very flight to which she is compelled will induce a forfeiture of every species of property she may possess, and furnish such conclusive evidence of guilt, as will be followed by the extinction of all her civil and legal rights!

"Is this the body, we would gravely ask, which had such "full liberty to gather her members into a church estate?"—such "free liberty to exercise all the ordinances of God according to the Scripture?"—such "free exercise of the discipline and censures of Christ according to the rules of the word?" (Col. law, 1641.) Are these the churches, which are entitled "to use, exercise and enjoy all their accustomed privileges and liberties, and to be encouraged in the peaceable and regular enjoyment thereof?" (Prov. law 1692 and Stat. of 1800.) And is this a practical illustration of the value of that great principle of the Bill of Rights—that "every denomination of Christians, demeaning themselves peaceably, and as good subjects of the Commonwealth, shall be equally under the protection of the law?" (Art. 3.)

In such a state of things, it is impossible that cases of extreme oppression and injustice should not occur. Not a few of this description have occurred already, and in the present state of our ecclesiastical affairs, more are to be expected. Take the following as a very supposable case: Here is a church, in which a sum of money has accumulated from the stated contributions for the support of the Lord's Table. With this money a lot of land is purchased, to be holden by the church, and to be used under its direction for the benefit of the Pastor. But soon after the land comes into possession of the church, the Pastor is taken sick and dies. In their attempts to settle a successor, the church and parish disagree. A majority of the parish are determined to impose a pastor on the church; one of different sentiments, and of immoral life. The church remonstrates and entreats, but to no purpose. Supported by the late decisions, the unprincipled part of the town, who have all now become members of the parish, will have their own way. Their minister is settled, and the church has no alternative but to withdraw. And they cannot withdraw, except as individuals,—in which case they forfeit their existence as a church, and leave all their property, even to their communion furniture and records, behind them! In these circumstances, what shall they do? They know their property is their own. They have purchased it with their own money; it is held in trust for them by their own deacons; and these rapacious parishioners have no more right to it, than they have to the garments which the church members wear. But what shall the brethren of the church do? They must submit and *suffer*, and wait for justice at a higher tribunal than that of their country.

We may suppose another instance. Here is a feeble church and society situated in a large and wealthy town. They have struggled through many difficulties, and against much opposition, from the irreligious and profane; but they have been united among themselves, and have succeeded in maintaining the institutions of the Gospel. At length, one of the best and wealthiest members of the church dies, and leaves a large landed estate,

duly and legally secured to the church. No trust is expressed in the legacy, but it is to go in succession, and the income is to be appropriated according to the direction of the church. Immediately, a majority of the inhabitants of the town are seized with a strong desire to have the management of this property. They throw up their certificates, flock into the society, turn out the existing minister, and propose settling one of their own liking. The church do all in their power to prevent it, but they are disregarded and overwhelmed, and the society's minister is settled. The members of the church have now no other resource but to withdraw; and in doing this, they must commit ecclesiastical suicide, and leave their inheritance to their persecutors! And the gift of their dear brother, on whose grave the grass has not yet begun to grow, must 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.

5. The doctrine that the church cannot exist but 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 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 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.

6. The doctrine that a church cannot dissolve its local connexions, and change its place of worship, without forfeiting its existence, is refuted by the *frequent actual removal* of Congregational churches, both in this country and in England. The thing which it is now pretended cannot be done, often *has been done*; and the record of it is a matter of indisputable 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 enterprize 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 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.¶¶ The church at Midway in Georgia removed from Dorchester, Mass. more than a hundred and thirty years ago.** The church at

* Hubbard, p. 117.

† Morton's Memorial, pp. 231, 406.

‡ See Hutchinson, vol. i. pp. 93, 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.

** See Dr. Holmes' Anniversary Sermons, p. 28.

Granville, Ohio, was formed at Granville, Mass. in 1804, and removed in a body to the former place.* And to mention but one more instance; in 1821, the church in Granby, Mass., separated itself from the society with which it had long co-operated in the support of religious institutions, and became connected, by vote, with another society; and yet, according to a decision of C. J. Shaw, this church was the *same body* subsequent to a change of relation that it was before.† (2 Pick. 403.)

7. The doctrine that the church has no independent existence—that it is indissolubly united to a parish, and incapable of existing but in such connexion, is comparatively a *new doctrine*. It was not the doctrine of our courts, or of any portion of our clergy, or of our citizens, liberal or orthodox, till within a few of the last years.—It could not have been the doctrine of the early settlers of Massachusetts, since, as we have shown already, for more than twenty years after the settlement commenced, there were no parishes in the land, but the churches exercised parochial power. It could not have been the doctrine of our ablest Jurists during the latter half of the last century, as is evident from the exhibition which has been given of their sentiments in the previous pages of this work. “Lawyers in those days would no sooner have questioned the independent existence and powers of the church, than they would whether there were any churches, or meeting-houses, or ministers in the country.”‡ It could not have been the doctrine of Unitarian ministers and delegates so late as the ordination of Mr. Lamson at Dedham, in 1818; for the Council convened on that occasion say, that while they “esteem the concurrence of the church and parish in the settlement of a minister as very desirable, they believe that EACH OF THESE BODIES HAS A RIGHT TO ELECT A PASTOR FOR ITSELF, when it shall be satisfied that its own welfare, and the general interests of religion require the measure; *this right being secured to the church by the essential principles of Congregational polity*, and to the parish by the Constitution and laws of the Commonwealth.”|| The language here used necessarily implies the right of a church to dissolve its connexion with a parish, and to institute public worship by itself. For suppose each of these bodies should do, what it is here declared they have a right to do,—should elect a Pastor for itself, and the choice should not fall on the same individual; how are they to proceed and maintain their rights, unless they are allowed to separate?

Indeed, so far as we can learn, the doctrine under consideration

* See Boston Recorder, Vol. xiv. No. 7.

† And why, on the same principle, was not the church in Brookfield the *same body*, subsequent to its change of relation, that it was before, and entitled, as such, to retain its sacramental furniture.

‡ See Spirit of the Pilgrims, vol. ii. pp. 622—629.

|| The Committee of Council who prepared this Result were Doctors Reed, Kirkland, Channing, and Lowell, and Hon. John Davis.

was first broached in the case of Boutell and others vs. Cowdin, in 1812, by the counsel for the defendant; but no opinion was expressed by the Court. (9 Mass. 254.) It was *decided* in the case of "the deacons of the first church in Sandwich vs. Tilden," but the case was not argued or reported. (16 Mass. 503. n.) It was again *decided* in the case of Baker and Fales, in 1820, by C. J. Parker.

"It is not to be disguised," says Mr. Strong, "that about the period of this latter decision, principles were first publicly advanced, and have been reiterated in various ways since, indicating great and manifest changes in the law upon this subject, as that law had been previously understood by the great body of the people; and should those principles be recognized and established, as the law of the land, we have no hesitation in saying, that the year eighteen hundred and twenty may be considered as the commencement of a new era in the history of our state government."

In the former discussions of this subject, it has been considered a matter of great importance to prove the right of the churches to elect their own Pastors. This right, C. J. Shaw by implication admits.

"Using the term 'corporation' in a loose sense, and without technical exactness, it may be true that these bodies (the churches), to some extent and for some purposes, have a corporate character. The same may be said of all the various associations and voluntary societies formed in the community, for any charitable, useful, or innocent object. They are known and designated by a collective name, may hold meetings, elect officers, pass votes, raise money by voluntary assessment, and direct its disbursement."

That churches, like all other "voluntary societies," may be permitted to *elect their own officers*, implies all that we have ever claimed in relation to this subject.* We do not ask that the church should elect a minister for the parish. Indeed, such a provision, were it freely granted, we should be unwilling to accept. Nor do we ask that the church should be allowed to invade any parish right whatever. Only grant her the privilege, like any other voluntary society, of 'holding meetings, electing officers, raising money by voluntary assessment, and directing its disbursement,' and we are satisfied. And why should the church

* Although C. J. Shaw seems here to admit all we could ask, it is doubtful whether he means any thing by it, as the course of his argument would go to prove (what he expressly asserts in another place) that 'the church can have no Pastor, no *presiding officer*, distinct from the minister of the parish.' "Considering a church, gathered in a religious society, in the sense in which it is used, and in which alone it can be used in this relation, it seems to follow conclusively from the principles already stated, that when a minister ceases to be the teacher of piety, religion and morality in such society, he ceases to be the Pastor of such church." This sentiment may be compared with the following language of the late Gov. Sullivan: "I consider the character of a Minister of the Gospel, settled in the *common and ordinary way of New England, as THE PASTOR OF THE CHURCH, and THE MINISTER OF THE PARISH.*" He proceeds to show, that a Pastor may be dismissed from his church, and "still be the *minister of the parish*, and entitled to his salary." Reply to Thatcher, p. 20. The sentiment under consideration may also be compared with the Result of the Council which ordained Mr. Lampton at Dedham, as quoted on our last page. "Each of these bodies" (the church and the parish) "has a right to elect a Pastor for itself" &c.

be denied this privilege, which is freely permitted to all other associations? Why should a society, claiming to be an institution of Christ, and gathered for the noblest purposes, be declared incapable of privileges and rights, which were certainly enjoyed by the primitive churches, and by the churches of our fathers, and which are permitted to the meanest voluntary associations in the land?*

We have thus gone through with an examination and vindication of the rights of the Congregational churches of Massachusetts, so far as we think them invaded in the decision before us. It is exceedingly to be regretted that there should be this difference of opinion between our judicial authorities, and the great body of professing Christians in the Commonwealth. But so it is;—and what is to be done? What is the *duty* of the churches at the present crisis? Are they to *acquiesce* in the recent decisions, and acknowledge that they have no independent existence and rights? that they cannot elect their own officers, and manage independently their own concerns? that they are the mere appendages, the *shadows*, of their respective parishes, and can no more exist in a state of separation, than the shadow can exist without its substance? An acknowledgement such as this, the public may rest assured, neither the churches nor their sup-

* The following pithy and sensible remarks on this subject are from the (Unitarian) Christian Register of Sept. 10th, 1831.

"A congregational church is a company of professed Christians, possessing the exclusive right of self government in matters of religion, and so far independent as to be amenable to no earthly tribunal for the exercise of its rights and prerogatives.

"Its rights are, to form its own terms of agreement; its own conditions of membership; its own constructions of doctrine; its own laws of discipline; accountable only to the great Head of all Christian churches.

"A Congregational church has, most clearly, the exclusive right to determine who may be members of its own body, and to elect its own officers. If others than those, contrary to its own consent could become members and influence its elections, its very existence must become a nullity. It has the right of electing, not merely its own teacher of religion, but its own pastor, its own presiding officer, its own minister of holy seals. The imposition of a pastor and presiding officer upon a church, by a body politic not acknowledging its terms of agreement, its obligations and the sanctity of its seals, would seem to me to be the essence of tyranny. A congregation or society of Unitarians might have it in their power to impose a pastor to break the bread of life and administer government to a Calvinistic or Baptist church, and *vice versa*. Societies who associate for the support of religious teachers do not consider themselves as *professing* to be Christians. Their general object is, not to take upon themselves the obligations of Christians, but to be *instructed* upon the general subject of religion. They give no pledge that they will ever receive the seals of membership in the church, or consent to its administration of discipline. I think no enlightened and good citizen would lift up his hand in the election of a teacher to be imposed on the church as its minister or seals—to break to it the sacramental bread. It cannot be reasonably supposed, that what are called religious societies, in electing their teachers, consider themselves as exercising a right of membership in the church. If they supposed this, would not many persons of tender conscience, or influenced by sentiments of most serious regard to Christian institutions, be induced to shrink from measures that confound together civil and religious institutions. Parishes and religious societies are known to our constitution and laws as bodies politic under the protection of the State. If the churches be merged in them, they either lose their ecclesiastical existence, or there is a complete amalgamation of church and state. Or rather, the church loses its existence, and the *body politic* assumes the keys of the kingdom of God and all the attributes of ecclesiastical prerogative. This cannot be reconciled to the principles of religious liberty."

porters will ever make. They have investigated this subject for themselves. They have endeavored to do it coolly and thoroughly. They have attended to what has been offered on the other side; and so far from being convinced, they are the more confirmed in their former views. They are satisfied that there has been a departure, a wide and manifest departure, within a few of the last years, from the previous and general understanding of the community in regard to this subject.* Others may adopt these newly invented notions, as a matter of present convenience and interest; but the Orthodox churches choose to adhere to the good old way. Others may go to the civil authorities to learn what a church of Christ is; but the Orthodox churches prefer to appeal to the New Testament, to the Apostles and their successors, to the Platform, and to the institutions of the venerable fathers of New England. Some churches may be so recreant to the principles of the Gospel and of their ancient supporters as to rejoice in the admission that they have no independent existence; but the Orthodox churches will never be of their number.—There will be, indeed, no open rebellion on the part of these churches. Like the sufferers of old, they choose rather to 'take the spoiling of their goods,' than violently to resist the powers that be. But to all whom it may concern be it distinctly known, that the Orthodox churches of Massachusetts do not *acquiesce* in these late decisions. They believe them to be contradictory to the Bible, to reason, to law, and to fact as recorded on the page of history; and they *cannot acquiesce* in them. They can submit, and suffer, and pray for those who injure them, and wait the restoration of their privileges and rights; but that they should *acquiesce* in measures which go to strip them of their independence, and throw them defenceless into the hands of their enemies, is more than ought to be expected of them, and more than they can yield.

* So late as 1815, the Unitarians of Boston were strenuous advocates for the Cambridge Platform. A noted "Layman" represented the Platform, at that time, as our "religious charter," as "our present church constitution;" as "the rule of discipline and palladium of our religious liberties." He even urged, that "a covenant be instantly formed, by the friends of religious freedom and of the Cambridge Platform, for its defence against all schemes of innovation." *Are You a Christian or a Calvinist*, pp. 70—72.

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DR. TAYLOR'S REPLY TO DR. TYLER'S EXAMINATION.

Dr. Tyler in his 'Remarks on my letter to Dr. Hawes,' explicitly says, "That to the eleven articles of my creed, he does not object." He more than insinuates however, that I am engaged in "a gradual, undermining process," which tends to introduce "the great errors which have infested the Christian Church," and to lead "my pupils to renounce some of the fundamental doctrines of the Gospel." The *sole* ground of this alarm, as stated by Dr. Tyler himself is, "that my *theories* involve principles subversive of some of the most prominent and important articles of my creed."

In reply I remark,

I. That as the word "theory" is used by Dr. Tyler, *I have propounded none, which is either novel or anti-orthodox.* By a 'theory,' Dr. Tyler means a philosophical explanation of a given fact, which professes to assign the *actual* reason of that fact.

In respect then, to the first of the doctrines under consideration, viz. the decree of God respecting the existence of sin, I have, in the above import of the word, advanced *no theory* whatever. I have said, that the theory, which affirms, that *sin is the necessary means of the greatest good*, CANNOT BE PROVED to be true; and have attempted to show, that the arguments used to support it, are inconclusive—that it is incapable of proof,—that there are apparently unanswerable objections against it. But I have never attempted to show, what the *true or actual reason* is, why sin is permitted to exist. In view of

the claim, made by Dr. Tyler and others, that there can be no *other possible* reason except the one in question, I have said, that another reason *may be* conceived of as possible; and have stated, what that reason *may be*. I have said, that sin, in respect to divine prevention, *may be* incidental to the best possible system;—or, that it *may be* true, that if God created those beings and adopted that system of measures and of influence, which were necessary to secure the greatest amount of holiness and happiness which he could secure, sin would exist. I have said, that God therefore, *may* have preferred the existence of sin rather than not create these beings and adopt this system. But while I have said, that such *may* be the reason why sin exists, I have never said, that it *is* the reason, nor that some other, is not the reason. Contrary then to Dr. Tyler's repeated representations, I have advanced *no theory*, which professes to assign the *actual* reason of the fact, that sin exists.

Nor have I attached any importance to the above hypothetical statement, except as showing that we are not, by the nature of the case, shut up to the conclusion, 'that sin is the necessary means of the greatest good.' This, while no *possible* alternative is presented to the mind, will naturally and almost necessarily be admitted as the true reason for the existence of sin. Hence many excellent men have adopted the theory in question; and when pressed by Arminians, Universalists and Infidels, with the absurdities and contradictions, in which it involves many doctrines of the Gospel, have resolved the difficulties created solely by their theory, into 'inscrutable mysteries,' the solution of which must be reserved to a future state. In calling this theory in question, I was compelled, therefore, to state some other solution as *possible*,—to present some point on which the mind might rest, before it could candidly consider the objections to the theory, 'that sin is the necessary means of the greatest good.' For this purpose, it was not necessary to attempt an exhibition of the *true* reason; it was sufficient, if the solution suggested was barely *possible*. If *possible*, it saves us from being shut up, by the nature of the case, to a conclusion, which involves so much difficulty and contradiction. It stands, like the unknown quantity in an algebraic equation as a *representative* of that which may prove at last to be the true reason. It thus presents "a point of rest," to the mind, in relinquishing what I deem a groundless and pernicious theory. It is in this character alone that I have offered this solution—not as *actual*, but simply as *possible* truth.

Should Dr. Tyler reply, that in saying 'that sin in respect to divine prevention, *may be* incidental to the best system,' I have

propounded a *theory*, as he uses the word ; be it so. I have the authority of Dr. Bellamy to bear me out in this. I do not say that Dr. Bellamy has not propounded another theory ; but I say, that he has also propounded and reasoned upon this solution.*—Dr. Woods also, though the professed object of his Letters to me, is to defend the doctrine, that ‘ sin is the necessary means of the greatest good,’ has unequivocally given the same solution which I have supposed *may be* the true one. He supposes ‘ that *the mode of proceeding* which God adopted, (not sin)—though it would not entirely exclude evil, might ultimately raise his kingdom to a higher degree of holiness and happiness than *any other*, and that *in this view* (on this account) God might actually fix upon it.†

As to the theory, that sin is the necessary means of the greatest good, the following remarks from Robert Hall, will show how far it is from being essential to sound orthodoxy. After speaking of ‘ the malignant tendency’ of this theory, he says, “The distinction between producing sin, and approving it for its own sake, with which the doctrine is attempted to be palliated is perfectly futile ; for this is ascribing no more to the Deity, than must in justice be ascribed to the most profligate of mankind, who never commit sin for its own sake, but purely with a view to certain advantages with which it is connected.” Speaking of those whose sins have been the means of the greatest good, he says, “Persons of this description, are a species of benefactors.—They are the scavengers of the universe ; and having done a great deal of necessary though dirty work, they are entitled to commiseration at present, and to proportionable compensation in another state of being. How admirably are these views fitted to promote a horror of sin ! What tenderness of conscience, fear of offending, deep humility and penitence may we expect to find in Mr. Belsham and his admirers ? Doubtless their eyes are a fountain of tears, &c.” Works Vol. 2. p. 329.

Without appealing to other authorities, it may be safely affirmed, that a very large part of the orthodox clergy of this country reject the theory, that *sin is the necessary means of the greatest good* ; and choose simply to say ‘ we know not the reason of the divine permission of sin.’ This ground is taken by Dr. Green, who may be considered, as the representative on this point, of the old Calvinists generally.‡ It is taken also, by very many of the orthodox clergy of New England ;

* Vide C. Spect. for 1830, p. 529.

† Letter p. 77.

‡ He says, “As Dr. Woods has to defend the principle, that sin is the necessary means of the greatest good, which his whole argument admits, it is here that his opponent will have him at an advantage—an advantage which we perceive he has already taken.” C. Adv. Vol. viii. p. 632.

while the theory of Dr. Tyler though embraced by others, is uniformly adopted by no theological sect or class except the high Hopkinsians. As to myself, I have never denied that the best answer to the question 'whence cometh evil,' is, 'Even so, Father, for so it seemeth good in thy sight.' It is only when the theory, that 'sin is the necessary means of the greatest good,' is so brought forward as to pervert the doctrines of the Gospel in the popular mind, and to countenance some of the worst of errors; and is insisted on as the only possible solution of the problem, that it becomes needful to show, that some other solution *may be* the true one. In this, I have the satisfaction to *know*, that I concur with very many of the ablest orthodox divines in this country, while with a large majority, in answer to the question, what is the true reason that sin exists, I frankly say, I *know not*. Dr. Tyler, Dr. Woods, and others, are the men, who speculate and theorize, and profess to fathom these high counsels of God, not I. Let them defend their theory, if they can. Let them convince the Christian community if they can, that men please God better on the whole by every sin they commit, than they would by obedience to his perfect law. But let them not charge me with a spirit of bold speculation, because I do not adopt their theory. It is rather hard measure, to be reproached with subverting the Gospel, merely because, without professing, after their example to explore the counsels of God, I have ventured to question the success of their scrutiny, and to conjecture, that there *may be* another reason for the permission of sin, than that it is better on the whole than holiness in its stead.

In respect to the doctrine of depravity, the theory to which Dr. Tyler objects, is this, "that mankind come into the world with the same nature as that with which Adam was created, and which the child Jesus possessed."* If Dr. Tyler means, by "the same nature," the same in *degree*, he is, as he supposes he may be, "entirely mistaken." The very passage which he quotes from the Spectator, (for which, by the way, I am not responsible) points out a striking difference between Adam and his posterity, viz. the *higher* degree or strength of propensity &c., with which the latter are first called to moral action. If Dr. Tyler means the same nature *in kind*, so that in this respect we are as truly *human beings* as Adam was, he rightly understands my belief. As to my orthodoxy on this point, it will not suffer by a comparison with that of Dr. Tyler. Pres.

* How the Saviour "was in ALL points tempted like as we are," if he had not, and if we have, a "CONSTITUTIONAL PROPENSITY TO SIN," it may be difficult for Dr. Tyler to show. Probably he will not attempt to reconcile this apostolic declaration with his own theory.

Edwards, to say nothing of very many other distinguished divines, has so unequivocally *denied*, what Dr. Tyler maintains;—*denied* that there is “*any thing*,” “*by any means*,” infused into human nature,—“*any quality* which is not from the *choice* of our minds, *ALTERING the natural constitution, faculties and dispositions* of our souls;”—he so expressly asserts, on the contrary, that the depravity of the heart “*is to be traced to the common, natural principles of self-love, natural appetite &c., which were IN MAN IN INNOCENCE*”—I say, this author so unequivocally denies what Dr. Tyler asserts on this topic, and affirms what I have affirmed, that I need only ask, was Pres. Edwards orthodox?

In respect to the *doctrine of regeneration*, Dr. Tyler objects to my statement, “*that the grace of God is not irresistible, in the primary, proper import of the word, and that it may be resisted by man as a free moral agent.*” Dr. Dwight explicitly rejects the doctrine of *irresistible* grace: and says he is “*ready to question, whether the language does not lead to views concerning this subject which are radically erroneous.*” Sermon 72. Dr. Tyler himself says, “*I am not disposed to vindicate the use of the word, as applied to this subject;*”—meaning evidently, that he is not disposed to vindicate the use of the word in its primary import. Thus he assents to the very position which he seems to attack. He also represents certain divines, whose views he approves, as teaching ‘*that sinners do always resist the Holy Ghost.*’ This certainly looks like *resistible* grace. Indeed, in what respect Dr. Tyler differs from me on this topic, I am at some loss to discover.

Pres. Edwards says, “*The dispute about grace's being resistible or irresistible (speaking of grace when it is effectual) is perfect nonsense, for the effect is on the will; so that it is nonsense, except it be proper to say, that a man with his will can resist his will.*”^{*} By the doctrine of irresistible grace I suppose some to mean, that the sinner under the renewing influence of the Spirit, resists that influence voluntarily and with fixed purpose, until it becomes a natural impossibility for him to resist it any longer. But I have expressly stated my belief, that though the influence of the Spirit in regeneration operates in accordance with the constituted laws of mind, and is an influence which compared with natural power, may be called resistable, is still an influence, which, when exerted for the conversion of the elect, is always infallibly efficacious.

The orthodoxy of this sentiment will not be questioned by any

^{*} Vol. v. pp. 448, 472, 3. Worces. Ed.

who confide in the orthodoxy of the Shorter Catechism, the Synod of Dort, and President Dwight, as illustrated in the following extracts.

"Effectual calling is a work of God's Spirit, whereby, convincing us of our sin and misery, enlightening our minds in the knowledge of Christ, and renewing our wills, he doth persuade and enable us to embrace Jesus Christ, freely offered to us in the Gospel."—[*Westminster Shorter Catechism.*]

"This divine grace of regeneration does not act upon men like stocks and trees, nor take away the properties of his will, or violently compel it while unwilling; but it spiritually quickens, (or vivifies,) heals, corrects, and sweetly, and at the same time, powerfully inclines it."—[*Synod of Dort.*]

"When it is said, that the Agency of the Divine Spirit in renewing the heart of man is *irresistible*, it is probably said, because this agency being an exertion of Omnipotence, is concluded, of course to be irresistible by human power. This seems not, however, to be said on solid grounds. That agency of the Holy Ghost, which, St. Stephen informs us, was resisted by the Jews, and by their fathers, was an exertion of the same Omnipotence; and was yet resisted by human power. I know of nothing in the regenerating agency of the same spirit, except the fact, that it is never resisted, which proves it to be irresistible, any more than that, which the Jews actually resisted. That the Spirit of God can do any thing with man, and constitute man any thing, which he pleases, cannot be questioned. But that he will exert a regenerating agency on the human mind, which man has not a natural power to resist, or which man could not resist, if he would, is far from being satisfactorily evident to me. Indeed, I am ready to question whether this very language does not lead the mind to views concerning this subject, which are radically erroneous.

"The influence which he (Christ) exerts on them by his Spirit, is of such a nature, that their wills, instead of attempting any resistance to it, coincide with it readily and cheerfully; without any force or constraint on his part, or any opposition on their own. That it is an *unresisted Agency*, in all cases, is unquestionable; that it is *irresistible in any*, does not appear."—[*Dwight's Theology.*]

In regard to the doctrine of Election, Dr. Tyler first concedes that my statement is "full and satisfactory." This however does not *satisfy* Dr. Tyler. He accordingly charges me with holding the Arminian view of this doctrine, viz. "that the purpose of election is, *simply* God's determination to *save* those who he foresaw would accept the terms of pardon." This

charge is not based on any thing which I have said, but *solely* on what a Reviewer, for whose opinions I am not responsible, has said in the Christian Spectator. Here then I might leave this charge of Dr. Tyler, simply asking how he can sustain it, by citing the opinions of another man.

But the course taken by Dr. Tyler to sustain this charge against the Reviewer himself, deserves notice. In the first place then, the charge is made in the face of the most abundant and decisive evidence, that it is not true. The Reviewer, instead of maintaining simply the Arminian view of Election, states again and again, that the Election which he advocates, is "an election unto holiness,—an election unto salvation,—as presupposing God's purpose to *secure the condition* of salvation in the hearts of the elect." He also says in direct opposition to the Arminian view; "How come *particular persons* to be believers? Does God actually in his government, induce persons to submit and believe? Does he do any thing, which he foresees will actually secure the submission and faith of *those very persons*, who become submissive believers? In other words, the question is not whether justification is dependent on the existence of faith; but whether God by the dispensations of providence and grace, **ACTUALLY SECURES ALL EXISTING FAITH?** That he does, we hold to be a fact, and **THE GREAT FACT** involved in what is said in the Scriptures on the subject of election."—"It was to *be* believers, and not *as* believers, that he chose them." Such are a part only of the passages in which the Reviewer affirms most unequivocally the very doctrine, which Dr. Tyler represents him as rejecting. Is it not truly astonishing, that with such passages under his eye, Dr. Tyler should make so injurious a charge as this?

But how does Dr. Tyler attempt to support this charge? He first quotes a passage from the Reviewer, in which the latter represents God as saving all, who under the best arranged system of measures and influence, accept the terms, &c. Now Dr. Tyler surely will admit, that God saves all, who under the influence he actually uses, accept the terms of life. But is this saying, with Arminians, that God does not purpose, that they *shall accept* the terms? How then is there any inconsistency in saying that God saves all who repent, with what the Reviewer has constantly affirmed, viz. that God has purposed to *secure* their repentance?

Dr. Tyler cites another passage, in which the Reviewer, after speaking of the influence which God uses, as that to which sinners can yield, and which they can resist, says, "Election involves nothing more, as it respects his individual case, except

one fact—the *certainty* to the divine mind, whether the sinner will yield &c., or whether he will continue to harden his heart, till the measures of grace are withdrawn.”—Dr. Tyler then proceeds, “Now what is this but the Arminian view of election, founded on the foresight of faith and good works?”—I answer, that there is not a word about such an election in the passage. The Reviewer speaks, *not* of an election to *salvation* on the foresight of faith, which is the Arminian doctrine; but exclusively of an election or purpose of God involving or securing the *certainty*, that the sinner will yield &c., or continue to harden his heart. And yet, strange to tell, Dr. Tyler says, “this is not a purpose to make some willing to obey the Gospel &c.” Thus when the Reviewer expressly asserts God’s purpose to secure the submission of the sinner, Dr. Tyler says, he does *not* assert such a purpose of God.— — Here Dr. Tyler’s mistake comes out. Every thing which is said respecting the foreknowledge of God, savors so strongly of Arminianism with Dr. Tyler, that he confounds God’s foreknowledge of one thing and a consequent purpose, with God’s foreknowledge of another thing and a consequent purpose. Thus the Reviewer has stated, that God foresaw that certain measures and influences, if used, would result in the actual conversion of a part of mankind, and accordingly purposed to use them, and to secure the actual result *in the conversion* of a part of mankind. And this Dr. Tyler strangely mistakes for the Arminian doctrine, of God’s foresight that some would turn and obey the Gospel, without any purpose of God, or special influence of his Spirit. Surely, it is not Arminianism to maintain, that God foresaw what influences would secure the conversion of the elect, when he determined to use them. A little discrimination would have saved Dr. Tyler from this mistake.

In the next passage cited by Dr. Tyler, the Reviewer speaks of ‘the purpose of God to *gain whom, in the methods of his wisdom, he can*, over to his authority and his kingdom.’ I might ask Dr. Tyler, is not this even so? Does not God do all he *wisely* can, to save sinners? Does infinite wisdom require something more to be done, than God has determined to do?—But says Dr. Tyler, speaking of this purpose, “It is God’s purpose to save as many of the human race as he possibly can.” But is this necessarily true? Is a purpose of God to save as many of the human race as he can by *wise* methods, the same thing as a purpose to save as many as he can, by methods *not wise*?—“But,” says Dr. Tyler, “what *election* is there in such a purpose?” I ask, what election worthy of God in any other purpose? Must we suppose God to deter-

mine to depart from *the methods of his wisdom*, in bringing sinners to repentance, or say, there is *no election*?—Whoever objected to the sentiment as Arminian, that God saves by the influence of his Spirit as many as he can, consistently with his glory and the highest good of the universe? And yet is not this identically the same, as that “it is the purpose of God to gain, whom in the methods of his wisdom, he can over to his authority and his kingdom?” What is meant by the methods of his wisdom but to save as many as is consistent with wisdom? What then is the difference between *wisely can*, and *consistently can*? Must writers, in these days, not only think exactly alike, but use exactly the same words, to escape the charge of heresy? It is truly surprising, that on such grounds,—grounds which furnish not a shadow of plausibility to his charge,—and with the Reviewer's most unequivocal statements and formal defence of the Calvinistic doctrine of Election before Dr. Tyler, he should charge the Reviewer with holding “*simply*” the Arminian doctrine?

I now ask what *theories*, I have advanced, which are not sanctioned by high orthodox authorities?

II. My second remark is, that Dr. Tyler's attempts to convict my creed and my theories of inconsistency and contradiction, *are an utter failure*.

I. His first attempt respects the doctrines of decrees. The inconsistency supposed is, that I hold that God prefers in all cases holiness to sin, and still admit that in some cases he prefers sin to holiness. To remove this apprehended contradiction, it is only needful to understand the two suppositions made by Dr. Tyler and myself. Dr. T. supposes sin to be employed as a means to an end in *making* the system of God perfect. So that without sin, it would not be the best system possible. But I have taken the liberty to suppose, that there is no evidence that sin is a *necessary means* of the perfection of the divine system.

Now on Dr. Tyler's supposition, it is plain that to prefer sin as the *means* of the greatest good—and at the same time to prefer holiness to sin would be a contradiction.

But to prefer the best system, whose excellence does not depend on sin—but on its own merits in other respects—and *notwithstanding* the certain foreseen existence of sin, does not imply a contradictory preference of sin to holiness—for it is not in either case *sin*, which is the object of preference—but in the one case the preference of the best system notwithstanding the existence of evil, or in the other the non-existence of the entire system to avoid the evil of sin.

Suppose as the condition of existence or non-existence—a body were offered to a new created mind, as its destined residence the most perfect of its kind—(i. e.) including the least practicable amount of disease—and the greatest practicable amount of health. In preferring the inhabitation of this body to non-existence would this mind be chargeable with the contradiction of preferring health to disease, and also disease to health—when his only objects of choice were existence and happiness, notwithstanding the existence of some infirmity and pain.

Suppose again, that Dr. T. should appoint a religious service for his people as the best means of their salvation—with the perfect foresight of the conversion of the greater part—and the perversion of it by a few to the augmentation of their sin.

Would not Dr. T. prefer the existence of the meeting to its non-existence, and yet would this be to prefer the perversion to the saving improvement of the means of grace by a few.—The thing actually chosen would be the salvation of the many as the greatest good, notwithstanding the foreseen perversion of means by the few.

Which of the two suppositions is true, or whether either is true is not the question. But that the one I have made is not contradictory would seem to be self-evident.

In the first instance, for a plain position of mine, he substitutes a very different one of his own. He represents me as maintaining, "that God prefers, all things considered, that sin should *not* exist;" and also, "that God has purposed that sin *shall* exist."—But I ask Dr. Tyler, when or where I have said, "that God prefers, all things considered, that sin should *not* exist?" Nothing like it; I said, "that God, all things considered may prefer *holiness* to sin in every instance;" and Dr. Tyler strangely substitutes for this, the position, that God does not prefer the existence of sin on any account. But God may prefer holiness to sin in his present system, and also as a consequence of other purposes, purpose the existence of sin; i. e. purpose its existence, rather than to change or not to adopt the system. Does it involve a contradiction to suppose, that Dr. Tyler should prefer the repentance and salvation of *all* his people to their impenitence and perdition; and also prefer that a few should pervert the means necessary to the salvation of all the rest, rather than not adopt these means? Does it involve a contradiction to suppose, that a benevolent parent should prefer, under the best system of government, the obedience of his children to their disobedience in every instance, and still prefer their occasional disobedience to perpetual imprisonment or

death, to prevent it? May not a voluntary being prefer A. to B. and still prefer B. to C.? Nothing can be plainer. For my position then, that God prefers holiness to sin in every instance, Dr. Tyler has most unaccountably substituted a very different one of his own, viz, that God does not prefer the existence of sin on any account. Thus the "palpable contradiction" on my part, turns out to be only a *palpable mistake* on the part of Dr. Tyler.

The next charge of contradiction by Dr. Tyler, is founded on begging some of the main questions in debate. He reasons thus; 'God must have designed to bring to pass the greatest possible amount of good. If then the existence of sin is not the necessary means of the greatest good, God would not have foreordained its existence.' By 'the greatest possible amount of good,' Dr. Tyler must mean, the greatest possible good through the *combined* agency of God, and of creatures, most perfectly employed for this end. But in this meaning, he assumes, what he cannot prove to be true. God doubtless designed to bring to pass the greatest amount of good possible to *himself* to secure by the most perfect administration of the most perfect moral government over intelligent beings. All that can be fairly inferred from the benevolence of any being is, that he will accomplish all the good he can by such a plan and such means as he has wisely chosen. While God then has designed to bring to pass the greatest good possible, consistently with what it is proper for him to do in the perfect administration of moral government, it does not follow, that there would not be more good, were all his creatures to do spontaneously all which as free agents it is proper for them to do, and which they are under infinite obligations to do. Who can prove, that a universe of moral beings, bearing God's perfect moral image, would not be happier, than one comprising the devil and his angels? On this supposition however, not sin, but holiness would be the necessary means of the greatest good. But says Dr. Tyler, 'then God would not have foreordained the existence of sin.'—Why not? He tells us—"It must be for a good or a bad end." I answer, not so; for he may have foreordained sin, directly not at all, and only as involved in other purposes, and not for any reason dependent *necessarily* on the good effects of sin;* but simply and solely for this reason, that the

* I do not deny, but admit, that God *overrules* sin, and brings good out of the evil, by counteracting its tendencies and by other interpositions. But there is no proof that this good is the greatest possible, nor of course that it is the reason for God's purposing the existence of sin. Holiness might be better in its stead. Indeed to say, that a thing must be *overruled or counteracted* in all its tendencies to secure a good result, and also that it is the *necessary means* of that result, is a contradiction.

adoption of the moral system best on other accounts involved its certain existence. Until Dr. Tyler shall prove, that it *may not* be so, his assertion, that God must purpose sin as the necessary means of the greatest good, if he purpose it at all, is begging the main question in debate.

Dr. Tyler's third charge of contradiction on this point is founded in a *mis-quotation* of my language. He represents me as saying, "that I do not believe, that a God of sincerity and truth, punishes his creatures, for doing that, which on the whole he prefers they should do."—Now instead of saying this merely, I added for the very purpose of preventing this misapprehension, "*and which, as the means of good, is the best thing they can do.*" This, it will be seen at once, changes the thing, for which I said God will not punish. But says Dr. Tyler, reasoning from his mutilated quotation, "if God's purposes extend to all actual events, sin not excepted, then he does on the whole prefer, that they should do the very things for which they are punished."—He does indeed prefer a system notwithstanding it includes their sin as better than one in which he should do any more than *he* does to prevent it,—but does it follow that their sinning is the best thing as the means of good which *they can do*, and that he punishes them, though they did more good by sinning than they would have done by obeying? The question is, whether when God has done all he consistently can as a perfect lawgiver, the system would be more perfect if all his subjects would also do as well as they consistently can? i. e. whether perfect laws, perfectly obeyed, would produce better society and more happiness, than perfect laws extensively disobeyed. In other words, whether the lawgiver of the universe has commanded all his subjects to do, and by the best possible means persuaded them to do, and then punishes them for not doing what it would not be most for his glory, and the good of the universe that they should do? A parent may punish a child, for doing that which he prefers the child should do, rather than change the best system of government, to prevent the act. But is this punishing the child for doing *the best thing he can do*? I acknowledge, that I cannot but feel myself deeply injured by this omission of the very clause, which was designed to prevent the identical misconception of Dr. Tyler.

The fourth instance of contradiction on this subject, alleged by Dr. Tyler, results from his again begging *one of the main questions* in debate. I had said, "that God, for wise and good reasons, permits or does not prevent the existence of sin;" and also "that God may prefer, all things considered, holiness to sin

in every instance." Hence Dr. Tyler infers, "that I represent God as having wise and good reasons, for not *decreeing* that state of things (meaning universal holiness) which he prefers." Now *decreeing* universal holiness, is purposing its actual existence. But a father might not certainly purpose or decree to secure universal obedience, when the adoption of the best system of government would not secure it; and still, might prefer universal obedience to disobedience under that system. So it may be true that God does not decree universal holiness under the best system of government, because the system involves the certain existence of sin; and still he may prefer universal obedience to disobedience under this system. For how does it appear that God cannot do in this respect, what man can do?—Dr. Tyler can only say in reply, that God can secure universal obedience in a moral system; i. e. he can reply only by begging what he knows to be a main question in debate. If he may assume this without proof, I may assume the contrary without proof; and then what becomes of his alleged contradiction?

Dr. Tyler adds, "that I represent God as preferring that (viz. universal holiness rather than sin,) against the existence of which there are wise and good reasons." Here again, I must contradict Dr. Tyler. I have said, that there may be wise and good reasons for God's not decreeing the actual existence of universal holiness. But does this imply, that there are wise and good reasons against the existence of universal holiness? A father has a wise and good reason for not determining to secure the universal obedience of his children, and this reason may be, that the adoption of the best system of influence will result in disobedience. But does this prove that he does not prefer right conduct to wrong in every instance? So God may adopt a system, which will result in the existence of sin, and for this reason not decree universal holiness, and still prefer holiness to sin. If Dr. Tyler says, that God can secure the conduct he prefers, this would only show, how he constantly falls into that sort of paralogism called begging the question.

Dr. Tyler's last charge of contradiction on this topic, is founded in a representation of my sentiments, to which I cannot allude without pain, even in self-defence. He charges me with affirming in unqualified terms, that God *could not* prevent sin; and with maintaining, that "He foreordained that which he would have prevented, but could not." Now, it is known to every one who has read my statements on this subject, that I have uniformly disclaimed this sentiment. Dr. Tyler's representa-

tion is incorrect in two respects. He first represents me as making a *positive* affirmation, when I have only made a mere *supposition*. This he has done, after the very error, into which he has fallen, was pointed out in Dr. Woods;—the error of changing a mere supposition into an affirmation of a fact,—a hypothetical statement into a positive assertion of a truth. But this is not all. I have said, ‘that it *may be true* that God could not prevent all sin *in a moral system* ;’ or ‘that sin, as to God’s prevention, may be incidental *to a moral universe*.’ Now Dr. Tyler in representing my views, leaves out the words in italics,—the very words on which the main thing in the statement depends. Suppose, I had said, ‘that Dr. Tyler would have prevented the increased guilt of some of his people *under the privileges of a protracted meeting*, but could not,’ what would be said of one, who should leave out the words in italics, and represent me as saying without qualification, ‘that Dr. Tyler would have prevented the evil, but could not ;’ when we all know, that he could have done it, by not holding the meeting? I ask, if the words *moral system*, *moral universe*, have no meaning? If they have, why is that meaning disregarded? If I had said, ‘that Dr. Tyler could not live an hour *under water* ;’ he would, on his principle, have charged me with saying *absolutely*, that ‘he could not live an hour!’

I have then in no instance, said any thing that implies that God would have prevented all sin, if he could; never “talked of God’s permitting what he cannot prevent.” I have on the contrary proceeded, in what I have said on this subject, entirely on these grounds; that God, by not adopting a moral system, could have prevented all sin; and that he could have prevented any particular sin individually and abstractly considered; and even all sin in this world up to *the present time*; and even to the end of it; and have only *supposed* that to prevent all sin finally and forever, it might have been necessary not to adopt a moral system; and that to prevent any sin, which takes place, *might involve a change* in the appointed system of influence, which would result in more sin than it would prevent. And yet Dr. Tyler, with a confidence, which it would seem, that nothing but explicit declarations on my part could authorize, without even assigning a reason for so doing, and by direct changes in my language, represents me as holding, that God could not prevent sin!—Why are such statements made?

2. The next attempt of Dr. Tyler to convict me of inconsistency, respects *the doctrine of Depravity by nature*. The amount of what he says is, that he does ‘not see,’ how depravity can be ascribed to nature, nor how there can be a connexion

between the sin of Adam and the sin of his posterity, unless we admit a *propagated propensity to sin*, in the latter. To this, it would be a short and sufficient reply, that others *can see*, how both may be true, without supposing a propensity to sin infused into the soul, by creation, or propagation, or as Edwards says, 'by any positive cause or influence whatsoever.' Dr. Tyler contends however, that unless our sinful exercises spring from a *propagated propensity to sin*, they must be ascribed wholly to *circumstances*, which is the Arminian doctrine. To this, I answer, that, according to the true *usus loquendi*, a given result is ascribed to *the circumstances* of any thing, when that result would be changed, by some change in its *appropriate* circumstances. A result is ascribed to *the nature* of any thing, when that result is the *uniform* consequence of its nature in *all* its appropriate circumstances. Accordingly the true Arminian doctrine is, that by changing the *circumstances* of men in this world, as they might be, by a good education, by a good example, by diminishing temptation &c., the universal sinfulness of mankind would be prevented; and that therefore the sinfulness of mankind is to be ascribed to *their circumstances*.

The Calvinistic doctrine opposed to this is, that let the appropriate circumstances of men be changed as they may, they will in all these circumstances, or without renewing grace, sin and only sin; and that therefore their sinfulness is truly and properly ascribed to *nature* and *not* to circumstances. To say then that men are sinners *by nature*, is a popular form of expression used, not to ascribe sin to nature alone *exclusive* of all circumstances, as if temptation were not as necessary to sin as a nature to be tempted,—*not* to decide that men would sin were the Creator to place them with *the same nature* in some other possible circumstances, especially under the supernatural influences of his Spirit; but to denote simply, *that such is the nature of man, that in all the appropriate circumstances of his being, he will uniformly sin*; the very statement, which I have made. This has been shown so often, and so conclusively to be the true doctrine of orthodoxy and of the Scriptures, and especially to be the doctrine taught by President Edwards, that Dr. Tyler's *mere opinion* to the contrary deserves no further notice.

In this view of the subject, Dr. Tyler says, "I see not, that there is any connexion between the sin of Adam and the sin of his posterity." This is all he says in the way of argument. All I now say in reply is, that if *in consequence* of Adam's sin, his posterity uniformly sin as above described, I *do* see a connexion between his sin and theirs.

3. Dr. Tyler's third charge of contradiction, respects *the doctrine of regeneration*. His object is to show, that I maintain what is inconsistent with my belief in the necessity of divine influence. Thus I have said, that "when grace becomes effectual it is unresisted;" "that is," says Dr. Tyler, "the sinner ceases to resist *before* the grace of God converts him." He then asks, "what necessity is there for the grace of God to convert him, *after* he ceases to resist?"—I might reply, that *ceasing to resist* is not of course *holy love*, and that therefore grace might still be necessary to secure this affection.—But I am again compelled to say, that Dr. Tyler has changed the import of my language in a manner, which I am unable to account for, or to palliate. I said, "when grace becomes effectual, it is unresisted." Dr. Tyler represents me as saying, "that the sinner ceases to resist, *before* grace becomes effectual." How will he show, that cotemporaneousness is the same thing as priority?

Dr. Tyler attempts to confirm this representation, by two passages from the Christian Spectator. In the one he represents me as holding, "that before God will interpose to renew the sinner's heart, he must give up his idols, submit to divine authority, and cease to be a rebel." He then asks, "But when all this is done, what necessity is there for divine interposition?"—In the other, he represents me as maintaining, "that continuance in sin is the result merely of a false intellectual judgement, and hence infers that a correction of the mistake would supersede the necessity of the Spirit's influence."

These topics have been discussed before, by Dr. Tyler and myself. I have claimed, that he puts this construction on my language, in defiance of all usage, and of abundant definitions and explanations. If I am right in this, then Dr. Tyler perverts my language.—If I am not, still Dr. Tyler has been *assured*, that I reject the meaning which he imputes to me. Who then would expect Dr. Tyler to quote the language again, and still persist in giving it that meaning? Is not this, charging opinions on me which he knows I do *not* maintain? He can now take which side of the alternative he pleases. One or the other, in view of the facts, he must take; and take which he may, he has charged me with holding opinions with decisive evidence before him that I do not hold them.

A word or two more in explanation of what I have said in the Christian Spectator. In respect to the suspension of the selfish principle; I have maintained, that *before* the moral change (*before* in the order of nature, not of time) the selfish principle or purpose ceases to prompt *to appropriate specific action*, as truly as when the sinner is asleep. This suspension of selfish-

ness in its *active* control, and influence in respect to *specific* acts, I have carefully distinguished from *the renunciation* of selfishness; and accordingly have represented the moral character,—the heart of the sinner as unchanged.—I have further said, that self-love, or that constitutional regard to happiness which pertains to every sentient being, prompts the mind to that kind of thoughtfulness of, or manner of considering, the objects of holy affection, to which selfishness would never prompt. I have said, that this thoughtfulness, or consideration of the objects of holy affection, is indispensable to the exercise of such affection. I have further said, that in correct usage, the term regeneration sometimes denotes the simple act of the heart or will; and sometimes the complex act, which consists in *thinking* of the objects of right affection, in *comparing* them with other objects, in *renouncing* the latter and in *preferring* or supremely loving the former. I have said, that whatever may be the specific states, or acts of the sinner's mind, prompted by selfishness, in any forms of thought, of anxiety, of desire, of conviction, prior to this *complex act*, he is still committing sin; and that *in that instant*, when this complex act takes place, the moral change, (which consists in this act,) takes place; and that it never does take place, except through the gracious influence of the Holy Spirit. With the exception of divine influence, this complex act is analogous to every change of supreme affection or controlling purpose of the mind; e. g. to that of a man, who with a purpose to walk onward, should meet a lion in his path, should *instantaneously* in view of the reasons for it, renounce that purpose, and choose to flee to a refuge at hand. Will Dr. Tyler undertake to show, that I have said any thing which implies, that "the sinner submits to divine authority and ceases to be a rebel," before the complex mental act thus described, takes place?

In regard to the second particular, according to the original statement and subsequent explanations given, the position which I have taken, is nothing more nor less, than what Dr. Tyler fully believes, viz. *that the will is as the greatest apparent good*. Dr. Tyler has been abundantly assured, that such was my meaning, and yet charges me with ascribing the sinner's continuance in sin to a mere *intellectual mistake!*

4. Dr. Tyler's fourth attempt to convict me of contradiction, respects *the doctrine of Election*. Of my statement of the doctrine, he says "it is a full and satisfactory statement."—But he proceeds thus; "how is this to be reconciled with other statements? If it be true that God prefers holiness to sin, then it must be his choice, that all men should become holy and be

saved; and his infinite benevolence will prompt him to do all in his power, to bring all men to repentance. What then becomes of the doctrine of election? *Who maketh thee to differ?* Not God surely.—It cannot be true, that he hath mercy on whom he will have mercy, for he would have mercy on all if he could.—Has God done more for the conversion of one man, than for the conversion of another? I readily admit, and this on the authority of Apostles,* that God “would,” or chooses that all men should, become holy rather than continue in sin and die. But does this necessarily imply, that God purposes that all men *shall* become holy in fact; or that he will do *all* in his power to *bring* all men to repentance? Because a father prefers that a child *should* obey his command to attend school rather than disobey it, does it follow that he chooses in the given instance to *secure* his attendance, as he might, by changing a wise plan of government? Here then Dr. Tyler can see, how God may prefer holiness to sin in every instance, without doing or choosing to do, all in his power to *bring* all men to repentance. Such an *int:position* might be inconsistent with other interests of his universal kingdom.—But says Dr. Tyler, “what becomes of the doctrine of election?” I answer.—Suppose the father can wisely do more to secure the repentance of one child, than he can wisely do to secure the repentance of another; suppose that a higher influence in one case, would be safe and even salutary in respect to the conduct of his other children, while in the other case it would in this respect prove fatal; suppose him for these reasons to use the higher influence, with a design to secure the obedience of one child, and to use it with success;—is not this election—is not this *making one to differ* from another—is not this *having mercy on whom he will have mercy*—and doing more for one than for another, and with good reason too? Thus God may do, and choose for good reasons to do, more for one than for another, either in respect to motive or divine influence, or both; and still prefer, that every subject under the influence, wisely resolved on in his case, should as he can, repent rather than continue in sin.

But, says Dr. Tyler, “If so, God has not done all in his power for the conversion of the other.” Certainly not, in the import in which I understand Dr. Tyler to use this language. Nor have I ever said anything which implies, that God does all he can do, in the import of Dr. Tyler, to secure the repentance of any sinner. I should regard the language in which he is pleased to state my opinion, as altogether too loose for logical

* 1 Tim. ii. 4. 2 Pet. iii. 9.

discussion. It is however to be remembered, that in the less guarded and more popular language of the Bible, such phraseology actually occurs. "What *could* have been done more in my vineyard, that I have not done in it."—"For it is *impossible*—to renew them again to repentance." Isa. v. 4. Heb. vi. 4, 6. There is then *some import*, in which correct usage will authorize the unqualified language, which Dr. Tyler reprobates. It is the language of God himself. Now here is an interesting question for Dr. Tyler to answer, viz. whether this language, according to the true *usus loquendi*, does not express the very sentiment, which he opposes? Suppose then a father had done all he could do, to reclaim and save a wayward son, *consistently* with preventing the misconduct and ruin of other children; what language so natural, so perfectly in accordance with common usage, as to say, 'I have done all I can do, to reclaim and save that child?'—I now ask if the language of the Bible is not the language of common life, and to be interpreted accordingly? If so, I ask again, in which of two meanings, the passage quoted from Isaiah is to be understood? Is it this, which accords with my supposition, viz. that God had done all that could be done to secure obedience, *consistently* with adhering to the system best fitted to secure the greatest amount of holiness and happiness in his kingdom? Or, is it this, which accords with Dr. Tyler's theory, viz. that preferring the continued disobedience of his creatures to their obedience, he had done all he could to secure their obedience, *consistently* with actually securing their disobedience, as the best thing of the two?—I express no opinion here, but simply put a *question* to Dr. Tyler.—It is surely worthy of remark, that Dr. Tyler should be so fond of stating my opinion on the present topic in language which I have not adopted, and especially, when the very form of expression, which in his view can convey nothing but falsehood, is found in the word of God.

I have thus shown, that there is nothing anti-orthodox, in not receiving the theory, 'that sin is the necessary means of the greatest good;' nor of course, in merely supposing *another* reason for the permission of sin, as *the possible* reason. Here Dr. Tyler evidently overlooks the fact, that very many, and in my own view, a large majority of the orthodox divines in this country, reject *his* theory.

I have also shown, that there is nothing anti-orthodox, in denying the doctrine of 'a propagated constitutional propensity to sin,' while I maintain, that all men are sinners *by nature*, and in consequence of Adam's transgression. Here again Dr. Tyler entirely mistakes the fact, in regard to many distin-

guished orthodox writers. On this topic, he also falls into another mistake; that of entirely overlooking the possibility, that propensities for natural good, like those which led our first parents to sin, may, as well as a propensity *to sin itself*, prove the occasion of certain sin, to all their posterity.

I have also shown, that there is *no contradiction* between the two positions; that God prefers, all things considered, holiness to sin, under his appointed system of influence; and also purposes the existence of the sin which takes place, rather than not adopt or change that system. The objections of Dr. Tyler to the solution which I have offered, seem to resolve themselves into two. One is, that it is inconsistent with the accomplishment of God's providential purposes, i. e. inconsistent with certainty. But, it is plain, that according to this solution, an omniscient God will give existence to no creature, who will do any thing which God does not foresee that he will do, and purposes for some good reason to permit him to do. God in his eternal counsels has appointed the law and the kind and degree of moral influence, under which every one of his subjects will act. And though these foreseen actions are the result of a perfect legislation and administration on the part of God, and entire free agency and accountability on the part of man, the certainty of the foreseen sinful actions, while it affects not their character and desert, is just as great to the divine mind, as if they were preferred to holiness, or were the result of direct divine efficiency; and it is just as consistent with moral government and free agency, as with fatality or force. And therefore, while God prefers the obedience of all, to the sin of any, he may by purposing the existence of such agents, and such a government as they act under, purpose consequently all the sins which he foresees they will commit, rather than not to adopt or to change the appointed system in order to prevent them.

The other objection to my supposition is, that it seems to limit God's omnipotence. This objection is somewhat strangely alleged by one, who holds that Omnipotence is *weakness* itself, in respect to securing the greatest good, *without sin* as the means of this end. No. God *cannot*, by universal holiness, *the best* means of *the best* end, accomplish that end. He must have sin, which is commonly esteemed *the worst* means of *the worst* end, or omnipotence itself is inadequate to secure the greatest good! How does such a theory avoid limiting God's omnipotence, even in a manner the most revolting? God can secure the greatest good, not by the *best* means, but only by the *worst*!—Besides, what right has Dr. Tyler to assume, that God can prevent all sin in beings who, as free moral agents, must pos-

ness power to sin? How can he *prove* this by a *a priori* reasoning? How could Dr. Tyler, if he *knew* that fire possessed the same power to freeze us, which it does to warm us, *prove* that it would not *in fact* produce the former effect in some instances, instead of the latter? Plainly, this would be impossible. To prove that fire *will not* in fact freeze us, he must first prove, that it *cannot*. Such is the case in hand. Such is the precise point to be met, by those who affirm, that God can prevent all sin in a moral system. There is no way for them to prove *a priori* that beings who *can sin will not* sin, but by first proving that they *cannot*! Let them then fairly and manfully address themselves to this point, and no more *beg* such a question as this.

But it will be said, and it is *all* that can with truth be said, 'that there is a strong *a priori* probability from the omnipotence of God, that he *could* prevent all sin in a moral system.' This I freely and fully admit. But is there *no* probability,—*no evidence*, to be set against this? Is there no proof, even *no* probability, that universal holiness as the means of good in a moral universe, is better than sin? This seems to bring us to the gist of this great controversy. It seems to resolve itself, into a simple question of probabilities; viz, which is most probable,—that God *would* have prevented sin in his moral universe, and have secured the perfect holiness and perfect happiness of every subject, if he *could*; or, that he *could* have done this, but *would not* do it, because sin as a means of good to moral beings, is to some extent better than holiness in its stead? To this point, provided there can be no alternative but that now supposed, the whole question seems to be reduced.

Now, let any candid man weigh these probabilities. Let it be told what possible *a priori proof* there can be, that beings, who *can sin will not sin*; and then let it be told, what *is* truth—what is infallible truth, if it is not, that perfect and universal obedience to God's perfect law, is a better means of happiness to his moral universe, than sin?—What is the law of God, if it does not decide this to be truth?

I have thus examined all Dr. Tyler's charges of inconsistency and contradiction between my creed and my theories. Nor can I disguise the fact, that I feel deeply injured by the design of his strictures, and the course he has taken to accomplish it. His design professedly is, to hold me up to the community, as 'a teacher in theology' engaged in 'a gradual undermining process,' tending to corrupt the opinions of my pupils, and to introduce the worst errors into the Christian Church. This would be a serious charge in any circumstances, but it is peculiarly fitted to

wound, in view of the facts in the present case. How then has Dr. Tyler given plausibility to this very serious charge? By substituting very different positions of his own for mine; by begging every main question in debate; by charging opinions on me which he knows, I have publicly disclaimed; by misquoting my language,—and by representing me in my theories, as peculiar, and differing from my brethren generally, when the fact is beyond a question that in these very matters, I more entirely accord with the great majority of the orthodox clergy, than does Dr. Tyler himself!

But suppose it were true, that in rejecting the *theory* that sin is the necessary means of the greatest good, and still not pretending to know the reason, why God permits sin; and also in denying a created or *propagated* constitutional sinful propensity, I did in fact differ from the majority of the orthodox ministry, what then is the case?—Dr. Tyler admits, without qualification, *my soundness in the faith*, but objects only to my *theories*. Now it will not be denied, that in respect to *theories*, there has long been much diversity of opinion among the Calvinistic clergy of this country. It will not be denied, that very many of the orthodox clergy,—men distinguished for talents, for piety, for successful labors in the cause of their Master,—men above all suspicion, substantially hold the system of Calvinistic doctrine under those modifications, which Dr. Tyler opposes. It will not be denied, that Professors in the same theological seminaries, differ among themselves on many, or on all these points, and yet tolerate each other, and are tolerated by the guardians of these institutions. It will not be denied, that the very subject of collision and controversy, on which the voice of enlightened piety is calling a part of the orthodox community to peace and concord in this country, respects '*theories*' in distinction from fundamental doctrines; and that to join in the outcry of danger and ruin to the churches, is assuming the somewhat peculiar character of an alarmist. It will not be denied, that the Andover seminary was founded in a mutual compromise in regard to *theories*, in respect to which its original patrons were divided in opinion.

I have another thing to say, viz., that the best test of tendency, is matter of fact. I ask then, whether this diversity of *theories*, some of which must be false, has *in fact* been followed with the calamitous results predicted by Dr. Tyler? Has the *taste* scheme, or the *exercise* scheme, the supralapsarian or the sublapsarian theory, been connected *in fact* with the doctrinal corruption of the orthodox clergy, of orthodox churches, or of theological students? I ask again, whether the tendency of what Dr. Tyler calls my theories, has not been tested by a twenty

years ministry, and ten years instruction in this seminary? I ask whether, by a course of almost constant preaching for twenty years, I have in any degree corrupted the orthodox churches in this city, or elsewhere? I ask, whether an individual student from this seminary, has renounced the orthodox system of faith?—Have not the labors of these students been crowned with as signal success, as those of students from any other seminary? In view of these considerations, especially of the acknowledged diversity of opinion, and the general toleration in respect to theories, among the orthodox clergy, why is it that the Professors of Yale College, are singled out, as the subjects of so much jealousy and evil prognostication? Why is it done, by one who fully admits the soundness of their creed, and objects only to 'theories.'

But I can readily forgive Dr. Tyler. His fault, as I regard it, is *venial* in intention, though highly injurious in its tendency—injurious not merely to myself, but to many of the most useful ministers of Christ. And it is most obvious, that even honesty of intention can furnish no sufficient excuse for the injustice done to the character and usefulness of this class of men by propagating erroneous statements concerning them; or for the injury done to the cause of Christ in destroying confidence in a large number of pious and useful ministers, and filling the church with jealousy and alarm—diverting her attention from revivals of religion to watch against the anticipated heresies of men confessedly *sound in the faith*—hazarding the division of her ministry and members without cause, and threatening to destroy the unity and power of her benevolent associations for the redemption of the world. Most assuredly, if more carefulness and accuracy of representation in controversy, is not observed generally, than has been by Dr. Tyler, no limits can be assigned to the evil which must ensue.

Whatever may have been the occasion of Dr. Tyler's alarm in regard to the cause of truth, and of his singular misapprehension of my statements, I trust he will yet see, that "eleven articles" of sound Calvinism, are at least some security against dangerous innovations in theological doctrine. Or, if he should still maintain, that it is *essential* to orthodoxy, to believe, that God prefers on the whole that men, to a great extent, should do wrong rather than right; and that God punishes men for the sin of which he is the author either by creation or propagation; he will attempt to sustain his position, by some other method, than that which he has hitherto adopted. The *odium theologicum*, and the *hic niger est* of other times, can hardly meet with toleration in our days; and he who ventures to reason by a *re-*

ductio ad absurdum, should be peculiarly careful, that he neither misunderstands nor mis-states the opinions of an opponent.

It has been truly painful to me, to make the exposures in regard to Dr. Tyler, which I have made in replying to his 'Remarks.' He has compelled me. I have scrupulously aimed to avoid every reproachful epithet, and every thing wounding to the feelings of Dr. Tyler. If it is difficult for him to bear the exhibition of the facts in the case, he must remember, that my own vindication, to say nothing of the cause of truth, demands it. Nor ought he to complain. To be charged publicly with absurdity and contradiction and subverting the Gospel, especially by one who coins positions for me *ad libitum*, begs every main question in debate, charges opinions upon me, which I have publicly disclaimed, and misquotes my language, may be as difficult to be borne on my part, as the detection and exposure of such conduct on his own. Such charges as he has made, so utterly destitute of all pretext, and yet so confidently made, would be in most cases, strong temptations to suspect the integrity of their author. But we all know, how the excitement of controversy, and the eagerness to put an adversary in the wrong, can mislead the intellect. Shall I then accuse Dr. Tyler of wilful misrepresentation, or criminal design? By no means. This were to dishonor one, whom I consider as honest in his errors as any man living. I only say therefore, in a spirit of entire good will toward Dr. Tyler, that he has fallen into mistakes so strange, that for their solution I shall leave him to devise his own *theory*; always excepting, 'that sin is the necessary means of the greatest good.'

N. W. TAYLOR.

THE VISIBLE CHURCH THE SAME UNDER BOTH DISPENSATIONS.

The relation subsisting in ancient times between the congregation of Israel and the Supreme Being was very intimate and peculiar. They had entered into solemn covenant with him, and he had entered into covenant with them. They had 'avouched the Lord to be their God, to walk in his ways, to keep his statutes, his commandments, and his judgements, and to hearken to his voice; and the Lord had avouched them to be his peculiar people, as he had promised them.' Deut. xxvi.

17, 18. Accordingly God speaks of the Israelites throughout the Old Testament as *his* people, *his own* people; and they speak of him as in a peculiar sense *their* God. They were the depositaries of the true religion; had made profession of this religion; and were manifestly a church—a *visible church*. They are spoken of as a church in the New Testament. "This (Moses) is he that was in *the church* in the wilderness." Acts vii. 38. My object in this paper is to show, that *the visible church, under both dispensations, has been substantially the same*; or that *the general, visible Christian community is but a continuation and enlargement of 'the commonwealth of Israel.'* I do not mean, indeed, that there have been no changes: there certainly have been changes in circumstantial things. While the people of God were looking forward to a Saviour to come, they needed types, and rites, and bloody sacrifices, which have since, for the best reasons, been taken out of the way. Still, the abolishing of these things, and the ushering in of the new dispensation, did not affect the identity of the church.*

1. The identity of the visible church under both dispensations may be argued from *the identity and perpetuity of the real church*.—The real church on earth consists of all the true friends of God existing in the world. It embodies all the true religion, the piety, which is at any time to be found among men. It is on all hands admitted, that this body has been perpetually the same. The real friends of God have always sustained the same relations to him, and to one another;—they have always belonged to the same holy family, and this family is the church.—But if the *real* church has been in all periods the same, so has the *visible* church. What is the visible church? It consists of all those who, by a credible outward profession, *appear* to belong to* the real church—*appear* to be truly sanctified persons. The visible church is nothing more or less than the real church *bodied forth, made visible* to the apprehension of men;—so that we can no more conceive of two distinct visible churches, while we admit the identity of the real church, than we can conceive of any thing else as *visibly two*, which yet *appears to be one and the same*.

2. Under both dispensations, the church has *professed the same religion*.—No one can doubt that true religion has been

* John the Baptist and our Saviour preached, "Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." Matt. iii. 2, and iv. 17. The phrase *kingdom of heaven* is used in the Evangelists in a variety of significations. In the places above referred to it imports, not the erection of a new visible church, but the introduction of the *Gospel Dispensation*, to displace that of the ritual law.

in all periods the same. There has been but one path from earth to heaven—but one way of salvation by a Redeemer. This religion is revealed and inculcated in the Bible; and the religion of the Bible is *one*. The religion of the Old Testament is not distinct from that of the New, like the religion of Brumha or Mahomet;—in all essential points it is *the same*. But the Israelites were professors of this religion as truly as Christians are. The Old Testament was committed to them, and they professed to receive it and follow it. Both the Old Testament and the New are committed to us, and we profess to adopt them as the rule of our faith and practice. It follows, therefore, that the church, under both dispensations, has professed the same religion—the religion of the Bible.

This argument may be presented in a different light, and the conclusion derived from it will be the same.—The religion of the Bible consists essentially in its *doctrines*; but what doctrines does the church now profess to receive, which the church of old did not receive? What important doctrines are inculcated in the New Testament, which are omitted in the Old? The New Testament, to be sure, sets forth the doctrines of religion with greater clearness, particularity, and force; but it would be difficult to show, except in matters of inferior importance, that it reveals any new truths.

Another part of the religion of the Bible is its *requisitions*; and in these there is a singular uniformity. The demands of the law have been the same, under both dispensations. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind, and thy neighbor as thyself." The demands of the Gospel have been also the same. Repentance, faith, submission, hope, all the holy affections towards God, and all the benevolence and kindness to man, which are required of church members under the Gospel, were as strictly required of Israelites under the former dispensation.—Indeed those directions, which go to constitute *the discipline of the church*, are inculcated in the New Testament almost precisely as in the Old. The direction of Christ now is, "If thy brother trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault." Formerly it was, "Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thine heart; thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy neighbor, and not suffer sin upon him." Lev. xix. 17. The direction of Christ now is, "If thy brother repent, forgive him." Formerly it was, 'When the offender shall bring his sin-offering, and in token of repentance lay his hand upon its head, the victim shall be slain, and he shall be forgiven.' (See Lev. chap. iv.) The direction of Christ now is, 'If the offender

will not hear the church, but continues presumptuously obstinate, let him be cut off and become to you as an heathen.' Formerly, it was, 'The soul that doeth aught presumptuously, and will not hearken to the priest, nor the judge, the same hath reproached the Lord, and that soul shall be cut off from his people.*'

Still another part of the religion of the Bible consists of its *promises*; and what better promises has the church under the present dispensation, than those which it formerly enjoyed? Indeed, are not the identical promises to *the ancient Zion* still relied on as valid, and as applicable to the existing church of Christ? "Behold I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands; thy walls are continually before me. Kings shall be thy nursing fathers, and queens thy nursing mothers. They shall bow down to thee with their face toward the earth, and lick up the dust of thy feet; and thou shalt know that I am the Lord." Is. xlix. 16, 23.

It is plain, I trust, to every reader, that the religion of the two Testaments is the same; and that the church under both dispensations has actually professed the same religion. Of course, in regard to its outward religious profession—its *visibility*, it has been the same church.

3. Numerous declarations, which in the Old Testament were made to the ancient church, are in the New Testament applied to the Christian church. For instance, it is said in the Psalms, "I will declare thy name unto my brethren; in the midst of the congregation I will praise thee." Ps. xxii. 22. But from the Epistle to the Hebrews we learn, that this is a declaration of Christ respecting his church. "Both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one; for which cause he (Christ) is not ashamed to call them brethren, saying, 'I will declare thy name unto my brethren; in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee.'" Heb. ii. 11, 12.

It follows, that "the congregation" spoken of in the Psalms, and "the church" spoken of in the Epistle to the Hebrews, are the same body.—Again, God said of his ancient church, "I will walk among you, and will be your God, and ye shall be my people." Lev. xxvi. 12. The Apostle quotes this language, together with other expressions from the Old Testament, and applies them to the church at Corinth: "As God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. And I will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith

* See Mat. xviii. 17. Numb. xv. 30. Deut. xvii. 12.

the Lord almighty. *Having, therefore, these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves,*" &c. 2 Cor. vi. 16—18. How could Paul represent the Corinthian church as *having these promises*, and as being under consequent obligations to cleanse themselves, unless he considered them as a branch of the same ancient church to which these promises were made?

In the following language God addressed his church under the former dispensation: "If ye will obey my voice and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people; and ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation." Ex. xix. 5, 6. In almost the same language he addresses his church under the Christian dispensation: "Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people." 1 Pet. ii. 9.

4. The *prophecies* of Scripture clearly show that the present visible church is the same with the church of Israel.—John the Baptist predicted of him who should come after him, not that he should *destroy*, but that he should "*thoroughly purge his floor.*" Mat. iii. 12. Accordingly the church was *purified*, but not *destroyed*, by the coming of the Saviour.*

Christ predicted that many should "come from the east, and from the west, and sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven," while "the children of the kingdom should be cast out into outer darkness." Mat. viii. 11, 12. What are we to understand here by the phrase, "kingdom of heaven?" Not the kingdom of glory, surely; for none of the children of that kingdom will ever "be cast into outer darkness." The phrase must denote in this place, as it does in many others, the *visible church*. And the prediction of our Saviour was, that when the Jews were ejected for their unbelief, the Gentiles should come and sit down in the *same visible church* "with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob."—In the parable of the vineyard Christ also predicted, that the *same vineyard* or church, in which the Jews had done so wickedly, should be taken from them and given to the Gentiles. "The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof." Matt. xxi. 43.

In proof of the point under consideration, I might adduce numerous quotations from the prophecies of the Old Testament. Indeed all the ancient predictions of the ingathering of

* The period of Christ's advent is spoken of by the apostle Paul as "the time of reformation." Heb. ix. 10. On the theory here opposed, this must have been to the ancient church a time, not of reformation, but *destruction*. Reformation necessarily implies a *continuance* of the thing reformed.

the Gentiles, and of the future prosperity and glory of the church, were made, not to a new church to be erected under the Gospel dispensation, but to the Zion of the Old Testament—to the church at that time existing in Israel. “The Lord shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee, and the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising. Lift up thine eyes round about and see: all they gather themselves together, they come to thee: Thy sons shall come from far, and thy daughters shall be nursed at thy side. Then thou shalt see and flow together, and thine heart shall fear and be enlarged, because the abundance of the sea shall be converted unto thee; the forces of the Gentiles shall come unto thee. The sons also of them that afflicted thee shall come bending unto thee; and all them that despised thee shall bow themselves down at the soles of thy feet; and they shall call thee the city of the Lord, *the Zion of the Holy One of Israel.*” See Is. chap. ix. There is no resisting the conclusion to be drawn from these and similar passages, hundreds of which might be quoted from the Old Testament, but by supposing that it is the *real* and not the *visible* church which is here addressed. But how will those who adopt this supposition interpret passages like the following? “The children which thou shalt have, *after thou hast lost the other*, shall say again in thine ears, The place is too strait for me, give place to me that I may dwell. Then thou shalt say in thine heart, Who hath begotten me these, seeing *I have lost my children*, and am desolate, a captive, removing to and fro?” Is. xlix. 20, 21. Will it be pretended that this prediction belongs to the *real*, as distinct from the *visible* church of God? Has the *real* church ever lost any of her children? Has any *real* saint ever fallen finally away?—It cannot be denied that this and similar predictions relate to *the visible church of Israel*, and establish the fact, that converted Gentiles under the new dispensation are gathered into the same church.

5. The identity of the church under both dispensations is certain from *the declarations* of Scripture.—The Apostle Paul teaches, in the eleventh Chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, (v. 17—24.) that the believing Gentiles are grafted into *the same* olive tree from which the unbelieving Jews were broken off, and into which the restored Jews shall be grafted again. What are we to understand by this olive tree? Not Christ; for none who are truly interested in him are ever broken off. Not the *real* church of God; for the same

reason. The olive tree represents the *visible church of God*,* whose branches are attached to it by a *profession* of godliness. From this, the unbelieving Jews were broken off. Into the same, the believing Gentiles are grafted. And into the same, the restored posterity of Abraham will at length be grafted again. Hence, the sameness of the church under both dispensations is in this chapter incontestably established.

In further proof of this point, I shall adduce but one passage more. The Apostle, addressing his Ephesian brethren, says, "Wherefore remember, that ye, being in time past Gentiles in the flesh were without Christ, being *aliens from the commonwealth of Israel*, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world." Chap. ii. 11, 12. Does this form of expression necessarily imply, that the Ephesians were *no longer* "without Christ, having no hope, and without God in the world?" But it implies with equal certainty, that they were no longer "*aliens from the commonwealth of Israel.*" It is just as clear from this passage that these Christian professors were now members of *the commonwealth or church of Israel*, as it is that they believed in Christ, enjoyed the comforts of hope, or loved and served the God of heaven.

6. There is evidence from *fact*, that the church, under both dispensations, has been the same. During Christ's public ministry, his disciples were members of the *Jewish church*. They attended the festivals and other instituted services of that church, and 'walked in all its commandments and ordinances blameless.' After the ascension of Christ, we find them pillars in the *Christian church*. Had they in the mean time been cut off from one church, and gathered into another? And if so, when and how was this done? And what record have we in the New Testament of any such proceeding?—In the hour of Christ's death, important changes were indeed accomplished. The old dispensation was abolished, the new one ushered in, and the church was purged of its unbelieving members; but the stock of the olive tree, with its few green branches, remained the same, and into it multitudes were speedily engrafted.

In short, nothing can be more evident, than that the disciples belonged to the same church on the day of Pentecost, and afterwards, to which they belonged on the night when they ate the Passover, with their blessed Lord. And from this *fact* it follows conclusively that the church, under both dispensations, has been the same.

* Jeremiah, addressing the church, says, "The Lord called thy name a green *olive tree.*" Chap. xi. 16. Of the church in Israel the prophet Hosea says, "His branches shall spread, and his beauty shall be as the *olive tree.*" Chap. xiv. 6.

I forbear to press the inferences which naturally result from the truth here established. It will occur to every intelligent reader, that if the church, under both dispensations, has been the same, then the *covenant* of the church has been essentially the same, and *children of church members are entitled to the seal of the covenant now, as they were in former times.* The prevailing difference of opinion in regard to the subject of infant baptism, has its foundation deep in the constitution of the church, and will not probably be removed, until the claims of the Israelitish church are better understood, and more truly appreciated.

DR. WOODS'S LETTER TO DR. BEECHER.

DEAR BROTHER,

I am ready to join with you and with others in a sincere effort to prevent needless collision and separation among the ministers of Christ, and to promote the spirit of mutual forbearance and kindness. And though it is not for us to control the feelings of our brethren, or to prescribe the course which they shall pursue; we may avert from ourselves the evils of unchristian strife, and secure the blessedness of those who seek the peace of the churches.

The interesting remarks contained in your letter, present to my mind the important inquiry; *What can be done to prevent that coldness, alienation, and strife, which minor differences of opinion are apt to produce among Christian ministers?* I wish to be understood as speaking of those differences which have generally existed among the most eminent saints, and which are acknowledged to be consistent with a sound belief of all the essential doctrines of religion. What these differences are, and what is the line which separates them from differences which affect the fundamental principles of religion, may be a subject of inquiry at another time.

Nothing in this letter is intended to interfere in the least with the most faithful efforts to explain and defend what we deem to be important religious truth. It is a sacred duty, enjoined by the authority of God, to *contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints.* What that faith is, and what is the comparative importance of its different parts, we

are to learn from the word of God. And if we are sufficiently diligent and candid and patient in our inquiries on this subject, and seek, as we ought, the guidance of the Holy Spirit; we shall be in little danger of erring in judgement. Men who possess the right spirit will not be likely to attach great importance to small matters, or to consider those things among the essentials of religion, which are only needless appendages. Still, if any one, through mistake, believes particular opinions to be important which are not so, we must acknowledge that he acts *consistently*, to say the least, in laboring to support them, and to persuade others to embrace them. His mistake may be one which we think to be very obvious, and of hurtful tendency; and we may with propriety endeavor to convince him of it. But we must, after all, allow, that he is free from blame, and acts a just and honorable part, in contending for what he sincerely believes to be fundamental truth, provided he does it without any thing faulty in the manner.

Nor is any thing in this letter intended to preclude free inquiry or debate on *any* subjects, whether more or less important. Only let debate be kind and temperate, and let it be carried on for the discovery or defense of truth, not for victory; for the detection and confutation of error, not for the injury of those who maintain it; with moderation and fairness, not with violence, artifice, or obstinacy; and much good will undoubtedly be the result. The usefulness of this result does not always depend on the magnitude of the points discussed. A candid and thorough examination of a subject of secondary consequence, and a just decision upon it, frequently involves principles, which will lead to a just decision on subjects of the highest consequence.

If we would determine how to prevent the smaller differences of opinion which are commonly found among the ministers of Christ, from running into angry dispute and schism, we shall find it of great advantage to consider some of the principal ways in which such differences have led on to such results in past times. By thus looking at the source of evils, we may learn how to prevent them.

Good ministers have, in many instances, contributed to the evils referred to, by thrusting little differences into frequent notice, and giving them a prominence which does not properly belong to them. It often happens, that a particular point, on which two men happen to differ, and which at first they both regard as of small consequence, quickly grows in their hands, and at length acquires an importance which, in their apprehension, entitles it to be placed among the essential principles of

religion; and you will often find them disposed to expend more time and thought and zeal upon that single point, so insignificant in the view of all impartial men, than upon the great doctrines which constitute the foundation and the glorious edifice of Christianity. To such weakness and extravagance is human nature liable.

We may be betrayed into the mistaken conduct here intended, *in our more private intercourse*. Whenever some ministers meet, even on the Sabbath, they immediately bring up the disputed point, and remark with great freedom, if not with severity, upon the opinion which is opposed to theirs, and upon the futility of the arguments which have been used to support it. They dwell upon it, till they become much interested, and somewhat heated, and till they lose all candor and patience towards those who dissent from them; while, as to the great things of revelation, the high points of doctrine and duty and experience, on which the Apostles continually dwelt, and which have engrossed the attention of the most eminent Christians in all ages,—they show but little feeling. If we should listen to their private conversation from year to year, we should be tempted to conclude, that they held all the essential and glorious truths of revelation to be trivial matters, compared with a few little, disputed, doubtful points. Now if conduct of this kind should prevail to any considerable extent among Gospel ministers, and especially if they should show a readiness to cast a blot upon each other's reputation; it would be impossible to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There would be evil surmises, and heart-burnings, and resentments. Ministers who once loved as brethren, and who are still united in the great things of Christianity, would become suspicious of one another, and from suspicion would proceed to anger and bitterness. And then, what could they do towards advancing the interests of vital godliness? How could they pray for one another? How could they act together, where their joint influence is most needed, in promoting revivals of religion, and the spread of the Gospel through the world? Their individual sanctification, usefulness and comfort would be impeded; the name of Christ dishonored, and the great plans of benevolence disconcerted.

There are some instances, I trust not many, in which ministers give undue prominence to points acknowledged to be of small consequence, while engaged in *the examination of candidates for the sacred office*. A particular minister, I will suppose, speculates differently from others on some points in theology, which he regards as non-essentials. A young man

comes forward for examination, and in language clear and scriptural, declares his belief in the principal doctrines of revelation. The minister referred to is satisfied that the candidate is sound in the faith, and qualified for the ministry. But he is not willing to let such an opportunity pass, without bringing up his particular speculations, although no occasion could be more unsuitable. Accordingly, he begins to question the candidate about a number of little points on which he knows that others differ from him, not because he believes those points of any essential consequence, nor because he feels any want of satisfaction as to the orthodoxy, or piety, or intellectual furniture of the man under examination,—for perhaps he is particularly acquainted with him, and with his qualifications, and knows his speculations to correspond with his own. But he urges his questions, because he chooses to show how boldly he can contend for his peculiar notions and his peculiar phraseology, and how free he is from the narrow prejudices and antiquated notions held by some present, and because he wishes to make it appear that he can count the candidate on his side. This proceeding, which is both ungentlemanly and unchristian, excites the feelings of others; and they follow his questions with questions on their part, endeavoring to draw the candidate to express himself as favorably as possible to their notions, and to unsay or modify his previous answers. It now becomes a dispute between different ministers, carried on by means of questions and arguments addressed to the candidate. They go from one thing to another, and passing by all that is obvious and fundamental, insist, in language not a little ambiguous, upon points of doubtful speculation, which they themselves profess to regard as not making an essential part of the system of orthodox faith. To show their size as disputants, and their dexterity in carrying on a controversy over the head of another person, they go forward with their lists of inquiries. In this conflict, much time is consumed. Some parts of the examination of radical importance are precluded. The candidate is puzzled with hard questions, and instead of being surrounded, as he expected to be, with ministers of the Prince of Peace, he finds himself in the midst of combatants. The effect upon by-standers is, to diminish their respect for the character of ministers, if not for the religion which they preach. But the effect is most unhappy in regard to themselves. Their minds are disturbed, and in a greater or less degree unfitted for the solemn occasion; the spirit of brotherly love and prayer is suppressed; and the whole scene results in alienation and strife among ministers, and discredit to their holy calling.

Forgive me, my brother, for enlarging as I have done, on such a subject. I have done it to show how deep a conviction I have of the indecorum and the mischief of such a proceeding as I have described, or of any thing like it. The ordination of a minister is a most solemn occasion, and if rightly regarded, most delightful and profitable. It furnishes no place for disputation, or unbrotherly feeling. Let speculative differences on the non-essentials of religion be discussed freely on other occasions; but why should they be brought in, with all their unhallowed tendencies, to interrupt the sacred peace of ordaining councils? The holy doctrines of revelation, the grand points of Christian experience and ministerial duty, should be made prominent in the examination of the candidate, and should be so treated as to promote self-inquiry, penitence, love, and the spirit of devotion among those engaged in it, and to fit them to engage in the public services with solemnity, and tenderness, and fervent prayer, and then to return to their respective charges with increased affection for one another, and new purposes of fidelity in their sacred calling.

The *public ordination services* should be most carefully guarded against all such improprieties as I have alluded to.—For some time before and after I was introduced into the sacred office, there was much debate among ministers indifferent parts of New England, respecting what was called the "Exercise scheme," and the "Taste scheme." Men distinguished for talents and piety and usefulness, were enlisted on both sides; and some few became so engrossed with the subject, that they were inclined to thrust it into notice on all occasions. When one who adopted the "Exercise scheme," was called to preach at an ordination, he took pains to make the excellencies of his scheme, and the absurdities of the opposite, stand out in bold relief. And if it fell to one who embraced the opposite scheme, to give the charge, he sometimes took equal pains, on the same occasion, to set forth the superior advantages of *his* scheme, and the inconsistencies of the one he rejected. Though the subject of controversy involved deep, metaphysical subtleties, which lay beyond the reach of common intelligence; both parties made it a frequent topic of reasoning before popular assemblies, and treated it as though the interests of the universe depended upon it. This mode of proceeding, which occurred not unfrequently, besides being the source of unmeasured irritation among those who were enlisted as combatants, broke in, to some extent, upon the peace of the churches, and hindered the work of divine grace. And such for a time was the influence of this controversy, that many young ministers and theo-

logical students seemed to regard it as involving all the principles of truth and piety, and some were for forming themselves into two armies, EXERCISE MEN, and TASTE MEN, and, though agreed in regard to every doctrine of revelation, and every object of Christian benevolence, were inclined to carry on a more active war against each other, than against the grossest heretics or infidels. But divine providence ordered things favorably; and after a while, that controversy gradually gave way to a more diligent study of the Bible, to revivals of religion, and other paramount interests of the church, in which all hearts were happily united.

What I have now related is only a specimen of what the general history of the church in past ages lays open to view. Now how lamentable would the case be, if, notwithstanding all the lessons which history and observation and experience have taught, any man at this day should be disposed to follow on in the track of those fierce-minded polemics who have gone before us, and working himself up by the heat of controversy to think little things great, should thrust them into the business of ordinations, attaching supreme importance to his peculiarities, and looking with defiance or contempt upon whatever opposes. Let those who pray for the peace of Jerusalem keep themselves at a great distance from all conduct like this, and pursue the course which is pointed out by that pure, peaceable, gentle wisdom, which is from above.

Bear with me, if I go forward with my design, and represent still farther the importance of avoiding those things which would occasion the breach of union and friendship among the servants of Christ.

Our religious Periodicals are professedly intended for the elucidation and defense of the fundamental doctrines and duties of revealed religion. The great object of ministers and others, who contribute to these important publications, should be, to honor the word of God as the only perfect standard of faith, and to search out and exhibit what it teaches as to the grand principles of theoretic and practical Christianity; to expose the errors which stand in opposition to these principles; to promote the conversion of sinners and the prosperity of the church, and to set forth the vast importance and the most effectual means of growth in grace. And I am happy to bear my testimony to the correct scriptural sentiments, the distinguished ability, the ardent piety, and the expansive benevolence, generally exhibited in these publications. But suppose they should be turned aside, and betray unreasonable fondness for any doubtful, or unimportant, or singular speculations; suppose that, in writing

for religious periodicals, we and others should make it our first object to support any opinions which are not essential to the Christian system, and should show that they are exceedingly precious to us; and suppose we should put in requisition whatever there is that is lively or powerful, acute or profound in the faculties of our minds, to give our favorite notions currency, and to expose the shallowness of those who dissent from us; what would be the consequence of all this? Evil, and only evil. The publications containing these peculiarities, would come in contact with minds of a different mould from ours, not less attached to the holy truths of revelation, nor less imbued with the spirit of Christ, but formed to a different way of thinking on the subjects of discussion. In all probability some of them would be provoked to write in opposition, especially if, in maintaining our opinions, we showed undue confidence in ourselves, or any thing contemptuous towards our opponents.

Here would probably commence a warfare in Magazines and Pamphlets, among those who believe the same great doctrines of the Gospel, and love the same great interests of vital godliness. And well would it be for the dignity of theological discussion, formerly conducted in volumes, if it should not go down to the newspaper arena, and thus carry the agitation into the bosom of society. This warfare, so unpropitiously begun, and waxing worse and worse in its progress, would tend, not to remove errors, but to confirm them; not to subdue prejudices, but to give them augmented power over the minds of men; not to unite the hearts of those who love the Lord Jesus, but to multiply jealousies among them, and to interpose a wall of separation. In this way the press, which should be made to contribute its varied and mighty influences to the advancement of truth and love, would be turned to be an instrument of error and discord.

Under the operation of those various and powerful causes which are alluded to in your letter, who can think himself secure from the danger of being drawn aside to take some part in such a warfare? I am aware of the danger in regard to myself, and would not cease to pray, that divine grace may preserve me, so that I may never be either a principal or an accessory in the sin of thus invading the peace of Christ's kingdom. I would also solicit your watchful inspection, and that of every minister of Christ. If at the present day, when such great things are to be done, and the Lord is hastening to take possession of the world, you should ever see me expending zeal upon things of little or no consequence, or doing what would tend to promote evil surmises and altercation among Chris-

tians ; freely admonish me ; if necessary, "smite me ; it shall be a kindness ; reprove me ; it shall be an excellent oil which shall not break my head."

I shall here touch upon another subject, which my situation renders specially interesting to my feelings, and in regard to which great circumspection and candor and Christian friendship are evidently necessary, in order that general harmony may prevail. For twenty-four years, I have occupied, though with very inadequate qualifications, an office of peculiar responsibility and difficulty. The thought of the good or the evil which is likely in future time to result to the church of Christ from my conduct in this office, has often filled my heart with inexpressible emotions, sometimes of encouragement and hope, sometimes of fear and distress. And you, my brother, are now called by the providence of God, to occupy a similar office in a very promising Theological Seminary in a distant part of our country. The Lord send prosperity to that rising Institution, and render your labors in it successful above all that you ask or think. Now you and I, together with all those who sustain a similar office, however agreed in our views of the essentials of the law and the Gospel, may have different shades of thought in regard to some of the adjuncts of the Christian system. What then shall be done respecting these unessential differences ? The best answer to this will be found in the spontaneous promptings of that Christian love, which "suffereth long and is kind ; which envieth not, vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil ; rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth ; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things." Under the influence of this enlightened and noble principle, we shall be able quietly to dispose of those differences which do not affect the substance of our holy religion. Sometimes we shall pass over them in silence ; and shall always treat them with courtesy and forbearance. When there is occasion for it, we shall exercise a Christian magnanimity in rising above little provocations, and overcoming coldness and suspicion with frankness and generosity. Although our brethren may not be disposed to follow us in all our peculiar speculations, we shall remember that their character and usefulness are as important as our own, and shall do all in our power to induce those around us to treat them with sincere respect. We and they are engaged in a work of indescribable moment. Subjects sublime and profound, incomprehensible and awful, subjects involving the interests of the universe, continually press upon our attention, and the

attention of those whose studies it is our duty to superintend. The application of our minds to these subjects being as intense, and our zeal to make them rightly understood as ardent, as they should be, any undue attention to unessential matters will be precluded. Our favorite points will be the fundamental principles of the Gospel. In the whole course of theological instruction, we shall labor to exhibit these in all their magnitude and brightness. It will be our determination, as much as it was Paul's, "not to know any thing, save Jesus Christ and him crucified." On this subject, the highest zeal is moderation. Here we may lay out all our strength and fearlessness. Here, if any where, we are to show the spirit of martyrs. God forbid that we should turn aside from this our great work. As to every thing else, compared with this, our Lord says to us, "What is that to thee?" Let those who teach in our Seminaries act on this principle; instead of seeking their own honors and triumphs, let them seek to honor the Saviour and to extend the triumphs of his grace; and all occasions of jealousy and strife among them will be taken away. They will have one interest, and one heart. And through the blessing of God, the rising ministry will have the same spirit, and be devoted to the same interest. Instead of coming forth clad with the polemic armor, they will come forth in the fulness of the blessing of the Gospel of Christ, and clad with the garments of salvation; and great will be the peace of the churches.

In your letter you have suggested important cautions for the purpose of preventing uncharitableness and contention among those who agree in the great principles of religion, but have different shades of opinion on matters not fundamental. I pray that your suggestions may not be forgotten. There are things evidently unchristian, and various others of a doubtful character, which *must* be avoided, or harmony and love cannot generally prevail. Ministers of the Gospel are under special obligations carefully to weigh this subject; as it is a well known fact, that almost all the variance and contention and party-zeal, which have existed in the Christian world, have originated in the feelings and conduct of ministers. It will probably be so still. Whatever evils come upon the churches, will no doubt be owing chiefly to something amiss in those who sustain the sacred office. We are set for the benefit or the injury of the church, for the rise or the overthrow of many in Israel. We, of all men, should be most sensible of the importance of keeping our hearts with diligence, and of having our tongues and our pens under the guidance of heavenly wisdom. The brotherly correspondence which you have in-

troduced, and in which I shall with pleasure attempt to do my part, will, I hope, in some measure, exemplify the benefits which may arise from kind explanation, fraternal discussion, and the spirit of mutual concession, and so contribute, through the blessing of God, to advance the cause of truth, and the cause of love.

But after adverting so frequently as I have to differences of opinion on subjects of little or no consequence, I must say very frankly, that I am far from considering all differences among the professedly orthodox to be of this character. Those who seem to adhere to the general principles of Christianity, may advance an opinion which, in our sober judgement, is totally irreconcilable with those principles. And where the opinion is not *directly* and *visibly* inconsistent with what we believe to be truth, we may honestly believe it to have a tendency, however covert or remote, to undermine the truth, or to shake men's confidence in it. If we perceive any thing like this;—if we are satisfied that a particular speculation cannot be received without displacing in the end some fundamental truth, or detracting from its salutary influence; it becomes a sacred duty for us to treat that speculation as a fundamental error. The circumstance that those who have originated it, do not in their words, or even in their thoughts, reject any essential truth, can be no certain proof to us that the speculation is really harmless, or that those who adopt it, and who dare to be consistent, will continue to hold fundamental truth and give it a proper influence over their minds. In all such cases, we ought to be awake to the most distant approach of danger, to be aware of the various and subtil arts by which error may be propagated, to point out early, prove clearly, and press urgently these dangerous tendencies. But, by all means, let the opposition which we make against an apprehended error, whether more or less related to the essence of the Christian religion, be made by sound scriptural argument, and by nothing else. The instrument which we use should be the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God; and we should use this, as the word of God directs, with meekness and gentleness and love, not in strife.

It should be a great object with us, so to dispose of unimportant and harmless differences, that we may preserve a collected and tranquil state of mind, and thus be prepared for a profitable discussion of subjects really important. I believe, as you do, that this may be done; that all unimportant matters may be kept in the subordinate place where they belong, while those which are of real consequence, either in themselves, or

relatively to others, may undergo a free and animated and useful discussion. I trust we shall be able to show that all this is practicable.—But for me to express my views fully on this subject would extend my letter to an immoderate length. I must therefore content myself with a few additional remarks.

It is sometimes useful to loosen ourselves from the influence of present times, and make use of the power which God has given us, of anticipating the future. And it is useful sometimes to give way to feeling, rather than keep ourselves always strained up to reasoning. And if we can, in certain cases, let our minds be at their ease awhile, and let our imagination range freely into futurity, and can take a high stand, such as we may suppose a good man will take a hundred and fifty years hence, which will be towards the close of the next century; we may perhaps, in that high and commanding position, suddenly be freed from the mist of past ages, and acquire a judgement and taste, greatly superior to what men have commonly possessed, and such as is suitable to one who beholds the dawn of the millennium. I have been endeavoring, with an imagination not much accustomed to flights, to reach forward to that advanced station, and thence to look, with quickened powers of mind and a brighter vision, upon the scenes now passing in this part of Christ's kingdom. As we sometimes find it useful in determining questions of present duty, to anticipate the end of life, and to ask ourselves, how things will appear to us on a dying bed, and what we shall then wish we had done; so have I endeavored to judge what is proper and desirable in regard to the cause of truth and the interests of the church at the present day, by translating myself in thought a century and a half forward, and thence looking back upon the Redeemer's kingdom in this my beloved country, and pressing myself with the question; "In what light shall I view things at that time? How shall I then wish, that I and my fellow-laborers had proceeded in regard to the present objects of attention, particularly in regard to existing differences of opinion, whether more or less affecting fundamental doctrines. Allow me here to bring out the pleasing result of my contemplations at once. I will suppose then that, near the close of the next century, somewhere about A. D. 1980, some learned and faithful man will write a book, called, **THE HISTORY OF THE CHURCH OF CHRIST IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.** Guided by the promptings of my heart, and believing, or almost believing, what I wish to be true, I imagine that there will be a short chapter in that book, relating to the present times, and containing something like what here follows.

Title of the Chapter.

“A SKETCH OF THE HISTORY OF THE CONGREGATIONAL AND PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA DURING THE FORMER PART OF THE 19th CENTURY, AND PARTICULARLY FROM A. D. 1820 TO THE MIDDLE OF THE CENTURY.

“The church in New England and throughout the United States, having been guided and protected by the arm of her Almighty Saviour through many seasons of darkness and peril, and having often experienced times of refreshing from his presence, stood forth in her beauty, clothed with the garments of salvation. From A. D. 1800, and before, the work of God's grace in revivals of religion became extensive and glorious. During the first twenty years of that century, many benevolent societies were formed, and many charitable and pious institutions were established, devoted to the education of youth for the ministry, to the circulation of the Bible and religious Tracts, to the cause of Missions, and to all the other interests of Zion. The great truths of the Gospel were defended, error was confuted, and the church rejoiced in the presence of her Redeemer, and in the sure prospect of his universal reign. Still the coming of this kingdom, and the general influence and spread of the Christian religion, were for a time delayed. Ministers and churches had not yet attained to that union of affection, strength of faith, fervency of prayer, or faithfulness in duty, which were necessary to the highest advancement of Christ's empire. Their light did not shine before the world with sufficient clearness. Where the grand doctrines of revelation were received, they were in many instances received with too little of the simplicity of faith, and defended with too little of the meekness of wisdom, and too little submission to the authority of God. And amidst the glorious displays of divine power and mercy, the spirit of the world, developing itself here and there, exerted a pestilential influence, and brought innumerable evils upon the ministry and the church. And the prospects of the church were further overclouded by theological controversies. Certain views of Christian doctrine were exhibited in private conversation, in the pulpit, and from the press, which were regarded by some as important improvements, but by most as dangerous innovations, and as leading on to the subversion of the settled orthodoxy of the churches. These views, which were defended with no small degree of zeal and dexterity, appertained chiefly to various

metaphysical or philosophical questions, connected more or less with the doctrines of revelation, and, in general, to the manner of apprehending, and proving, and teaching from the pulpit, the fundamental principles of the Gospel. For several years, there was much debate, attended with unusual excitement, and threatening to bring discord and division in its train. Some men enlisted in this controversy, who had much of the polemic character, and who wrought themselves up to a high pitch of warmth. The great things which concerned the glory of God and the salvation of the soul were in danger of being overlooked, and the Bible, of being undervalued; while other matters, questions which gendered jealousy and strife, were strangely magnified, and were becoming the all-engrossing subjects. The controversy was likely to turn aside the servants of Christ from the great object of their heavenly calling, and to involve them in evils, over which many generations would weep. But while the clouds were gathering blackness, and showing fearful signs of a far-spreading and desolating storm, He who rules in the heavens, and whose power can restrain the wrath of man, interposed, and scattered the angry tempest. He first waked up his ministers to the glory of his character as the God of love, and to the infinite evil of doing any thing to offend him. Through the more abundant effusion of his Spirit, they attained to higher degrees of holiness and spiritual enjoyment. They so contemplated the beauty and glory of divine things; they had such communion with God, and were so filled with his fulness, that all corrupt and selfish affections died away, while holy affections grew stronger and more perfect. Here began the effectual remedy of all the evils which had come upon the ministry. Those evils originated from an extensive spiritual declension. Ministers had practically neglected the word of God. In their feelings and words and actions they had not been careful to conform to it as their only standard. The prayer of Christ for his disciples, and the various passages in the writings of the Apostles which inculcate mutual forbearance and kindness, they had in a manner forgotten. At the commencement of that happy period, they found themselves in a new moral world. The Bible became a new book, displayed new glories, elicited new affections, led to a new course of action, and opened new sources of enjoyment. When they read in the seventeenth chapter of John's Gospel, the repeated and earnest prayer of Jesus, that all his followers might be one, and meditated on the overflowing benevolence which prompted the prayer, and on the preciousness

of that cordial union which it was the object of the prayer to promote among them ; their feelings were greatly moved, and they became "kind, tender-hearted, forbearing one another and forgiving one another." Their eyes were directed to such passages as these : "I therefore beseech you, that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, forbearing one another in love ; endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." (Ephes. 4:1—3.) They read also what the same Apostle says, (Phil. 2:1—3.) "If there be therefore any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies, fulfil ye my joy, that ye be like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. Let nothing be done through strife or vain-glory ; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself." While they perused these inspired passages, they were filled with a delightful surprise, as though they had never seen them before ; and an impression, exactly corresponding with these heavenly precepts, was made indelibly upon their hearts. And this was the second step towards a full remedy of the evils, under the burden of which the ministry had long labored.

This purified and improved state of moral feeling in ministers in relation both to God and to each other, soon manifested itself in an improved mutual intercourse, and a more exemplary conduct in the church. No strife was any more found among them, except the strife to excel in acts of Christian kindness and generosity. Formerly they found it hard to obey the precepts of the New Testament, inculcating humility, condescension, and love, or even to form a clear conception of their meaning. Now, these precepts were easy to be understood, and easy to be obeyed. In those very circumstances in which pride, ill will, variance, and party-spirit had before showed their hateful forms, nothing now was to be seen but mutual candor and generosity, and the spirit of conciliation. This feeling of Christian friendship and true liberality diffused itself in a remarkable measure, among the different Theological Schools. Each Professor cherished a cordial and warm affection towards all other Professors, rejoiced in their prosperity, sympathized with them in their afflictions, and sought, on all occasions, to promote their reputation and usefulness. If in any instances there had before been any degree of suspicion, emulation, or distance among different schools of Divinity, the evil now disappeared, and they regarded each other with confidence and love. By a free and fraternal interchange of thought, they

availed themselves of the benefit of each other's wisdom and experience. Indeed nothing of special interest to the churches was undertaken by either, without the counsel, the concurrence and aid of all. Thus the various Theological Institutions in the country came at length to be, what they always should have been, ONE GREAT CHRISTIAN ESTABLISHMENT, consisting indeed of different parts, but all devoted to one and the same great object, and each striving, by diligence and fidelity in its own proper work, and by kind affection and kind offices towards all the others, to raise itself and them to the highest possible point of usefulness. That was a bright and happy day among the Seminaries, such as no one had ever seen or thought of before. The fears which once existed respecting them in the minds of some good men, were now gone. The cross was taken away. All was holiness to the Lord. Teachers, students, talents, studies, acquisitions, all were consecrated to the glory of Zion's King.

The same noble spirit spread through the whole multitude of Gospel ministers. They loved one another with a pure heart fervently; and took care, by the exercise of a delicate mutual respect and courtesy, to perpetuate and increase that love. If in some smaller matters they entertained different conceptions, they took care not to thrust their differences into public view. Or if at any time, through inconsideration, any of them happened to do this, no one took offense. Of small things they made small account. At the examination of candidates, at ordinations, in religious publications, and in all their labors in the ministry, they showed that the whole field of their vision was filled with the great things of the law and the Gospel, in which they were all agreed. As to other things on which they thought differently,—they treated them as though they were not. Christian politeness, an instinctive sense of propriety, and a nice regard to each other's feelings, would have been sufficient to influence them to this, without any higher principles. But they had no occasion to rely on the aid of these motives, as they had the illuminating, purifying influence of the Holy Spirit constantly abiding and operating in their minds and hearts, expelling wrong views and wrong feelings, rectifying their judgement, and rendering them totally incapable of attributing great importance to trifles. That was truly a bright and happy day among the ministers of Christ, such as they had never seen or imagined before. And how gloriously did the work of God proceed in the conversion of sinners, in the growing holiness and fruitfulness of believers, and in the enlargement of Christ's empire at home and abroad. Great was

the company of Gospel ministers ; and they all kept steadily to the business of their calling, having nothing within or or without them to turn them aside. For a while, there were indeed a few individuals, who were not prepared for that new and blessed era. Even after it had evidently commenced, they held back, cherishing still some feelings of suspicion, cleaving to former notions and habits, holding fast their instruments of warfare, as though they would be again needed ; afraid to let their hearts go out in a full tide of affection and confidence towards their brethren ; seeing indeed, and with some uneasiness, that others were more active and prosperous and happy than they, but choosing rather not to partake of that prosperity and happiness, than to take pains to alter their manner of thinking. But at length the jealousy and reluctance of such individuals yielded to the general current. The purified and all-pervading moral atmosphere brought a healthful influence upon them, and the state of their minds was meliorated, before they were aware of it. There was a mighty tide of benevolence rolling over the land, and their resistance became more and more feeble, till they found themselves safely and delightfully carried along upon its bosom.

The removal of all material differences of opinion among ministers, was an important step in the effectual remedy, then experienced, of pre-existing evils. Their improved state of feeling prepared the way for this. Having "put away wrath, and malice, and envy, and evil speakings," and every selfish and party object, and all feelings of self-confidence and self-sufficiency ; not thinking of themselves more highly than was just ; having a sincere respect for the understanding of each other, and cordially loving the truth, they were in a state to be profited by free discussion. No one claimed infallibility, or was unwilling to see or confess his mistakes. All were open to conviction. There was just debate enough among them to sharpen their faculties, without producing irritation. They heartily welcomed new light respecting God's word and providence, from whatever quarter it came. It was a real pleasure to them to feel and acknowledge their obligations to each other for the solution of their doubts and difficulties, and the advances they made in knowledge. The cause of divine truth was to them a common concern. Whatever useful acquisitions one made, he was desirous of imparting to all. And whatever mistakes any one made, he was ready to have corrected by his brethren. The rashness, haste, or indiscretion of the ardent was counteracted and even turned

to advantage, by the sober judgement of the more moderate; while any coldness or tardiness or excess of caution in these, was warmed and quickened and turned to use by the greater ardor of those. The harmonious commingling of so many minds of such different moulds, and so diverse from each other in their intellectual habits and attainments, gave a new beauty and vigor to piety, and evinced to the admiration of the world, what unthought of wonders could be accomplished by the power of holy love. It was in that era of light, that the boundaries of human knowledge and human investigation were first well understood. It was then found, *that within their proper province men could attain to knowledge vastly more clear and perfect, than they had supposed attainable.* And what was almost as important, it was found that, *beyond the proper limits, far less could be known, than had been imagined.* Within these limits, therefore, where knowledge was attainable and useful, all the powers of the mind were exerted. But beyond these limits, where men in all ages had groped amid shadows and phantoms, and had fallen foul of one another, because they were in the dark,—into that region of gloom and danger these heaven-taught men ventured not to go. In the bright and fertile field which spread out so wide before them, they found employment enough; and they had no inclination to travel into any dreary waste, or to hazard a plunge into any unfathomed abyss. No long time elapsed, before ministers were delighted to find, that their free and brotherly explanations and discussions, both in conversation and in writing, produced a growing harmony of opinions. They learned to think and speak alike, because they learned to think and speak according to the sure standard of God's word, and under the constant superintendence of his Spirit, which they most earnestly sought, and on which they all implicitly relied. And so they came to be of the same mind and judgement, and to see eye to eye.

Thus were the ministers of that period prevented from adding to the many examples with which the history of the church is filled, of the evils of needless theological speculation and strife. And thus, by exhibiting mutual forbearance, meekness, and moderation, where the exercise of these virtues is most difficult, they made manifest the power of divine grace, and gained the approbation of heaven. And when the unholy spirit of contention was expelled from the bosom of the ministry and the church, the peaceful, holy Dove returned to dwell there. As we look back upon that period, so signalized in history, our eye rests upon it with delight; and we are compelled

to exclaim; "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity.—It is like the dew of Hermon, and like the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion; for there the Lord commanded his blessing, even life for evermore." In united strength, under one banner, the church went forward, "clear as the sun, fair as the moon, and terrible as an army with banners;" and such a work of salvation was accomplished, as prophets and kings, apostles and martyrs desired to see, but saw not, and to hear, but heard not. It was the dawn of the latter-day glory."

Such is the chapter which I have fondly imagined some future historian will find occasion to write, respecting that part of the church of Christ with which we are connected, during the period of time referred to.

LEONARD WOODS.

Theol. Seminary, Andover, Aug. 1832.

EXPOSITION.

1 Cor. xv. 24 and 28.

"Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father, when he shall have put down all rule, and all authority, and power.

"And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all."

The subject of discussion in this chapter is the resurrection of the dead. The two verses to be examined, with the three included by them, are parenthetical, containing an account of what may be considered as a circumstance attending the resurrection;—a circumstance, however, involving a sublime and most wonderful transaction. Then cometh the end, it is said, when Christ will deliver up the kingdom to God, even the Father, having first put down all rule, and all authority and power;—and then will he become subject himself also to him, that put all things under him, that God, the supreme Jehovah, may be all in all.

* These verses are quoted and remarked upon in an interesting manner in the *Biblical Repository* for Oct. last. Between the views given there and here, there is a similarity. It seems proper, therefore, to remark, that this article was written before that number of the *Repository* appeared, and that no part of it has been modified by the views there presented.

1. In the first place, what are we to understand by the phrase "*the end*;"—"then cometh *the end*." Some suppose it to mean the end simply of the resurrection. That they may so interpret it they place it in immediate and close connexion with the preceding verse. In that we are told, that the dead shall come forth, "every man in his own order; Christ the first fruits, afterwards they that are Christ's at his coming." "Then," i. e. in the progress of this great work, "cometh the end;" by which they understand the finishing or completion of the resurrection. But to connect the verse thus inseparably with the preceding, seems constrained and unnatural,—especially, as it cannot be disjoined from the four following verses, while it is plain that in them there is a digression. After these, the Apostle returns to his grand subject, the resurrection. Indeed, it is quite clear, that the two verses at the head of this article, with the three which intervene, are parenthetical. With the connexion, then, we have nothing to do, further than to presume that what the parenthesis contains was suggested by it. In minute inquiry, recourse must be had to the verses themselves. To what, then, do these refer, as being now about to close, and what is here denominated "*the end*?" I answer, not to the resurrection; but to that kingdom which Christ had received by appointment of God; in which he had reigned; and which (its purposes all being answered) he was now about to resign. With the great body of critics, I understand the end to be the close of the dispensation of mercy to our apostate world;—a dispensation constituting a separate branch of the Divine government, over which Christ, in the capacity of Mediator, reigns.—This seems so obvious as to need no further remark.

2. Secondly, What is the nature of this kingdom; and what is meant by its being delivered up to God?

The mediatorial kingdom, or dispensation of grace by a Mediator, as a part of the government of a holy God, is altogether a peculiarity. It was introduced in behalf of our world; and because it was a ruined world. It operates, and will operate, to make an illustrious exhibition of the strength and resources of the divine benevolence, by employing its expedients to recover, from the ruins of earth, a countless throng, and raise them to glory and honor and immortality;—and all this, without sacrificing any of the claims of law, or lessening the sense of obligation in any intelligent being.

The general government of God, as originally constituted, provided no relief for the transgressor. It knew no course, but to measure out to him his deserved portion, and move on,—shining with more resplendent glory, as often as it cast forth a

sinner, and ejected from itself the pollution of his sins. Angels sinned, and it took this course. It visited upon them the just measure of its indignation, and moved on undisturbed,—awfully great, awfully holy, and the object of increasing confidence to all holy beings.

But when, tempted by these sinning angels, man rebelled, a new course was taken. Here was a world of immortal beings in ruin. The sword of the divine government was drawn, and ready to visit upon them deserved wrath. But in that fearful crisis, divine benevolence awoke to try its resources. The question was, how to suspend the immediate course of law, without frustrating any of its ends, so that our world might be placed by itself, under some special applications for its recovery. Infinite wisdom and goodness were adequate to the emergency. A scheme of mercy was projected and applied. Our world was set by itself. It was dismembered from the universe, as to continuing over it the *regular* course of the divine government, and placed under another economy.

Over all other worlds, so far as we know, the government of God was taking its unsuspending course. For ours, a remedial system was introduced. Here was made a new exhibition of the divine character. The universe saw its great author acting in new circumstances, for a new object, and endearing himself immeasurably to the affection and confidence of the holy, by contravening the designs of malignant spirits, and bringing good out of the ruin they had caused.

Jesus Christ undertook the special agency of this remedial system. He took the government of this now separate world; and became head over all things to it. He came forth and stood as a days-man between it and the general government of God; so that, while without this arrangement we could no more have access to God than fallen spirits, by means of it we may approach and find him ready to be reconciled.

The application of this system of recovery, which infinite wisdom and goodness devised, Christ is now making. He is hastening it on to its final consummation. As the fruits of it, a triumphant company, recovered from the reign of sin, and restored to the likeness of God, will be prepared to come back, and be replaced under the Divine government, as originally constituted.

When this shall be effected;—when all the purposes of this mediatorial dispensation are secured, and glorious trophies are rescued out of a world in ruins;—when sin, by its rejection of a Saviour offered and a gospel preached, is made to appear exceedingly sinful, and is prepared to go with tenfold shame to the

prison of the universe ;—when mediatorial agency and remedial influence are to be exerted no longer ; Christ shall come, with all his holy throng—and the company shall be great, ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands—and he shall deliver them up to God. He shall give them over to be kept no longer under a remedial system, but to be replaced under the government of God, thenceforward to operate upon them according to its original provisions ;—no longer to be kept where they shall hear of pardon on repentance, but to come directly under that original constitution which connects life and favor only with obedience ;—no longer to remain under a separate administration, having access to God only through a Mediator, but to be introduced into the community of heaven, and with angels, seraphim and cherubim, to come near, and cast their crowns immediately before the throne.

This is what I understand to be delivering up the kingdom to God, even the Father. The mediatorial kingdom, as a separate dispensation, shall subsist no longer. Its purposes all being answered, the glorious fruits of it shall be brought forth and presented before God, and shall then be merged in the great family of heaven, and dwell there, under no peculiar provisions of government, but such only as have prevailed from eternity.

3. But before this grand consummation of Christ's mediatorial agency, or rather as a preliminary to it, he is to "put down all rule, and all authority, and power." The meaning of this is, that he shall have triumphed over every thing that exalteth itself against God—that he shall have subdued all things to himself. This interpretation is sanctioned by the next verse, which adds, "for he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet." Are there then conflicting powers at issue on the destiny of man? So, beyond controversy, the Bible teaches. In this kingdom of grace, at the head of which Christ stands, he is embarked in a warfare with the mighty and malignant powers of darkness. How mighty they are, we know not. Perhaps as near to infinite as finite can be. So near, perhaps, that they even thought of equal conflict, and of hopeful conquest, when they raised revolt in heaven. What they have done, is sufficient proof of power.

They could not, however, raise and sustain rebellion in heaven. That holy place cast them forth at once. As by instinctive loathing, it spued them out. But over our world, they spread the wave of ruin dark and deep. They reared their empire. By sufferance, they extended it. But only that they might exemplify more fully the malignity of their spirit,

give opportunity for a more illustrious conquest over them, and prepare the way for a more approving alleluia, when the smoke of their torment shall ascend up forever and ever.

This suggests the remark, that the object of Christ's kingdom is not merely to save and raise to heaven, the glorious throng, on whom the remedy of the gospel takes effect, but also to prepare his enemies for a more consuming destruction. He will act as Mediator and king, till every thing that opposeth and exalteth itself against God shall be put down. By moral exhibitions from Calvary and from the gospel,—renovating and purifying to every thing but the malignity of sin, but by that resisted, he will bring to light its true nature. He will cause it to act out its inherent hatefulness. Thus will he draw upon the sinner the concentrated and unmingled abhorrence of the universe. Then, as the day of consummation comes, and in the universe there is not a sinner but lies prostrate, and stung with the agonies of eternal death, heaven will sound with alleluias such as never before were sung, and hell will echo with wailings such as never before were heard. Each guilty conscience will smart with throes of remorse and shame, such as never before were felt.

“And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all.” So reads the second verse under examination. Its short import appears to be, that Christ, as Mediator, having first subdued all things to himself, will then come and present himself, and all the results of his mediatorial agency, to God, the Supreme Jehovah of hosts, by whose appointment he had acted.

The first particular in this verse—“when all things shall be subdued unto him,” is only a repetition of what has been already sufficiently explained. The next particular, in these closing scenes of the work of our redemption is, “then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him.” What are we to understand by this? In order to a right apprehension of it, we must keep in view the nature of that kingdom which is to be delivered up, over which Christ reigns as head and king;—for evidently it is in *that capacity*, that he is to make his resignation, and become subject to God.

Let it be remembered, then, that the mediatorial dispensation is altogether a peculiarity in the government of God. It has respect, so far as we know, only to our world; and exists in relation to that, only because it is a world in ruins. Prompted by benevolence God conceived the design of recovering it to his own glory, and causing the machinations of the wicked to re-

coil upon their own heads. This I have already in some measure explained. A few words further, touching the nature and circumstances of this peculiar kingdom which Christ is now about to surrender, may not be out of place here. When the wave of ruin flowed over our world, and the powers of darkness were rejoicing in its hopelessness, and guilty man was afraid and trying to hide himself from his Maker, than it began to be revealed that there yet was hope. A remedy was contemplated. But that it might be applied, the regular course of divine government on us must be suspended, and justice must for a season keep back its penalty. This required an arrangement, such as the wisdom of the world would never have conceived. Christ must come down from his place in the Godhead into a subordinate capacity; must take upon himself the form of a servant; must be made in the likeness of sinful flesh, and thus become what the Apostle calls the great mystery of godliness, "*God manifest in the flesh.*" Perhaps it is asked, why must there be this wonderful transaction—this humiliation of Christ? The proper answer is, the exigencies of the case require it. And this we know, not because a proud philosophy has ascertained it—philosophy can travel here only as she is led—but because God has declared it. "For verily he undertook not for angels, but he undertook for the seed of Abraham. Wherefore, in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren." The language implies, that if he had undertaken the redemption of angels, it would have behoved him to assume an angelic nature. "It behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of his people." And further, "It became him, for whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the Captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings."

As it regards all this, it may be said, that the method of this redemption, and what its application would require, were all present to the divine mind, while yet the time for its accomplishment had not come. Christ was yet "with God, and was God." The three distinctions of the triune Jehovah were acting in the union and oneness of perfect Deity. There remained the *execution*. "Whom shall I send, and who shall go for us?" This may be regarded as the language, in concert, of the "three that bear record in heaven." Then said one of them "Lo I come, to do thy will O God!" Illustration is possible here, though limited and imperfect, because of the remoteness of the subject from familiar analogies. We can conceive of a society of persons, who in their associate capacity, are

strictly one body. Let them have an enterprise, in the achievement of which they are interested as a body, yet which requires, in many respects, only an individual agency. Now we can conceive how one of their number might step aside, and address himself to the body, and propose to take the agency in question, under direction of the body, while yet his place and his prerogatives in it, continue the same as they were before. He undertakes the agency in his individual capacity, but not at his own discretion. He acts under the direction, and with the sanction of the body,—to which body he still belongs, and in all whose measures he has the same voice as before. As an individual, however, he is in a subordinate capacity; and his power to act is a delegated power, conferred upon him by the body;—in conferring which he acts equally with the others.

Perhaps this may represent, in some feeble manner, how Christ, when he said "Lo I come to do thy will," came forth from his place in the God-Head. Our world was in a sense dismembered from the universe. He came forth, divinely appointed, and took the government of it, that he might hold it under a separate and peculiar dispensation. In doing this he assumed a new character, descended to a subordinate capacity, and acted, so far as his actions were strictly in that capacity, by a delegated power. While power to reign belonged to him essentially in his original character, as *Mediator* it was to rest upon him by appointment, till all the purposes of his assuming that character were answered. It was certain also, that by going into this subordinate capacity, he should alienate none of his claims to the worship and the exalted praises of heaven. "When he bringeth in the first begotten into the world he saith, and let all the angels of God worship him."

We see then, if I mistake not, the relation which Christ, as Mediator, sustains to the Supreme God; and how he is constituted head of the kingdom of grace—that great remedial system which he is applying to our world. He is accomplishing a work of God. He is doing it for God. And when that work shall be done,—when he shall have achieved the redemption of the general assembly and church of the first-born, and prepared them to shine in purity forever, and to go back and be amalgamated with the family of God under the original provisions of his government;—and when, on the other hand, he shall have broken the power of his enemies, triumphed over all who oppose God, and the happiness of his children, and by the operation of the gospel upon them, shown what spirit they are of, and thus prepared the way for an eternal song of approbation, while the smoke of their torment shall ascend up forever and

ever,—then will Christ come and deliver up the glorious and matchless results of his Mediatorial work to God, (in which name he is himself embraced;) and with those results he will also deliver up his prerogatives as Mediator. As the mediatorial kingdom is no longer to exist, so the office and prerogatives of Mediator can exist no longer. This is the relinquishment—the subjection that is referred to in the passage under remark. Christ shall deliver up to God the power and prerogatives which he held, as by stipulation, in the capacity of Mediator; not at all those which belong to him as one of the adorable Trinity. Thus the mediatorial kingdom and office are returned to God—that God with whom they originated, and from whom they proceeded—even the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. To him, therefore, who is thus “all in all,” be the glory of our redemption.

Perhaps the question will here be started, what will be beyond this closing scene? Will there be no longer a Redeemer and a redeemed throned? In making a single remark to this point, I reply there will be; but they will not subsist under the divine government as they now do. The redeemed will ever be to Christ the fruit of his atonement, for whom his soul travailed in the garden and on the cross;—and he will ever be to them the author of all former hope and all present happiness. There will be endearment, surpassing that of every other relation; but not as now a separate reign and kingdom. When the son ceases to be a minor, does he cease also to be a son; and has he no longer a father whom he loves? Washington did not cease to be the father of his country, when he resigned his official character and retired to private life; nor did he by that act alienate the affections of a grateful people. So long as Christ shall bear in his glorified body the marks of his sufferings, the redeemed as they behold will not cease to cry “Worthy is the Lamb that was slain—thou hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation.” The exterior frame work of the mediatorial kingdom may be taken down; but never will cease the emotions with which that everlasting anthem will be sung in heaven.

J. TENET.

RECENT PUBLICATIONS.

1. *Sermons and Sacramental Exhortations.* By the late ANDREW THOMSON, D. D. Minister of St. George's Church, Edinburgh. First American Edition. Boston: Crocker & Brewster. 1832. pp. 447.

The author of these sermons, who has long been known in this country as among the most efficient ministers of the Church of Scotland, was the son of the late Dr. John Thomson, one of the ministers of Edinburgh, and was born July 11th, 1779. Early in 1802, he was licensed to preach the gospel; and in March of the same year, was ordained minister of Spronston. In 1808, he was removed to the East Church, Perth; and in 1810, to the New Grey Friars Church in the city of Edinburgh. In 1810, he was removed again to St. George's Church, a new and spacious edifice which had been for some years building. Here he continued to labor with great diligence, fidelity and success, ministering to an audience composed chiefly of the higher classes in society, until the 9th of Feb. 1831, the day of his decease. He died suddenly, being in usual health till the instant that he fell, and was summoned from this scene of labor to his final reward.

Being a prompt and eloquent extemporaneous speaker, Dr. Thomson was not more distinguished as a preacher, than as a *man of business* in the line of his profession. He "belonged to that party in the Church of Scotland which has defended the rights of the people, in opposition to a vigorous enforcement of the law of patronage; and in advocating this cause in the Church Courts, he displayed his unrivalled talents as a public speaker, sustained by an intrepidity which was unawed by power, and a fortitude which was proof against overwhelming majorities. Of late years, he devoted a great portion of his labors to the defence of the pure circulation of the Scriptures," in opposition to those members of the Bible Society who were for circulating the Apocryphal books, and to "the emancipation of the degraded negroes in the West Indies. His exertions in behalf of the doctrines and standards of the Church against some recent heresies and delusions afford abundant proof of his readiness at all times to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints."—Dr. M'Crie, the historian of Knox and of the Reformation, thus speaks of his deceased friend:

"Dr. Thomson was by constitution a reformer; he felt a strong sympathy with those great men who, in a former age, won renown, by assailing the hydra of error, and of civil and religious tyranny; and his character partook of theirs. In particular, he bore no inconsiderable resemblance to Luther, both in excellencies and defects—his leonine nobleness and potency, his masculine eloquence, his facetiousness and pleasantry, the fondness which he shewed for the fascinating charms of music, and the irritability and vehemence which he occasionally exhibited, to which some will add the necessity which this imposed on him to make retractions, which, while they threw a

partial shade over his fame, taught his admirers the needful lesson, that he was a man subject to like passions and infirmities with others. But the fact is, though hitherto known to few, and the time is now come for revealing it, that some of those effusions which were most objectionable, and exposed him to the greatest obloquy, were neither composed by Dr. Thomson, nor seen by him, until they were published to the world; and that in one instance, which has given rise to the most unsparing abuse, he paid the expenses of a prosecution, and submitted to make a public apology, for an offence of which he was innocent, as the child unborn, rather than give up the name of the friend who was morally responsible for the deed;—an example of generous self-devotion which has few parallels."

The volume before us contains twenty-two Sermons, with several Sacramental Exhortations. The Sermons are not so discriminating or impressive as those of Payson, but they are strictly evangelical and highly finished productions. The following, from the Sermon on the death of the Princess Charlotte, is a favorable specimen of the author's manner.

"Yes, my friends, all earthly distinctions are destroyed at death. Sometimes, indeed, they may appear to remain. One man is honored with a splendid and imposing burial. Another has a blazoned monument erected over him. A third may have historians to record his name, and poets to sing his praise. And in contrast to all these, a fourth may be laid in the base earth, and have not even a stone to tell where he lies, and fade from the remembrance, almost as soon as he passes from the sight of that world, in which he did little more than toil, and weep, and suffer. But let your eye penetrate through those showy and unsubstantial forms which custom, or affection, or vanity has thrown over the graves of departed mortals, and behold how the mightiest and the meanest lie side by side in one common undistinguished ruin. Striking is the fact, and numerous are its proofs. Every day that passes over you, and every funeral that you attend, and every church yard that you visit, give you the affecting demonstration. And sometimes God in his judgement, or in his mercy, sends a proof of it which knocks loudly at the door of every heart, and sets a broad and a lasting seal upon the humbling truth. This proof he has lately sent us in the most solemn and pathetic form which it could possibly assume. There was one who had all that earthly greatness can confer; who filled one of the most elevated and conspicuous stations to which mortals are ever born; who had all of personal dignity, and accomplishment, and honor, that this world could afford; and who, as her best and highest distinction, sat enthroned in the heart of her country as their admiration and their hope. Such she was; but it pleased God, whose creature and whose child she was, to assert his own sovereignty, and to illustrate the emptiness of all terrestrial grandeur, by taking away her breath, and she died, and is returning to her dust. And what, think you, my friends, are the distinctions in which she is now rejoicing? Not in those with which she was surrounded and adorned on earth; these have lost all their importance and all their charms, and even that universal and affectionate respect in which she was held, appears to her now a very little thing. But there are distinctions which death cannot touch, and which are now, we trust, the glory and the joy of her departed spirit. To her, we trust, it is now given to rejoice, that in the high places of this wilderness, she was enabled, by divine grace, to confide in the mercy of her God and in the merits of her Redeemer; that she paid a practical regard to the exercises of devotion; that she revered the Lord's day; that she performed her relative duties with affection and fidelity; that she set an example of piety and virtue, amidst strong temptation and abounding iniquity; and that with the splendid prospects of an earthly crown, she did not forget her heavenly hopes, but aspired after that crown of righteousness and glory which fadeth not away."

2. *Lectures on Ultra-Universalism.* By A. WILSON McCLURE. Boston: Peirce & Parker. 1832. pp. 59.

The only question in regard to these Lectures (a question which Universalist Editors and ministers have long ago decided in the affirmative) is, whether it is proper to employ ridicule and satire for the purpose of exposing and running down what we conceive to be errors on the subject of religion. If this be proper, of all the errors which prevail around us we think Universalism presents the fairest mark; and of all the satirists with whom we are acquainted, Mr. M. has best succeeded in assailing it. In his first Lecture, he urges upon Universalists the great and important duty of putting an end to their mortal existence, and going as speedily as possible to glory. In the second, he weighs the question as to the sincerity of Universalists. In the third, he characterizes the preachers of "the blessed doctrine." And in the fourth, he 'gathers up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost.'—Those Universalists, who have so long been trying to make a jest of the truth, and all others who wish to enjoy a laugh at the expense of the abettors of a most monstrous and ridiculous as well as dangerous error, should not fail to procure and read these extraordinary Lectures.

3. *Sermons, by the late Rev. Charles Jenkins, Pastor of the third Congregational Church Portland, Me.* Portland: A. Shirley. 1832. pp. 407.

These sermons are, in a high degree, evangelical in doctrine and in spirit. They are written in a style plain and forcible, and well adapted to popular use. The sermons have a good share of directness and pungency, and mark very clearly the natural character of man, and the peculiar characteristics of true religion. They are a fair specimen of what has been usually called "New England preaching."

The following extracts from the sermon on "the Results and Uses of Human Depravity," will be read with pleasure and profit. After describing the enmity of the unrenewed heart against God, the author introduces a number of reflections. The first is this.

"This subject presents an interesting and instructive view of the nature and degree of man's alienation from God. There is nothing, by which we can rightly estimate moral or spiritual delinquencies in creatures, but by reference to the character of God, as disclosed in his law, government, and gracious dispensations. Jehovah thus revealed, is the only perfect standard of spiritual purity. By contemplating him, as he unfolds his character to the dimmed vision of fallen creatures in the scenes of his visible works, men may discern little or nothing, that would serve to show them how far they have departed from him, or how profound are the depths of pollution into which they are sunk. Accordingly it is found, that they, who read his character only as they are able to discern it written on the fabric of material things, whether they be those, who are necessarily deprived of any other revelation, or those, who wilfully refuse to seek the deep spiritual illumination promised to the humble student of the book of God, are without any adequate conception of their amazing deficiencies of character, and of their positive ENMITY AGAINST the holy One. Indeed, AGAINST the God whom they apprehend—the God of nature, and of reason, of fancy, or of fiction, their

mind is not ENMITY. Nay, it delights in the being which its own vitiated powers create. But let for once, the true God, the God of holiness, of justice, and salvation, break in upon the discoveries of the unrenewed mind, and the case becomes very different. All indifference, all complacency ceases. It no longer retains its negative or equivocal posture. It retires from the ground of an assumed neutrality, where it has been amusing itself in "looking through nature up to nature's God." It finds itself urged by its inherent tendencies, now waked up to action, to advance to a most unequal contest, and to rush upon the thick bosses of the Almighty's buckler. The unrenewed mind, thus forced to a disclosure of itself, thus made to feel and to show to others its innate temper, lets us into some right discoveries of what human depravity is. It is not a negative existence. It is not simply a destitution of holiness. It is not merely the being *without God*, but the being *AGAINST* God. It is the entire vitiation of the moral powers of the mind, the strong tendency and incessant activity of these powers in opposition to the Most High."

4. *Memoir of John Knill, a little Boy who died of the Cholera in St. Petersburg, July, 1, 1831.* Boston; Peirce & Parker, 1832. pp. 36.

"The Rev. Richard Knill, father of the lovely boy who is the subject of this memoir, was born in Devon, England, and studied under the Rev. Dr. Bogue, preparatory to going as a missionary to India. He went out to South Travancore, under the patronage of the London Missionary Society; but his health became so enfeebled, that the only hope of his recovery was in his returning to a colder climate; and he landed in England about two years from his leaving it. Mr. Knill was advised to try the climate of Russia, and the Missionary Society engaged him to go to St. Petersburg," where he has since labored, and where his labors have been followed with much success. At the commencement of the ravages of the Cholera in St. Petersburg, Mr. Knill had three sons, two of whom were snatched from him by that dreadful pestilence within three days. John, the eldest of these (not quite four years old) "was attacked in the morning, died at noon, and in the evening was carried to his grave." He was an uncommonly lovely child, was deeply interested in the concerns of religion, and seems to have felt its power on his heart. The memoir of him was written by his afflicted parents and sent to this country to be published, in hope that the avails of the publication might enable them to print it in the Russian and German languages. When the friends of Sabbath Schools among us become acquainted with the work, they will be glad to contribute to so interesting an object.

5. *The Youth's Book on Natural Theology, illustrated in familiar Dialogues, with numerous Engravings.* By REV. J. H. GALLAUDET, late Principal of the American Asylum for the Deaf and Dumb. Hartford; Cooke & Co. 1832. pp. 248.

In our previous numbers, we have noticed Mr. Gallaudet's Books on the Soul. With equal pleasure we commend to the attention of our readers the interesting volume before us. It is an attempt to *impress* upon the youthful mind, from a description of appropriate objects in the natural world, the fundamental truth that *there is a God*. The argument is conducted after the

manner of Paley, and is expressed in such terms, and so illustrated, as to be entirely familiar. No youth can attentively read the book without being instructed, as well as pleased, and without receiving good impressions.

6. *The History of the first Church and Society in Raynham, in two Discourses, delivered Jan. 1, 1832.* By ENOCH SANFORD, Pastor of the Church. Taunton: Edmund Anthony. pp. 24.

Much good may be done by the preaching and publishing of historical discourses such as these. They furnish opportunity to a Pastor to point out "the old paths;" to urge on a people the worthy example of their ancestors; and to enforce lessons of wisdom from the past. Ordinarily, too, they possess more than a local interest. Facts are elicited of importance to the community and materials are furnished for the future historians of our country.

7. *Apostolic Mode of Preaching. A Sermon delivered in Boston before the Conference of Baptist Ministers, May 29, 1832.* By DANIEL SHARP, Pastor of the Charles Street Baptist Church. Boston: Lincoln & Edmands. pp. 16.

We know of no subject of greater importance to ministers of the gospel, than that briefly but happily illustrated in this discourse—the *matter and manner of preaching*. "The Apostles so SPAKE, that a great multitude both of the Jews and also of the Greeks believed." As the Divine Spirit operates through the medium of our faculties, and in accordance, ordinarily, with the established laws of the human mind, there is needed as much wisdom and skill in the adaptation of means, in order that they may be persuasive and successful, as though salvation depended on means alone. "What we preach," says Dr. Sharp, "may be the truth; but its improper separation in our discourses from other truths with which it is naturally allied may render it not only useless, but pernicious; or it may be so unadapted to those who hear it, as not to affect them in the least; or it may be uttered with such indifference, as to produce no other effect but doubt and inattention."

☞ Dr. Woods's Letters to young Ministers will be suspended for the present, on account of his correspondence with Dr. Beecher.

THE
SPIRIT OF THE PILGRIMS.

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NO. 9.

COMMUNICATIONS.

HERMAS.

There is a very ancient ecclesiastical writing still extant, entitled "the Shepherd of Hermas." It consists of three Books. In the first are four Visions; in the second twelve Commands; and in the third ten similitudes. The writer begins by saying, "He by whom I was educated sold a young woman at Rome, whom when I saw many years after, I remembered and began to love her as a sister. It happened sometime afterwards, that I saw her washing in the river Tyber," &c. At the end of the second Vision, Hermas is directed "to write two books, and send one to Clement, and one to Grapte; for Clement shall send it to the foreign cities." It is inferred from these passages that Hermas resided at or near Rome, was cotemporary with Clement, and that "the Shepherd" was written while Clement presided over the church in that city. And with this supposition, other passages in the work entirely accord. For instance, Hermas speaks of recent persecutions, in which Christians had suffered from "wild beasts, scourgings, imprisonments, and crosses;" (Vis. iii. Sec. 2.) which is a good description of the persecution under Nero. He also speaks, in several places, of "a great trial coming;" "the great tribulation that is about to come;" "the great trial that is at hand," &c. which may be supposed to refer to the persecution under Domitian, or to that under Trajan. In one of his Similitudes, he represents the preaching of the Apostles as a recent event: "These are they who have believed the Apostles, whom the Lord sent into all the world to preach." In another passage, in the same Si-

militude, he speaks of the Apostles as already dead; which was the case with them all, with the exception, possibly, of the Apostle John.

By the general consent of the ancients, the author of "the Shepherd" is the Hermas spoken of by the Apostle Paul in the last chapter of his Epistle to the Romans: "Salute Asyneritus, Phlegon, *Hermas*, &c. and the brethren which are with them;" and the work before us must have been written near the close of the first century.

Respecting the life of Hermas nothing is known with certainty, except what is gathered from his writings. It appears that, before conversion, he was a man of wealth; for it is represented as said to him in one of his Visions, "They who are rich in this world, unless their riches are squared off, cannot be made profitable unto the Lord. Learn this from thy own experience: *when thou wert rich* thou wast unprofitable; but now thou art profitable, and fit for the life which thou hast undertaken." Vis. iii. Sec. 6. It further appears that his own conversion took place some time previous to that of his family, who still continued in the practice of gross wickedness. In these circumstances he seems to have been indulgent to them even to a fault, and was often perplexed with anxious cares, that he might supply them in their extravagance.

"Thy household have committed wickedness against the Lord, and against their parents. And because, out of fondness for thy sons, thou hast not admonished them, but hast permitted them to live wickedly, therefore the Lord is angry with thee. But he will heal all the evils that are done in thy house; for through their sins and iniquities, thou art wholly consumed in secular affairs. Wherefore, cease not to admonish thy sons; for the Lord knows that they will repent with all their heart, and they shall be written in the book of life."—"Thy seed, O Hermas, hath sinned against the Lord, and betrayed their parents through their great wickedness. And now they have added lewdness to their other sins, and filled up the measure of their iniquities. But do thou reprove thy sons with all these words; and thy wife also, and let her refrain her tongue with which she calumniates; for when she shall hear these things, she will refrain herself, and shall obtain mercy. And thy sons also shall be instructed, when thou shalt have reproved them with these words, and the sins which they have committed shall be forgiven." Vis. i. 3. ii. 2.

It may be inferred from these passages, that the family of Hermas were at length won by his instructions and kindness, and that he had the satisfaction of seeing them embracing and adorning the Christian faith. As to the circumstances of his

life, after this, we have no particular account. From the whole tenor of his writings, exhibiting every where a tender conscience and a deep and lively sense of sin,* we are warranted to conclude that, like the Apostles, whose example he had witnessed, he continued to walk as the grace of God teaches, and 'that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, he had his conversation in the world.' He was very faithful, in confessing his own sins, and reproofing those of his Christian brethren; also in warning the wicked of their danger, and exhorting them to flee from the wrath to come. In labors such as these, this holy man filled up his ministry and spent his days; and according to the Roman Martyrology, his end was not unsuitable to it; for we there read, that having been "illustrious for his miracles, he at length offered himself a worthy sacrifice unto God." This last is said, however, without sufficient authority, as none of the ancient writers have recorded the manner of his death.

The Shepherd of Hermas, the only work of his which is extant, was written in Greek; but, with the exception of some fragments preserved in the ancient Greek authors who have quoted him, we have now only a Latin translation. In the greater part of it, he is represented as conversing with mystical personages, and receiving from them revelations; but whether he really thought himself inspired, or whether he took this method to give to his instructions a deeper interest and impression, may perhaps be doubted. By many of the ancients this work was held in very high esteem. Irenæus quotes it under the name of Scripture.† Origen, after expressing the opinion that the Hermas mentioned in the Epistle to the Romans was the real author of this book, speaks of it as a most useful writing, and one, as he thought, divinely inspired.‡ The following is the account given of it by Eusebius: "Forasmuch as the Apostle, in the salutations at the end of his Epistle to the Romans, makes mention, among others, of Hermas, who, it is said, wrote the book called the Shepherd, it is to be observed that this is doubted of by some. Wherefore, it ought not to be placed among the books of unquestioned authority. By others, it is judged to be a most necessary book, especially for those who are to be instructed in the first elements of religion.

* Being convinced on one occasion that he had indulged an evil desire, on account of which the Lord was displeased, he "said within himself, If this be laid against me for sin, how can I be saved? Or how shall I ever be able to entreat the Lord for my many and great sins? With what words shall I beseech him to be merciful unto me?" Vis. i. Sec. 2.

† Adven. Hæres. Lib. 4.

‡ Hom. in Rom. Lib. x. Cap. 16.

And we know that it is publicly read in the churches, and that some very ancient writers make use of it.”*

Jerome, in his book of *Illustrious Men* (Chap. x.) says, “Hermas, of whom the Apostle makes mention in his *Epistle to the Romans*, is affirmed to be the author of the book called the *Shepherd*; and it is publicly read in some churches of Greece. It is indeed a useful book, and many of the ancient writers have made use of testimonies out of it.” Athanasius speaks of the book, not as strictly canonical, but as one which “the fathers appointed to be read to those who were to be instructed in the faith, and who desired to be directed in the way of piety.† It may be further observed, as evidence of the esteem in which this work was held in primitive times, that it was not only read in the churches, but is included in some of the more ancient manuscripts of the *New Testament*.

Of all the writings of the *Fathers*, the *Shepherd of Hermas* has perhaps the least claim to be considered a doctrinal work. His *Visions* were designed to reprove sinful thoughts, and the neglect of family government; also to convey instruction respecting the enlargement of the church, and the great trial which was coming upon it. His book of *Commands* is almost entirely on moral and spiritual subjects; such as ‘avoiding detraction and dissimulation, and doing our alms-deeds with simplicity; of the sadness of the heart, and of patience; that we must fear God and not the devil; that we must pray to God daily, without doubting; that we must beware not to grieve the Spirit of God; and that the commands of God are not impossible.’ The following are the titles of some of the *Similitudes*: ‘That seeing we have no abiding city in this world, we ought to look for that which is to come; that as the green trees in winter cannot be distinguished from the dry, so neither can the righteous from the wicked in this present world; that as in summer, the living trees are distinguished, by their leaves and fruit, from the dry, so in the world to come, the righteous shall be distinguished from the wicked by their happiness; that they who repent, must bring forth fruits worthy of repentance; that all repenting sinners shall receive a reward proportionable to the measure of their repentance and good works.’

I shall quote a few passages from the *Shepherd*, partly with a view to exhibit the sentiments of the writer on some controverted subjects, and partly as a specimen of his manner.—In the following sentences, he teaches the proper Divinity of Christ: “The Son of God is more ancient than any creature; inso-

* See Lardner's *Credibility*, &c. Part ii. Chap. 4.

† *Epist. Pasch. Tom. ii. p. 40.*

much that he was in council with his Father at the creation of all things." "The name of the Son of God is great and without bounds, and the whole world is supported by it." Sim. ix. Sec. 12, 14. "That holy soul, which was created first of all," (the human soul of Christ) "he placed in the body, *in quo habitaret Deus*, in which God should dwell; in a chosen body, as it seemed good to him." Sim. v. Sec. 6.

Hermas is very full in his declarations of the future and endless punishment of the wicked. "Those stones that fell into the fire and were burnt, represent those *who have forever departed from the living God; nor doth it ever come into their hearts to repent*, by reason of the affection which they bear to their lusts and wickednesses which they commit." Vis. iii. Sec. 7. "Those sheep which thou sawest exceeding joyful," (enjoying the pleasures of sin for a season) "are such as have *forever departed from God*, and given themselves up to the lusts of this present time. To these, *there is no return by repentance unto life*." Sim. vi. Sec. 2. "Those who have revolted from the faith, and spoken wicked things against the Lord, and betrayed the servants of God;—these are condemned to death; *there is no repentance for them*." Sim. ix. Sec. 19.

The Apostle John directs his brethren to "try the spirits, whether they are of God;" and we can easily conceive (in those early times, when many were favored in some degree with the miraculous suggestions of the Holy Spirit, and when many false pretenders to this gift had gone out into the world) that this direction and the rules according to which the trial should be made, were of great importance. It is evidence that Hermas lived near those times, and partook largely of the spirit of the Apostles, that he has an excellent "Command" or Chapter on this very subject.

"Try the man who hath the Spirit of God: for the spirit which is from above is humble, and quiet, and departs from all wickedness, and from the vain desires of the present world, and answers not always when he is asked, nor to every one singly; for the Spirit of God doth not speak to a man when he will, but when God pleases. When, therefore, a man having the Spirit of God shall come into the church of the faithful, and they pray unto the Lord; then the holy angel of God fills that man with the blessed Spirit, and he speaks in the congregation as he is moved of God. Thus, therefore, is the Spirit of God known, because whoever speaketh by the Spirit of God, speaketh as the Lord will.

"Hear now concerning the earthly spirit, which is empty, and foolish, and without virtue. And first of all, the man who pre-

tends to have the Spirit (whereas he hath it not in reality) exalteth himself, and desires to have the first seat, and is wicked, and full of words, and spends his time in pleasure, and receives the reward of his divination,—which, if he receives not, he does not divine. Should the Spirit of God receive reward and divine? It doth not become a prophet of God to do so. Thus you see the life of each of these kinds of prophets. Wherefore, prove that man by his life and works, who says that he hath the Holy Spirit." Com. xi.

THE SELF-FLATTERY OF SINNERS.

When a person has brought a stain upon his character and stands before the public in the attitude of a delinquent, the only way to regain his reputation and become restored to the confidence of his fellow-men, is to repair all injury as far as possible, and conduct himself discreetly in future. In this way, he may at length recover himself, and come to be regarded as a sound and valuable citizen. But if instead of reforming, he continues his irregularities, and says he shall still be respected, he deceives himself fatally, and is undone. The confidence of people shall no more be placed in him. He runs down and falls lower and lower, till finally he sinks in the deep waters of hopeless infamy and perpetual disgrace.

So it is with the sinner in relation to the future, eternal state. He has already a stain upon him. He is a sinner; and to be a sinner, is to be a rebel against God. Now there is an opportunity to repent; and though he can never make amends for what he has done, through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, he may be saved; and salvation implies every thing that can make him blessed. But if he repent not, and do not believe in Christ; if he bless himself in his heart and say, 'I shall have peace though I walk in the imagination of mine heart;' then the Lord will not spare him, but the anger of the Lord and his jealousy shall smoke against him.

Self-flattery in matters of religion is as certain ruin to the soul, as it is in matters of the world to reputation, where that has been injured. And to hope well, without reason, in temporal or spiritual things, is only to prepare the way for more poignant grief at the last. Yet this, alas, is often done. 'Let us not then be deceived; God is not mocked: For whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.'

Sinners know very well that their way is wrong. They are more or less disturbed in their sins. The law is written on their hearts, and the voice of conscience is not easily stifled. Sinners know they are guilty, and after all their self-flattery, have a thousand secret fears. In moments of sober reflection, even the stout-hearted tremble. They know God does not approve of sin, but requires them to repent of it. They try to keep up good courage, and to cheer each other's spirits, and for this purpose they often express their confidence in sentiments which, after all, they secretly distrust. This is what, on becoming penitent, they have often confessed,—that whilst they were indulging error, they had painful suspicions that all was not right, and that what they opposed might be the truth of God.

Sinners know, too, that there is *danger* in their course. The idea of danger is closely connected with that of sin. For God is a God of truth; and we naturally and justly conclude that, while wandering from the way of his appointment, we are exposed to his wrath. Sinners may flatter themselves that God is good, and therefore that they shall escape; but they cannot altogether forget, that God is also holy and just, and will by no means clear the guilty. They feel alarmed in the midst of their conviviality and mirth. A dreadful sound is in their ears. A fearful foreboding frequently troubles them. When awakened, they often anticipate their doom.

Yet, strange as it may seem, sinners prefer their course, and persist in it. I would it were not so. But are we not constrained to admit the fact? It meets us continually wherever we turn our eyes. Multitudes untold are to be found in the community, who are examples of what I here assert. They know they are sinners, and that till they repent and believe in Christ, they are in danger. Yet they move not a step towards repentance. They refuse admonition. Warnings from Providence and the word of God are slighted. They hear preaching, but go away and soon forget what manner of persons they are. They live as carelessly as ever, as much without prayer, and without communion with God. They view Christians with the same jealousy, and the same evil eye. They flatter themselves in their own eyes, and cry *peace, peace*, to their deluded souls.

I have referred to the community in general; but may I not be more particular? Impenitent readers, how is it with you? Are you not convinced that your course is wrong, and that by continuing in it you are in danger? And have you not been warned, and admonished, and entreated in vain? Are you not, then, proof of what I am saying, that though sinners know

a state of impenitence to be wrong and dangerous, still they persist in it? Alas! it is so indeed. For why, if it is not so, have you not broken off your sins by righteousness, and your iniquities by turning unto the Lord? Why is the morning and evening sacrifice wanting in your families? And why does the place of personal retirement bear witness to your negligence? Be assured, if you were as you should be, things would be different with you. You would not be flattering yourselves in impenitence, while living in the neglect of Christ, and in the indulgence of what you know is wrong.

Sinners in general flatter themselves that all will be well with them at last. If they do not, how can we account for it, that they should continue as they are? Could they rush on destruction as they do, if they did not flatter themselves, notwithstanding their convictions, that in some way they should escape? Their guilt and danger they know, and the hopeless state of the impenitent they dare not call in question; but for themselves they hope, that some way of deliverance will be opened. Say, sinner, if this is not the case; and if this thought, secretly indulged, be not the very thing which keeps you quiet. Could you remain so, if you admitted the truth in relation to yourself, with as little qualification as you do in relation to men in general? O, then, be undeceived! It is the deception of self-flattery that keeps you quiet in your sins. And the Lord, we are assured, will not spare the self-flatterer, but his anger and his jealousy shall smoke against him, and all the curses that are written in the Holy Scriptures shall come upon him, and the Lord shall blot out his name from under heaven.

While sinners flatter themselves in their own eyes, judgments are preparing for them. The word and attributes of God, the honor of his law, and the welfare of his universal kingdom, all conspire to render their destruction sure, unless they repent. This must be the inevitable result; for God has settled it forever in heaven, that no sinner, however he may flatter himself to the contrary, shall ever enjoy him, or be happy in his presence, without repentance and submission to his will.

What then is it for a man to bless himself in his heart, and say, 'I shall have peace, though I walk in the imagination of my heart?' It is but to proclaim his own folly. It is but to prejudice and declare himself an heir of perdition. 'I can't repent and be sorry for my sins. I can't be serious and commence a life of prayer. I can't break off this and that habit, and forsake this and that vicious companion. I can't submit to certain doctrines and duties, so close and strict. I choose to

live on as I am. I should be glad if it were different with me, but I hope for the best. At least, there are many worse than I am, and some who profess to be good, I suspect are no better.'—Such is the language of one, and another, and in all of multitudes. But O, their end! Eternity will declare it. And then, when in turn, God shall refuse to listen to their cry, as now they refuse his call, O, then, their doom will open! May the writer of these paragraphs, and he who shall read them, be preserved from the self-flattery of the impenitent, and from their awful end!

H.

DR. BEECHER'S SECOND LETTER TO DR. WOODS.

DEAR BROTHER,

It has been my deliberate opinion for many years, derived from extensive observation, and a careful attention to the elementary principles of the various differences which have agitated the church, that the ministers of the Orthodox Congregational Church, and the ministers of the Presbyterian Church, are all cordially united in every one of the doctrines of the Bible and of the Confession of Faith, which have been regarded and denominated fundamental;—and that the points wherein they differ do not subvert or undermine any one of these doctrines, or justify the imputation of heresy, or the withdrawal of confidence, or co-operation in every good work. I would not be understood to say, that I think the points of difference to be in every case of little consequence; or that, by being made centres of assault and defence, they may not be driven to hurtful extremes; nor yet that earnest discussion, conducted with Christian courtesy, is to be deprecated. Without something of this kind, the public intellect might fall asleep, and truth be transmitted by tradition, through the memory: and an unthinking theology, cold as winter and powerless as the grave, might extend a “dead Orthodoxy” over the land,—a sure precursor, as in Germany, of a coming age of heresy and infidelity.

It is a happy circumstance, that the Confession of Faith, contained in the Cambridge and Saybrook Platforms, and adopted by all the Congregational churches in the early days of New England, and the Confession of Faith of the Presbyterian church are the same document, and nearly *verbatim*; and that the Westminster Catechism has in all generations been

held in estimation by the ministers and churches of New England, next after the Bible. A simple subscription to these symbols has not been required as the condition of licence or ordination; but a practice much more trying and thorough has been universal and immemorial, so far as my knowledge extends; viz; a strict personal examination upon every one of the fundamental points contained in these symbols, and a cordial avowed belief in them.

That some shades of variation have been given to these symbols in New England and in the Presbyterian church, is well known. The entire ministry of the same age have never explained precisely alike all the great points in which they were substantially agreed; and in every succeeding age their exposition has received some shades of modification by the change of circumstances. The Reformers and Puritan fathers were men of powerful minds. But in their arduous conflict with the Papacy, they had not time to discriminate exactly between the doctrines of the Bible, and those expositions which resulted from the principles of the received philosophy. They laid hold upon the fundamental truths with an iron grasp, and wielded them with giant strength: but to say that in their ardor they grasped, with their weapons of heavenly temper, neither wood nor hay nor stubble, would raise them above the primitive ministry, as described by Paul, and make them more than men. In marshalling the truth against the Papists in an exigency, they gave doubtless to some points (and properly) a place and proportion, which need not be maintained when this controversy has passed away: while new arrangements are necessary to meet the untiring and ever-varying assaults of error. And if any minor defects, embodied in these writings, have been detected by ingenious adversaries, it is not to be regretted that the unprofitable material has been given up, and its place supplied with solid gold.

It is these different theoretical expositions of the fundamental truths, however, which constitute the debateable ground in the controversies which are now agitating the church; and it is especially with reference to the temper and practice displayed in these controversies, that I am pained and alarmed. For I have no doubt that the heresy of a bad temper and unchristian practice has always been one of the worst heresies which has desolated the church of Christ. The cautions on this subject contained in your letter are worthy of deep consideration; and if any influence which we possess may avail to withhold from the historian of 1980, the sad materials of acrimonious controversy, loss of confidence, alienation and strife, the grieving of the

Spirit, the suspension of revivals, and the paralysis of missionary and benevolent institutions, and to provide the materials of that bright page which your benevolence has imagined, it would be a consummation worthy of the consecrated energies of all our remaining days. I doubt not but that we might so live as to leave the church in the blaze of a controversy, which the generation following might not live to see extinguished. But O! my brother, how different in the eye of heaven, in the eye of man, in our own eye on a death-bed and on the record of eternity, will be the appearance of a great pacification or a great conflagration, achieved by our instrumentality,—leaving the church either torn and enfeebled by internal conflict, or pouring out the whole energy of her power in prayers, and charities, and high enterprize for the conversion of the world.

The danger to which at the present time we are most exposed, is the strength, and I must even say, the severity of feeling which has already in some instances broken out in this controversy, and broken over alike the rule of common decency and christian courtesy, in rude denunciations, or in exposing to ridicule the supposed inconsistencies of conduct or argument of Christian brethren. This is what even sanctified human nature cannot bear, and what is not allowable in the controversy of Christian with Christian, and is never lawful, except where reformation is hopeless, and sharp rebuke is authorized, and answering a fool according to his folly enjoined, for a warning to others.

It is manifest that our religious periodicals, of the more grave as well as the more ephemeral class, are not wholly exempt from the danger, and will do well to take good heed on this subject—while some of them have already fallen into the deep and muddy stream of editorial petulance and invective, of sarcastic argument, and theological tale-bearing—embalming the failings of good men, which it were quite enough for them to have manifested once in their narrow sphere; and giving to them a speedy resurrection and a tiresome pilgrimage over the whole land, for the sake of the castigation of the offender, and the peace and spiritual edification of the whole church: as if the eighteenth chapter of Matthew had never been revealed, and the whole world had been constituted the tribunal of the church, and public opinion the supreme executive, and the newspaper, attorney general, witness, judge, and jury. Unless a public sentiment shall be spontaneously formed to overrule such public violation of the laws of Christ and outrage upon our common Christianity, the church herself will soon become like the troubled sea which cannot rest, whose waters cast up

mire and dirt. It must be remembered, that the public character of an editor does not emancipate him from the obligations of personal meekness, and of adorning in all things the Gospel of Christ : and that in bodies of men professing godliness, the rights of an evil temper and a lawless tongue can never be acquired by numbers.

In confirmation of the opinion that the Orthodox Congregational and Presbyterian ministry are agreed in what have always been regarded as the fundamental doctrines of the Calvinistic system, I have ventured to submit to your consideration, such an outline of these doctrines as will be admitted to be Calvinistic, and as, in my apprehension, would be adopted by a very large proportion of the ministry of the two denominations, if not by nearly every man.

1. BEING AND ATTRIBUTES OF GOD.

God is a Being of infinite perfections, both natural and moral, and, in consistency with his unity, exists in three persons, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

2. DECREES AND PROVIDENCE OF GOD.

The design of God in all his works is the manifestation of his glory in the holiness and happiness of a moral kingdom. His plan for the execution of this design comprehends the creation of a universe of free, rational, accountable, and immortal beings, under the government of perfect laws perfectly administered.

The purposes of God are, like his nature, eternal, wise, just, good, immutable, and universal, extending to, and implying the certainty of, whatsoever comes to pass ; and yet, by his providential administration, events are so ordered, that they "fall out according to the nature of second causes, either necessarily, freely, or contingently ;" and so that "thereby God is not the author of sin, nor is violence done to the will of the creature, nor is the liberty or contingency of second causes taken away, but rather established." The providence of God extendeth itself to the "sins of angels and men, and that not by a bare permission, but such as hath joined with it a most wise and powerful bounding, and otherwise ordering and governing of them, in a manifold dispensation, to his own holy ends ; yet so as the sinfulness thereof proceedeth only from the creature,

and not from God, who being most holy and righteous, neither is nor can be the author or approver of sin."*

3. ORIGINAL RECTITUDE AND FALL OF MAN.

Our first parents were in the beginning holy, after the image of God, to the exclusion of all sin ; but by transgression they lost all rectitude, and became as depraved, as they had been holy.

4. CONSEQUENCES OF THE FALL UPON THE POSTERITY OF ADAM.

In consequence of the sin of Adam, all his posterity, from the commencement of their moral existence, are destitute of holiness and prone to evil ; so that the atoning death of Christ, and the special, renovating influence of the Spirit are indispensable to the salvation of any human being.

5. OBLIGATION, FREE-AGENCY, AND ACCOUNTABILITY OF MAN.

The obligation of intelligent beings to obey God is founded on his rights as Creator ; on his perfect character, worthy of all love ; on the holiness, justice, and goodness of his law ; and on the intellectual and moral faculties which he has given his subjects, commensurate with his requirements.

"God hath endued the will of man with that natural liberty, that it is neither forced, nor by any absolute necessity of nature determined to good or evil."†

Man having been corrupted by the fall, sins voluntarily, not with reluctance or constraint ; with the strongest propensity of disposition, not with violent coercion ; with the bias of his own passions, not with external compulsion.‡

"By the fall, however, man does not cease to be man, endowed with intellect and will ; neither hath sin, which has pervaded the whole human race, taken away the nature of the human species, but it hath depraved and spiritually stained it."§

"The moral law doth forever bind all, as well justified persons as others, to the obedience thereof. — Neither doth Christ in the Gospel any way dissolve, but much strengthen this obligation."||

6. ATONEMENT.

An atonement for sin was indispensable to reconcile the ex-

* Confession of Faith.

† Confession of Faith, Chap. ix. Sec. 1.

‡ Synod of Dort, Chap. iii. and iv. Sec. 16.

§ Confession of Faith, Chap. xix. Sec. 5.

‡ Calvin.

ercise of mercy with the maintenance of law; and such an atonement was made by Christ's dying for us. "This death of the Son of God is a single and most perfect sacrifice and satisfaction for sins; of infinite value and price; and abundantly sufficient to expiate the sins of the whole world." On the ground of this all-sufficient atonement, the universal offer of salvation is authorized and made, and the command to accept it given; and "the promise of the Gospel, that whosoever believeth in Christ crucified, shall not perish, but have everlasting life,—ought to be announced and proposed promiscuously and indiscriminately, to all nations and men, to whom God in his good pleasure hath sent the Gospel, with the command to repent and believe." "But as many who are called by the Gospel do not repent and believe in Christ, but perish in unbelief, this doth not arise from defect or insufficiency of the sacrifice offered by Christ, but from their own fault."^{*}

7. REGENERATION.

Regeneration is not to be regarded as the creation of any new natural faculty or capacity of the soul, without which obedience is a natural impossibility; but as a special act of the Spirit of God, whereby he "maketh the reading, but especially the preaching of the word, an effectual means of convincing and converting sinners;"[†] or that "work of God's Spirit, whereby, convincing us of our sin and misery, enlightening our minds in the knowledge of Christ, and renewing our will, he doth persuade and enable us to embrace Jesus Christ, freely offered to us in the Gospel."^{*} But this persuasion of the Holy Spirit in effectual calling is not that moral suasion of man's exerting, or sufficient grace of God's giving, whose efficacy turns on the will of the sinner, and not on the energetic and transforming influence of the Holy Spirit,—"as the Pelagians do vainly talk;" nor is it of a kind, which, when exerted, the sinner by his free will ever does resist; "but it is manifestly an operation supernatural, at the same time most powerful and most sweet, wonderful, secret, and ineffable in its power, according to the Scripture not less than, or inferior to, creation, or the resurrection of the dead: so that all those, in whose hearts God works in this admirable manner, are certainly, infallibly, and efficaciously regenerated, and in fact believe. And thus their will, being now renewed, is not only influenced and moved by God, but being acted on by God, itself acts and moves. Wherefore

^{*} Synod of Dort, Chap. ii. Sect. 3, 5, 6.

[†] Assembly's Shorter Catechism, Ans. 89.

[‡] *Ibid*, Ans. 31.

the man himself, through this grace received, is rightly said to believe and repent.*

"This divine grace in regeneration does not act upon men like stocks and trees, nor take away the properties of their will, or violently compel it while unwilling; but it spiritually quickens, heals, corrects, and sweetly, and at the same time powerfully inclines it: so that whereas before it was wholly governed by the rebellion and resistance of the flesh, now prompt and sincere obedience of the spirit may begin to reign; in which the renewal of our spiritual will and our liberty truly consist. And unless the admirable Author of all good should thus work in us, there could be no hope to man of rising from the fall by that *free will*, by which, when standing, he fell into ruin." "But in the same manner as the omnipotent operation of God, whereby he produces and supports our natural life, doth not exclude, but require the use of means, by which God, in his infinite wisdom and goodness, sees fit to exercise this his power; so this fore-mentioned supernatural power of God, by which he regenerates us, in no wise excludes, or sets aside the use of the Gospel, which the most wise God hath ordained as the seed of regeneration and the food of the soul. For grace is conferred through admonitions; and the more promptly we do our duty, the more illustrious the benefit of God who worketh in us, is wont to be, and the more rightly doth his work proceed. To whom alone, all the glory, both of the means, and their beneficial fruits and efficacy, is due for everlasting. Amen."†

The dependence of man, as a sinner, on the Holy Spirit, is so real, universal and absolute, that no human being ever was, or ever will be saved without special grace. The natural ability which avails to create obligation, and to bring on the disobedient a just condemnation, never avails, either alone, or by any power of truth, or help of man, to recover a sinner from alienation to evangelical obedience,—*because of the inflexible bias of his will to evil*. The necessity of the regenerating influence of the Spirit lies wholly in the sinfulness of man's heart, or the obstinate obliquity of his will, which over-rules and perverts his free-agency only to purposes of evil. "We are oppressed with a yoke," says Calvin, "but no other than that of voluntary servitude. Therefore our servitude renders us miserable, and our will renders us inexcusable." It is the same impotency of the will to good, and slavery to evil, of which Luther speaks, and all who follow him. An obstinate will demands as really and certainly the interposition of special divine influ-

* Articles of the Synod of Dort, Chap. iii. and iv. Sec. 12.

† Synod of Dort, Chap. iii. and iv. Sec. 16, 17.

ence, as if the inability were natural, though the difference in respect to obligation and guilt and deserved punishment is infinite.

8. ELECTION.

All the subjects of God's special renewing grace were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy and without blame before him in love, to the praise of the glory of his grace ; not on principles of law as meriting this favor, and not on the ground of repentance, faith, or good works foreseen ; and yet not without a wise reference to the effect of this discriminating grace to corroborate the law, to deter from sin, and promote evangelical obedience.

9. PERSEVERANCE.

'All who have been renewed by the Holy Spirit, and have truly accepted of Jesus Christ, as he is offered in the Gospel, will persevere in holiness to the end and be saved ; not because the falling away of a saint, if left to himself, would be impossible ; but because the unchangeable love, and purpose, and promise of God, the power and faithfulness of Christ, and the agency of the Spirit, all make it certain that he who believeth shall be saved.'*

10. JUSTIFICATION.

Justification includes the forgiveness of sin, and the restoration of the offender to the protection and privileges of an obedient subject. The meritorious ground of justification is the atoning death and righteousness of Christ. And this, by God's appointment, is set to our account, and becomes available to our salvation, when it is received and relied upon by faith.

11. GOOD WORKS.

Good works can never be the meritorious cause of our justification, like the obedience and death of Christ ; nor the instrumental cause, like faith ; and yet they are a part of that obedience which is due to God, the unfailing effect of faith, and indispensable as the fruit and evidence of repentance, and as the means of adorning the profession of the Gospel, glorifying God, and stopping the mouths of gainsayers.

"Works done by unregenerate men, although for the matter of them they may be things which God commands, and of good use both to themselves and others ; yet because they pro-

* See Synod of Dort.

ceed not from a heart purified by faith, nor are done in a right manner, according to the word, nor to a right end, the glory of God; they are therefore sinful, and cannot please God, or make a man meet to receive grace from God;”* nor can they be lawfully proposed as a substitute for immediate repentance, or as a sort of minor obedience as good as the sinner can render, and as having a promise of special grace to help out their deficiency.

12. FUTURE STATE.

“God hath appointed a day, wherein he will judge the world in righteousness by Jesus Christ, to whom all power and judgement is given of the Father; in which day, not only the apostate angels shall be judged, but likewise all persons, that have lived upon earth, shall appear before the tribunal of Christ, to give an account of their thoughts, words, and deeds; and to receive according to what they have done in the body, whether good or evil.”†

Now would it be thought possible that ministers who are substantially agreed in every one of these articles, could regard one another with suspicion, fear, and aversion? I suppose that we must admit that it can be so, because it is so. The reason is, that we apply to the explanation and vindication of these doctrines different theories; some of which on either hand are supposed to be of dangerous tendencies, and threatening to terminate in the subversion of the truth.

It must be admitted, that secondary truths may in their tendencies affect, ultimately, fundamental truths; and that every man possesses the right of judging for himself concerning those tendencies, and of pointing them out, and guarding the community against them. But it is a right, the exercise of which is environed with the greatest danger, and the perverted use of which is productive of the greatest evil. It may open the door to charges of constructive heresy, and fill the church with alarm and controversy about predicted tendencies, sacrificing often the existing peace, to guard against imaginary evils. For who does not know the high estimation in which every man holds his particular theory, and how it rises, and amplifies, and beautifies, and warms his heart, as he gazes on it, till, in his estimation, it becomes almost a fundamental doctrine.

Now, did all men adopt the same theories, this conscientious hallucination falling upon them, would serve to bind them fast-

* Confession of Faith, Chap. xvi. Sec. 7.

† Ibid. Chap. xxxiii. Sec. 1.

er together. But, unhappily, the moment we leave the chart of the fundamentals and step off from the king's highway, our theories, like the language at Babel, immediately begin to differ, and we find ourselves surrounded with alarming tokens of aberration, and multiplying tendencies to heresy; until, mutual cautions having failed, discussion commences, and then controversy, and misapprehensions, and wounds, and personal alienation; until conscience, thoroughly aroused, comes in, and sounds the trumpet and beats to arms. The truth is in danger—a host of heretical tendencies are rushing into being, and must be met upon the threshold. And now, all that is good stands still, and all that is evil riots. The fundamental truths, instead of becoming mighty through God by use, are left behind with the baggage, to be contended about in this war against tendencies—and revivals and benevolent institutions stop—while the God of peace and love departs.

Whoever reads the controversial pamphlets of other generations, will be amused and grieved, to perceive how they amplified the evil tendencies of each other's speculations, and disquieted themselves and others, in efforts, to prevent evils which never came to pass. The opinions of Edwards, and Bellamy, and Smalley, and West, which have marched in the van of our glorious revivals, have, as you know, descended to us through ranks of opposition and notes of alarm, on account of their supposed Arminian tendencies.

The mistake originates in the attempt to make the truth more safe than the condition of human nature admits of, not only to secure existing purity, but to shut out the possibility of error. But while sanctified minds admit of an agreement in fundamentals, experience shows that they will not endure a minute agreement in respect to theoretic exposition. There, the more unity is insisted on, the more revulsion and discrepancy is created—and there is no alternative consistent with peace, but to hold fast the form of sound words, with a magnanimous charity, which hopeth all things, instead of fearing all things; and, if there be danger, as no doubt there may be; the highest security, as I apprehend, will be found in giving all possible efficacy to fundamental truths in preaching, religious education, revivals and missions; creating such a river as shall make it difficult for theorists to get out of its channel, and moving with such a blessed momentum, that if they seem to stray out on the right or left, it shall soon draw them back upon its bosom, and carry all resistless in its own benevolent career.

The united light and power of the church will never be

turned on this dark world, till Satan has lost his power of embroiling the soldiers of the cross about little things, while they are agreed in respect to every article of that heavenly armor, before which he is destined to fall; and whenever the time shall come that the fundamentals unite us, and, theories cannot divide, then his power is broken, and the millennium is at the door.

LYMAN BEECHER.

Boston, August 26, 1832.

DR. WOODS'S SECOND LETTER TO DR. BEECHER.

DEAR BROTHER,

As you have given me opportunity to peruse your second letter in manuscript, I hasten to make a brief reply.

We have already remarked freely on the importance of carefully tracing out and avoiding the causes of unnecessary controversy. But to prevent all occasion of recurring to the subject again, I subjoin a few hints in this place.

A fondness for novel terms and phrases in theology has often been the occasion of fruitless debate. If our belief on any subject corresponds with the common belief, why should we not express our belief in the common way? Our departing materially from the language in common use will be very likely to make the impression, that we have departed from the common faith. Of course, it will excite painful apprehensions in the minds of our brethren, and lead them, from the purest motives, to stand forth as our opponents. But suppose the common phraseology is so misunderstood, that our using it will in all probability convey erroneous ideas to the minds of others. Shall we still use it? I answer; in ordinary cases, still use the common phraseology, but take special pains to explain it, and bring others rightly to understand it. In this way we shall generally succeed much better in guarding against mistake and in promoting a knowledge of the truth, than by introducing new terms and phrases. We well know that the Christian community are not easily induced to change the customary forms of speech. They are tenacious of common usage, especially when associated with the sacredness of religion. If we change, a few may follow us; but the mass of the community will look upon us with suspicion, and by giving way to prejudice, will bar their minds against the good influence which

we may wish to exert upon them. Except in extraordinary cases, I much prefer the method above suggested, that is, retaining the common language, with special care to correct mistakes and establish the right meaning. On this subject, Edwards and Fuller, authors whom we both esteem so highly, pursued a course marked out by Christian wisdom, and worthy to be imitated by all who publicly advocate the cause of truth.

I am, indeed, no stickler for technical terms and set phrases in theology, especially for those which are not according to the word of God. A bigotted adherence to such terms and phrases is a hinderance to improvement, and too often a cloak for ignorance and error. But there are words and phrases, which are altogether proper, and specially convenient, and which have a definite sense in religious discourse; such as Trinity, depravity, atonement, election, regeneration, divine sovereignty, the special influence of the Spirit, justification, &c. Some of these are Scripture terms, and some not; but they are all suited to express important Scriptural truths. Now for any one who adopts the doctrines commonly marked by these terms, studiously to avoid them and to substitute new terms, would betray an unpardonable affectation of novelty, and naturally lead us to think that he had renounced the common faith.—“Appropriate terms,” says Robert Hall, “become the surest safeguard of ideas, inasmuch that a truth which is never announced but in a circuitous form, will either have no hold, or a very feeble one on the public mind. The anxiety with which the precise, the appropriate term is avoided, bespeaks a shrinking, a timidity, a distrust with relation to the idea conveyed by it, which will be interpreted as equivalent to a disavowal.” I would press this thought, because I am convinced that many evils are likely to arise to the cause of truth from an attempt to set aside the common phraseology of religious books and of the religious world. It is however a still greater offence, for any one to retain the common phraseology, and thus make a show of holding the common faith, when in reality he rejects it. If the former is unpardonable affectation, this is unpardonable deception.

Another fault of common occurrence and of very hurtful tendency, is, the use of *rash* and *unguarded language*. Whether this fault arises from an excess of ardor, or from a culpable recklessness of character, or from the want of a nice discernment, or, which is sometimes the case, from a deep impression of a particular portion of divine truth, and a desire to impress it powerfully upon the minds of others; it is the occasion of no small mischief, and ought to be watchfully avoided by all who would attain to the highest degree of usefulness. The exam-

ples of the most distinguished preachers and writers show it to be altogether practicable to use the most vivid and powerful language, without any degree of rashness or indiscretion.

A word as to one more fault, and then I have done with these general remarks;—I mean the fault of *appearing* to differ from others, when there is really no difference; or of putting on the appearance of greater difference than actually exists. This may arise from some eccentricity of character, or from a disposition which takes pleasure in giving false alarms; which loves agitation and uproar, the *noise* of war, if not its violence and desolation;—an attribute of character very undesirable, and not a little mysterious.

I come now to your statement of fundamental doctrines, in which I cordially agree with you. I apprehend that, with few exceptions, the ministers of the Orthodox Congregational church in New England, together with most, if not all of the Presbyterian ministers through the United States, will give their full assent to this statement. The cordial belief of these doctrines is, I think, a solid basis of ministerial fellowship and co-operation, though there may be a variety of opinions on other subjects, and on some subjects which are by no means unimportant.

I am specially gratified that, in exhibiting the essential articles of our common faith, you have so far adopted the language of the Westminster Assembly of Divines, and the Synod of Dort. I cannot read the Confession of Faith and the Catechisms of the Presbyterian church without a lively impression of the ability, and the correct and well-balanced judgement of those excellent men who composed them. And as to the articles of religion which were drawn up by the Synod of Dort, I know not by whom they were ever expressed more lucidly, or with greater theoretic and practical correctness, or more skillfully guarded against misapprehension and abuse. No one can pretend that these or any other human productions are incapable of improvement, or entirely free from mistakes. The best uninspired men are fallible; and nothing which they have written, or can write, is or ever will be entitled to our implicit confidence. What I have said of the Westminster Assembly and the Synod of Dort, I wish may be understood with this qualification. But after saying this, I am constrained to add,—how defective, crude, and illogical, as well as unscriptural, are many modern statements of doctrine, compared with the venerable symbols just referred to! As far as doctrine is concerned, the ministers and churches of New England early adopted the Westminster Confession of Faith; and it is the only Confes-

sion which has ever been publicly adopted in New England. The use of the Assembly's Catechism in families and churches has, in my judgement, been immensely beneficial in its influence. I believe it has been among the best means of preventing apostasy, and of preserving purity, union, and prosperity, in this part of Christ's kingdom. While I would not cease to bless God for the propitious events of the present day, especially for the increased attention given to the Holy Scriptures in the instruction of youth; it is my serious conviction, that we should have a still brighter prospect of the prevalence of a pure and scriptural faith, and of the increase of piety, if, in addition to a more diligent study of the Bible, people in general, especially churches, Bible classes, and theological students would give due attention to the Assembly's Catechism, the longer as well as the shorter, together with the Confession of Faith, and if ministers would make it a part of their public work, to explain the principles of religion as there set forth.

Some expressions there are indeed in these summaries of doctrine, which are generally, in New England, deemed exceptionable. But it has for some time been a question with me, whether, in the construction which has frequently been put upon the language of these symbols, and of many of the older theological works, the established rules of interpretation have been duly regarded. One of the most important of these rules is, that we should take into account the time and circumstances of the writer, the manner in which words and phrases were used when he wrote, the errors against which he wished to guard, and the mode of thinking and reasoning which was common in the class of men, to which he belonged; in a word, that we should, as far as possible, put ourselves in the place of the writer. The neglect of this rule has led to numberless mistakes respecting the theological books and Confessions of Faith, written by the early Protestant Divines.

My attachment to the Catechism and the religious books, which, from my earliest years, I was taught to reverence, I have endeavored to guard against any mixture of bigotry, being fully aware that this tends to produce narrowness of feeling, and to prevent improvement. Most heartily would I welcome every ray of new light which may shine upon the great subjects of revelation. For while I regard the unchangeable word of God as a perfect and infallible rule of faith and practice, I believe that our perception of its truths, and our manner of explaining and enforcing them, admit of vast improvement. And although, in the extent of their knowledge of Christianity, and their ability to defend and illustrate its doctrinal and practical principles,

the older Divines seem to me far superior to the generality of late theological writers, whether in Europe or America; I cannot but think that some real progress has been made during the last century, in the right understanding of the Christian religion, and in the right mode of setting forth its truths for the conversion of sinners and the spread of the Gospel. And it is my persuasion, though some may regard it as partiality or weakness, that this progress is chiefly owing to the labors of those whom we call New England Divines; and I am supported in this persuasion by some of the ablest advocates of divine truth in Great Britain. But while I say this, I am ready to deplore whatever has been among us of erroneous opinion, and of unchristian feeling and practice. I cherish the pleasing hope, that the multitude of young men who have recently entered the ministry, or are now preparing for it, will seek and obtain larger measures of divine illumination, than their predecessors, and that, in the happy results of their studies and labors, they will exceed all former generations.

Your statement of the leading doctrines of the Gospel affords me peculiar satisfaction, not only because it does, in my view, entirely accord with the holy Scriptures, but because it is very unambiguous, lucid, and comprehensive. In point of particularity also, it is, I think, sufficient for the purposes intended.

But all statements of this kind, such as we find in Confessions of Faith, and Heads of Doctrine, though very important as exhibiting summary and connected views of Christianity, and as helping to mark and perpetuate a true Scriptural faith, are still mere outlines or sketches, which are not by themselves calculated to make a full impression of divine truth, or to accomplish the purposes of man's salvation; like a skeleton, which shows us the frame-work of man, but is not at all suited to the purposes of life and action. It wants flesh and blood, nerves and sinews, intelligence, feeling, and the principle of life and motion. An outline of Christianity is not Christianity itself, that living body of truth, which God has given us. In the Scriptures we see Christianity in its genuine, original, inspired form, as it came from God. And in relation to the ends in view, this form of Christianity is perfect. But here, as in the natural world, the good which God designs, cannot be fully accomplished without effort on our part. An agency is demanded of us, commensurate with all our powers. We must diligently apply ourselves to the business, first, of understanding the principles of our religion, and then of explaining them, and impressing them upon the hearts of others. This may be done in various ways; but in no way so fully and efficiently as in the living ministry.

Here Christian doctrines, which a Confession of Faith presents in general propositions, are filled out, illustrated, carefully qualified and balanced, guarded against misapprehension, and applied to the conscience and heart. As you, my brother, have long been engaged in the work of the ministry, and with a success for which you will have abundant reason to bless God forever, I hope that, in the course of our correspondence, you will bring out the results of your reflections and your experience, as to the best manner of exhibiting evangelical doctrine, and of adapting it to the ever-varying circumstances of individuals, so that it may indeed be the power of God to salvation.

We have now before us what we regard as the leading, fundamental doctrines of the Gospel, in which there is, as we think, an agreement among Orthodox ministers. But there are points which are peculiarly interesting at the present day, and on which there is no small difference of opinion, and no small debate. As it is the plan of our correspondence to enter now on the consideration of these points, withholding nothing which we deem important, and insisting upon nothing which is trifling; and as such an undertaking is difficult in itself, and is rendered doubly so by the circumstances of the present day; may it please God graciously to vouchsafe to us that wisdom which is profitable to direct, so that our endeavors may be acceptable in his sight and conducive to the welfare of his church.

LEONARD WOODS.

Andover, Theol. Seminary, Aug. 30, 1832.

DR. TYLER'S REPLY TO DR. TAYLOR.

The object of my remarks on Dr. Taylor's letter to Dr. Hawes, was to show, not that Dr. Taylor had renounced any of the leading doctrines of Calvinism, but "that his theories do involve principles subversive of some of the most prominent and important doctrines of his creed." If this attempt is, as Dr. Taylor avers, "an utter failure," it is owing to one of two things, viz: I have either misapprehended and misrepresented his theories—or I have reasoned inconclusively in my deductions. The question now is, has Dr. Taylor convicted me of either? The reader will bear in mind that nothing which he has said, is at all relevant to the case, any farther than it bears on one or the other of these points. Let us then try the question in relation to

each of the topics which have been brought under discussion.

1. *The doctrine of decrees.*

Dr. Taylor says in his creed, "I believe that the eternal purposes of God extend to all actual events, sin not excepted; or that God foreordains whatsoever comes to pass."

What I have attempted to show is, that he has advanced theories which are utterly inconsistent with this article of his creed, and which, if adhered to, must ultimately displace it as an article of belief. For example, I have understood him to advance the theory, *that God could not have prevented all sin or the present degree of sin in a moral system.* He claims, I am aware, that he has proposed this theory only as a *supposition*—that he has not affirmed it to be true, nor pretended that it is capable of direct proof. Still, however, he has made it the basis of his reasoning, and in every argument, and in every illustration, he has assumed it as true. He has moreover endeavored to establish its truth, both by direct argument, and by attempting to overthrow the opposite theory.

And here let it be particularly noted, that if this theory is not true, the converse of it is true;—that is, *God could have prevented all sin in a moral system*—or, *he could not.* One of these positions must be true. Consequently, he who asserts one of them to be false, does, at the same time, assert the other to be true; and he who attempts to overthrow one of them, or to show that it is unworthy of belief, does, at the same time, attempt to establish the other, or to show that it is worthy of belief.

Now, what has Dr. Taylor said in regard to the theory that *God could have prevented all sin in a moral system?* He has said, that "it is a groundless assumption,"—an assumption, the proof of which "bids defiance to the powers of human reason,"—that "no one has a right to assert it, or even to think it,"—that it "ought never to be made the basis of an objection, or an argument,"—that "so long as (it) is admitted and reasoned upon, (it) must leave the subject involved in insuperable difficulties,"—and that it must be dismissed from the mind, before "the character and government of God (can) be shown to be free from embarrassment." What, then, must be Dr. Taylor's opinion of the opposite theory? Why, verily, that it is not a groundless assumption—that it ought to be admitted and reasoned upon, and be received and relied on as the true theory. I ask Dr. Taylor, if he can possibly conceive of any other alternative? If the theory which he calls in question be not true, the one which he suggests, certainly is true. If, then, he disbelieves the one, must he not believe the other? And if he

undertakes to refute the one, does he not at the same time attempt to establish the other ?

If he should say, that although one or the other must be true, yet he does not pretend to say which—he has no belief on the subject—either of them may be true, for aught he can tell—I would then ask, why he calls one “a groundless assumption,” and “a groundless and pernicious theory,” which “involves many doctrines of the Gospel in absurdities and contradictions,” while he reasons upon the other as if it were true ? Has he a right to affirm that a theory is groundless and pernicious, when he knows not but it may be true ; and especially when he does not even profess to believe that it is false ?

Dr. Taylor informs us that he proposed his theory as “a point of rest to the mind, in relinquishing a groundless and pernicious theory.” But how can it present a point of rest to the mind, unless it be regarded as true ? Can the mind give up one theory as groundless and pernicious, and then rest in the only conceivable theory different from this, as having a bare possibility of truth ? Can a man be very certain that he is not sick, and yet regard it not “as an actual,” but only “possible” truth, that he is in health ?

Now, in view of what Dr. Taylor has said in regard to the theory that *God could have prevented all sin in a moral system*, is it unjust to represent him as having advanced and endeavored to establish the opposite theory ? Suppose a man should say that the position which affirms the existence of a God, is a groundless assumption—an assumption, which, so long as it is admitted and reasoned upon, involves the subject in insuperable difficulties, absurdities, and contradictions ;—should I be guilty of slander, in pronouncing that man an Atheist ? Suppose a man should affirm, that all proof of the inspiration of the Scriptures rests on a groundless assumption ;—should I do him an injury to say that he denies their inspiration ?

Again—Dr. Taylor says, “I have said that the theory which affirms that *sin is the necessary means of the greatest good*,”

* What is the theory which affirms that *sin is the necessary means of the greatest good* ? If it be what Dr. Taylor sometimes represents it to be, viz. that sin in its own nature tends to good—and that when sinners commit sin, “*they do the best thing they can do* ;” which is the same as to say, that when they commit sin, they do their duty, and of course do not sin at all ;—so far from being “a common assumption,” it is a theory which no divine, to my knowledge, ever advanced ; and Dr. Taylor, in opposing it, is contending with a creature of his own imagination. The view which has been generally taken of this subject by Orthodox divines is this. They suppose, what Dr. Taylor says he does not deny, but admits, “that God overrules sin, and brings good out of the evil by counteracting its tendencies.” They suppose that he so overrules it, that he will bring to pass, eventually, a greater amount of good, than would have been realized if sin had never existed. This is the theory of Bellamy, of Hopkins, and of

cannot be proved to be true, and have attempted to show that the arguments used to support it are inconclusive—that it is incapable of proof—that there are apparently unanswerable objections against it.” Yet in his reply to Dr. Woods he says, “If God can secure universal holiness, and if universal holiness would result in the highest happiness, then why does he not secure universal holiness? This is the question for Dr. Woods to answer. NO ALTERNATIVE REMAINS, *but either to admit that sin, in respect to the divine prevention, is incidental to the best system, or to adhere to the position that sin, in every instance of its occurrence, is, on the whole, better than holiness in its stead,*”—that is, (unless he means to misrepresent the sentiments of his opponents,) sin, in every instance of its occurrence, will be so *overruled* and *counteracted* in its tendencies, as to be made ultimately the means of the greatest good.

Here, the reader will perceive, that Dr. Taylor asserts in the most positive terms, that the theory which he rejects, or the one which he proposes as “a point of rest to the mind,” must be true, and that we must *admit* the one or the other. If we reject one, “*no alternative remains*” but to *admit* the other. Consequently, unless Dr. Taylor does admit what he calls “the revolting dogma,” and the “groundless and pernicious theory” that *sin is the necessary means of the greatest good*,—a theory which he says “cannot be proved,” and against which “there are, apparently, unanswerable objections,” he must *adhere* to the position, that *sin, in respect to the divine prevention, is incidental to the system*;—in other words, that *God could not prevent all sin in a moral system*.

Besides—Dr. Taylor says, “We do not distort the views of our opponents. God, they maintain, permits sin, when he can prevent all sin, and when he would prevent it, were it not for showing his mercy and justice by means of it.” Revolting as the dogma is in its real form and aspect, its advocates must defend it as it is.” Who can read this statement and entertain the slightest doubt whether the writer meant to maintain and

the Orthodox generally. In this sense only, have they maintained that sin is the necessary means of the greatest good. But Dr. Taylor says, “To say that a thing must be *overruled* or *counteracted* in all its tendencies to secure a good result, and also that it is the *necessary means* of that result, is a contradiction.” I shall not stop to inquire whether this declaration is true. My only remark is, that if it be true, then none of the Orthodox have ever maintained the theory that *sin is the necessary means* of the greatest good, and Dr. Taylor is entirely mistaken when he says it is “a common assumption.” For he may be challenged to show that any Orthodox divine ever maintained that sin is the means of good, except as it is “*overruled* and *counteracted* in its tendencies.”

* “What if God, willing to show his wrath and make his power known, endured with much long-suffering, the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction; and that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory.” PAUL.

defend the position that God cannot prevent all sin in the moral universe?

Further—Dr. Woods had stated, that “God does not do *every thing he can* to make his creatures virtuous and happy.” At this declaration, Dr. Taylor professes to be exceedingly shocked. He says, “A benevolent God does not do *what he can* to make his creatures virtuous and happy! We think that this position might be safely left to answer for itself.” What is this but a virtual declaration, that to his mind, it was a perfectly plain case, that a benevolent God must do *every thing he can* to make all his creatures virtuous and happy, and that since he has not made them all virtuous and happy, it must be because he cannot?

Once more—In the note to the sermon in which he first proposed this theory, he has a formal argument by which he attempts to establish its truth. He says, “Would not a moral universe of perfect holiness, and of course, of perfect happiness, be happier and better than one comprising sin and its miseries? And must not infinite benevolence accomplish all the good it can? Would not a benevolent God then, HAD IT BEEN POSSIBLE TO HIM IN THE NATURE OF THINGS, have secured the existence of universal holiness in his moral kingdom?” Here is a direct argument, (founded, it is true, on an assumption of the point in debate,) to prove that the reason why God has not prevented sin, and secured universal holiness in his moral kingdom is, that it was not “POSSIBLE TO HIM IN THE NATURE OF THINGS.” Nor is this all. He goes on to show that those who deny this position are guilty of limiting the goodness of God, and asks, “Who does most reverence to God, he who supposes that God *would* have prevented all sin in his moral universe, but *could* not;—or he who affirms that he *could* have prevented it, but *would* not?”

Now, in view of all these facts, how Dr. Taylor could say, “I have advanced no theory which professes to assign the actual reason of the fact that sin exists,” I shall leave it for him to explain. To me, it is utterly inexplicable.

But supposing that Dr. Taylor has propounded his theory only as an hypothesis, or possible truth; yet if it is inconsistent with the doctrine of decrees, it must tend directly to subvert that article of his creed:—for how can he consistently believe a doctrine, while he strenuously maintains that a theory utterly inconsistent with it, may be true. Suppose a man should say, it may be true, though I will not affirm it positively, that Jesus Christ is a mere man;—could he consistently and undoubtingly maintain the doctrine of the Trinity? Or suppose a man

should believe it *may* be true, that all men will finally be restored to holiness and happiness;—could he believe, without wavering, the doctrine of endless punishment? Just so far as he believes that the one *may* be true, he must believe that the other *may* be false.

Again—Dr. Taylor has said, “I do believe that it may be true, that God, *all things considered*, prefers holiness to sin in all instances in which the latter takes place.” This I have considered equivalent to the position, that God does prefer, *all things considered*, that sin should not exist. But Dr. Taylor professes to regard this as a misrepresentation. He says, “But I ask Dr. Tyler when or where I have said that God prefers, *all things considered*, that sin should not exist. Nothing like it. I said that God, *all things considered*, may prefer holiness to sin in every instance; and Dr. Tyler strangely substitutes for this the position, that God does not prefer the existence of sin on any account.”

Now, I would ask, if, in all the instances in which sin takes place, holiness should exist in its stead, would there be any sin in existence? And if God does prefer, *all things considered*, holiness to sin in *all instances* in which the latter takes place, is not this the same as to prefer, *all things considered*, that sin should not exist in *any instance*. How is it possible for God to prefer, “*on any account*,” the existence of sin, *in any instance*, if, *all things considered*, that is, *on all accounts*, he prefers something else in its stead, *in all instances*? Will Dr. Taylor be so good as to inform us? Until he shall do it, I shall continue to maintain, that his statement is equivalent to the position, that God does, *all things considered*, prefer that sin should not exist.

The reader can now judge, whether I have given a fair representation of the theories of Dr. Taylor in relation to the topic under consideration.

The next inquiry is, have I reasoned conclusively in my deductions.

I said, “If it be true that ‘God, *all things considered*, prefers holiness to sin in all instances in which the latter takes place;’ it cannot be true that God has purposed or foreordained whatsoever comes to pass:—for, according to this representation, it was from eternity God’s will or choice, *all things considered*, that sin should not exist in a single instance. Consequently, it could not, in any sense, be his purpose or choice that it should exist. To say that God prefers, *all things considered*, that sin should not exist, and at the same time, to say that he has *purposed* or *foreordained* that it shall exist,

is a palpable contradiction. It is the same as to say, that God chooses, and does not choose the same thing, at the same time."

To this Dr. Taylor replies, "To prefer the best system, whose excellence does not depend on sin, but on its own merits in other respects, and notwithstanding the certain foreseen existence of sin, does not imply a contradictory preference of sin to holiness:—for it is not in either case SIN THAT IS THE OBJECT OF PREFERENCE." Very true—this is what I maintain; that, according to Dr. Taylor's theory, *sin is not the object of preference*, and consequently it is not the object of a divine purpose or decree; and it is not true, that *God hath foreordained whatsoever comes to pass*. Whatever God has *purposed* or *foreordained*, he does in some sense *prefer*; and to say that he has purposed that sin shall exist in all instances in which it does exist, and at the same time to say that he prefers, *all things considered*, that something else should exist in its stead, in every instance, is to my mind a manifest contradiction. Nor has Dr. Taylor shown that it is not a contradiction.*

The sense in which Dr. Taylor supposes God to have decreed the existence of sin, will be seen by attending to some of his illustrations. Notice the following.

"The wheels of a watch are a necessary means of regulating the motion of its hands; the friction of those wheels, is necessarily incidental to the existence of such a machine. Each wheel in its character of a means, constitutes an *integral part* of the system of machinery, *devised* and executed by the artist. FRICTION IS NO PART OF THAT SYSTEM; it is an evil to which he submits, a limitation on the exercise of his skill, resulting from the nature of the materials of which the watch is made. The direct tendency of every wheel, if properly adjusted, is to produce the desired result. There is no such tendency in friction; it is an evil to be encountered, and, as far as possible, to be set aside."

This illustration is intended to show the relation which Dr. Taylor supposes sin to bear to God's moral system, viz. the same relation that friction bears to the machine of the artist. It constitutes no part of the system, but is necessarily incidental to it. It would be avoided if it were possible in the nature of things, and is submitted to merely because it cannot be avoided.

Now, I ask, who would ever think of affirming, that the artist *purposed* or *foreordained* the existence of friction?—especially since it is "*no part of the system of machinery DEVISED*" (that is, *contrived, planned, purposed*) by him; but is an evil which he never chose—which he would gladly avoid—

* See the corrections at the end of this No.—*Assist. Ed.*

and to which he submits solely because he cannot avoid it.

Dr. Taylor has given us another illustration. He says, "Suppose Dr. Tyler should appoint a religious service for his people as the best means of their salvation, with the perfect foresight of the conversion of the greater part, and the perversion of it by a few to the augmentation of their sin—would not Dr. Tyler prefer the existence of the meeting to its non-existence?—and yet, would this be to prefer the perversion to the saving improvement of the means of grace by a few?" And I would ask, would it be proper to say under such circumstances, that I *purposed* or *foreordained* this perversion of the means of grace by a few? If, as the statement of the case supposes, it was my desire, *all things considered*, that every individual should receive saving benefit; and if I did all in my power to effect this object; and if those who perverted the means, did it against my will, and in defiance of my utmost efforts to prevent them:—I ask, would it be proper to say that they fulfilled my will and executed my purpose?

And if God does desire, *all things considered*, that sin should not exist in the moral universe, and if he has done all in his power to prevent it, and it has come into being, because its entire prevention in a moral system is impossible, even to Omnipotence:—is it proper to say, that God determined to permit it—or that he hath *purposed* or *foreordained* its existence? Is it proper to use the language of the Bible, and to say in any case, that persons, while committing sin, have done *what God's hand and counsel determined before to be done*? In other words, can Dr. Taylor, consistently with his theory, maintain the doctrine of decrees, as taught in the Bible?

If "God prefers, *all things considered*, holiness to sin in all instances in which the latter takes place;"—then he preferred, *all things considered*, that David should not number Israel, even when *he moved him to number Israel*. He preferred, *all things considered*, that the Jews should not crucify Christ, although they executed his *determinate counsel*, and did *what his hand and counsel had determined before to be done*. He preferred, *all things considered*, that the kings of the earth should not *agree and give their kingdom to the beast*, although *he put it in their hearts thus to fulfil his will*. And he prefers, *all things considered*, that none of the sinful conduct of men which fulfils his purposes, shall take place, (for it would not take place, if holiness should exist in its stead,) which is the same as to say, that he prefers, *all things considered*, that his purposes should not be fulfilled, but defeated. If this is not a contradiction, I know not how a contradiction can be expressed in language.

Dr. Taylor asks, "Does it involve a contradiction to suppose that a benevolent parent should prefer under the best system of government, the obedience of his children to their disobedience in every instance, and still prefer their occasional disobedience, to perpetual imprisonment or death to prevent it?" To this I reply:—To suppose a parent to prefer, *all things considered*, the obedience of his children to their disobedience in every instance; and at the same time to prefer their occasional disobedience on any account, that is, *any thing considered*, does involve a contradiction.

Besides—Is it proper to say that a parent has *foreordained*, *purposed*, or *decreed* the disobedience of his children, merely because he did not destroy their lives as soon as they were born, or shut them up in perpetual imprisonment? And is it proper to say that God hath *foreordained*, *purposed*, or *decreed* the sinful conduct of men merely because he did not create them machines, or refuse to give them existence? Is this the doctrine of foreordination taught in the Bible?

If Dr. Taylor can maintain the doctrine of decrees, consistently with the theories which he has advanced, every Arminian may consistently maintain this doctrine. The grand objection of Arminians to the doctrine of decrees, is, that it represents God as having foreordained the existence of sin; and yet they take precisely the same ground that Dr. Taylor does, in accounting for the existence of sin, viz. that *God could not prevent it in a moral system*. They admit that God foreknew all the sinful actions of his creatures; and they admit in the same sense as Dr. Taylor does, that he determined to permit them:—that is, he determined to permit them, because he could not prevent them and have a moral system. If then Dr. Taylor is a consistent predestinarian, every intelligent Arminian is a consistent predestinarian. How then has it happened, that the doctrine of predestination has ever been regarded as one of the "five points" by which Calvinists are distinguished from Arminians?

I said in my remarks, that if God foreordained the existence of sin, it must have been for a good or a bad end. To this Dr. Taylor replies, "I answer, not so." Indeed! Has God foreordained the existence of any thing for no end whatever? This is to suppose him to act without motive, and of course without wisdom or benevolence. But Dr. Taylor proceeds—"He may have foreordained sin directly not at all, and only as involved in other purposes." If he foreordained it directly or indirectly, it must have been for some end; and to say therefore that he did not foreordain it for a good or a bad end, is the

same as to say, he did not foreordain it at all; and this is to deny that God hath foreordained whatsoever comes to pass.

But Dr. Taylor goes on to say that God might have foreordained sin, "simply and solely for this reason, that the adoption of the moral system, best on other accounts, involved its certain existence."—That is, it could not be prevented in a moral system; and God decreed its existence in the same sense, that a man decrees that his son shall be a drunkard, when he finds he cannot prevent it unless he takes away his life, or locks him up in a dungeon!

According to Dr. Taylor's theory, the great God is reduced to the necessity of choosing between two evils. He cannot accomplish as much good as is seen to be desirable even by the worms that dwell on his footstool;—much less can he accomplish what his own infinite mind perceives to be desirable. He is reduced to the alternative of having no moral system, or of having one exceedingly imperfect—one in which he will find much everlastingly to regret. While he does all in his power to stay the progress of iniquity, and to secure universal holiness, he finds he has made a world which he cannot govern, and is obliged to see his benevolent designs continually defeated. To use the language of another;—"The mighty One of Jacob is thus involved in a perpetual contest of strength with the creatures of his power, who have their foundation in the dust, and are crushed before the moth, and is baffled by them in every instance in which they commit a transgression."

Dr. Taylor says, "Dr. Tyler's third charge of contradiction on this point, is founded in a *mis-quotation* of my language. He represents me as saying, 'that I do not believe that a God of sincerity and truth, punishes his creatures for doing that which, on the whole, he prefers they should do.'—Now instead of saying this merely, I added for the very purpose of preventing this misapprehension, *and which as the means of good is the best thing they can do.*"

Now I can assure Dr. Taylor, I did not intend to mis-quote his language, nor misrepresent his meaning, nor am I yet convinced that I have done it. The passage which I quoted contains an entire proposition by itself, nor does it express more than Dr. Taylor has repeatedly expressed in other passages. The additional clause I supposed to be thrown in as a comment upon the preceding;—that is, I supposed that Dr. Taylor meant to say, that when men do what God on the whole prefers they should do, it is the best thing they can do, and thus to represent those who hold that all sin will be overruled for good, as teaching that when men commit sin they do the

best thing they can do (which, by the way, is an entire misrepresentation of their sentiments.) I am confirmed in this opinion by the following passage in the review of Dr. Woods' letters. "Ought he [the sinner] to mourn that he had done the best thing he could do—even the very thing which God himself preferred he should do?" Here Dr. Taylor tells us expressly, that for the sinner to do the best thing he can do, is, in his estimation, only to do what God prefers he should do. The clause, therefore, which I omitted, was not intended to add to the meaning of the one which I quoted, but only to express the same meaning in different terms. I shall leave it for the reader, therefore, to judge whether Dr. Taylor has cause to "feel (himself) deeply injured by this omission;" or whether his opponents have not cause to feel injured, that he should have added this clause with a view so grossly to misrepresent their sentiments. Dr. Taylor says, "Dr. Tyler's last charge of contradiction on this topic, is founded on a representation of my sentiments to which I cannot allude without pain even in self-defence. He charges me with affirming in unqualified terms that God could not prevent sin, and with maintaining that he foreordained that which he would have prevented, but could not."—"I have said that it may be true that God could not prevent all sin *in a moral system*, or that sin as to God's prevention, may be incidental to a moral universe. Now Dr. Tyler in representing my views leaves out the words in italics."

I will thank the reader just to turn to my Remarks, and examine the passage quoted by Dr. Taylor in its connection. He will find it written:—"It is a part of Dr. Taylor's theory that 'God could not prevent all sin or the present degree of sin *in a moral system*.' 'He would have prevented all sin *in his moral universe*, but could not.' Yet he foreordained whatever comes to pass: that is, he foreordained what he would have prevented if he could." Have I left out the words in italics? It is true I did not repeat them in the last sentence; but they are evidently understood; and considering the close connection of that sentence with the preceding in which Dr. Taylor's own language is quoted verbatim, no impartial reader could possibly mistake my meaning, or understand me to misrepresent the meaning of Dr. Taylor. But suppose the words in italics had been repeated in the last sentence and it should read, "he foreordained what he would have prevented in his moral universe if he could," does this make the contradiction any the less palpable?

"If," says Dr. Taylor, "Dr. Tyler says that God *can* secure

the conduct he prefers, this would only show how he constantly falls into that sort of paralogism, called begging the question." And Dr. Taylor as constantly falls into the same sort of paralogism; for all his reasonings, and all his illustrations assume the fact, that God cannot secure the conduct he prefers. But to prevent further charge of assuming the point in debate, I shall attempt to prove that "God can secure the conduct he prefers"—in other words, that he can control at pleasure the moral actions of his creatures.

I argue this

1. From the fact that God is almighty. Almighty power is power to which no limits can be assigned. It is power to do any thing which does not imply contradiction. Now that it does not imply a contradiction to suppose God to control the moral actions of his creatures, we know; because he has done it in thousands of instances. If then he is Almighty he can do it to any extent he pleases.

2. The Scriptures explicitly teach us that God can and does control at pleasure the moral actions of his creatures. *The king's heart is in the hand of the Lord, as the rivers of water, he turneth it whithersoever he will. The way of man is not in himself; it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps. The heart of man deviseth his way, but the Lord directeth his steps. The wrath of men shall praise thee: the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain.* This text establishes both of the positions which Dr. Taylor has branded as groundless assumptions. It teaches us that the sin which exists will be made to praise God, or be overruled for good; and that the remainder—all which cannot be made to praise God, will be restrained or prevented. This clearly implies that God could prevent all sin in his moral kingdom, if it were his pleasure; and that the reason he does not do it, is, that he sees it will be more for his glory to permit its existence, than it would be to exclude it from his kingdom.

3. If God cannot "secure the conduct he prefers," or control at pleasure the moral actions of his creatures, there is no encouragement to the duty of prayer. For what can we pray? We may pray that God would govern the natural world; but we cannot pray that he would exert any influence upon our own hearts or the hearts of others. We cannot pray that God would keep us from sin, and cause us to walk in his statutes, for this would be to control our moral conduct. We cannot imitate the Psalmist when he prays, *create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me—Make me to go in the way of*

thy commandments—Incline my heart unto thy testimonies and not unto covetousness—Lead me, O Lord, in thy righteousness—Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins. Nor can we pray for our fellow men, that God would restrain, awaken, renew or sanctify them. That it is proper to pray for these things, no man who believes the Bible will deny:—and every man who prays, whatever theories he may profess to adopt, does implicitly admit that God can and does influence the will and control at pleasure the conduct of men, without impairing, in the least degree, their moral agency.

4. If God cannot control at pleasure the moral actions of his creatures, he cannot fulfil his predictions and promises; for the fulfilment of these depends on innumerable voluntary actions of men.

Should it be said, that God foresaw what men would do, and made all his predictions and promises to correspond with what he foresaw—I reply, this is representing the whole system of the divine administration as dependent on the conduct of finite beings. "It is representing the Creator as subject to the will of his creatures, rather than creatures as subject to their Creator." According to this view of the case God does not govern the world as he would be glad to do, if he could; but as he is obliged to do, by the ungovernable waywardness of his creatures.

Besides—How could God know what the actions of his creatures would be, if they are independent of his control? If no influence which he can bring to bear on their minds, will infallibly "secure the conduct he prefers;" how is it possible that he should foresee what they will do? Is it said, God is Omniscient? Granted. But Omniscience cannot foresee that of which there is absolutely no evidence, any more than Omnipotence can accomplish natural impossibilities? And what evidence can there be even to the Divine Mind, that creatures acting independently of his control, will act in a given manner? If there are creatures whose actions Omnipotence cannot control; there are creatures whose actions Omniscience cannot foresee.

5. If God cannot "secure the conduct he prefers," he cannot be perfectly happy. It is impossible to conceive of a being as perfectly happy, unless all his desires are gratified. But if "God does prefer, *all things considered*, holiness to sin in all instances in which the latter takes place," he does desire, *all things considered*, universal holiness in his kingdom. Consequently his desires are not all gratified.

If his creatures were all holy, he would be more happy than he now is—and if he could be more happy than he is now, then he is not now perfectly happy. Besides—according to the theory I am opposing, an infinite variety of events are occurring every hour and every moment, which he would prefer, *all things considered*, should not take place—events too of infinite moment, connected with the most fearful consequences, and such as must cause infinite regret. And it will be so forever. According to this theory, then, how is it possible that the divine being should not be infinitely, and eternally unhappy? And is it so? Does Jehovah sit on the throne of his glory, and look down on his creation, only to pass eternal ages in fruitless lamentations over the evils which have crept into the system against his will, and which all his wisdom and power are incompetent to remedy?

6. That God can and does control at pleasure the moral actions of his creatures, is implied in the duty of submission. That the evils which we suffer, are to be regarded as afflictions and judgements sent upon us by God, and to be submitted to as such, is a dictate both of reason and revelation. But a very large proportion of these evils are brought upon us by the agency of men. How then are they to be regarded as divine judgements, if men act independently of the divine control? *Is there evil in the city and the Lord hath not done it?* Most certainly, if the actions of men are beyond the divine control, there is evil in the city (and not only moral evil, but natural evil) which God not only hath not done, but which he never would have suffered to be done, if he could have prevented it in a moral system. A vast proportion of the evils which we suffer are of this description. And are they, then, to be regarded as righteous dispensations of providence? But how is this subject exhibited in the Scriptures? Read the history of Job. The Sabeans stole his oxen and slew his servants. The Chaldeans stole his camels and slew the servants. And yet Job said, *The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord. In all this Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly.* What, did not Job sin, and charge God foolishly in ascribing those events to him which were brought to pass by the agency of wicked men? How often have Calvinists been charged with the most horrid blasphemy, for ascribing such events in any sense to God! When Shimei cursed David, the pious monarch exclaimed, *let him curse, for the Lord hath bid-den him.* What, did God bid Shimei to commit such an atro-

cious crime as to curse the Lord's anointed? I need not multiply examples. Any one who has read the Scriptures with the least attention, cannot but have observed, that God is often represented as inflicting judgements upon his creatures, when those judgements are brought to pass by the voluntary actions of men.

7. That God can and does control at pleasure the moral actions of his creatures, is implied in the duty of gratitude. That every blessing which we receive is a gift of God, and ought to be gratefully acknowledged, will not be disputed by any one who has a fair claim to the Christian character. But a great part of our blessings come to us through the instrumentality of men; and if they act independently of the divine control, how are we indebted to God for them? How do we know that the individuals whose actions have conferred great blessings upon us, were not, while performing those actions, doing what God preferred, *all things considered*, they should not do? How, then, can we be under obligation to thank God for these blessings?

Finally—If God cannot “secure the conduct he prefers,” there can be no certainty that any of the subjects of his moral government will be preserved from utter and final apostasy. Dr. Taylor says, “Free moral agents can do wrong under every possible influence to prevent it. The possibility of a contradiction in supposing them prevented from doing wrong, is therefore demonstrably certain. Free moral agents *can* do wrong under all possible preventing influences. Using their powers as they may use them, they will sin, and no one can show that some such agents will not use their powers as they may use them.”—“But this possibility that free agents will sin, remains (suppose what else you will) so long as moral agency remains; and how can it be proved that a thing *will not be*, when for aught that appears, it *may be*? When in view of all the facts and evidence of the case, it remains true that it *may be*, what evidence or proof can exist that it *will not be*?”*

Apply this reasoning to a particular case. Gabriel is a free moral agent. Gabriel therefore can do wrong under every possible influence to prevent him. It is demonstrably certain, that to suppose him prevented from doing wrong, may imply a contradiction. Using his powers as he may use them, he will sin; and no one can show that he will not use his powers as he may use them. The possibility that he will sin remains

* Review of Dr. Woods' Letters, p. 563.

(suppose what else you will) while his moral agency remains; and how can it be proved that a thing *will not be*, when for aught that appears, it *may be*? When in view of all the facts and evidence of the case, it remains true that Gabriel *may sin*; what evidence or proof can exist that he *will not sin*? The same may be said of every saint on earth, and every saint and angel in heaven. "What evidence or proof" then "can exist" that the whole moral universe will not yet be in a state of perpetual revolt, and present a scene of unmingled and interminable wo? Do you say, that the purposes and promises of God secure a different result? But how can God execute his purposes and fulfil his promises, unless he can control at pleasure the moral actions of his creatures? Whither then are we driven? Into what a dark unfathomable chaos are we plunged! Give up the doctrine that God can "secure the conduct he prefers," or control, at pleasure, the moral actions of his creatures; and the destinies of the universe are left in awful uncertainty, and no intellect can conjecture what may be the issue of events.

Am I not now authorized to say, that the theory of Dr. Taylor (viz.) that "God cannot secure the conduct he prefers," or that "God could not have prevented all sin, or the present degree of sin, in a moral system," is "a groundless assumption"—that it "ought never to be made the basis of an objection or an argument"—that "so long as (it) is admitted and reasoned upon, (it) must leave the subject involved in insuperable difficulties,"—and that it must be dismissed from the mind, before the character and government of God (can) be shown to be free from embarrassment."

(To be continued.)

REVIEWS.

LECTURES ON CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY, BY GEORGE CHRISTIAN KNAPP. *Translated by* LEONARD WOODS, Jr., *Abbot Resident at the Theological Seminary in Andover, Mass. In two Volumes. Vol. I.* New York: Published by G. & C. & H. Carvill. Andover: Printed at the Codman Press, by Flagg & Gould. 1831. pp. 539.

The spirit of religion in this country is active rather than contemplative. The nature of our institutions gives full scope to action, and the bustling character of our population is more favorable to doing than to thinking. Every thing is submitted to the judgement of the people; the standard of excellence is fixed by them; and they can more justly appreciate the active laborer than the profound thinker. Whatever visibly contributes to immediate good is highly valued, and the zealous promoter of any scheme of this kind is sure of his reward; but that which is more remote or hidden in its beneficial results, however excellent and even necessary as a principle for future action, is apt to be slighted, and the author neglected.

During the struggles in the mother country for religious and political freedom, the developement of Christianity among our Puritan ancestors was eminently a practical one. The principles of religion were all brought to bear upon the actual condition of men in real life; they were employed as means for the increase of physical comforts and the upholding of civil rights. This disposition was brought into this country by its first settlers, and it has rapidly increased with our growing strength. Hence the number of our benevolent institutions, and the heroic energy with which their measures are conducted; hence the passion for the study of statistics and for new schemes for doing good. Hence, too, the persevering and indefatigable character of the chief promoters of our public charities; who, though generally theologians by profession, have studied things more than books, and are not scholars so much as men of business. They make but little use of classical learning, and choose neither Demosthenes nor Cicero for their models of impressive speaking; but their minds are richly stored with appropriate facts, and they are eloquent, because they have an object before them which they thoroughly understand, and are intensely anxious to see accomplished.

Who will deny that this peculiarly practical, active character of our religion, the legitimate offspring of a government perfectly free, and the habits of a people accustomed to estimate every thing by its visible results, has been productive of immense good, and is in fact in perfect accordance with the very genius of Christianity? The actual achievements of our numerous associations for the spreading of the Bible and religious books, for the support of missions, for the education of indigent youth, for the comfort of the poor, for the promotion of temperance, all show that this spirit of activity has not been productive of mere bustle and noise. Who ever before dreamed, that the power of humble men, when they unite their efforts for a good purpose, is so great, so irresistible, as it has been found to be, by actual experiment, in our own country, since the last war? For all this we are indebted to the democratic tendency of the Calvinism of our ancestors. Christianity itself, indeed, is essentially democratic: it has in its own spirit all the freedom and thrilling excitement and unceasing activity of democracy. But democracy is always turbulent: and is Christianity therefore turbulent? By no means; nor would democracy be so, were it not for that deep-rooted depravity in man, which always turns the best things to the worst, and obliges God, as a wise and benevolent moral governor, to give us, not those things which are in their own nature the best, but those which, under existing circumstances, we may be the least likely to abuse to our own ruin.

The Christian religion, in all ages and under all circumstances, is essentially the same; and it is always a religion of action. Still it is not action exclusively; and unless the contemplative spirit keep pace with the active, religion loses its spirituality and heavenliness. In this case, religion drops that unsuspecting frankness and fearless simplicity, which are the products of a habit of constant communion with the spiritual world, and becomes too much a matter of calculation and contrivance; and men seek to promote its interests in the same spirit, and by somewhat the same means, that they would endeavor to increase an estate. The life of faith gives way to the life of sense. The active spirit, without the contemplative, leads to intellectual barrenness and leanness of soul; the contemplative without the active, to empty sentimentalism and superstition. Those minds in which these two characteristics have been equally developed, have always produced the most lasting benefit to the church. Such were the minds of the best English theological writers in the times of Elizabeth and the Commonwealth; and such, in our own country, were the minds of Ed-

wards and Brainerd. Those, on the contrary, in whom one of these characteristics has been strongly developed to the partial or almost total suppression of the other, however good their intentions or praiseworthy their zeal, have generally done as much evil as good. It is the union of these two elements, that has given to English theology the advantage over every other in writings on practical religion. In what other language shall we find books of this sort combining so much sound sense and practical wisdom with such fervent piety and deep devotion, as we see in Baxter's *Call and Saints' Rest*, in the *Discourses of John Howe* and the *Commentaries of Leighton*? Nor have our own times, or our own nation, been destitute of writers of this class.

Not a few of the peculiarities of American theology owe their origin to the circumstance, that we are situated in a new country. We have no ancient universities, nor extensive libraries, nor liberal foundations, which afford the opportunity and the means for extensive literary investigation. The wants of the country and the wants of the students, many of whom do not commence study till late in life, call our educated men immediately to active service, after what must be, at best, but a hasty and superficial preparation: and in after life, their engrossing occupations leave them but little leisure or inclination to compensate for their imperfect acquirements by a course of study, which requires thorough intellectual training and access to many books in various languages. If our divines can read a little Latin and less Greek, and spell out a Hebrew text with the help of the *Manual Lexicon*, they are rather above the common standard:—but if, in addition to these accomplishments, they have a smattering of French, and an ability to read German commentary, some good folks are almost afraid that such prodigious learning must be a hindrance to their piety! Is this picture too highly colored? I would ask, how many of our ministers in good standing can read the original of even Calvin's *Institutes*, without *construing*? This is not reproachfully spoken: such is the natural consequence of our situation in a new country, where there are comparatively few books, but little time for study, and a great abundance of work. Nor would we by any means intimate that a mere knowledge of languages is the real essence of intellectual greatness. Homer and Socrates were both intellectually great, and Aristotle and Plato had learning as well as greatness, though their knowledge of languages was probably limited to their mother tongue. It is the depth of study, and not the extent of it, that gives a man intellectual power. Still, at the present time, when the

human mind has developed itself so variously in the different ages and nations of the world, a man must seek in various languages for that sort of information which was formerly confined to one or two, or his views of the actual advancement made in human knowledge will be narrow and partial. The ability to read different languages ought to be acquired in early life, certainly below the age of twenty, before the mind has become too much occupied with things to attend patiently to words. But how many there are among us, who do not even commence the Latin grammar, till the time for the study of languages is well nigh past! And is it to be expected that many such scholars will ever make themselves familiar with the minds of other nations than their own? Much more than is now done in this way, however, might be accomplished, if public opinion would only demand a more thorough preparation for college, a more thorough course of study in college, and higher literary attainments in professional men. We are happy to believe that higher demands already begin to be made, and that they are daily increasing.

But the mind, even if cramped by a defective education and limited attainments in learning, will still demand aliment. If its views be not extended by an extensive course of study, it will seize with the stronger grasp those ideas which lie within its reach. Our theologians have not been idle, though they have cultivated comparatively a narrow field. In those departments of study which require but little knowledge of the efforts of other minds, and but a limited acquaintance with the actual state of theological science in the world, they have produced works of great merit. Who in all Christendom stands higher as a metaphysician than Edwards? The most distinguished philosophical and ethical writers of the present day, among whom we may mention the Frenchman Cousin and the Englishman Mackintosh, venerate his talents and labors in this science. A foreign scholar, educated at the universities of Copenhagen and Halle, who has devoted his chief attention to metaphysics, recently obtained a volume of Edwards, whose writings he had till then never seen. Soon after, he observed to the writer of this article, with an expression of agreeable surprise:—" *Ich habe so eben Edwards gelesen, und er ist noch tiefer wie Kant.*" ("I have just been reading Edwards, and he is even more profound than Kant.") A too exclusive attention, in our country, to metaphysical theology, and a very limited acquaintance with theological literature in general, have been productive of no inconsiderable evils. We have almost thought that metaphysics is the whole of theology. Some theological theories

have been regarded as original and highly important, and involving the essential principles of religion, which a more extensive acquaintance with dogmatic history would have shown to be but the apparitions of some antiquated speculations, that had faded away on account of their intrinsic insignificance, and which have power to do neither good nor harm, only as they are made matter of contention. This is a sore evil; and to remedy it, our theologians ought to be made more thoroughly acquainted with the theological writers of other ages and other nations.

If from our own country we now turn our attention to Germany, we shall find there a theological development directly the reverse of our own. The German theologians have glaring faults from which we are happily free, and they have also great and striking excellencies to which we can at present lay no claim. The theology of both countries can be greatly improved by sifting the two and mingling together the better portions of each.

The moral and political condition of the Germans—perhaps also, to some extent, their native temperament—have led them more to the speculative than to the practical. They have witnessed the failure of many attempts for the renovation of their country; instead of seeing their several states united and free, they have seen little but oppression, discord, and blood-shed by a brother's hand. Their fondest hopes have been so often disappointed, that they seem to have relinquished all present expectation of applying speculative principles to the purposes of practical utility. They live on the history of the past and anticipations of the distant future. As a distinguished writer of their own has said, 'they leave the empire of the ocean to England, and of the land to France, and reserve to themselves the dominion of the air.' Literature and philosophy are the only subjects on which they can employ their minds with any prospect of advantage; and hence their unexampled diligence and success in these pursuits. Talents and ambition, which in this country would find note in politics, or at the bar, or in schemes for internal improvement, are there all turned into the field of literary investigation, as the only one which promises distinction without incurring the jealousy of government. They may speculate as freely as they choose, if they will not apply their speculations to the disturbing of the existing order of things.

It is easy to see what must be the effect of such a state of society upon the character of the public mind. Knowledge cannot be carried into practice; speculation cannot be tested by experience. Accordingly there are no limits to the boldness,

the freedom, and even the extravagance of speculation. The deep feeling of the intrinsic excellence and importance of truth, which always exists where truth is a practical reality, is there to some extent lost; for neither truth nor error seems essentially to affect the condition of real life. The pursuit of knowledge becomes a pastime, a refuge from the irksomeness of a compelled inactivity; it is entered upon for the sake of the employment and the distinction it affords, rather than from any hope of becoming essentially happier or better by the possession of knowledge. Hence, in the German writers there is often wanting that high appreciation and deep love of truth for the sake of its practical results, that manliness of tone, and that earnest determination to do good, which gives such an interest to the works of the best English authors.

Notwithstanding these defects, which almost necessarily result from their condition, the Germans have excellencies, too, no less peculiar and important. They live much within themselves, and are accustomed to watch closely the operations of their own minds. They are meditative, full of a silent and quiet, but deep enthusiasm. They have more of a philosophical spirit than the English, and their philosophy is of a higher order and more solemn tone. The religious spirit in Germany, though it may be deemed somewhat mystical, has less of earthliness than it has here. There is generally a depth and simplicity, and an absence of all worldly calculation in the feelings of a religious German, which we seldom find among ourselves. Their learning is altogether more thorough and accurate than ours. Study is the business of their lives; and they accustom themselves from early youth to habits of patient and complete investigation. The original sources of knowledge in all its various departments lie before them, and they are never debarred access to them through want of ability to read an ancient or a foreign language. They can avail themselves of the learned treasures not only of Greece and Rome and modern Europe, but of Arabia and Syria and eastern Asia.

These are qualities in which we cannot at present pretend to bear any comparison with the Germans; and they are qualities, too, of the highest importance. How then can a greater service be rendered to the cause of religion and learning in our land, than by adapting the best German works to the state of things in our own country, and transferring them to our language? Can we not add our own practical sense to German erudition, and fill up our own shallowness by German depth? We are able, surely, to reap the advantages of their learning and philosophy, without adopting their skepticism, or becoming

mystics. The best scholars are English who have completed their education in Germany; and the best books are by English writers who have made a free and discriminating use of German helps.

We are, therefore, grateful for every attempt to make our countrymen familiar with the scholars of Germany. But mere translation will not answer the purpose. There is often as much need of remodelling the form in which the thoughts are presented, and of adapting the mode of philosophising to the state of science in our own country, as there is of transferring the words and sentences from their idiom to ours. The *Biblical Theology* of Storr and Flatt is written on a plan, and with a design, so different from any thing to which we are accustomed, that, profound and elaborate as it really is, many of our scholars, because they cannot take it up and read it through, as they would Dr. Dwight's Lectures, wonder in what its excellence consists. Its excellence consists in its being a scientific arrangement and thorough exegesis of the most important doctrinal texts of Scripture. It is a philosophical system of the materials of thought on theological topics: its design is to guide and aid the student in his own theological studies, and not to furnish the work ready done to his hands. It is not appreciated, because it does just what Bishop Butler wished might be done in his day, states the bare premises and the conclusions, without artificially linking them together.

Professor Stuart adopted the right plan in the beginning, and this plan is followed up in the *Biblical Repository* with great ability and success. The work, whose title stands at the head of these remarks, is also one of the most successful attempts that have hitherto been made in the way of translation. Nor is it a mere translation; for the translator has constantly kept his eye upon the state of theological science in our own country, and endeavored to adapt his work to it by a series of judicious notes. These notes are for the most part written with great care, and contain numerous references to the best modern writers of Germany. As comparatively few, who will use this translation, can have access to German writers, we think it would have added much to the utility of the work, if the translator had more frequently referred his readers to the standard English theologians. Owen, Baxter, Edwards, Leighton, Stillington, Watts, Doddridge, Horseley, and many other writers in the English language, we cannot help thinking, are, both as scholars and theologians, as instructive and as worthy of notice as Morus, Reinhard, Koeppen, Bretschneider, Schleiermacher, Hahn, or any other of the so often quoted Germans; besides being much more accessible to the English student.

Mr. Woods has enriched his translation with a very valuable Preface, which, as most readers will be likely to think, gives indications of even a deeper philosophical spirit and a more generous flow of soul than the original work itself. We cannot deny ourselves the pleasure of making one quotation, in which Mr. W. describes the consequences of what are called liberal principles in theology.

"Theologians, it is said, have no choice left them, and must adopt the splendid results which are every day disclosed in all departments of knowledge; and if they would not suffer theology to fall into contempt, must admit some compromise between its antiquated doctrines, and the rapid progress of light. To effect this compromise is the office assigned to modern RATIONALISM, by one of its ablest apologists. Rationalism, says Bretschneider, designs to restore the interrupted harmony between theology and human sciences, and is the necessary product of the scientific cultivation of modern times.—But whence the necessity of this compromise? It is a necessity with which the believer in Revelation can never be pressed, and which certainly was not felt by theologians of the old stamp. They had not asserted their independence of the Pope and the school-men, only to yield it again to the empiric. And as to the advantages of this compromise,—what has really been accomplished by this far-famed Rationalism, after all its promises? It professed friendship for Christianity, but has proved its deadly foe; standing within the pale of the Church, it has been in league with the enemy without, and has readily adopted every thing which infidelity could engender, and as studiously rejected every thing which true philosophy has done to confirm the truths of Revelation. It promised to save Theology from contempt; and how has this promise been performed? In the days of Spener, Theology was the Queen of Sciences, so acknowledged by the mouth of Bacon, Leibnitz, Haller, and others,—their chosen oracles. She wore the insignia of divinity; and 'filled her odoriferous lamp' at the very original fountain of light. But in an evil hour, she took this flattering Rationalism to her bosom. Now stript of every mark of divinity, cut off from her native sources of light, and thrust out into the dark, this Foolish Virgin is compelled to say to her sister Sciences, 'Give me of your oil; for my lamp has gone out.'"

Mr. W. has read extensively and studied deeply, and we hope that this is but the beginning of his labors for the theological literature of our country. He has our most hearty wishes for his continued success and happiness in the prosecution of studies so delightful in themselves and of such deep interest to the moral welfare of mankind.

Of the merits of the original work, as a system of theology, we shall be better prepared to speak after the second volume has made its appearance. Thus far it seems characterised by a method perspicuous and scientific, by great simplicity of thought and language, thorough examination of texts, judicious selection of arguments, and gentle, unostentatious piety. The literature, also, of theology, and the history of its principal doctrines, are given with great clearness and fidelity, and with copious references to authorities. In reference to the present state of theological science in our country, this is, perhaps, the most valuable part of the work.

We do not find in Dr. Knapp the strong intellectual nerve of Doederlein, nor the rich philosophical spirit of Tholuck; but his plain good sense, his skill in exegesis, his acuteness in unravelling the sophisms of error, his accurate acquaintance with the history of theological literature, his Christian goodness of heart, adapt his work admirably to the present wants of our theological community. We look for the appearance of the second volume with eager anticipation.

Discours sur l'étude de l'histoire du Christianisme et son utilité pour l'époque actuelle—Prononcée à Genève, dans la séance d'ouverture d'un cours sur l'histoire de la Réformation et des Réformateurs de l'Allemagne au seizième siècle, par M. Merle D' Aubigné, Ministre du Saint Evangile dans l'Eglise réformée et ancien Pasteur, Président du Consistoire de l'église protestante de Bruxelles. Genève. 1832.

The name of Geneva is connected with a thousand interesting associations, as the cradle of the Reformation, the asylum of liberty, and the residence of distinguished Divines and scholars for many ages. But it is now still more interesting as the scene of an approaching contest between truth and error, which will draw upon it the eyes of the whole Christian church. The apostasy of her ancient Seminary and Company of Pastors is well known. After having passed through the same stages of concealment and evasion, which form the invariable history of defection from the truth, they at length openly avow that system of belief, or rather disbelief, which, under all the multifarious forms and titles which it assumes, has ever this characteristic, that it exalts reason to the place and authority of dethroned revelation. But though the avowal of these doctrines has been comparatively recent, yet they have long exerted an influence not the less pernicious, because it was diffused in secret and covered by the most artful dissimulation. A rapid decay of piety must ever follow, when the vital energy of the word of God is withdrawn. It was thus with the church at Geneva. She soon fell into the most deplorable lukewarmness.—The things which remained were *ready to die*.—But God never suffered a total extinction of piety. The visits of Haldane and Drummmond and other pious Englishmen, and of our own Bruen and Mason fanned the expiring spark which is now blazing up into a glorious and far-seen beacon, awakening throughout Christendom the hope that a new Reformation is about to break forth from Geneva—a reformation not

less necessary, and we trust, destined to prove not less complete, than that in which the church emerged from the darkness and superstition of popery—a reformation from deadly apathy to all genuine religion and sneering contempt of its most sacred and vital truths.

Christians at Geneva (hitherto overawed by an ecclesiastical organization wedded to the state and wielding its power—a power of which they have made, and still make, the most ungenerous use) have at length, become convinced, that it is their duty to make a more decided and conspicuous avowal of their faith, and to act on the offensive against the prevailing error and indifference. The first result of this movement was the formation in the last year (we believe) of the Evangelical Society, designed to serve as the centre and organ of Christian and benevolent operation. This Society has exerted itself in the circulation of the Scriptures, not only in Switzerland, but in the neighboring departments of France. It has established at Geneva a weekly lecture (already most numerous and respectably attended,) where those evangelical doctrines are preached which are no longer to be heard in the temples of the establishment. But their most important step has been the establishment of “the New Evangelical School of Theology.” It was founded in September 1831, and was announced in the same month by one communication addressed to “the Syndics and Council of State of the Republic and Canton of Geneva,” and another “to the Churches, Universities and all the faithful of Protestant Christendom.” Both these documents contain an able and temperate exposition of the motives which led to the foundation of the School.

The interesting location of this Seminary, the distinguished men who fill its various departments of instruction, above all, the great and important emergency in which it originated, all have caused its establishment to be regarded as the rising of the morning-star on Europe. It will probably exert a wide and salutary influence on Switzerland itself, of which Geneva is the principal canton and head of influence. But it is as a means of evangelizing France, that it awakens our deepest interest and highest expectations. What a vast field does that country open to Christian enterprise in a free, ingenious and enlightened, but dissolute and infidel population of 33,000,000?—A population, too, effectually emancipated from papal bigotry, and weary of political experiments, which in fulfilment of their magnificent promises, have produced nothing but the abortive and fruitless agonies of revolution—and thus prepared by unprecedented sufferings and disappointments, to appreciate and embrace the glorious gospel of the blessed God. The actual

success of the Gospel at this time in France, as it is preached by itinerants supported by private patronage is, perhaps, unexampled since apostolic times. An individual, supported by a gentleman in this country, has in nine months collected at Cherbouurg, a congregation large enough to demand a salary from government, a church of sixteen members, and a large and flourishing Sunday school. His place is now occupied by an evangelical preacher of the established Protestant church, and the indefatigable pioneer has gone to break ground in the same manner at Brest. This is but one instance of many others of which intelligence has reached us within a few weeks. But where are the laborers to gather in the harvest which now whitens the fields of that vast country? Great numbers of young men, it is true, are offering themselves, eager for employment and satisfied with the bare means of subsistence—but where are they to receive their education? Shall they resort to the Seminaries of Montauban, or Strasbourg, or the old Seminary of Geneva, where they must hear the Divinity of their Saviour denied, and the quaintnesses and alledged discrepancies of Scripture held up to perpetual ridicule in the lectures of their Professors? Yet such is the only instruction to which they have had access. These are the only seminaries in French Europe—they are the only avenues to the pulpits of the French Protestant churches. And though all founded and endowed to perpetuate the doctrines of the Gospel and of the Reformation, they are now arrayed in direct hostility to both. Such was the exigency which demanded the establishment of the "New Evangelical School of Theology."—It is well described in one of the circulars issued by the Evangelical Society, as follows,

"We have just said, and it is too easy to demonstrate the truth of the assertion, THIS SCHOOL WAS NECESSARY. If the young men who repair to the Academies of France and Geneva in order to prepare themselves for the ministry of the word of life are there imbued with erroneous doctrine; if the professors are hostile to those truths, for instruction in which all our pulpits were erected, all our schools opened, all our institutions endowed; if the course of study at those schools is not free; if pupils who are attached to the faith of the Reformers and Apostles have there no opportunity of following those instructions which answer to their wants and which satisfy their consciences; if pious parents who wish to devote their sons to the ministry, must condemn them to pass the four finest years of their youth in studies which undermine the foundations of our faith; in a word, if it is true that Arianism overturns the Gospel from its base; then certainly, the es-

establishment of this school was indispensable.—The churches are themselves convinced of it. We only recall an acknowledged fact," &c.

No location could have been selected for this school, perhaps on the continent, combining so many advantages as Geneva. Its excellent climate, its polished and elevated society, in which are to be found men of the highest distinction in almost every department of science, the purity of its vernacular French, the very moderate expenses of living, and not least, perhaps, its venerable and inspiring associations—all invest it with attractions which will not only render it a place of general resort to theological students from France, but, as in the days of her own renowned Calvin, will probably invite occasional pupils from distant countries.

Still more substantial attractions, however, are presented in a corps of highly endowed Professors. The department of Exegesis is filled by men from the right quarter, from Germany, Germany as it now is; men who have sat at the feet of Tholuck and Neander. Men who have passed through the intoxication of Rationalism and have sobered themselves by deeper draughts at the fountains of knowledge. At the head of this department is M. Steiger of Berlin, of whom Professor Tholuck says, "If he has access to the necessary means, he will render the present day an epoch in the learned world." Mr. Steiger is known in Europe as the author of the best refutation of German Rationalism and of a valuable commentary on the first Epistle of Peter. His associate in this department is M. Havernich, whose commentary on Daniel is mentioned by Tholuck, is an important accession to the biblical literature of the day. He is farther characterized by a distinguished scholar of Berlin as follows, "The publications of M. Havernich would serve to restore the Theology of Protestant France, and would increase the reputation of the Seminary in France, Germany, and even in England and America, where they have been for some time translating the pernicious works of Gesenius, *for want of better.*" The department of practical Theology and pastoral care is filled by M. Galland, and that of dogmatical Theology by M. Gaussen, the well known pastor of Satigny, though degraded from his charge and his pastoral office within a few weeks by the *liberal* party of the venerable company of pastors for being concerned in the establishment of this Seminary. "He is," says a countryman of his own, "the Calvin of our times; Calvin, with more winning manners and a more expansive charity."

The discourse of which we have placed the title at the head of this article, is the first fruits of this institution. It was deliv-

ered at Geneva in January of the present year by M. Merle D'Aubigné, Professor of Ecclesiastical History in the New Seminary. He held the pastoral office successively at Berlin and Brussels, and sustains a high reputation in the European churches for his eloquence and piety. It was introductory, as its title imports, to a course of Lectures on the "history of the Reformation and of the Reformers of Germany to the 16th century," not forming a part of the regular instruction of the Seminary, but separate and preparatory, and "attended," as a note informs us, "not by an auditory of students, but by an assembly composed of persons of various ages and of both sexes." It is dedicated to Neander, the intimate personal friend of the author, and the father of Modern Ecclesiastical History.

This introductory discourse has given us the impression that Professor Merle D'Aubigné is admirably qualified for the task he has undertaken, viz. to deliver a course of lectures on Ecclesiastical History, adapted to popular instruction and impression. To do this, on any subject connected with religion, in the present thoughtless and skeptical condition of European society, is a task of no ordinary difficulty. To accomplish it, a man must be learned, deeply learned; but this is not all. Never, perhaps, was there a generation which regarded mere learning with less respect, than our own. To the treasures acquired by solitary research, he must add the acuteness, versatility and readiness of mind, which can only be acquired by actual and wide intercourse with the living world. He will be less occupied in meeting arguments, than insinuations. He must be able to reply to sarcasms with dignity. He must have a profound insight into the spirit of his own times, and be able to bring the results of past ages to combat its errors and rectify its speculations; above all, his heart must be thoroughly warmed with his subject, and he must speak with the force and ardor, which can only proceed from an entire and honest conviction of the truth and importance of what he utters. We repeat our conviction, that the author of this Discourse possesses these rare qualifications in a superior degree—an evidence of which may perhaps be derived from the fact that it has been largely quoted with high encomiums by one of the weekly papers of Paris. We present our readers with a few extracts.

After showing the superior interest of the history of Christianity over the history of politics and of literature, and answering, in a masterly manner, the sarcastic objections to this history arising from the spirit of infidel mockery, he thus replies to the more serious objection, that Christianity has shackled the human mind and kept our race in perpetual infancy.

"We shall not even speak of the blessings which Christ-

tianity bestows in a future life, though these are its principal objects, but we shall meet our adversaries on their own ground. Let a map of the world—a statistical table of the nations, decide the question. Where is light? Where is darkness? Where is liberty? Where is slavery? Mark the obscurity which envelopes all unconverted countries, and the light which rests upon those where Christianity is found. What has rent asunder the dark and murky veil which so long overspread the islands of Otaheite, of Eimeo, of Hawaii? Christianity. Nay more, mark with a pencil upon this map, by successive shadings, those countries where there is most light, morality, and freedom. You will find but one scale of progression—that of Christianity itself. Wherever the Gospel enjoys the highest respect, *there* are found in the greatest abundance, the true blessings of humanity. The United States of America, Great Britain, other evangelical countries, where the light of the Word shines in its greatest purity, will be at the summit of the scale; and those deepening shades of the transition by which you are conducted from Christian nations to those which are not so, will be found on those regions of the earth where Christianity exists, it is true, but is neutralized by the human elements which are blended with it."

The concluding remarks are exceedingly impressive and noble, and discover a familiarity with the far-reaching views of prophecy which are peculiar to Hengstenberg and the modern prophetic school of Germany.

"It is the reign of Christ which has brought unity to the peoples of the earth and to their history; and by it, the disjointed members are formed into one body. One of the most essential and important ideas of the epoch in which we live, which perhaps has only slightly traced itself on many minds, but which will ever become the fundamental thought of those who meditate and believe, is, that in the new period which opens before us there ought not so much to be a personal history, if I may so speak, of peoples, as a general history of humanity. Our epoch is the point where numerous filaments, coming from different quarters, unite, and from whence they proceed in a single cord. And what is this new period, if it be not the consummation of the purposes of Christianity? While a few philosophers have feebly discerned of late something of this vast centralization of human races, Christianity points the world to the annunciation this great event of humanity addressed two thousand years before the actual era to the Chaldean Abraham, and to the still more surprising expression of its founder, "There shall be ONE FOLD, and one Shepherd." The religions of antiquity rendered impossible this vast assemblage of nations. Like the languages of Babel, they were so

many walls which separated the nations from each other. They were national gods which were adored by the tribes of the earth; they pertained only to the people who had made them; they had no points of contact, none of sympathy, with any other nation. Falsehood has a thousand strange faces which have no common resemblance. Truth alone is one, and can alone unite the races of the earth. The idea of a universal kingdom of truth and purity, remained unknown to the ancient world; and if some wise men had a vague and obscure presentiment of it, it was to them only an ideal, without the possibility of their even conceiving what could convert it into a reality. Christ appears, and soon accomplishes what the religions and the sages of the world had not been able even to foresee. He founds a spiritual kingdom, to which *all nations* are invited; he overturns, in the energetic language of the Apostle, the "enclosures," the "middle walls of partition" which separated the nations, and unites them together to form one body, *one new man*, before God. Christianity is not, like the ancient religions, a doctrine adapted only to a certain degree of development of the nations; it is a truth, descended from heaven to earth, which can act, at once, on men of every climate and every grade of culture. It imparts to human nature, whatever be its asperities or the various modifications which letters and philosophy have caused it to undergo, the principle of a new and truly divine life. And it is this life which must be, at once, the great means of development for all nations, and the centre of their unity. No sooner has it appeared, than the true *cosmopolism* begins to exist in the world. The citizens of Judea, of Pontus, of Greece, of Egypt, of Rome, till that hour enemies to each other, embrace as brethren. Christianity is that tree spoken of in Scripture, "the leaves of which are for the healing of the nations." It acts at once, on the most opposite conditions of human society. It regenerates, it vivifies the corrupted world of the Caesars, and shortly after subdues and civilizes the barbarous hordes of the North. And at the hour when I write, it produces the same effects on the citizens of London, of Berlin, of Paris, and on the savage of Greenland, of Caffraria, and of Sandwich. The net is thrown over the whole earth, and the day is not distant, when a divine hand will draw captive within it, all the races of men."

We are unable to follow our author in his development of these important thoughts, and in his spirited and masterly refutation of the objections which they may be expected to excite from French Infidelity and Genevese Liberalism. The whole conclusion (of which we have given a very inconsiderable part)

* Is. ix.

is rich with profound and original thought. Every line of it deserves to be read and pondered. Indeed, the Discourse is well worthy of being presented entire to the American public in a translation; and if this is not done, we shall probably give some further extracts in a future number.

BAPTISM IN ITS MODE AND SUBJECTS, *considered, and the Arguments of Mr. Ewing and Dr. Wardlaw refuted.* By ALEXANDER CARSON, A. M., *Minister of the Gospel, Edinburgh.* Together with a *Review of Dr. Dwight on Baptism.* By F. L. COX, LL. D., *of London.* New York: C. C. P. Crosby. 1832. pp. 395.

The subject of Baptism seems to have excited an unusual degree of attention of late, among the Dissenters of England and Scotland. The principal writers on the one side have been the Rev. Greville Ewing and Dr. Wardlaw; and those on the other, the Rev. Alexander Carson and Dr. Cox. The publication before us is the latest on the subject which has been received in this country, and is almost entirely from the pen of Mr. Carson. A few pages are added by Dr. Cox, animadverting on some of the positions of Dr. Dwight. Our limits do not permit us to go into a full examination of the work; and yet we are unwilling to pass it altogether without notice.

1. Mr. Carson makes several important concessions, such as have not been often made by writers on that side of the question. In the first place, he admits that the word βαπτισμα, from which βαπτισμα is formed, literally signifies *to dye* as well as *to dip*, and to dye or color "in any manner," whether the operation be performed by dipping or not.* This proposition he supports by several incontestable examples. And after adducing them, he says, "Having such evidence before my eyes, I could not deny this to my opponents, even were it a difficulty as to the subject of the mode of baptism. In a controversialist, nothing can compensate for candor; and facts ought to be admitted, even when they appear unfavorable."

2. Mr. C. admits that, in some points, "the baptism of John was essentially different from the baptism of the Apostolic commission. John did not baptize into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. He did not baptize into the faith of Christ as come, but as about to be made manifest."—"John's baptism," he further adds, "did not serve for Christ's. Paul baptized the disciples of John the Baptist, because they had not been baptized into the faith of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost;

* βαπτισμα signifies to dye by sprinkling as properly as by dipping, though originally it was confined to the latter." p. 63.

and because they had been baptized only in the faith of the Messiah to come."

3. It has been commonly urged against the baptism of infants, that this practice is not *expressly enjoined* in the New Testament. Positive institutions, it is said, are never left as matter of inference, but are always enforced by *express commands*. But Mr. C. says, "I do not object to inference. On the contrary, I receive what is made out by inference, just as I receive the most direct statement." He adds, however, with great propriety, that "an inference is not a guess, or conjecture, or probability, or conceit, drawn at random," but "the necessary result of the principle from which it is derived."

4. Mr. C. represents the Abrahamic covenant as "having a letter and a spirit." According to the spirit of it, he admits that "all believers are the children of Abraham;"* that the promise to Abraham, "I will be a God to thee and to thy seed after thee," is "fulfilled in the spirit, by God's being a God to all believers;" and that the promise of the land of Canaan is "in the spirit fulfilled to the true Israel, in the possession of the heavenly inheritance." "The kingdom of God in Israel, with its officers, laws, worship, &c. is a *visible model of the invisible kingdom of Christ*." (Of course, it is the *visible church*.) "The typical ordinances, which exhibited the truths of the gospel in figure, form one of the most conclusive evidences of Christianity; and present spiritual things to the mind in so definite and striking a manner, that they add the greatest lustre to the doctrines of grace." He says in another place, "The covenant with Abraham is everlasting in the full sense of the word; for by it, all Abraham's spiritual seed are blessed with him, by having their faith counted for righteousness to the end of the world." pp. 344, 351.—We know not when we have recorded sentences with more pleasure than these. They are full of truth, and of very *extraordinary* truth, to fall from the lips of a Baptist.

5. Commenting on the passage, Rom. iv. 11, in which circumcision is called a 'seal of the righteousness of faith,' Mr. C. observes, "Undoubtedly it was a *seal of spiritual blessings*; but not a seal to the individuals circumcised that they were personally interested in these blessings. *It seals the truth of the gospel*, namely, that there is righteousness in the faith of Abraham; or that all who have Abraham's faith have righteousness." Again he says, that "the spiritual or emblematical meaning of circumcision is *the change of the heart by the Holy Spirit*." pp. 359, 364. This is precisely that for which Pedobaptists have been long contending; and on which they found, as they think, a conclusive argument, to show that baptism has come in the place of circumcision.

We must now leave the concessions of Mr. C. and turn to other

* "By that covenant, he (Abraham) was constituted the father of believers in all ages." p. 348.

parts of his work which are less agreeable. He advances some things which will be new to most readers, and which certainly are very extraordinary.—He supposes, for instance, that John's baptism—'the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins'—had the *same design and meaning*, when received by Christ, as when received by the other Jews. His language is as follows:

"If John's baptism implied repentance and confession of sin, how could Jesus submit to it? This apparent inconsistency struck John himself so forcibly, that he even presumed to forbid him. 'I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me?' But it was necessary for Jesus to observe all the Divine institutions incumbent on his people. And if this was necessary, there must be a propriety in the thing itself. If he submits to the baptism of repentance, there must be a point of view in which it suits him. And what is that point of view? Evidently, that though he is himself holy, yet, as one with us, *he is defiled*. Just as by our oneness with him, we can say, 'Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect?' by his being one with us, *he can confess himself a sinner*. The oneness of Christ and his people is not a figurative way of speaking. It is a solid and consoling truth. By it, we die in Christ's death, and are acquitted as innocent; by it Christ is made sin for us, who in his person knew no sin. Christ's baptism, then, is no exception from what is implied in John's baptism. It has *the same meaning*, as well as the same figure, to him as to us."

Again, Mr. C. insists, that though infants are saved by Christ, they are not saved by the gospel, and that *the gospel has nothing to do with them*. "The gospel," he says expressly, "has nothing to do with infants, nor have gospel ordinances, any respect to them." "The salvation of the gospel is as much confined to believers, as the baptism of the gospel is. None shall ever be saved by the gospel, who do not believe it. Consequently, by the gospel, no infant can be saved." Again he says, that though "infants must be saved *as sinners*, and saved *through the blood of Christ*," they "are not saved by the new covenant. There is no such doctrine exhibited in any part of the book of God." pp. 279, 345.—How infants can be saved, as sinners, by the blood of Christ, and yet have no interest in the covenant of grace, and the gospel have nothing to do with them, will not be so obvious to all readers, as Mr. C. probably anticipated.

Mr. C. professes to be deeply skilled in Hermeneutics, and he delivers his canons, and makes assertions, like one entitled to speak *ex cathedra*. His assertions, however, will not in all cases be received. For instance, he lays it down as indubitably certain, and insists upon it, that the Greek preposition *ex* "always signifies *out of*." Now so far is this from being true, that *out of* is not the most common signification of this word, and is not so represented by the most respectable lexicographers. A vast number of instances may be gathered from the New Testament in which this rendering is wholly inadmissible. What sense would the following passages make, if the preposition *ex* were rendered *out of*? "The tree is known *out of* its fruit." "Having agreed with the laborers *out of* a penny a day." "Jesus knew *out of* the beginning who they are that believe not." "Many good works

have I showed you *out of* my Father." "A man is not justified *out of* the deeds of the law." "They *out of* the faith are the children of Abraham." "They are *out of* the world; therefore speak they *out of* the world, and the world heareth them. We are *out of* God; he that knoweth God, heareth us. He that is not *out of* God, heareth not us." "Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord, that they may rest *out of* their labors."—Obviously, Mr. C. needs stronger proof that Philip and the eunuch came up *out of* the water, than his alleged invariable signification of the preposition *ex*.

Notwithstanding the concession already noticed respecting the meaning of the word βαπτω, Mr. C. asserts in the most unqualified manner, that βαπτίζω *always denotes immersion*.* "It never has any other meaning." He admits, indeed, that he has "all the lexicographers and commentators against him in this opinion"—a suspicious circumstance to begin with—still, he insists that "the meaning of the word is always the same," and that it *always signifies to dip*." Well, how does he prove this? Why, as many of his brethren have done before him. He proves that the word *sometimes* signifies to dip, and then assumes that it *always* does—that it *can have no other signification*. And what if some other person should undertake to prove that the word *never* signifies to dip? We believe he might do it in the same way, and do it as conclusively. Suppose he should take one of the examples quoted from Aristotle by Dr. Gale, and inserted in the work before us by Mr. Carson. "The Phenicians who inhabit Cadiz relate, that sailing beyond Hercules' pillars with the wind at East, in four days they came to a land uninhabited, whose coast was full of sea weeds, and is not (βαπτίζεσθαι) covered with water at ebb, but when the tide comes in, it is entirely overwhelmed." Here is a baptism, but no immersion. The coast was not plunged into the tide, but the tide flowed over the coast. Mr. C. speaks of this as *figurative* baptism; but what necessity of supposing it figurative, except what results from his narrow interpretation of the word βαπτίζω?

Take another example borrowed by our author from Dr. Gale. Homer, representing the death of one of his heroes, says, "He struck him across the neck with his heavy sword, and the sword became warm with blood." One ancient Greek critic remarks on this passage thus: "The sword is represented as *baptized εβαπτισθη* with blood." Another says, "In this phrase, Homer expresses himself with the greatest energy, signifying that the sword was so (βαπτισθεντος) baptized in blood that it was even heated by it." But how could a sword be plunged into the blood of a man, by merely cutting off his head? Doubtless, it was more or less stained with blood. By a strong figure, it might be said, to be bathed in blood. But in this case, the bathing must

* Still he admits, in another place, that "the derivative cannot go beyond its primitive."

have been effected by the blood flowing over the sword, and not by the sword being plunged into the blood. Here, then, is another instance of baptism which could not have been performed, either by a literal or a figurative immersion.

We might ask Mr. C. to explain, in consistency with his definition of βαπτίζω, the current language of several of the early Christian writers, in representing the martyrs as baptized, sometimes with their *tears*, and in other instances with their *blood*. He will not deny that such language was often used, nor can he pretend that what Athanasius and others called 'the baptism of tears and of blood' was performed by immersion.

But no cases can be more convincing than some of those occurring in the Scriptures. For instance, the children of Israel were certainly "baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea;" and they certainly went through "the sea on *dry ground*." Ex. xiv. 22. How then were they all immersed in the waves? This, our author insists again, was a figurative baptism. And so all passages, by many, are thought to be figurative, which do not coincide with their preconceived views.

Our Saviour, on a certain occasion, went in to dine with a Pharisee, and the Pharisee marvelled that he was not *baptized* (εβαπτισθη) before dinner. Luke xi. 38. But was it the custom of the Pharisees to *immerse* themselves before dinner? Let the other Evangelists answer. "The Pharisees, and all the Jews, except they *wash their hands* oft, eat not." "Why do thy disciples transgress the tradition of the elders; for they *wash not their hands* when they eat bread?"

Again, the Jews were in the habit of *baptizing*, not only their "cups and pots and brazen vessels," but their κλινων *couches*. Mark vii. 4. Is it likely that, along with their smaller utensils, they stately *immersed* their couches? Mr. C. admits that this would be "very inconvenient," and "very foolish;" and yet he insists that it was done, because the word βαπτίζω *always* signifies immerse. But this, it must be kept in mind, is the very question. Does this word always signify immerse? Does it signify immerse here?

The account given in the Scriptures of the baptism of the Holy Spirit, we have ever regarded as entirely convincing. Believers are said to be baptized with the Spirit. And this baptism is represented as performed by the *pouring out* of the Spirit upon them. For instance, the disciples on the day of Pentecost were baptized with the Spirit; and this baptism, we are expressly told, was in fulfilment of a prediction of the prophet Joel. "It shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, *ἐκχεω* I will *pour out* of my Spirit upon all flesh."—Cornelius and his family, too, were baptized with the Spirit; but in accomplishing this baptism the Spirit *ἐπέσε* fell upon them; or, as it is represented in another place, *ἐκχευται* was poured out. Compare Acts 10: 45 and 11: 15, 16. All this, to be sure, is figurative language. But why

was such a figure used? Not, surely, to mislead, but for our instruction and edification.

These representations of Scripture respecting the baptism of the Spirit teach us more than that immersion is not the only mode of baptism. They indicate satisfactorily, as it seems to us, that the more proper mode of administering this ordinance is, by pouring or sprinkling. "I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean." "So shall he sprinkle many nations."

After our utmost endeavors to divest ourselves of prejudice, and to look at the subject with candor, we feel constrained to say, that Mr. Carson's method of discussing the mode of baptism, is, to us, entirely unsatisfactory. Had he undertaken to prove simply that βαπτίζω is sometimes used to denote immersion, he would have accomplished his object. But this would not have been enough for his purpose. The verdict would then have been on the wrong side. He undertakes to show (as in duty bound to those with whom he is connected) that βαπτίζω always signifies to immerse—that "it never has any other meaning." And having given a number of examples, he assumes that he has accomplished his undertaking. And then, when cases occur, in which the word cannot signify immerse, 'Why these are figurative! They must be figurative, because I have before proved that the word, in its literal meaning, always signifies immerse.'!

We design not to go into an extended examination of the work before us. Indeed, we have said already more than we at first intended. The writer evidently has ingenuity and learning, and a sufficient degree of confidence in his own powers. He seems to be one of those ready, off-hand geniuses, who form decisions easily and with great positiveness, but who are often under the disagreeable necessity of reversing their decisions, and unsaying things which they had before said.* No one who reads his book will question the honesty or goodness of his intentions; and yet he sometimes treats those on whom he remarks with great and almost unpardonable severity.

It gives us great pleasure to add, that our author is strictly evangelical in sentiment, regarding the differences among brethren in respect to ordinances as a mere trifle, compared with those greater differences which separate Evangelical Christians from Unitarians and other Liberalists. He also takes high and strong ground in relation to the Sabbath. "The Sabbath," he says, "rests on pillars as firm as those of creation, being appointed before the entrance of sin, and grounded on reasons that are lasting as the world. And the particular day is ascertained in the New Testament, as the first day of the week, and the Lord's Day."

* Mr. Carson avows that he was once a Pedobaptist.

CORRECTIONS.—In the No. for August, on page 433, fifth line from the bottom, for "it is not in either case *sin*," &c. read "it is not *sin* rather than holiness, which is," &c.—On page 434, eighth line, for "when his *only* objects of choice," read "when the real objects of choice."

THE
SPIRIT OF THE PILGRIMS.

VOL. V.

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NO. 10.

COMMUNICATIONS.

DR. TYLER'S REPLY TO DR. TAYLOR.

[Continued from p. 523.]

THE DOCTRINE OF ORIGINAL SIN.

Dr. Taylor admits that I have correctly represented him to hold, that mankind come into the world with the same nature *in kind*, as that with which Adam was created, and which the child Jesus possessed; and that there is in man no natural, hereditary propensity to sin. Yet he says in his creed, "I believe that all mankind in consequence of the fall of Adam, are born destitute of holiness, and are *by nature* totally depraved,"—and that, "they may properly be said to be sinners *by nature*."

How these statements can be reconciled, he has not shown; and if I mistake not, he will find it difficult to show. Adam was created in the image of God. Are his posterity born into the world in the image of God? Adam was *by nature* holy—so was the child Jesus. Are all mankind *by nature* holy?—and also "sinners *by nature*," and "*by nature* totally depraved?"

What are we to understand by the language, when it is affirmed that mankind are sinners *by nature*? Dr. Taylor says, "It is a popular form of expression, used, not to ascribe sin to nature alone, exclusive of all circumstances, as if temptation were not as necessary to sin, as a nature to be tempted—but to denote simply that *such is the nature of man, that in all the appropriate circumstances of his being, he will uniformly sin.*"

But what are the appropriate circumstances of his being? Were not the circumstances in which Adam was placed, appropriate to his being? And why did not he sin as soon as he commenced his moral existence? And why did not the child Jesus sin? Was there any thing in his circumstances, so far as his human nature is concerned, inappropriate to the being of man? If he possessed, in his human nature, the same constitutional propensities that other children possess,* why did he not exhibit the same moral character?

Suppose it could be said with truth, that *such is the nature* of a part of the human race, that in all the appropriate circumstances of their being, they are uniformly holy—and *such is the nature* of another part of the human race, that in all the appropriate circumstances of their being, they uniformly sin. If this could be said with truth, it would be proper, according to Dr. Taylor's statement, to say, that part of the human race are *by nature* holy;—and part are *by nature* sinful. But could this be true, if the natures of all were alike? If all come into the world with the same propensities—if those who uniformly sin, possess no more natural bias or inclination to evil than those who are uniformly holy; most surely NATURE is in no sense the cause or reason of this distinction of character; and it ought to be attributed *exclusively* to something else.

I said in my remarks, "I have always supposed that when it is said, that in consequence of the fall of Adam all have become sinners, the language is intended to convey the sentiment, that there is a real connexion between the sin of Adam and that of his posterity:—and that when it is said, all are *by nature* sinners, the meaning is, that there is something in our nature, which is truly the cause or reason why all men are sinners:—consequently that human nature is not what it would have been if sin had not existed, but has undergone some change in consequence of the original apostasy. When we say, it is the nature of the lion to eat flesh, and the nature of the ox to eat grass, we mean that their natures are not alike. And when we say, that one moral being is *by nature* sinful and that another is *by nature* holy, we must mean, if we mean any thing, that their natures are not alike. If they are alike, then *nature* is, in *no sense*, the cause, or reason that one

* Dr. Taylor says, "How the Saviour was in all points tempted like as we are, if he had not, and we have a constitutional PROPENSITY to sin, it may be difficult for Dr. Tyler to show." If Dr. Taylor had stated what he conceives to be the precise difficulty in this case, I should know better how to frame an answer. At present I am not able to see any difficulty at all in the case. Does the fact, that different individuals are made the objects of similar temptations, prove that they must possess the same nature? Christ was tempted—*yet without sin*. If he was by nature as much inclined to evil as we are, why did he not, like us, yield to temptation?

is holy and the other sinful. To say that it is, would be to ascribe two directly opposite effects to the same cause. Now the question is, is the nature of man different from what it would have been, if sin had never entered the world? Is there any thing in human nature which is *hereditary*, and the consequence of the original apostasy? Or is every thing pertaining to the nature of man, the immediate production of creative power? And do mankind come into the world now with the same nature as that with which Adam was created, and which the child Jesus possessed? If so, then mankind are not *by nature* sinners. Their *nature* is *in no sense* the cause or reason of their sinning; for Adam was not *by nature* a sinner, nor was the child Jesus. They were by nature holy."

Now what reply does Dr. Taylor make to this reasoning? None at all. He does not even deign to notice it. He remarks, indeed, that I have said nothing "in the way of argument" on the subject.

But let us look again at the position of Dr. Taylor:—"Such is the nature of man, that in all the appropriate circumstances of his being, he will uniformly sin." But what is the cause or reason that he will uniformly sin? What constitutes the certainty that this will be the fact? Is it the *nature* which he possesses, or these *appropriate circumstances* in which he is placed? Not his *nature* surely, according to the theory of Dr. Taylor:—for what is there in his nature which would lead us to conclude that he would sin rather than be holy? Do you say, he is a moral agent, and therefore can sin? I answer—he is a moral agent, and therefore can be holy; and if he has no more bias or propensity to sin than to holiness, the fact that he uniformly sins, is to be attributed in *no degree whatever* to the nature which he possesses, but *entirely* to the circumstances in which he is placed. If all mankind come into the world with the same nature as that with which Adam was created, and which the child Jesus possessed; then the only reason that they do not exhibit the same character, must be that they are placed in different circumstances. It cannot be owing *at all* to the nature which they possess. Consequently, it is not true that they are *by nature* sinners. Dr. Taylor's theory, therefore, is at war with his creed.

Again—If mankind come into the world with no propensity to evil, but with the same nature as that with which Adam was created, what connexion is there between the sin of Adam and that of his posterity? Suppose that Adam had never sinned. Would not his posterity, in that case, have come into

the world with the same nature as that with which he was created?—the same, of course, which Dr. Taylor supposes them now to possess? What influence then, has the fall exerted upon the posterity of Adam? And why is it not just as proper to say that all mankind have become sinners, in consequence of the creation of the world, as it is to say that they have become sinners in consequence of Adam's fall?

If Dr. Taylor does see, as he says he does, a connexion between the sin of Adam and that of his posterity, why has he not told us what that connexion is, and explained it so that his readers can see also? This, I apprehend, he will find to be a difficult task. If I mistake not, he will find it impossible to show, according to his theory, that the sin of Adam's posterity is *in consequence* of his sin, in any other sense than that he sinned first, and they sinned afterwards.

I would now ask, (not invidiously, but as a question of fact,) in what respect does the theory of Dr. Taylor, in relation to the native character of man, differ from that advanced by Pelagius, 1400 years ago.* And in what respect does it differ from that advanced by Dr. Ware in his controversy with Dr. Woods? Dr. Ware says, "Man is by nature—innocent and pure, free from all moral corruption, as well as destitute of all positive holiness."—"He is by nature no more *inclined* or *disposed* to vice than to virtue, and is equally capable, in the ordinary use of his faculties and with the common assistance afforded him, of either. He derives from his ancestors a frail and mortal nature; is made with appetites which fit him for the condition of being in which God has placed him; but, in order for them to answer all the purposes intended, they are so strong as to be very liable to abuse by excess. He has passions implanted in him which are of great importance in the conduct of life, but which are equally capable of impelling him into a wrong or right course. He has natural affections, all of them originally good, but liable, by a wrong direction, to be the occasion of error or sin." If the theory of Dr. Taylor differs in any respect from that which is here advanced, will he be so good as to tell us in what respect?

* The following are some of the expressions of Pelagius and Cælestius, characteristic of their doctrine, and in opposition to that of Augustine and the Catholic fathers in general. "Peccatum Adæ solum ipsum læsit."—*The sin of Adam hurt nobody but himself.*—"Omne bonum ac malum, quo vel laudabiles vel vituperabiles sumus, non nobiscum oritur, sed agitur a nobis; capaces utriusque rei, ut sine virtute, ita et sine vitio procreamur; atque ante actionem propriæ voluntatis, id solum in homine est, quod Deus condidit."—*The good or evil, by which we deserve either praise or blame, ARE NOT BORN WITH US, BUT ARE DONE BY US; being made capable either of virtue or of vice, we are born equally without the one as without the other: and before the action of man's own will, that alone belongs to him, which God himself has made.*—"Peccatum non natura: delictum, sed voluntatis."—*Sin is not the fault of nature, but of the will.*

The following declaration, to those who are acquainted with the writings of Pres. Edwards, will be not a little surprising. "This author so unequivocally denies what Dr. Tyler asserts on this topic, and affirms what I have affirmed, that I need only ask, was Pres. Edwards orthodox?" Where has Pres. Edwards affirmed that mankind come into the world with the same nature as that with which Adam was created, and which the child Jesus possessed? And where has he affirmed that mankind do not possess a native, hereditary propensity to sin? So far from having affirmed any thing like this, he has affirmed the contrary again and again. I will quote only a few passages out of many that might be cited.

"The natural state of the mind of man is attended with a propensity of nature, which is prevalent and effectual to such an issue; and therefore their nature is corrupt and depraved with a moral depravity that amounts to and implies their utter undoing." *Treatise on Original Sin*, p. 9.

"Thus a propensity attending the present nature or natural state of mankind, eternally to ruin themselves by sin, may certainly be inferred from apparent and acknowledged fact." *Id.* p. 21.

"It is manifest that this tendency which has been proved, don't consist in any particular external circumstances, that some or many are in, peculiarly tempting and influencing their minds; but is inherent, and is seated in that nature which is common to all mankind, which they carry with them wherever they go, and still remains the same, however circumstances may differ." *Id.* p. 22.

"That propensity which has been proved to be in the nature of all mankind, must be a very evil, depraved and pernicious propensity; making it manifest that the soul of man, as it is by nature, is in a corrupt, fallen, ruined state." *Id.* p. 27.

"A propensity to that sin which brings God's eternal wrath and curse (which has been proved to belong to the nature of man) is not evil, only as it is calamitous and sorrowful, ending in great natural evil; but it is odious too, and detestable, as by the supposition, it tends to that moral evil, by which the subject becomes odious in the sight of God, and liable, as such, to be condemned, and utterly rejected and cursed by him." *Id.* p. 28.

"If there be not a strong propensity in man's nature to sin—what should hinder," &c. *Id.* p. 34.

In commenting on Job xv. 14, 15, 16, Edwards says—

"In this place we are not only told how wicked man's heart is, but also how men come by such wickedness, *even by being*

of the race of mankind by ordinary generation."—"Tis most plain, that man's being born of a woman is given as a reason of his not being clean."—"And without doubt David has respect to this same way of derivation of wickedness of heart, when he says, Psalm LI. 5—*Behold I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me.*" *Id.* pp. 194, 195.

In view of these quotations the reader can judge whether Pres. Edwards unequivocally affirms what Dr. Taylor has affirmed on this topic. Does Pres. Edwards deny that there is in man a native propensity to sin, transmitted from parent to child *by ordinary generation*? Does he affirm that mankind come into the world with the same nature *in kind* as that with which Adam was created? Did he maintain that the nature of Adam at his first creation, was "corrupt and depraved with a moral depravity"—that there was in his nature "a very evil, depraved, and pernicious propensity, making it manifest that (his) soul as it (was) by nature, (was) in a corrupt, fallen, and ruined state?" So far from this, every one who has read his chapter on original righteousness, knows, that he maintained that Adam was created perfectly holy.

Dr. Taylor thinks that I have fallen into the mistake "of entirely overlooking the possibility that propensities for natural good, like those which led our first parents to sin, may, as well as a *propensity to sin itself*, prove the occasion of certain sin to all their posterity." The reader is desired to compare this with the following language of the great champion of Arminianism, Dr. Taylor of Norwich.

"Adam's nature, it is allowed, was very far from being sinful; yet he sinned. And therefore the common doctrine of original sin, is no more necessary to account for the sin that hath been in the world, than it is to account for Adam's sin."—"When it is inquired, how it comes to pass that our appetites and passions are now so irregular and strong, as that not one person has resisted them, so as to keep himself pure and innocent;—if this be the case, if such as make the inquiry will tell the world how it came to pass, that Adam's appetites and passions were so irregular and strong, that he did not resist them, so as to keep himself pure and innocent, when, upon their principles, he was far more able to have resisted them; I also will tell them how it comes to pass, that his posterity don't resist them. Sin doth not alter its nature by being general; and therefore, how far so ever it spreads, it must come upon all just as it came upon Adam." See *Edwards on Original Sin*, pp. 100, 101.

To this Edwards replies;—and his reply is certainly worthy of very serious consideration.

“These things are delivered with much assurance. But is there any reason in such a way of talking? One thing implied in it, and the main thing, if any thing at all to the purpose, is, that because an effect's being general don't alter the nature of the effect, therefore nothing more can be argued concerning the cause, from its happening constantly and in the most steady manner, than from its happening but once. But how contrary is this to reason!”——“'Tis true, as was observed before, there is no effect without some cause, occasion, ground, or reason of that effect, and some cause answerable to the effect. But certainly it will not follow from thence that a *transient* effect requires a permanent cause, or a fixed influence or propensity. An effect's happening once, though the effect may be great, yea, though it may come to pass on the same occasion in many subjects at the same time, will not prove any fixed propensity, or permanent influence.”——“We see that it is in fact agreeable to the reason of all mankind, to argue fixed principles, tempers, and prevailing inclinations, from repeated and continued actions, though the actions are voluntary, and performed of choice; and thus to judge of the tempers and inclinations of persons, ages, sexes, tribes, and nations.”——“From these things it is plain, that what is alledged concerning the first sin of Adam, and of the angels, without a previous fixed disposition to sin, can't in the least injure or weaken the arguments which have been brought to prove a fixed propensity to sin in mankind in their present state. The thing which the permanence of the cause has been argued from, is the permanence of the effect. And that the permanent cause consists in an internal fixed propensity, and not any particular external circumstances, has been argued from the effects being the same through a vast variety and change of circumstances.”
Id. pp. 101—104.

THE DOCTRINE OF REGENERATION.

“In respect to the doctrine of regeneration,” says Dr. Taylor, “Dr. Tyler objects to my statement, that the grace of God is not *irresistible* in the primary, proper import of the word, and that it may be resisted by man as a free moral agent.” This, however, is not the statement to which I objected. The positions to which I objected were, that “IN ALL CASES it [the grace of God] may be resisted by man as a free moral agent, and that when it becomes effectual to conversion it is *unresist-*

ed." I said expressly, "I am not disposed to vindicate the use of the term *irresistible*, as applied to this subject." All, therefore, which he has said to show the impropriety of using this language, and his long quotation from Dr. Dwight, are altogether irrelevant. But while I agree with Dr. Dwight in discarding the use of the terms *irresistible grace*, I agree with him also, and with Calvinists generally, in maintaining the sentiment which this language has been employed to inculcate, by those divines who have been in the habit of using it. By the doctrine of *irresistible grace* I have understood them to mean, not what Dr. Taylor supposes, "that the sinner under the renewing influence of the Spirit, voluntarily, and with fixed purpose resists that influence till it becomes a *natural impossibility* for him to resist it any longer;"—but that the sinner resists, till, by the influence of the Spirit, his obstinacy is overcome, and he voluntarily submits; and that the resistance of the sinner is *never* so great, as to render it *impossible* for God to bring him thus voluntarily to submit.

This I understand Dr. Taylor to deny; for it is a part of his system, that the reason why God does not secure universal holiness in his moral kingdom, is, that it is not "possible to him in the nature of things." "Free moral agents," he says, "can do wrong under all possible preventing influence. Using their powers as they may use them, they will sin; and no one can show that some such agents will not use their powers as they may use them." He says also, "What finite being, then, we ask, can know that a universe of free agents, who possess, of course, the power of sinning, could have been held back from the exercise of that power, in every possible conjunction of circumstances, even by *all the influences to obedience which God can exert upon them, without destroying their freedom?*" In view of these statements, the reader can be at no loss as to the meaning of Dr. Taylor's position, that "*in all cases, it [the grace of God] may be resisted by man as a free moral agent.*" His meaning evidently is, that *it may be so resisted*, as to render it *impossible* for God, by any influence which he can exert upon the sinner, to bring him to repentance. Consequently, it is in the power of every sinner, if he should be so inclined, to render it *impossible* for God to convert him. Who, then, can tell that another sinner ever will be converted? Sinners are free moral agents; and "free moral agents can do wrong under all possible preventing influence. Using their powers as they may use them, they will" persist in "sin." And who can show that they "will not use their powers as they may use them?" "When, in view of all

the facts and evidence in the case, it remains true," that they may render it *impossible* for God to convert them; "what evidence or proof can exist," that they will not render it thus impossible?

Again—Dr. Taylor says, "When it [the grace of God] becomes effectual to conversion, it is *unresisted*." If by this he means, that the grace of God in renewing the heart, overcomes the obstinacy of the sinner, and brings him voluntarily to submit; this is what has always been maintained by those who hold the doctrine of *irresistible grace*. But this is utterly inconsistent with what he has elsewhere advanced. Throughout his whole treatise on the means of regeneration, he maintains, that *before* the sinner's heart is changed, the selfish principle is suspended, and he ceases to sin. Consequently, he does maintain that "the sinner ceases to resist, before the grace of God converts him." But, as I said before, "What necessity is there for the grace of God to convert him, after he has ceased to resist?" "I might reply," says Dr. Taylor, "that ceasing to resist, is not of course *holy love*, and that therefore grace might still be necessary to secure this affection." But if ceasing to resist does not imply the exercise of *holy love*, what is the character of the man after he has ceased to resist, and before he has become cordially reconciled to God? He is not a rebel, for he has ceased to rebel. He is not a saint, for he has not been born again. But our Lord has decided this point. *He that is not with me, is against me*. No man in the exercise of his rational powers, sustains a *neutral* character. Every man is either the friend or the enemy of God. He is either a rebel, or a loyal subject of the King of kings. To cease to rebel, therefore, is cordially to submit; and cordial submission, implies the exercise of holy love.

But Dr. Taylor claims, that what he has maintained in regard to the suspension of the selfish principle *before* a change of heart, is, that it is "before in the order of nature, not of time." Be this however as it may; it is certain that he has maintained, and has written a long treatise to prove, that sinners do use the means of regeneration, and that they must use them, or they never can be regenerated. He has also maintained that they never do use these means, till the selfish principle is suspended. If then, there is *no time* between the suspension of the selfish principle, and a change of heart, there is *no time* in which sinners use the means of regeneration:—and if there is *no time* in which they use them, then, it is certain, that they *never* use them; and Dr. Taylor's elaborate treatise on this subject, is "*an utter failure*." It is an attempt to prove a thing to be, and not to be, at the same time.

That Dr. Taylor has disavowed his belief in the doctrine of progressive regeneration, I am happy to acknowledge. But how he could consistently do this, without at the same time retracting much which he has written, many have found it impossible to see. That this doctrine does follow irresistibly from principles which he has advanced, and is involved in many of his statements, I think I have fully demonstrated; and before Dr. Taylor shall charge me again with perverting his language, he is requested to answer the reasoning in my *Vindication*; particularly from the 36th to the 50th page. Let him expound the passages which I have quoted from his writings, and show if he is able to do it, that they will bear any other construction than that which I have put upon them, except "in defiance of all usage." Positive assertions, and heavy charges of misrepresentation, will not satisfy the Christian public. He must meet the question fairly, and show by candid and conclusive reasoning, that his language has been misinterpreted. If he has taught, as I maintain that he has, the doctrine of progressive regeneration, and yet does not believe the doctrine; it is surely not a subject of loud complaint against his readers, that they see his inconsistency.

In my *Remarks*, I quoted two passages from the treatise on the means of regeneration in the *Christian Spectator*, and stated what appears to me to be their obvious import. In reference to them, Dr. Taylor says, "These topics have been discussed before by Dr. Tyler and myself. I have claimed that he puts this construction on my language in defiance of all usage, and of abundant definitions and explanations. If I am right in this, then Dr. Tyler perverts my language. If I am not, still Dr. Tyler has been assured, that I reject the meaning which he imputes to me. Who then would expect Dr. Tyler to quote the language again, and still persist in giving it that meaning?" Now, I ask, when and where has Dr. Taylor ever explained the passages in question, and attempted to show that they will admit of a different construction from that which I have put upon them? I ask, moreover, why he did not now explain them, instead of complaining of me for bringing them again before the public? The reader will bear in mind, that I have not undertaken to give an abstract merely, of what I conceived to be the import of Dr. Taylor's statements; but I have quoted his language verbatim, that every reader might be able to judge for himself whether I have given a fair representation of his views. And why is it, that he should so perpetually complain of being misunderstood, and misrepresented, and still refuse to explain his language, and to show, that by any legiti-

mate rules of interpretation, it will admit of a different meaning from that which has been given to it? I must be permitted to quote one of the passages above referred to, again.

"This self-love, or desire of happiness is the primary cause or reason of all acts of preference or choice which fix supremely on any object. In every moral being, who forms a moral character, there must be a first moral act of preference or choice. This must respect some one object, God or Mammon, as the chief good, or as an object of supreme affection. Now, whence comes such a choice or preference? Not from a previous choice or preference of the same object, for we speak of the *first* choice of the object. The answer which human consciousness gives, is, that the being constituted with a capacity for happiness, desires to be happy; and knowing that he is capable of deriving happiness from different objects, *considers from which the greatest happiness may be derived*, and AS IN THIS RESPECT HE JUDGES or estimates their relative value, SO HE CHOOSES or prefers the one or the other as his chief good. While this must be the process by which a moral being forms his first moral preference, substantially *the same process is indispensable to a change of this preference.*" *Christ. Spect.* for 1829, p. 21.

"According to this representation," I said, "every moral being chooses what he judges will be most for his happiness. The reason, therefore, that the sinner prefers the world to God, is, that he has mistaken the true way of securing his highest happiness. What then is necessary to effect his conversion? Nothing but light to correct his mistake. So soon as he shall be *convinced* that more happiness is to be derived from God than from the world, self-love will at once prompt him to change the object of his preference. Where, then, is the necessity of the influences of the Holy Spirit to renew the heart?"

Now what has Dr. Taylor said to show that this is not a fair construction of his language, and a legitimate conclusion from it? He has simply given us his assertion, that the position which he has taken, is "nothing more nor less than that *the will is as the greatest apparent good.*" But if he supposes that this great principle of Edwards, is fairly represented in his statement above quoted, then, he entirely misapprehends the import of Edwards's language, as I have shown in the Appendix to my *Strictures*. Where has Edwards ever laid down the position that every moral being, "knowing that he is capable of deriving happiness from different objects, considers from which the greatest happiness may be derived, and AS IN THIS RESPECT HE JUDGES, or estimates their relative value, SO HE

CHOOSES OR PREFERS the one or the other as his chief Good? So far from having laid down any such principle, his whole treatise on the nature of virtue, is in direct opposition to the sentiment which is here advanced.

THE DOCTRINE OF ELECTION.

Dr. Taylor says in his creed,

"I believe that all who are renewed by the Holy Spirit, are elected or chosen of God from eternity, that they should be holy, not according to foreseen faith or good works, but according to the good pleasure of his will."

This I admitted in my Remarks, to be a full and satisfactory statement of the doctrine of election. But I attempted to show that he has adopted principles utterly inconsistent with this article of his creed. "This charge," says Dr. Taylor, "is not based on any thing which I have said, but *solely* on what a Reviewer, for whose opinions I am not responsible, has said in the Christian Spectator." If the reader will just turn to my Remarks, he will find that my main argument on this topic, is *based*, not "*solely* on what a Reviewer has said," but primarily on Dr. Taylor's own statements in his letter to Dr. Hawes. It is true, I quoted some passages from the Spectator, not pretending that they were written by Dr. Taylor, but supposing that they did express his views;—for I have always understood that the conductors of periodical journals consider themselves "*responsible*" for the sentiments contained in their Reviews. That these quotations do express the views of Dr. Taylor, he does not deny, but virtually admits; for he attempts to vindicate them. It is not, however, at all necessary to my purpose, that I should refer to any statements, but those of Dr. Taylor himself.

I said, "If it be true, that God, *all things considered*, prefers holiness to sin in all instances in which the latter takes place," then it must be his choice, *all things considered*, that all men should become holy and be saved; and his infinite benevolence will prompt him to do all in his power to bring all men to repentance. What, then, becomes of the doctrine of election? *Who maketh thee to differ?* Not God, surely; for if he prefers, *all things considered*, holiness to sin, in *every instance*, he will, of course, do all in his power to make every individual holy. It cannot be true, that he *hath mercy on whom he will have mercy*; for he would have mercy on all if he could." To this Dr. Taylor replies, "I readily admit, and this, on the authority of Apostles, that God 'would,' or chooses

that all men should become holy rather than continue in sin and die. But does this necessarily imply, that God purposes that all men *shall* become holy in fact; or that he will do all in his power to *bring* all men to repentance? Most certainly, if he chooses, *all things considered*, that all men should repent, he will do all in his power to bring all to repentance. If he prefers, *all things considered*, holiness to sin in every instance, he would secure the existence of holiness in every instance, if it were in his power. Consequently, in *every instance* in which sin exists, it is beyond the power of God to secure holiness in its stead. Take a particular case—the sin of Adam, for instance, in eating the forbidden fruit. Why did not God prevent this sin, and secure holiness in its stead? It must have been because he could not do it;—or because he did not choose to do it. If he did not choose to do it, then he did not prefer, *all things considered*, holiness to sin in this instance; for if this had been his preference, he would have prevented the sin, and secured the holiness. To say that God chooses not to secure that which he on the whole prefers, and which he is able to secure, is a manifest contradiction. According to Dr. Taylor's theory, therefore, the only reason that holiness does not exist in the room of sin, in every instance in which sin now exists, is, that God is unable to prevent the sin, and secure the holiness. Consequently, the only reason that any individual sinner is not converted, is, that God is unable to convert him. He desires, *all things considered*, that every individual should become holy and be saved; and most certainly, if it were in his power, he would bring to pass that which he, on the whole, desires. But, according to this view of the subject, how is it possible there should be any such thing as election? If God does choose, *all things considered*, that *all* men should become holy and be saved; how is it possible that he should choose, *all things considered*, that only a *part* should become holy and be saved? Will Dr. Taylor be so good as to inform us?

Besides—If God does, *all things considered*, prefer holiness to sin in *every instance*; and if the reason that he does not secure the existence of holiness in every instance, is, that he has not power to do it:—then, God doth not have mercy on whom *he will*, but on whom *he can*.

According to this scheme, why do a part become holy, and not all? Not because God does not prefer, *all things considered*, that all should become holy; but because he cannot influence all to become holy. And why can he not influence all to become holy? Because they will not permit him to do it.

Some of them resist his grace, and will not be converted; while others submit and become the children of God. Who, then, makes the difference? Not God, surely, for he desires the salvation of those that perish, as much as the salvation of those that are saved. He prefers, *all things considered*, that every individual should become holy and be saved; and, were it "*possible to him in the nature of things*," he would secure the object of his preference. The reason, therefore, that one is converted and another is not, is, that one ceases to resist divine grace, and suffers God to convert him, while the other resists divine grace, and thus renders it impossible for God to convert him. What, then, I ask, becomes of the doctrine of election? Suppose here are two individuals—one is a believer, the other is an unbeliever—to what are we to attribute this distinction of character? Do you say, God has done more for one than for the other—that he has exerted a regenerating influence upon one and brought him to repentance, when he might also have converted the other had he chosen? But why has he not exerted the same influence upon the other, and brought him to repentance? Do you say, that "such interposition might be inconsistent with other interests of his universal kingdom?" Be it so. Then, God does not prefer, *all things considered*, holiness to sin, in every instance; for in the case supposed, he does prefer, in view of the interests of his universal kingdom, to leave a sinner in impenitence whom he might bring to repentance. Consequently, he does prefer, *all things considered*, in this instance, sin to holiness. Otherwise he would have prevented the sin, and secured the holiness, as he might have done.

If it should be said, that although God does prefer, all things considered, that the sinner, in the case supposed, should repent himself; yet he does not prefer to exert a regenerating influence, as he might do, to bring him to repentance; then, I say again, he does not prefer, *all things considered*, holiness to sin in the given instance; for there is *one thing considered*, which leads him to prefer sin to holiness in this instance, viz.—rather than exert a regenerating influence, as he might do, he prefers that the sinner should remain impenitent; which is the same as to say, that, *all things considered*, he prefers that he should remain a sinner, instead of becoming holy. We see, therefore, that it is utterly impossible to adopt the theory of Dr. Taylor, and at the same time, consistently to maintain the doctrine of election.

"Because," says Dr. Taylor, "a father prefers that a child should obey his command to attend school, rather than disobey

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it, does it follow that he chooses in the given instance, to secure his attendance, as he might, by changing a wise plan of government?" I answer—If he does not secure his attendance, *as he might*, it is certain that he does not prefer, *all things considered*, that he should attend; for there is *one consideration* which leads him to prefer that he should not attend, viz.—rather than secure his attendance *as he might* by changing a wise plan of government, he prefers that he should not attend. "Suppose," says Dr. Taylor, "the father can wisely do more to secure the repentance of one child, than he can wisely do to secure the repentance of another; suppose that a higher influence in one case would be safe, and even salutary in respect to the conduct of his other children, while in the other case it would in this respect prove fatal; suppose him, for these reasons, to use the higher influence, with a design to secure the obedience of one child, and to use it with success;—is not this election?—is not this making one to differ from another?—is not this having mercy on whom he will have mercy, and doing more for one than for another, and with good reason too?" I answer yes. But this supposition is altogether inconsistent with the theory of Dr. Taylor. For if it be admitted, that the parent might, by any degree of influence which he could exert, bring any one of his other children to repentance, who are left in impenitence, then he does not prefer, *all things considered*, the penitence to the impenitence of the child supposed. If he did, he would exert the influence necessary to bring him to repentance. And if there is a sinner on earth, whom God is able to convert, and whom he has not converted; then it is not true, that God prefers, *all things considered*, holiness to sin in every instance, for in the case supposed, there is *one consideration* which leads him to prefer sin to holiness, viz.—rather than do what he can to convert the individual in the case supposed, he prefers that he should remain an impenitent sinner.

"Who ever objected," says Dr. Taylor, "to the sentiment, as Arminian, that God saves by the influence of his Spirit, as many as he can consistently with his glory and the highest good of the universe?" No one, surely. But does not Dr. Taylor maintain that God would be more glorified, and the universe be more happy, if all should become holy and be saved, than will be the case according to the present system? Would it then be inconsistent with the wisdom of God to save more than will be saved, if he were able to do it? What! inconsistent with the wisdom of God, to bring a greater amount of glory to himself, and of good to the universe!! According to the theory of Dr. Taylor, the reason that God does not se-

cure a greater amount of holiness in his kingdom, is not because the existence of a greater amount of holiness would be inconsistent with his glory and the highest good of the universe ; but because it is not possible for him to secure it.

"Is a purpose of God," says Dr. Taylor, "to save as many of the human race as he can by wise methods, the same thing as a purpose to save as many as he can by methods not wise?" Permit me, in reply, to ask, is it not a part of Dr. Taylor's theory, that it would be *wise* in God to make all men holy if he could? Let the reader bear in mind his inquiry on a former occasion,—"*Would not a benevolent God, had it been possible to him in the nature of things, have secured universal holiness in his moral kingdom?*" What then does Dr. Taylor mean, when he speaks of a purpose of God, "to save as many as he can by methods not wise?" Does he suppose that God might save more than he actually does save, by adopting methods not wise? According to his theory, the reason that God does not convert and save all men, is not that it would be *unwise* for him to do it, if he could, but that it is not "*possible to him in the nature of things.*" He saves all whom he can induce to submit to his authority. It was his purpose to bring as great an amount of influence to bear upon the minds of men, as is possible without destroying their free-agency. All whom he foresaw would submit under this influence, he determined to save. Those who he foresaw would not submit, he reprobated. This appears to me to be the view which Dr. Taylor's theory gives of the doctrine of election; and I see not that it differs materially from the Arminian view of this subject. The Arminians admit, that God has adopted the best system of means, which infinite wisdom could devise to bring sinners to repentance, and that he has determined to save all with whom these means shall prove successful. They admit also, that God foresaw who, under these means, would comply with the terms of pardon, and who would not: and that he fixed upon this system of means, with these results full in his view. If this is all that is meant by the doctrine of election, then every Arminian holds this doctrine.

But says Dr. Taylor, "Surely, it is not Arminianism to maintain, that God foresaw what influences would secure the conversion of the elect, when he determined to use them." But it is Arminianism to maintain, that the reason why God elected one individual in preference to another, is the foresight of the faith and obedience of that individual. And what other reason can Dr. Taylor assign consistently with his theory? His theory is, that God foresaw that under a certain system of

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means and influences, some would repent and believe the gospel, and others would persist in sin:—and that he fixed upon this system, not because it would result in the salvation of as many as he desired; but because it would result in the salvation of more than any other system which he could devise:—and he adopted it for the purpose of effecting the conversion and salvation of as many as possible; and determined to save all, who, he foresaw, under this system of means and influences, would voluntarily submit to his authority. Now, I ask, why are some elected in distinction from others? What is the ground of preference? Not the sovereign good pleasure of God; but the foresight of repentance and faith. They were chosen as vessels of mercy, not because God would not as readily have converted others if he could; but because he foresaw that they would submit, and thus render it possible for God to convert and save them, while others, by resisting his grace, would render it impossible for him to convert them.

It is a part of Dr. Taylor's theory, that "in all cases, it [the grace of God] may be resisted by man as a free moral agent," and that it never becomes effectual to salvation, till it is "*unresisted*." "Free moral agents can do wrong under all possible preventing influence. Using their powers as they may use them, they will sin," in despite of all the influence which God can bring to bear on their minds. If this be so, I ask, what election can there be, except what is founded on foreseen repentance and faith? To suppose God to purpose that he will *bring to repentance* certain individuals, is to suppose him to purpose what, according to Dr. Taylor's theory, "may involve a palpable self-contradiction." How does he know that those individuals will not resist his grace, and thus render their conversion impossible in the nature of things? Most certainly, before he can purpose their salvation, he must *foresee* that they will cease to resist his grace. His purpose to save them, therefore, must be grounded on the *foresight* of their submission.

I shall now leave the question to the decision of the candid reader, whether my attempt to convict Dr. Taylor's "creed and theories of inconsistency" is "*an utter failure*."

I cannot close this communication without expressing my regret, that Dr. Taylor should have allowed himself to indulge in such complaints of personal injury, and reiterated charges of misquotation, misrepresentation, etc. etc. To all these allegations, I have only to reply, that I am utterly unconscious of having given any just occasion for them. It has been my aim,

* I might also ask, how it is possible even for God to foresee who will repent and believe?

in all which I have written in this controversy, to treat Dr. Taylor with the respect which is due to his character and station; and with the kindness and affection which are due to a Christian brother. In pointing out what I have deemed his errors, and tracing them to their legitimate consequences, I have endeavored to be candid, and to exhibit the faithfulness of a friend. In no instance, have I misquoted his language, or intentionally misrepresented his meaning; nor have I imputed to him sentiments which he has disavowed, however irresistibly they may have appeared to flow from his principles. I had hoped, therefore, that my remarks would have been kindly received by him, however inconclusive he might think my reasonings. But in this, I am sorry to say, I am disappointed.

When a man writes for the public, and calls in question prevalent opinions, he ought not to expect that his views will be received without examination; nor ought he to wonder, if they become the subject of public discussion. He ought, surely, to concede to others the right which he claims for himself, and not complain if his own opinions are subjected to the same scrutiny to which he subjects the opinions of others. Have he and his associates the right to proclaim from the pulpit their peculiar views all over the land—to publish them in pamphlets, in periodicals and in newspapers;—and if any one of the multitudes who feel dissatisfied, ventures to call in question the correctness of these views, and to prove by sober argument that they are erroneous and of dangerous tendency; is he at once to be branded as a disturber of the public peace—as “assuming the somewhat peculiar character of an alarmist”—as “destroying confidence in a large number of pious and useful ministers, and filling the church with jealousy and alarm, diverting her attention from revivals of religion to watch against anticipated heresies of men confessedly sound in the faith—hazarding the division of her ministry and members without cause, and threatening to destroy the unity and power of her benevolent associations for the redemption of the world?” “Most assuredly,” those who are thus sensitive on the subject of controversy, ought to let contention alone before it is meddled with.

On whom, I ask, does the responsibility rest of having disturbed the peace of the New England churches?—On those who have impugned the faith of the Pilgrims, or those who have attempted to defend it? Does not Dr. Taylor know that previous to the publication of his peculiar views, it was a time of great peace and quietness in the churches? And does he not know that the publication of these views, has given great and extensive dissatisfaction? Now if it is a fact, as he and

his adherents profess, that there is nothing very important in these peculiarities—nothing which at all affects the great fundamental doctrines of the gospel; why are such strenuous efforts made to disseminate them through the land, with the certain prospect of causing divisions? Dr. Taylor knows that I do not regard these peculiarities as unimportant. He knows that I consider them as leading to dangerous errors. This opinion I have felt it my duty frankly to express, and candidly state the reasons on which this opinion is founded. And is this to be construed as an attempt to injure Dr. Taylor, or disturb the peace of the church? I cannot entertain a doubt, that when Dr. Taylor shall have calmly reviewed what he has written, he will be sensible of the injustice of his charges, and that he will contemplate them with unfeigned regret. He cannot, surely, believe that I have engaged in this discussion from any want of friendship to him, or from any desire to foment strife among brethren, or to produce discord in the churches. He has been fully apprized that nothing but an imperious sense of duty could have induced me to take up my pen. It has been extremely painful to me, to appear before the public, as the antagonist of one, with whom I have long been in habits of intimacy, and whom I have been happy to number among my personal friends. My sole object has been to defend the truth of God. And cannot brethren discuss points about which they differ, without alienation of feeling? Must religious controversy necessarily become an angry personal crimination and recrimination? To engage in such a controversy with Dr. Taylor, or any other Christian brother, I can never consent. Permit me, therefore, to express the hope, that should this discussion be continued, nothing may be said on either side indicative of undue excitement of feeling, or inconsistent with the spirit of the gospel. May the Lord give to both writers and readers the meekness of wisdom, and guide them by his Spirit into all truth.

B. TYLER.

DR. PORTER'S LETTERS ON REVIVALS OF RELIGION.

NO. IV.

To the Committee of the Revival Association in the Theological Seminary, Andover.

GENTLEMEN,

The exercises of hopeful converts, is the next topic on which you will expect me to remark, in speaking of those revivals, concerning which I have undertaken, at your request, to give some account. I say *hopeful* converts, because this modifying word was generally used by ministers of that day, and because, after a lapse of thirty years, it seems to me a safer way of expressing the thing intended, than any unqualified phraseology. On this point I shall have occasion to touch in another place.

The first thing which I shall notice in regard to those who became hopeful converts in these revivals, is, that *generally they could not fix on the exact time of their own conversion*; and that in the few cases which were exceptions to this remark, the individuals concerned did not regard the change in themselves, *at the time*, as being conversion, but gradually came to the conclusion that it was so, by subsequent reflection. Of this description I recollect but three cases mentioned in all the narratives of these revivals. One of these, in a letter written three months afterwards, mentions the *day* in which he then hoped that he experienced the new birth. Of another it is said, that, "On returning from a field, to which he had retired for secret prayer, all who saw him perceived in him a great alteration. He went out borne down with distress, and returned full of joy. He now thinks [the account was written four years afterwards] that if ever he experienced a change of heart, it was at that time, though he *then* had not the most distant idea of any such thing." Another who entertained a hope of having experienced a saving change, in writing to a friend, specifies the *evening* in which this change was supposed to have taken place; but adds, "at this time, I thought of no such thing."

Besides these cases, doubtless there were others, perhaps many others, who could fix, with more or less satisfaction, on the particular time of their supposed conversion. But with the subjects of this work generally, it was otherwise; nor were they encouraged by ministers, to regard certainty on this point as

belonging to the evidences of piety. The most judicious ministers viewed this matter much as Baxter did, who, in the midst of his eminent attainments in grace, and through a long life of devoted piety, never professed to know, or to think it essential that he should know, the exact time when he was born again. Doubtless, this view of the case is correct, according to the commonly received doctrine, that the regeneration of a sinner is an instantaneous work of the Holy Spirit, and to the subject of it *imperceptible*, except from the subsequent exhibitions of the character and life. It was, besides, a very common fact, that those exercises which afterwards appeared to have been the commencement of holiness in a sinner's heart, were regarded by himself at the time, as a relapse into spiritual indifference. The reason seems to have been, that he lost his anxiety, and even forgot *himself*, in the all-absorbing views of God and Christ, and the Gospel, which took possession of his soul. Yet, while the fear of hell subsided, a deeper feeling of personal guilt, and of absolute dependence on sovereign mercy, was the invariable consequence.

Dr. Charles Backus, one of the most judicious and able ministers of this period, said, "In those who appeared to become the subjects of saving grace, the first alarm was followed with a more full discovery of their moral pollution. In general, they said that when divine truth first appeared in a new and pleasing light, they scarcely thought of their own safety, or whether they were or were not converted. They were abundant in acknowledging that if Gospel grace were not free and sovereign, there could be no hope for such great sinners as they were, who had not made any advances of themselves towards submission to the will of God. *None manifested high confidence of their conversion.*"

The Rev. Dr. G. H. Cowles, formerly of Bristol, Conn., remarked concerning the hopeful converts among his people, that they generally found relief from their distress, in coming to just views of God and his government. "On discovering the glory of the divine character, they felt a disposition to rejoice in God, whatever should become of themselves. Their minds were so engrossed by the great truths of the Gospel, that they thought little or nothing about their own salvation. Some have said, it seemed to them that God's character would appear glorious and lovely, even if they should be cast off. Their love to God and his government appeared to originate from a real reconciliation to his holy character, and therefore to be essentially different from that selfish love which arises from a belief that God designs to *save us in particular.*"——Accordingly, it was by gradually finding in themselves a new and settled disposition

to delight in the truths and duties of religion, that they came to indulge a hope of their own personal interest in the great salvation.

The Rev. Alexander Gillet, of Torrington, said, 'Previous to the new birth, the subjects of the work have had clear convictions of their native depravity,—of the pride, selfishness, and awful stubbornness of their hearts. After they had experienced the great change, they appeared to themselves worse than ever. Then they could exclaim, "I thought I knew something of my heart before, but I knew nothing. It appears to me a sink of all treachery and abomination. How can I be a *new creature*, and have my heart filled with so many vain thoughts," &c.——Again, he adds, 'Another conspicuous feature of the work is, that when God had taken off their distressful burden, they at first had no suspicion of their hearts being renewed; but were rather alarmed with the apprehension that the Spirit of God had forsaken them, and that they were becoming more hardened than ever. In this situation, longing for the return of their anxiety, if asked, "How does the character of God appear to you?" they readily answered, "Great, excellent, glorious. I wish for no other God to govern the world;—no other Saviour but Christ;—no other way of salvation but the Gospel." They wondered what had become of their burden. In time, however, experience taught them that their load was taken off in consequence of the heart's being brought to love that very religion which they had been opposing.'

The Rev. Dr. Woolworth, in describing the subjects of the same work at Bridgehampton, L. I., said, 'When reduced to self-despair, they have usually experienced divine manifestations. These manifestations, in some instances, have been immediate and clear at first, and connected with great peace and joy in God. But more commonly they have been slow and progressive. The person has felt calm, and experienced a degree of satisfaction in view of divine objects. But these exercises have not been such, at first, as to bring in evidence of their being new creatures. Many have continued in this state, for a considerable time, some for weeks, without any apprehension of their being the subjects of saving grace. This has been the case, till increasing light, and a comparison of their exercises with the Gospel, have led them on to a comfortable hope of their good estate.'

Without multiplying these extracts, it seems proper to remark, that in the narratives from which I have taken them there is a peculiar coincidence in the above characteristics, as to the exercises of hopeful converts. And the coincidence is

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equally remarkable between these exercises and those described by Pres. Edwards, in the great revival of his time. He says, "It has more frequently been so among us, that when persons have had the Gospel ground of relief for lost sinners discovered to them, and have been entertaining their minds with the sweet prospect, they have thought nothing at that time of their being converted.——There is wrought in them a holy repose of soul in God, through Christ, and a secret disposition to fear and love him, and to hope for blessings from him in this way; and yet, they have *no imagination that they are now converted; it does not so much as come into their minds.*"

To those who experimentally know the power of the Gospel, there is nothing incredible or strange in these statements. It results from the nature of that divine influence by which the sinner's heart is transformed from sin to holiness, that the change is *imperceptible* to himself at the time; it being afterwards manifested, and for the most part, *gradually* manifested, by its *fruits*. Besides, when the love of God is first shed abroad in a man's heart, while the same objects that kindle to holy rapture the soul of Gabriel, are presented to his view, it were strange if he could forget the God of the universe, the Redeemer of the world, and the grace that exalts and honors this Redeemer, in saving the guilty,—it were strange indeed, if he *could* forget all these objects, and limit his thoughts to his own *little self*. The question of his own conversion, at a season of such joyful and awful interest, is not the chief object of his attention; "it does not so much as come into his mind." Farther still; the sinner, while unsanctified, may have some indefinite notions of what it is to love God, and cordially to rely on Christ, but he does not truly know what these things mean, till he learns their meaning from *experience*. It is not strange, therefore, that, after his conversion, he should exercise, for a longer or shorter time, what are truly Christian graces, without knowing that they are so. On the contrary, the most groundless confidence is commonly that which springs up at once to full strength, without regard to evidence.

I proceed to notice other exercises of hopeful converts, which are only a farther developement of those already mentioned. They had, in general, a *deep feeling of their own guilt and ruin as sinners*. I have already said, that convictions of this sort, which preceded conversion, were often greatly *increased after it*; and why should it not be so? A man in a dark room, is surrounded with objects which he does not see, because it is dark. Let in a little light, and he sees these objects obscurely; let in more,—he sees them clearly. So it is with the

Christian's heart. Why does he complain so bitterly of sin in himself? Because there is more sin in his heart than when he was unconverted? No,—but there is more *light*. He can see *what is there*, since “God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in his heart.” This solves the paradox, if such it is to any, why growth in grace, is also growth in self-abasement; why the Christian's highest spiritual happiness is conjoined with his deepest exercises of repentance; and why the full light of heaven will enable him to see, more vividly than ever before, that “sin is exceeding sinful.” Now any theory of conversion, that encourages a sinner to think himself born of God, on account of something that he has felt, or done, or “made up his mind” to do, while he is still an utter stranger to the “plague of his own heart,” is clearly contrary to the whole current of the Bible and of Christian experience.

I add the following case, as one among very many illustrations of the foregoing remarks. A man of mature age and sound understanding, who was numbered among the hopeful converts, closed an account of his own exercises thus:—“I saw that all I had done to obtain salvation was wholly selfish; that all my opposition to the doctrines of grace originated in pride, because I was unwilling that God should work in me to will and to do of his good pleasure. Now I rejoice that he does so, and yet find in myself the unimpaired possession of moral freedom. Before, I thought that I was right, and God wrong. Now, I feel that God is right, and I wrong. Having obtained help from God, I continue to this time, a brand plucked from the fire; in myself a poor, miserable, guilty sinner,—if I am ever saved, to God, through Christ, will be all the glory forever.”

It is a sentiment common to all these narratives, though expressed in a great variety of forms, that the *salvation of a sinner is wholly of God*; so that, aside from the influence of sovereign mercy, he never would have done any thing towards submitting to the terms of the Gospel. Often did anxious enquirers resolve, in their own strength, to make the concerns of their salvation their chief object, and then speedily relapse into their former insensibility. The same resolutions, perhaps, were renewed again and again, with the same result, till they saw that nothing could subdue the obstinate depravity of their hearts, short of special, sanctifying grace. When they came to just views of their voluntary alienation from God, and yet of their dependence on his mere mercy, so as cheerfully to resign themselves into his hands, the agony was over, and commonly was followed by a delightful tranquillity and joy in God.

The Rev. *Asahel Hooker*, one of the ablest divines, and best pastors, that New England has enjoyed, in remarking on the subject of the revival at Goshen, Conn. in 1799, said, "In many instances, when their attention was first arrested, they set out with apparent hope of working out their own salvation with ease and despatch. But the attempt served to show them that they were still working out their own destruction. Those who became eventually reconciled to the truth, and found a comfortable hope of their good estate, were led to such an acquaintance with *the plague of their own hearts*, as served to subvert all hope arising from themselves and their own doings. They were shown, that if saved, it must be, not by works of righteousness, which they had done, or could do, but by the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Ghost, according to the divine purpose and grace in Christ." He adds, as a distinguishing feature of the work, that the doctrines of grace were received by its subjects, *uniformly and with one consent*; though many of them had formerly "contemplated these doctrines with *abhorrence*."

In describing the exercises of hopeful converts, another point which deserves attention, is the *sources* and *degrees* of their enjoyments. This part of the subject I must treat with greater brevity than I had intended. The most striking characteristic of these religious enjoyments may be described negatively; by saying, that they were not of the *selfish* kind.

By this it is not meant that the true Christian is indifferent to his *own happiness*, since the word of God neither requires nor allows him to be so. Happiness, as he knows from the Bible, and the testimony of his own heart, is inseparably conjoined with holiness. His hope, therefore, to be *like* Christ, and to be *with* him, is, of course, a hope of eternal blessedness in heaven. But while he is bound thus to regard the welfare of his own soul, of which he is made the special and accountable guardian, in a manner which is not true of any other soul, it is not his duty to regard the glory of God, and the interests of the universe, as subordinate to his own individual interests. The system which makes God the centre of regard, and requires all to love him supremely, tends to universal harmony. But the system that allows every one to love *himself* supremely, and to regard God, and all other beings, only with ultimate reference to his *own happiness*, is a system of perfect and eternal discord;—for it makes as many centres of supreme regard, as there are moral agents. Such were not the feelings cherished in the revivals of which I am speaking. The hopeful converts were accustomed to distinguish between genuine and false en-

joyment in religion, according to the brief specimen subjoined in the form of dialogue.

A. "On what ground does the true Christian *submit* to God, and *rejoice* in him?"

B. "From a firm belief that he will manage all things in the very best manner for his great kingdom."

A. "Whence comes the fancied submission of the hypocrite?"

B. "From an apprehension, that by it, *he* shall be a *gainer*;—that without it, there can be no *safety* for him. As a refuge from evil, he *throws himself* into the hands of God; while the true Christian confides, not from *necessity*, but *choice*."

A. "What is the object of *selfish* gratitude?"

B. "A supposed *personal* interest in the partial goodness of God."

A. "In what does the truly pious heart chiefly rejoice?"

B. "In the assurance that God will glorify himself, and glorify his Son, in the salvation of sinners; and that Christ, in dying for our redemption, has magnified the law, and made it honorable."

The most common source of enjoyment among those whose hearts were apparently renewed, was found in contemplating the perfections of God. Their feelings were often expressed in language like this:—"God is so glorious, that I wish others might praise him forever, even if I should perish."

The Rev. *Jeremiah Hallock*, a patriarch of Connecticut revivals, described a man who had suffered intensely under legal convictions, but afterwards informed his minister, that he now saw unspeakable preciousness in Christ; that it was his delight to pour out his heart in prayer, for Christ's dear ministers, for the cause of Zion, for the poor heathen, for his enemies. Then, after a short pause, he said to his venerable pastor; "I wish you would pray for *me*, that I may be converted, if God can convert me consistently with his glory. Pray also for my poor children, that God would convert them; not that they are better, or their souls worth any more than my neighbors."

The Rev. *Asahel Hooker* says, in regard to the religious enjoyments, by which the "new heart discovered itself," "In some, it seemed to be first apparent by a spirit of complacency in the perfection of God's law; in others, by a sense of his justice in the punishment of sin; in others, by their approbation of his holy sovereignty; and in others by complacency in the glorious character and all-sufficiency of the Redeemer."

Connected with religious enjoyment, the case of individuals

is often mentioned, who, after indulging for a time some trembling hope, in their own behalf, have had a sense of their own sinfulness, so overwhelming, as to lead them to think it impossible that they should have any grace. The dawn of a bright and joyful morning was succeeded, in the experience of many, by clouds and darkness, of longer or shorter continuance, and of various degrees of intensity, from painful doubts of their own sincerity to almost total despair. Nor was it an uncommon thing, that frequent alternations of hope and despondence occurred in the feelings of the same individual.

This leads me to remark, that another characteristic in the exercises of hopeful converts, was *humility*.

In conducting these revivals so as to avoid the fanatical excesses witnessed in 1740, &c. which had occasioned the most lamentable results, ministers deemed it important that the simple truths of the Gospel should be set before the mind in the plainest manner, without violent appeals to the passions. It was their object, indeed, to make deep impressions on the hearts of sinners, but to do this only by means of the truth. Accordingly, the whole tendency of things, was to produce exercises of the calm, solemn, pungent kind, rather than passionate and clamorous excitement. In very few cases, if at all, were those who had recently entertained hope called upon to exhibit themselves in a public assembly, by telling their experiences, or by any other mode of teaching others. Generally, they viewed themselves as so ignorant and unworthy, that, instead of teaching others, it became them to sit at the feet of the meanest, to receive instruction. The great truths and duties of religion, too, were the chief topics of private conversation, in families and neighborhoods, rather than any ostentatious relation of personal experiences.

The narrative of the revival in Goshen, Conn. says:—"It is not usual for those who are hopeful subjects of mercy to seem wise in their own conceits, or to have high thoughts of their own experiences and attainments in religion; but in *lowliness of mind to esteem others better than themselves*. The reason which accounts for the fact is, its being a uniform characteristic of the work, that it has, sooner or later, led the subjects of it to a deep sense of their own unworthiness. It is not uncommon for them to think that they are more vile than others, and that they have less evidence of being sanctified, than is usual with true saints."

Of the hopeful converts, another narrative says, "They have not manifested any appearance of spiritual pride and ostentation, and censoriousness towards others, but a spirit of humility

and meekness." The temper which they generally manifested, corresponds remarkably with that described by Pres. Edwards. "When they are lowest in the dust, emptied most of themselves; and, as it were, annihilating themselves before God;—when they are nothing, and God is all, are seeing their own unworthiness, depending not at all on themselves, but alone on Christ, and ascribing all glory to God; then their souls are most in the enjoyment of satisfying rest; excepting, that at such times, they apprehend themselves to be not sufficiently self-abased; for then, above all times do they long to be lower." Yet this sagacious judge of Christian character says that a spirit of *ensoriousness* was the worst disease which attended the great work in his day. He speaks of some, whose habit it was, very confidently to determine from a little conversation with a man, or from hearing a minister pray or preach, whether he was converted or not. And they were not at all scrupulous in expressing to others the opinion which they had thus formed concerning any one, whether he was a Christian or a hypocrite. But, in the glorious work of grace, which prevailed at the beginning of this century, there was almost an entire absence of this hateful, self-complacent, unchristian spirit of censoriousness. "The loftiness of man was bowed down, and the haughtiness of men was made low; and the Lord alone was exalted." Especially were *youthful* professors of piety modest. Then there were no beardless oracles to stand forth, after a Christian experience, at best but very brief, and say of such venerable guides in the church as *Mills* and *Hatlock*, that they did not understand the subject of revivals, and were behind the spirit of the age.

I come now to a distinct and very important branch of the remarks which I proposed to make, respecting those who were accounted subjects of grace, namely, *the treatment of them by ministers and Christians.*

In general, it was deemed indispensable to adopt such a course respecting persons of this description, as should not tend to lead them into fatal mistakes. It was customary to describe them in a twofold manner, namely, by the *views which they entertained of themselves*, and by the *views which ministers and pious people entertained respecting them.* According to the former method, such language as the following was adopted:—"A goodly number entertain hope." "The man, at length, was brought to view himself as a subject of grace." "His wife has since embraced a comfortable hope." "As the fruits of this work, forty are rejoicing in hope." This phrase-

dology expressed no opinion of him who gave the narrative, respecting the godly sincerity of the persons described. What were their views concerning their own spiritual condition was all he undertook to state.

In using the other mode of description, he did express his own views of the persons concerned, but almost uniformly with some hypothetical adjunct, denoting the caution which he thought it proper to use, on such a subject. For example, when a minister was called to speak of those who gave evidence of being truly converted, he adopted some of the various terms in common use to denote this, but nearly always by prefixing the word *hopeful*, or some other of equivalent import. Thus he said, "We trust that seventy may be reckoned as *hopeful* converts."—In other cases, the phrase was, "*hopeful* subjects of grace;"—" *hopefully* renewed;"—" *hopefully* become pious;"—" *hopefully* born of God;"—" *apparently* reconciled to God;"—" in the *judgement of charity*, they have become new creatures." It was not from accident, that, in the narratives of those revivals, where phrases of this sort are used about 225 times, the qualifying word *hopeful*, or something synonymous, was used by all the writers, excepting 15 times, in which "*converts*,"—" *new converts*,"—" *young converts*," were spoken of absolutely; and three of these fifteen cases were in a single narrative, forwarded from Vermont.* It should be observed, too, that among several thousand hopeful conversions, the case of only *one individual* is referred to, as having occurred within the "week past;" while the descriptions generally apply to cases that occurred from *one year to three years* before the accounts were written.

Some of the Revival Association may, perhaps, think such particularity quite needless. But I recollect that a venerable father of the English dissenting church, cautioned a young minister not to use the terms, "Thy servant,"—"thy handmaid," in praying with ignorant, unconverted persons, when dangerously sick, lest they should draw some groundless conclusion in their own favor. For reasons far more weighty, when professedly speaking of the spiritual state of men, whose eternal interests may be put in jeopardy by a verbal mistake, the language we use should be such as cannot lead to misapprehension. In two cases, at least, within our own circle, devout young men, of small experience in revivals, have spoken to me, with a numerical statement of the "conversions,"—"wonderful conversions,"—which took place in a particular neighborhood, "yesterday afternoon," and "last evening." In

* If there is any failure as to *numerical exactness*, in this statement, it must be so trifling as not to affect the merits of the case.

one of these cases, I was obliged to know that the "converts," so unconditionally announced, spoke of their own supposed "conversion," with profane contempt, in the course of a few days afterwards. In the revivals of 1800, &c. it is a prominent fact, that ministers used great caution in giving opinions concerning the spiritual state of living individuals, which they might apply to themselves. This remark, of course, does not apply to that class of tempted, mourning, doubting converts, whose evidences of sincerity were conspicuous to all but themselves, and who needed special consolation and encouragement, from their spiritual guides.

You will anticipate another remark which comes in connexion with the foregoing statements, that *it was not an object with the conductors of these revivals, to encourage early hopes.*

Their theory was, that true religion, though it exist for a while without a hope, will not perish, but will be the salvation of the soul; but that a hope without religion, will perish, and be the ruin of the soul. One of the narratives says, 'It is affecting to see how jealous the subjects of the work have been, lest they should imbibe a false hope. Some whose hopes have been given up and renewed several times, still trembled lest they should fix down on the foundation of the hypocrite. Before conversion, they had supposed a true believer to be free from sinful propensities; but when they find in themselves a heart deceitful above all things, doubts prevail, God withdraws, and they regard their hope as having been a mere refuge of lies.' Another says, 'Some having a delightful perception of the glory of God, began soon "to abound in hope;" but the greater part were brought very *gradually* to entertain a hope that they were reconciled to God.' Another says, 'In some instances, the enemy has attempted to divert people from their anxiety, by premature hopes.' Such was the general fact as to the dread which was felt concerning a false hope; and the case, let me add once more, was just the same, in the time of Edwards, who said concerning the class of persons now in view,—"They generally have an awful apprehension of the dreadfulness and undoing nature of a false hope; and there has been observable in most a great caution, lest, in giving an account of their experiences, they should say too much, and use too strong terms."

This is a subject of immeasurable importance and difficulty, concerning which Christian discretion settles some general principles, while the details of pastoral practice must be adapted to the endless variety of circumstances and character found among the individuals of a congregation. In what cases it is

safe to tell a man, who has recently been under solemn religious impressions, (I mean, to tell him by words, or by any course of measures,) that there is good evidence of his being a child of God; and what time is requisite, that such evidence may be exhibited, are points on which every minister must judge, as to the members of his own flock, and judge under the fearful responsibilities of the final day.

You are aware, gentlemen, that the question has often been raised of late, *what interval should there ordinarily be, between hopeful conversion, and public profession of religion?* And you may wish to know whether the experience of the churches to which I have been alluding, throws any light on this question. It is easy to state facts with which I am well acquainted from personal knowledge, and from the testimony of ministers. But the statement can be only a general one, it being impossible to fix, with precision, any limitations, that shall apply to all cases. As the continuance of legal convictions differed, from one hour to many weeks, and even months, in different persons, so the evidence that a particular man is born again, may be more complete in a few days, than could possibly be given in a whole year, by another particular man, of very different character, and intellectual habits. But the ministers of whom I have been speaking, would not have encouraged the former man to enter the church in one week after his hope began; and that because more time for self-examination would be important to himself; and because the other man would be thereby encouraged to a decidedly premature offering of himself for membership in the church.

Ministers urged it as the immediate duty of all men, publicly to profess Christ; but to have themselves, and to exhibit to others, *evidence* of real friendship to Christ, they deemed indispensable to *consistency* in this solemn transaction. The churches in Goshen, Norfolk, Tarringford, and others like them, under the guidance of experienced and eminent pastors, never urged any one hastily to enter their communion. The most common time stated in the narratives, between hopeful conversion and public profession, was about *six months*. In one church, Rutland, Vermont, a shorter interval is mentioned than in any other case, and this was *two months*. There is, doubtless, a liability to err on both sides of this subject; but the present liability, if I mistake not, is to err on the side of too much haste. As I have no time now to give reasons for this opinion, I shall, if God permit, resume the subject of *premature hopes and professions*, hereafter.

The spiritual watchmen in these churches generally, when

their faithful efforts were blessed to rouse sinners from their deadly apathy, took care to instruct them, in the conference room, and in private visits, as to the nature of true religion. And when they entertained hopes, they took care still to *instruct* them, as to the evidences of piety. When they became candidates for admission to the church, the usual method was, for the pastor, in company with the deacons, a committee of the church, and such of its members as chose to be present, to meet them for prayer and examination into their religious belief and experience, their motives in wishing to unite with the church, &c.

When these seasons of examination embraced a large number of hopeful converts, of all descriptions, from hoary age to the bloom of youth; especially when these came forward on the day of public admission to the church, no scene on this side the judgement could surpass the solemnity of the occasion. My limits do not allow me to describe to you the delightful and awful interest awakened by such a transaction, in my own congregation, and in other places.

Having, as you know, but imperfectly recovered from the severe effects of the last winter's influenza, I am called, in the providence of God, to the self-denial of taking refuge, during the approaching cold season, in a southern climate. Wherever my lot may be cast, should sufficient health be granted me, I shall resume my pen, and send you some remarks on the *general results* of these revivals, and some *reflections adapted to the present state of our churches*. In the mean time may God bless, with his special presence, the instructors and students of our beloved Seminary. May his Spirit sanctify you, guide your sacred studies, and prepare you to be *revival preachers*, qualified to labor for Him in the 19th century.

Affectionately yours,

E. PORTER.

Theol. Sem. Andover, Oct. 1832.

ON MORAL AGENCY, WITH DOCTRINAL AND PRACTICAL
REMARKS.

*"I call heaven and earth to record, this day against you,
that I have set before you life and death; blessing and
cursing: therefore choose life."*

"Choose you this day whom ye will serve."

"How long halt ye between two opinions?—if the Lord be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him."

"As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live: turn ye, turn ye, from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel?"

"As the Holy Ghost saith, To-day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts." Deut. xxx. 19; Josh. xxiv. 15; 1 Kings xviii. 21; Ezek. xxxiii. 11; Heb. iv. 7.

In these passages of Scripture, men are addressed as rational and accountable beings; as capable of choosing between life and death, blessing and cursing, God and the world, sin and holiness. In other words, they are addressed as *free moral agents*; and the momentous responsibility is thrown upon them, of choosing that course of life and possessing that character, on which must depend their eternal destiny.

But as moral agency is a subject on which the views of many are obscure, I propose, in this essay, briefly to exhibit the evidence that men are free moral agents: then, from the discussion, deduce some doctrinal and practical remarks.

When I say men are *free moral agents*, I would be understood to mean, that they are at liberty to act, just as, upon the whole, they choose to act—that all the actions which they perform, which can be called good or bad, are strictly and properly their own—that all the dispositions, affections, volitions, as well as the words and outward conduct for which they are accountable; are the result of no force or coercion whatever; but exist in accordance with the most entire freedom that can either be desired or conceived.

1. First, on this subject, I observe, *men possess all the faculties of mind, that are essential to free moral agency.*

Possessed of a rational mind, *we are capable of knowing our duty.* We can understand the meaning of words, which command or prohibit certain things. For instance, we do as perfectly understand the prohibitions, 'Thou shalt not kill;' 'Thou shalt not steal;' 'Thou shalt not swear;' as we do the propositions, 'Two and two make four;' 'Twice four make eight.' We as fully comprehend the commands:—'Injure no man;' 'Love thy neighbor;' 'Love God;' 'Pray to him and obey him;' as we do the first four rules in arithmetic, or any declarations expressed in intelligible language.

We are also capable of *distinguishing between right and wrong.* To make this plain, take a few familiar illustrations.

In order to promote some selfish interest, you go and tell your neighbor a deliberate falsehood, which is greatly to his disadvantage. Can you reflect on that with the same feelings of approbation, that you do upon the declaration of the truth? You purposely injure a man in his property or character. Is that, to your heart, the same as if you had done him a favor? You steal by night into a dwelling-house, and when its inmates are asleep, maliciously plunge a dagger into their bosoms. Do you feel no difference between that horrid deed, and an attempt to save the lives of a family exposed to a midnight assassin? Sullen or angry, you blaspheme the name of God. Is that, to you, the same as humble prayer? Doubtless every human heart responds alike to these questions. Could we put them to every human being on earth, and have them distinctly understood, one answer, in substance, would come from all. This distinguishing between right and wrong, is what we call *conscience*. It pertains to the rational mind of man, and is essential to free moral agency.

Moreover, men are capable of *exercising affections* towards various objects, and by *an act of will* can choose or refuse, according to the strength of different motives. Place two objects before you, one of which you may choose as your own; and you will unquestionably select that, which, all things considered, you regard at the time as most valuable. A certain duty is enjoined, such as prayer. You must either pray or neglect it; and you are voluntarily to decide which you will do. First, you examine the reasons in favor of prayer; then, consider the objections to it. The service is too solemn, it brings you too near to the holy God, and makes you too sensible of his awful presence;—and therefore, for these very reasons, which at the time appear to you stronger than those in favor of prayer; you voluntarily, most freely, and most wickedly, neglect it. God and the world are presented to you as objects to be loved. Both present their claims and offer their motives to decide your preference; and on whichever your affections fasten as the object of choice, you are equally free and unrestrained.

The faculties of mind above mentioned, viz. : understanding, conscience, affections and will, being possessed in common by mankind, constitute them free moral agents.

2. *Men always regard each other as free moral agents.* One evidence of this is *the language* which we use. We have many words which would never have been formed, had not mankind believed, at least, that they are complete moral agents; and which can have no meaning in reality, if, in that belief, they are deceived. How common are the words *voluntary*,

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free, choosing, preferring, willing. How uniformly do we speak of men as acting as they please; following their inclinations, and 'walking after the desires of their own hearts.' So also when we hear of one acting in a particular manner, we say he has done *wrong*, he deserves to be blamed; or in another case, he has done *right*, he is worthy of commendation. Now how came such language in use? On what principle was it formed? Have the words any meaning? have they a meaning which all understand, the moment they are uttered? Then, surely, they express some fact; they denote what is really true; or else we must conclude that we are universally deluded, and believe ourselves to be what we are not. But if deluded in a matter of universal agreement—of what can we be certain?

Again—*men invariably use means to influence one another.* If you wish a neighbor to unite with you in a certain plan, or to go to a particular place, and he appears to be reluctant, you immediately lay motives before him; you suggest reasons why he should comply with your proposal. But why adopt this course with him? Of what avail are motives with those who are not capable of choosing? You would not present motives to influence a statue, nor a madman; and the reason is, you know that neither a statue nor a madman, is free and accountable.

It may, perhaps, be thought by some that *temptations are compulsory.* But temptations can have effect no further than they present objects or considerations to influence us. "A man is tempted," says St. James, "when he is drawn away of his own lust and enticed." But that men are wholly free in yielding or not yielding to temptation, is evident from the fact, that when they yield, they feel self-condemned and are blamed by others; but when they successfully resist, they are commended. Indeed, temptations affect us only as motives. They appeal to our appetites and passions, and solicit us to sin in opposition to reason and conscience. Thus Adam was tempted and FELL. Thus Christ was tempted and stood.

3. Moreover, *we are never conscious of any coercion or compulsion being used with or on our minds.* Were another person to attempt to convince you, that in regard to particular actions, dispositions, or affections of heart, and in the pursuit of different objects of desire, you are not free; then you ought to appeal directly to your own consciousness, and ask, Am I sensible of any compulsion or constraint? In what respect am I forced? Wherein do I feel myself compelled to these particular exercises? When does any power constrain me which I

am unable to resist? Is it possible for a being to be more unrestrained than I am, in what I feel, and in what I do? These questions afford intuitive evidence of free moral agency.

4. Once more, *God treats us now, and will hereafter treat us, as free moral agents.* His commands imply that we are so. He commands us to repent of sin; to love and obey him; and to believe in Christ. Are these commands proper and reasonable? Is God worthy of our highest love; and is sin so hateful that we ought to repent of it? If you say no; then you engage in a controversy with your Lawgiver and Judge; you even charge him with injustice in his requisitions. But if you admit that his commands are just and reasonable; then on what grounds are they so? Could they be so, were men in any respect forced, contrary to their own disposition, to transgress? It will not relieve the difficulty to say, 'man once had the power, but lost it by the original apostasy'—for the commands are addressed to us now; and if *now* we are not complete moral agents, then as it regards us, these commands are unjust. Nor will it avail to say, 'that sincere Christians fail of perfect obedience, though they aim at it'—for the question arises, Is not their failure their fault? Are they in any respect forced to sin? Rather, as conscious of their guilt, do they not cry like the publican, "God be merciful to me a sinner."

The *promises and invitations* of Scripture imply the same fact. If sinners are so disabled that they cannot, as far as the powers of moral agency are concerned, accept the offers of mercy, if they are not, in every respect which implies accountability, as free to embrace as they are to reject them; then we demand, what do the promises and invitations mean? What is the import of such language as this:—'Come, for all things are now ready.' 'Whosoever cometh I will in no wise cast out.' 'Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.' 'The Spirit and the bride say, come; and let him that heareth say, come; and let him that is athirst, come; and whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.' Will it be said, these evince the benevolent disposition of God towards his sinful creatures—though *they* are not free to comply with them? But surely they are expressed *as if* sinners were, in every respect, as free to comply as to refuse; and if such compliance is not strictly and truly in their power; then must these promises and invitations be insincere and delusive! Hence, too, the emphatic language of the Saviour to the Jews: 'Ye *will not* come unto me, that ye might have life.' 'O, Jerusalem, Jerusalem! how often would I have gathered your children together—but ye *would not*.'

Let us now direct our thoughts to the *final judgement*, when the characters of men will be tried, and their destiny fixed forever. On what ground will judgement proceed? On the fact assumed and real, that *in this world we were free to do as we did*. The books will be opened, our characters disclosed, and eternal life or eternal death allotted us, according to 'the deeds done in the body.' Then will be fulfilled what is written by the prophet: 'Say ye to the righteous, that it shall be well with him: for they shall eat the fruit of THEIR DOINGS. Woe unto the wicked! it shall be ill with him: for the reward of HIS HANDS shall be given him.'

If the evidence presented is sufficient to establish the fact that men are free moral agents; then the following remarks, of a doctrinal and practical character, will be sustained.

I. Since men are free moral agents, *we ought never to explain other truths so as to destroy or weaken our sense of accountability*. If free moral agency is denied, accountability cannot be proved. But the fact that we are accountable lies at the foundation of all the duties enjoined on us by our Creator;—and of course is of fundamental importance. Hence, whatever opinions tend to destroy or weaken our sense of accountability, must be erroneous: for all truths have a beautiful consistency with one another;—like the attributes of their divine Author, they all harmonize and make one perfect whole.

More particularly, I would remark, that according to the Scriptures, God brings events to pass in this world, agreeably to a *wise, benevolent, fixed, eternal purpose*. Now, do any, in admitting this truth, suppose that their free moral agency is infringed? Do they conceive that their obligations are taken away or diminished? Do they hence take liberty to sin? When urged to repent and believe, do any say, 'I will postpone attention to my future welfare, till God, according to his sovereign purpose, operates upon me;' or 'if I am to be saved, I shall be, in the end, let me take what course I please—and if I am not to be saved, no efforts of mine will avail?' But of such persons I ask,—What do you do with the other doctrine, that you are free moral agents, accountable to God? Do you believe the whole Bible? Then you believe the latter truth as well as the former; and if you suppose that you have nothing to do, because God's purpose is fixed; then you either err in your apprehension of the truth, or wilfully pervert it. If the question arises, How can the two doctrines be consistent? we reply: they *may* be consistent, though the *manner* of their consistency cannot be shown. For, if we prove by appropriate evidence that they are both true; then it is certain they are

consistent.—But further; is it in the compass of almighty power to create a free moral agent? *Can God make a dependent being accountable?* We say he can. *He has done it.* Then we say, however his purpose affects men, he never infringes or touches their free agency; but accomplishes his purposes towards them in perfect accordance with it. If a sinner is to be saved, that sinner must repent and choose God as his supreme good. Unless he does these things, as a free moral agent, he never can be saved. It were easy to go further in speculation on this point, but thus far the way is plain: and now, to gain a practical conviction of both doctrines at once, I urge the sinner to set about the work of repentance; break off from thy sins; seek the favor of God; cry to him for mercy, like the humbled publican or the penitent prodigal; and when thou enjoyest evidence that thy sins are forgiven, and thou hast a title to heaven, then, with the Bible open before thee, learn ‘that every good gift and every perfect gift cometh down from the Father of lights;’ and that thy renewed state is because ‘from the beginning God chose thee to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth.’

Again—The Scriptures declare that in some important respects *the sinful character of men is owing to the apostasy of Adam.* ‘By one man sin entered into the world.’ ‘By one man’s disobedience many were made sinners.’ But it will not do to affirm, on the strength of these passages, that we are guilty of Adam’s sin, or that his sin is imputed to us, so that on account of it we are criminal. For such transfer or imputation destroys personal accountability, and is incompatible with free moral agency. What agency could we have had in the transgression of Adam, six thousand years ago; or how can we feel to blame for an offence committed without our knowledge and before our existence?

When also the Scriptures declare, that ‘by nature we are children of wrath; that the heart is full of evil, only evil continually’—we ought not to form the opinion, that God *has created sin* within us, which constitutes us guilty without our choice, and independent of our moral agency. Such an opinion is repugnant, not only to the accountability of man, but to the moral character of God. The ground which may safely be taken on this subject is,—that human beings, in the exercise of their own moral agency, begin to sin as soon as capable of accountable action, and voluntarily persist in the same till the heart is renovated. ‘*Sin is the transgression of the law,*’—a free and unrestrained act of a moral agent. The stronger the disposition to sin, and the more numerous the acts of sin,

the greater is the guilt chargeable on the soul. If one has persevered in a course of transgression, ten, twenty, or fifty years; if his heart is fully set in him to do evil; if his evil passions are so strong as to break over all resolutions of amendment, and to bear him onward in opposition to commands, promises, and threatenings; still he alone must sustain the mighty burden of his guilt, as his conscience will testify, and God will make manifest in the day of retribution.

Moreover, in our views of the doctrine of regeneration by the Holy Spirit, we must guard against destroying or weakening our sense of accountability. Whatever theory we adopt respecting the mode of the Holy Spirit's operation, we must agree in the fact, that the change which takes place in regeneration, is a change from the supreme love and practice of sin, to the prevailing love and practice of holiness. But men can no more be holy without their choice, than they can be sinful without it. To represent, therefore, that in the case of the sinner, there is any *natural* obstacle to his choice of holiness; or any *moral* quality independent of his moral agency, which the Holy Spirit must remove, necessarily weakens, if not utterly destroys, accountability. The view which seems safe and scriptural, on this subject, is this:—In regeneration, the Holy Spirit preserves in constant exercise the free moral agency of men. When the change takes place in a sinner, he is active in the highest degree; it is he himself who chooses holiness; and he does it in view of the truths and motives presented to him, and which are rendered efficacious by the Holy Spirit.

On this subject, two practical errors are to be guarded against. One, is—that some Christians seem to entertain such views of the work of the Holy Spirit, as render them comparatively indifferent to the use of means for the salvation of sinners. They speak of 'waiting God's time;' while they are themselves sluggish in efforts and unbelieving in prayer. Is not this in effect denying that men are free moral agents? Is it not giving up the doctrine of human accountability? Is it not justifying impenitence *until God's time comes*? Such views of the work of the Holy Spirit are at war with every command addressed to sinners, in the Bible—with the practice of all the Apostles and of the Saviour himself, who unceasingly, and with the greatest zeal and importunity, urged immediate repentance and reconciliation to God. Connected with these views, also, is the secret feeling, that if means are used with sinners, they will be unmindful of their dependence on sovereign grace, and think, by their own doings, to merit heaven. Such an effect may be prevented, by exhibiting their enormous guilt, the justice and

holiness of God, and their desert of endless punishment. *Sinners will soon learn their dependence, if thoroughly convinced of their guilt and danger.*

The other practical error is—keeping out of view the *real agency* of the Holy Spirit in regeneration. This is sometimes done by ministers in preaching, by Christians in praying, and by the impenitent in the use which they make of the ordinary means of salvation. But this is derogatory to the work of the Holy Spirit, and renders preaching and prayer alike inefficacious. The fact of the Spirit's agency is the ground of all successful effort in religion; and should be gratefully acknowledged. Let Christians therefore depend upon and pray fervently for his influence in their sanctification and in the conversion of sinners—and let the impenitent also, when struggling with their inexcusable depravity, and trembling in prospect of the wrath to come, know from what source 'their help cometh.' When the first hope of pardon and salvation rises in their souls, let them be taught to ascribe it joyfully to the 'renewing of the Holy Ghost.'

Once more—we should be careful not to explain the doctrine of *the saints' perseverance* so as to weaken or destroy accountability. God promises to keep believers from falling away and finally perishing. But if, on this ground, one takes liberty to sin; if he says, 'I was once a Christian, and shall be kept from final misery, though I have no present evidence of piety?' let such an one know, that he turns the grace of God into licentiousness; that he bears the broad mark of a hypocrite or self-deceiver; and that no promise relative to the saints' perseverance is applicable to him. God keeps believers indeed—but he keeps them 'through *faith* unto salvation;' and consequently, he who does not live every day in the performance of duty, with present evidence of religion, can lay no claim to any promise.

2. The next general remark deduced from this subject, *respects the manner in which ministers should address their fellow men on the subject of religion.* They should address them as accountable beings, placed under the moral government of God, and on probation for eternity. They should appeal to the understanding, with all the force and authority of scriptural argument; should press conscience with obligation; and exhibit evangelical motives to determine the will and engage the affections. Ministers must urge men to do all their duty, and set the conditions of life and of death fairly before them. Especially must they press on impenitent sinners the duty of immediate compliance with the first requisition

of the Gospel. No plea or excuse for the neglect of it a single day or even hour can be admitted. If one throws in the plea, that he must go to his farm, and another to his merchandise; one that he wants time, and another ability; still, ministers must urge upon all the claims of the Almighty. With reiterated urgency they must say, 'Repent and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out. God now commandeth all men, every where, to repent. Turn ye, turn ye, from your evil ways; for why will ye die? Cease to do evil; learn to do well. Let the wicked forsake his way and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.' If ministers are in any way embarrassed or trammelled with their theories, so that they cannot urge immediate repentance in this plain scriptural manner; *they may be certain their views are erroneous*. As free moral agents, it is the duty of sinners to repent at once; therefore the obligation to do it must be urged on them; and if impenitence is persisted in, they must be made to feel that they are guilty of known and rank rebellion against the Most High God, and that every moment they live unreconciled to him, they expose themselves to a more aggravated condemnation.

3. It is evident from the nature of moral agency, that if any fail of heaven, *it will be wholly through their own fault*. SIN is the only cause of exclusion from heaven. But sin is the free act or exercise of a moral agent; and, if the consequence of sin be the loss of heaven, no blame can be imputed to any but the guilty agent himself. When final judgement is passed upon the impenitent, none will be able to ascribe their doom, in any faulty sense, to ministers or Christians; for, though *they* are answerable to God, if unfaithful in the use of means for the salvation of others, yet unfaithfulness on their part is no good reason why sinners should refuse to repent. Nor will any that perish find a palliation of their sins, in the strength of temptations, the violence of natural passions, or the influence of the great adversary of souls; because, should any bring forward such pleas, they would be silenced and confounded by the tormenting consciousness, that *they were free to act as they did*. Nor can they ascribe their loss of heaven to want of assistance from the Holy Spirit; for they will be convicted of resisting the very motives which the Spirit makes use of in the conversion of sinners; of stifling conscience, and of persevering in sin against the most affectionate entreaties and the most solemn warnings.

If sinners presume to ascribe their loss of heaven, in any

faulty sense, to their Maker, he will array their iniquities before them, rouse up conscience, and make them feel fresh compunctions for every guilty act. He will remind them of the talent which he gave them, and which they buried or threw away. He may repeat in their ears some of the invitations which he kindly gave them, and some of the threatenings by which he would have deterred them from transgression. He may address them, and say to each, 'Did I not, guilty mortal, set life and death, blessing and cursing, fairly before thee, in yonder world of probation? Did I not urge thee to regard thy own welfare and to choose life? Did I not forewarn thee of the consequences of continued impenitence, and bid thee flee from the wrath to come? Did I not offer myself to thee, as a satisfying portion, and promise thee my everlasting friendship? Did I not provide for thee a Redeemer, to make atonement for thy sins, and to render thy pardon consistent with the holiness of my character and the honor of my law? Did I not assure thee of salvation on condition of repentance and faith,—the lowest and most reasonable terms that could be proposed? Yea, did I not often visit thee by my Holy Spirit, and awaken in thy heart serious thoughts and purposes? Hast thou forgotten those seasons of conviction when thou didst groan with inward anguish for thy sins, and quake with fear of deserved wrath? Guilty mortal! thou didst resist all the efforts of Infinite Love to save thee!—and now, because I called, and thou didst refuse; because I stretched out my hands and thou didst not regard; because thou didst set at naught all my counsel, and wouldst none of my reproof:—therefore, I also will now laugh at your calamity, and mock when your fear cometh. Though thou callest upon me, I will not answer; though thou makest many prayers, I will not hear. Depart from me, into outer darkness, where is weeping and gnashing of teeth!

4. This subject furnishes a ground *for direct appeal to the impenitent*. Fellow-sinners, God requires you this day to choose between 'life and death, blessing and cursing.' He declares, that unless you repent of all your sins, and rely on Jesus Christ alone for salvation—unless you adopt his word as your rule of life, and aim to obey all his commands—unless you make his service your chief enjoyment, and glorify him in your body and in your spirit, which are his;—then you shall bear the curse of his law, experience his frowns in death, and be condemned at the day of judgement. On the other hand, he assures you, that if you choose his service, with true repentance of your sins and faith in the Redeemer, and walk in the path of holy obedience while you live; then he will own you as his people, and confer on you the rewards of endless felicity.

With 'life and death, blessing and cursing' thus fairly before you, can you hesitate which to choose? Are they so nearly alike in their nature that you need deliberate? Were poverty and riches, disgrace and honor, sickness and health placed before you, and you must choose between them; could you then hesitate? Or, were it proposed to choose between a lingering death and a life of unmingled bliss, to continue fifty or seventy years; could you then hesitate? Come then; make a choice between life and death, both eternal! Do you need persuasion to induce you to choose life? If the authority of God, the invitations of Christ, the preciousness of your souls, and the guilt and danger of protracted impenitence, are not sufficient to decide your choice—then be entreated to choose life *for its own sake*. In a little while you will be removed from the objects of your present love, and be fixed in a new state of existence. Oh! what will it be to you then, to have God for your friend, and Jesus for your Saviour;—to be welcomed, amid the terrors of the judgement, to a throne near your Deliverer;—to be admitted within the gates of the celestial city, and to occupy a mansion prepared by your Redeemer? What will it be to come unto 'Mount Zion, to the general assembly and church of the first-born'—to unite with patriarchs, prophets and apostles—to join in anthems of everlasting praise with angels? Oh! what will it be, to gaze on the benignant face of him that sitteth on the throne, and recognize him as your eternal friend? Then your soul will swell with joys unspeakable and full of glory. If you look around, you behold nothing but scenes of purity and bliss to enhance your enjoyment; if you look upwards and forward into futurity, you have the certainty of increasing holiness and immortal happiness. Could you now, while delaying your decision, hear the songs of the Redeemed; could a single note sung by the feeblest saint in heaven strike on your ear; could you catch a glimpse of that glory which lights up the celestial abode; could you feel one emotion of the joy that now animates each of the heavenly throng—would you, could you, longer hesitate? Rather, would you not desire to depart, and share in their employments and feel their raptures? Well, fellow-sinners, *choose life to-day*, and in the progress of immortality, you shall experience more joy than the happiest saint in heaven now feels. **CHOOSE LIFE**—and in a little while you shall hear, not a few notes from that distant world, but

“————— a shout
Loud as from numbers without number, sweet
As from blest voices, uttering joy;”

which fills all heaven with jubilee ;—and you yourselves shall be in their midst, uniting in the same harmonious strains.

Again, I beseech you, *choose life* ; for death, the only alternative, is a misery which none can describe and none can endure. Consider what banishment from God and heaven must be ; what exclusion from the presence of Christ and the company of the redeemed must be ; and consider what is implied in “everlasting punishment !” Can your hands be strong or your heart endure, when the Almighty shall rise up against you ? Can you support that wrath which will be kindled upon you and burn forever ? With *death* in prospect, do you still hesitate as to your decision ? Are you not aware that a choice *must be made* ? You are at liberty to choose which you please, ‘life or death, blessing or cursing ;’ but *you cannot be neutral*. The soul that refuseth life embraces death. Decide, then, now—heaven bearing witness—and let the recording angel write it in the Book of Life.

CLERICUS.

REVIEWS.

SLANDERS UPON THE MISSIONS IN THE ISLANDS OF THE PACIFIC.

- London Quarterly Review*. “*Sandwich Islanders*.” Vol. XXXV. pp. 419–445. 1827.
- A Defence of the Missions in the South Sea and Sandwich Islands against the Misrepresentations contained in a late Number of the Quarterly Review, in a Letter to the Editor of that Journal*. By WILLIAM ORME. London. 1827.
- North American Review*. “*American Missionaries at the Sandwich Islands*.” Vol. XXVI. pp. 59–111. 1828.
- London Quarterly Review*. “*Polynesian Researches*.” Vol. XLIII. pp. 1–54. 1830.
- A Visit to the South Seas in the U. S. ship Vincennes during the years 1829 and 1830 ; with Scenes in Brazil, Peru, Manilla, the Cape of Good Hope, and St. Helena*. By C. S. STEWART, A. M. Chaplain in the U. S. Navy. New York. 1821.
- American Quarterly Review*. “*The Missionary Question*.” No. XIX. pp. 99–126. September, 1831.
- A Vindication of the South Sea Missions from the Misrepresentations of Otto Von Kotzebue, Captain in the Russian Navy*. By WILLIAM ELLIS. London. 1831.
- Narrative of a Voyage to the Pacific and Beering's Straits to co-operate with*

the *Polar Expeditions*. Performed in his Majesty's ship *Blossom*, under the command of Capt. F. W. Beechey, R. N. in 1825, 1826, 1827, and 1828. London. 1831.

"*Beechey's Voyage, &c.*" *London Quarterly*, No. LXXXIX. April, 1831, and *Edinburgh*, No. CV. March, 1831.

Journal of Voyages and Travels, by the Rev. DANIEL TYERMAN and GEORGE BENNETT, Esq.; Deputed, &c. Compiled by JAMES MONTGOMERY. Boston. 1822.

"Though thou shouldest bray a fool in a mortar among wheat with a pestle, yet will not his foolishness depart from him." Many years since the *London Quarterly* began its bitter ebullitions against the Missionaries in the Islands of the Pacific. The misrepresentations, of which its pages became the vehicle, have been repeatedly exposed and refuted. But the folly, in part at least, seems to cleave to it, like a leprosy. Notwithstanding the dignified expostulations in the Letter of Mr. Orme, and the full, unimpeachable testimonies of the Rev. Mr. Stewart, which were published with it; notwithstanding the ample defence of the American Missionaries in the North American as above cited, and the severe but just castigations therein inflicted upon their calumniators; notwithstanding the multiplied and diversified evidences given in the publications of the American and English Missionary Societies, amounting to unanswerable proof, that the Missions to the South Seas have been attended with the most beneficial results; yet we still observe marks of the original propensity to vilify the missionary work in that quarter of the world. Captain Beechey's Voyage lately furnished an opportunity to bring forward some of the old slander, and if the boldness of the tone was in this instance considerably repressed, it requires no extraordinary penetration to perceive the remains of hostile feeling. We would hope that the gentlemanly appeal of Mr. Ellis in his *Vindication* and its Appendix, and the explicit statements in the *Journal* of Tyerman and Bennett may prove sufficient to silence hereafter the voice of reproach, and restrain the sneer of contempt. But Goldsmith's schoolmaster is not altogether a solitary in the mysteries of logic; for of other reasoners it is true, that "e'en though vanquished" they "can argue still" in their own way. And it need not be surprising if the next letter from a voyager in the Pacific, or a resident among the "beauteous coral isles," should bring upon some bigoted anti-bigot a turn of the bilious, and the superabundant humor find an outlet for its discharge in this periodical, or some one of its compeers. For the periodical first alluded to is not the only one, which has condescended to the work of flinging reproach upon the South Sea Missionaries. Not to speak of the *Westminster* and others of

considerable celebrity, we refer to the Edinburgh Review, or Critical Journal. Once, the Edinburgh reviewers looked with haughty contempt or philosophical indifference upon every thing connected with the cause of humble piety; but latterly, for some reason or other, (may it not be the increasing and spreading triumphs of that cause?) they have assumed a new tone and air, and this new aspect of theirs, we think, "does show the mood of a much troubled breast." Their aspersions upon "the evangelical class" have been noticed in our pages. On the subject now before us, we specify the Review of Beechey's Voyage, which, in the language of Mr. Ellis, "may truly be said to be the limbo of all calumnies cast upon the South Sea Missions."

It need not be surprising, if the oft-refuted slanders should again be issued, and be endorsed and countersigned by the same high authorities. Palpable and demonstrated facts have been arrayed by the friends of missions against mere inferences, conjectures, or suspicions. But the misfortune is, the case is one where the natural remedy only aggravates the disease. Lamentable as it may be, yet so it is in poor human nature, that, when the heart is in love with error, truth is rarely a torch light to illumine the understanding, but too often rather a fire-brand to enkindle the flame of passion. And then, it is of little matter, what pressure of logic or eloquence you apply; it avails almost nothing; the weights you lay on may keep down awhile the old predominating spirit, but soon it swells and bursts out in despite. "Naturam expelles furca, tamen usque recurret."

The conductors of a public journal cannot, in any case, throw off their responsibilities. It brings no relief in conscience or honor, to say that a reviewer may be misled by his author, especially in the case before us. Just see how it is. The captain of a ship sent out on a voyage of discovery, or for the protection of commerce, calls to refit his vessel or procure provisions at an island where a mission has been established; he remains but a few days, calls once or twice at the missionary house, has a few interviews of ceremony with the native chiefs and officers, sees mostly the lower and more vicious class of people that crowd about a foreign ship on its arrival, goes, perhaps, not a mile from the port to learn the character and condition of the main part of the population, understands scarcely a word of the language, but is obliged to employ an ignorant, and, it may be, treacherous interpreter, and all the while is hearing stories from officious foreign residents incensed against the missionary

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influence; with such advantages for obtaining correct information, he puts down in his note-book an account of the island, and his impressions respecting the success and utility of the missionary labors. Now, it is not by any means an impeachment of this man's competency as a naval officer, nor even of his general candor and intelligence, to say that comparatively little confidence can be reposed in any thing he may thus record against them. He has not the means of ascertaining the truth, and moreover is peculiarly exposed to gross deception and imposition. Not so the reviewer, who notices this officer's narrative. He is acquainted, or ought to be, with the numerous communications, which have already been made to the public respecting the island, its history and population, the former condition and character of its inhabitants, the plans and labors of the missionaries, and the changes actually effected through their instrumentality; some of these communications, let it be remembered, are from intelligent and conscientious men, who have passed several years on the island, travelled over the whole of it, written and spoken the native language with perfect ease and fluency, and have had familiar acquaintance with all classes of the inhabitants; but all these communications distinctly testify that a great and delightful melioration in the state of the island has been effected by means of the mission; nevertheless, the reviewer not only cites the narrative of the captain without any explanation or exception, but artfully speaks of the undoubted integrity and competency of the supposed eye-witness, and then seizes the favorable moment to fasten in the mind of the unwary reader, as well grounded convictions, the wild dreams of a heated imagination, or the more criminal inventions of malignant hostility; the article thus infused with poison is widely circulated, and effects its deadly work among thousands, perhaps, whom no antidote will reach. This is no trivial thing. A dread responsibility is in it. There are fictions enough of the human brain, and foibles enough in the human character, for those men to sport with, who have no better work for their pens; but to sport with individual reputation, wantonly to assail the innocent and rob them of that which is dearer than life, to ridicule the imperfect efforts of the degraded pagan to acquire the blessings of civilization, and especially to sneer at the infant simplicity of his hope of salvation by the cross of Christ, stands high in the gradations of guilt. And the sin lies in its full magnitude and turpitude at the door both of the reviewer and the conductor of the periodical; its criminality cannot be divided between them, any more than the criminality of a joint murder can be shared half and half by the two wretches that perpetrated it.

It may be asked, what are the sources of the opposition and calumny, under which the missions in the South Sea isles have for so many years been suffering? The *primary* sources are the two following, which were long ago pointed out; first, the influence of the mission tends to *enlighten the native mind*, which renders it more difficult for visitors and foreign residents to make extravagant and unjust profits in trade; and secondly, the influence of the missions tends to *purify the native morals*, which interrupts that licentious intercourse with the females, which formerly prevailed. No one acquainted with the unrighteous abuse heaped upon the American missionaries at the Sandwich Islands can doubt that in these facts, the latter especially, we have the secret of the hostility towards them. It was the 'head and front of their offending,' that by their help the ignorant, abandoned pagan had acquired both *knowledge* and *virtue*. It will not soon be forgotten, that visitors from the two countries which boastfully claim the highest rank in the world in point of civilization, liberty, and religion, actually surrounded, in armed companies, the little dwelling of one of these missionaries, with shameless hardihood, threatening his life, unless the tabu were removed, which interfered with their ungoverned lust. Nor let it be supposed that such motives could influence only the lowest seaman, or some acknowledged outcast. We blush to remember, that at a naval court in this Commonwealth, where a brave commodore presided, a distinguished living scholar was-judge advocate, and a well known Christian philanthropist, out of regard to the national honor no less than the welfare of the islands, led the prosecution, (we mention these circumstances only to show the notoriety of what we assert,) it was distinctly testified that a *commander of a United States vessel* at the Sandwich Islands openly boasted of having won the favors of a young native previously immaculate, and sought to show his title to the infamy of such an achievement, in a way which decency forbids to be mentioned. It is with pain that we remember, also, that the captain of an English ship threatened to storm and burn down a populous seaport of one of the islands, because the governor, in rightful authority, attempted to enforce the law forbidding prostitution, and actually opened from his ship the fire of a nine pounder; and that, for this attempt of the virtuous chief, the *English consul* was greatly incensed, and called him a criminal madman.

But there are some other causes to help the circulation of calumnies springing from this loathsome origin. There are men of infidel notions, and there are enemies to those fundamental

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doctrines of the Gospel which the missionaries embrace and preach; there are also those, whose practical irreligion is rebuked by the fervent piety of the native converts. The prejudices of all such men prepare them to credit every idle tale of missionary indiscretion and failure, and stimulate them to give it currency by means of the social narrative, the *private* journal, designed for *public* use, the newspaper paragraph, and the regular review.

There has also been in this matter, we fear, some working of the leaven of sectarianism. If we mistake not, the London Quarterly would have discovered more of success and less of mistake in the South Sea Missions, if the almost miraculous transformations they have wrought, had been effected, not through the instrumentality of some obscure dissenting preachers, but under the patronage of 'my Lords the Bishops' of 'the Established Church,' and with the help of 'our excellent Liturgy.' Besides many other passages, the following from the review of the *Polynesian Researches* seems to indicate something of the bias we here disapprove.

"The people (of the Society Isles) themselves said, that, 'had their chiefs been idolaters or wicked rulers, it would have been improper for them to have interfered in any matters connected with Christianity; but now that they were truly pious, it accorded with their ideas of propriety, that in the Christian church, they should, as Christian chiefs, *be pre-eminent.*' The missionaries replied to these sensible representations in a manner more consistent with their sectarian principles than with sound policy. But with such a preparation in the habits and disposition of the people, and with a prince so sedulous, so able, and so well disposed as Pomare, a *Bishop* Heber would have established a *national church* upon a foundation, which no storms could shake."

The same review, after censuring the missionaries for their influence in introducing a representative instead of an absolute monarchy, (since "the Jesuits did nothing so imprudent as this in Japan, nothing so rash, nothing so dangerous,") and lamenting some other offences against royalty, as "still less pardonable," concludes with exhorting them "to procure for their church the best human security that can be obtained, *by connecting it with the state.*" The missionaries, however, have much better and safer counsel in the farewell letter of Tyerman and Bennett.

"To preserve the purity of your churches, a firm and vigilant discipline will be essentially necessary.—That your discipline may be scriptural and beneficial, it must be impartial; and, to be impartial, it must extend alike to all, *whether chiefs or common people.*"

There is another circumstance, which, in relation to the missions at the Sandwich Islands, in some degree aids in spread-

ing the false reports of their calumniators. The missionaries there are Americans, and it is apprehended that "their influence will ultimately clash with that right of guardianship and protection, which is claimed for the British." We know not exactly what is implied in this guardianship or protection, nor do we perceive any important advantage that can accrue to the United States, or England, or any other power, from having these islands under its guardianship, whatever may be the sense of the term; but certain it is, that there have been some jealousies on the subject between England and Russia, as also in relation to the Society Isles. Witness the following extract from Mr. Ellis's Vindication :

"Speaking of a report, that the visit of the late king of Hawaii to this country was to implore the assistance of England against the seizure of the Sandwich Islands by Russia, Kotzebue observes, 'But from the air of protection, which England has for a long time past assumed towards these islands, it seems to me that she herself secretly harbors such a design, and probably only waits a favorable opportunity for its execution.' An insinuation of this kind comes with a good grace, indeed, from Capt. Kotzebue, when it is recollected, that a subject of Russia *did build a fort, on one island; and put up the Russian flag, with the declaration, I take possession of the island, in another; from which he and his Russian companions were only reluctantly driven by order of the chiefs and the attitude of determined resistance assumed by the people.*"

We think some passages in Tyerman and Bennett's journal indicate their conscious pleasure in recognizing a British ascendancy in these islands. In one place is given the letter of king Rihorihō to George IV., in which he returns his most grateful thanks for the present of a schooner, called the Prince Regent, and says, "the whole of these islands having been conquered by my father, I have succeeded to the government of them, and beg leave to place them all under the protection of your most excellent Majesty." The journal thus describes the delivery of the present just alluded to :

"At noon,* Capt. Kent formally delivered up the schooner, which he had brought from Port Jackson, as a present from his Britannic Majesty to the king of the Sandwich Islands. The latter came on board to take possession. When Capt. K. proposed to take down the English colors, the king said 'No, no; I shall always hoist the English flag.' In fact, he makes no secret of acknowledging his dependence—for friendly protection at least against all other nations—on our country and its illustrious sovereign."

Another record is as follows :

"A report has been in circulation, that the Americans residing here were conspiring to take this island from the king.—The king has had a consultation with his chiefs upon the subject, which, however, he affects to regard as—what no doubt it is—an idle tale, originating from some impudent boasting

* May 1, 1822.

of certain citizens of the United States, who employ their influence to obtain a national ascendancy in these islands, for the sake, we presume, of commercial advantages, since, in a political view, the absolute possession of them would be a burthen rather than a benefit.*

Such possession would probably be no less a burden to the British; but, although it may be passing strange, that either power should covet empire over any of "those green specks within the tropics," we doubt not, that criminations of the American missionaries have obtained readier belief, with many visitors and some writers, on account of this imagined rivalry.

Such are some of the causes of the reports against the missionaries. Let us now look at the competency of those who have aided in circulating them. We mean their competency to bear witness in the missionary question; we shall not impeach their skill as mariners, their wisdom as commanders, or their ability as critics in matters of science and literature generally; we only wish to test their qualifications for judging correctly respecting the facts of the case before us. The great disadvantages under which even an intelligent, candid, and diligent visiter, whose stay is transient, like that of a naval commander, must obtain his information, have been already suggested. But it will more clearly demonstrate with what caution it is necessary to take the statements of the writers in question, if we point out a few of their mistakes in matters not directly involving the subject of dispute, yet lying equally within their observation. We shall specify but a small part of what has fallen under our eye.

The editor of the Voyage of the ship Blonde has the following. "The Sandwich Islanders reckon by *forties*; they call forty, *teneha*; ten *tenehas* is one *lau*; ten *lau* is a *manu*; ten *manu* a *kini*; ten *kini* a *lehu*; ten *lehu* a *nurwancee*; ten *nurwancee* one *pas*." But the natives counted, in fact, only to *five* denominations, going no further than *lehu*. Fortunately, the blunder out of which the above statement arose, has been explained.*

"The word *nurawali* improperly written *nurwancee*, means *unknown*, *unthought of*; and the word *pau*, wrongly written *pas*, means *all*, or *the whole*. When the native was questioned, either in London or at the islands, *What do ten lehu make? or What comes next?* he doubtless answered, *Nurawali*; by which he meant, *I can go no further, all beyond is unknown*. The unsuspecting Englishman, however, supposed he had got a new denomination; and in fresh pursuit of another inquired, *What next? or What do ten nurawali make?* To which the native answered, *Pau*; *I have said all I can say*; and this was written down as a regular numerical denomination; so that when the Englishman comes to understand his own system of notation, he will find, that ten *lehu* make one *unknown*, and ten *unknowns* go for the *whole*."

* On the authority of a member of the American Mission. See North American Review, Vol. XXVI. p. 67.

Another instance is furnished, by Captain Beechey, who is spoken of as a very intelligent and courteous officer, and who, we would hope, never intended that abuse of the missionaries of which his work has been the occasion. Speaking of a Tahitian magistrate, he calls him *aava rai*. "Capt. Beechey," says Mr. Ellis, "would probably be surprised to learn that *aava* means *very sour*, and *rai*, *heaven or sky*; so that those two words, instead of meaning *chief judge*, have no other signification than the incongruous compound, as so applied, of *very sour sky*."—Grosser blunders still are made by Kotzebue.

"His remarks," says Mr. Ellis, "are often most ludicrous; and those in the present voyage not more so than those in the narrative of a former voyage, to which he occasionally refers. In that account, speaking of the late king of the Sandwich Islands, he writes, 'The prince, as soon as admitted to the rights of his father, receives the name of *Lio-lio*, that is, dog of all dogs, and such we really found him;'—there were 'several naked soldiers, armed with muskets, who guarded the monster. The dog of all dogs at last rose very lazily, and gaped upon us.' As a specimen of the ignorance manifested in the above assertion, I shall only state, that *Lio*, in the native language, does not signify a dog, but a horse. The king's name, however, was not *Lio-lio*, but *Riho-riho*, and, instead of signifying dog of all dogs, or, according to Kotzebue's principle of etymology, horse of all horses, signified the *dark or black heavens*."

Mr. Ellis exposes several errors, which might awaken suspicion of the scientific qualifications of the Post Captain in the Russian Imperial Navy; we select the following, because pertinent to our object; the captain certainly had as good means of ascertaining the course of *the tides*, as of learning the real merits of the missionary work.

"But, Kotzebue," we take the words of Ellis, "with the decision which ought ever to accompany *accuracy* of investigation, lays down the following general law!" "Every noon, the whole year round, at the moment the sun touches the meridian, the water is highest, and *falls* with the sinking sun *till midnight*."—Kotzebue must have paid little attention to the tides; for, instead of continuing from noon to 'fall with the sinking sun till midnight,' after six o'clock in the evening, they *rise*, and continue rising till midnight; so that, in the place of being highest at noon and lowest at midnight, 'the whole year round,' the tide is highest at both those times, and lowest about sunrise and sunset every day. So uniform and well understood is this ebb and flow in the sea, that throughout the islands, during the whole year, the time between evening twilight and midnight, is designated by a term expressive of its advancing height; and the hours from midnight to the appearance of the morning star are distinguished by terms descriptive of a corresponding fall."

We will specify another instance; it is of a historical nature, and a mistake of the greater importance because a gross calumny against the missionaries is attached to it, respecting the moral revolution in Tahiti. Kotzebue gives a detailed account

* Respecting the tides at the Society Isles.

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of a *King Tajo*, which, as *no such king ever existed*, "is wholly a fable," as Mr. Ellis asserts, "and has *no foundation whatever*, either in character or events, connected with the recent history of Tahiti."

But some of our reviewers also betray their incompetency in a similar way; that is, by giving evidence that they have not taken pains to understand all they write about. See the article in the Westminster, which has given currency to Kotzebue's aspersions.

"The writer of the notice," says Mr. Ellis, "appears to be totally unacquainted with the recent history of the people, and the *very situation* of the island; for, throughout the whole article, Tahiti is represented as among the Friendly Islands, though, in fact, it is nearly as far from them as Westminster is from St. Petersburg."

Witness also the first cited article in the London Quarterly, (reviewing the Voyage of the Blonde and Ellis's Tour,) which asserts,—the word Owhyhee "by a silly affectation of *Italianizing*," as they call it, "the language and proper names, (the letter *w* in Italian!) the American missionaries are pleased to spell Hawaii." But, says Mr. Stewart,

"The contempt lurking in this sentence fails of its object. No missionary ever gave the reason here assigned—such a reason never crossed the brain of any of their number, and silly indeed is the credulity of the writer in believing so improbable a fabrication."—"It would have been more kind in the reviewer, as a gentleman, before thus casting his contempt on the mission, to have informed himself *from the volume before him* (Ellis's Tour) of the *true** cause of the change he ridicules."

* It may be an act of justice to the scholarship of the missionaries to introduce the statement of Mr. Stewart. "One important and salutary consequence of establishing a Christian mission at the Sandwich Islands has been the introduction of letters, and a first effort of the missionaries was the reduction of the language to a written form. As soon as practicable, an alphabet, containing the requisite number of letters was chosen from the Roman characters; and, instead of the English sounds of the vowels, those given to them in the principal languages of the continent of Europe, were adopted. It was made a radical principle of this alphabet, that each letter should have but one invariable sound; in the oral language it was ascertained, that every syllable ended with a vowel. And following these three simple rules, the missionaries, in writing the name under discussion as spoken by the natives, *necessarilly* and *rightly* spelled it *Hawaii*, a word of three syllables, accented on the second. The *e* which had previously been attached to the name, was satisfactorily discovered to be only the sign of a case, and not a part of the proper noun.—The missionaries had but slender helps in forming their alphabet. The labors of Prof. Lee, of Cambridge, England, were unknown to them; Mr. Pickering's alphabet for Indian languages was not published. It is a sufficient proof of their intelligence and judgement, that the Hawaiian alphabet is formed precisely on the same principles as the alphabet of the New Zealand language, proposed by Prof. Lee, one of the most distinguished philologists in Europe. The vowel sounds are the same also as those in Mr Pickering's alphabet, which he formed for writing the Indian languages of the American continent. Those three alphabets, viz. Prof. Lee's, Mr. Pickering's, and that of the American missionaries, were formed independently of each other; yet they agree substantially, if not perfectly—all their vowel and diphthongal sounds, at least, are the same. On this subject, I speak with freedom, as the alphabet was in use previous to my arrival at the islands." The Quarterly is not yet reconciled to the innovation, nor, as would seem, wholly recovered from the dream of Italianizing.—[See No. LXXXIX. p. 85.]

It has become plain enough that the statements of these voyagers and writers are not to be held infallible. And if they err in so many matters, where truth and fact were quite as easy to ascertain as in relation to the missions, then, their bare declarations or mere insinuations ought not to be sufficient evidence to condemn the missionaries, but should in fact be allowed very little weight indeed, as they certainly would, if any other class of men were the accused.

We will finally consider some of the charges brought forward; first in relation to the Society Isles.—In the review of Beechey's Voyage, the Quarterly says,

“Our readers will regret exceedingly to find such a shrewd and liberal observer as Captain Beechey distinctly of opinion, that the cause of Christianity has not prospered in Otaheite to the extent we had been led to suppose by other accounts, and in particular by Mr. Ellis's delightful Polynesian Researches.”

Admitting such to have been Capt. B.'s opinion, what proof does his Voyage afford of its correctness? The first sentence quoted by the reviewer, apparently for evidence, is the following:—

“Ignorance of the language prevented my obtaining *correct information* as to the progress that had been made generally towards a knowledge of the Scriptures by those who were converted; but *my impression* was, and I find by the journals of the officers that it was theirs also, that it was very limited, and but very few understood the simplest parts of it.”

But of what value are the *impressions* of Capt. B. and his officers, although forming ‘a most able and accomplished society,’ when, confessedly, they were *prevented from obtaining correct information*? How, we ask, did they obtain the information, which occasioned their impressions? Did they use the proper means, as far as they were in their power? And suppose they had actually conversed with the Christian natives, and catechised them, and some of the converts had expounded texts in a sense more spiritual than accorded exactly with the faith of either commander or subaltern in one of his Majesty's ships of Discovery; must that, of course, convict the *islanders* of not understanding even the simplest parts of the Bible? But, we venture to ask further, did any one of this ‘able and accomplished society,’ by the help of an honest and competent interpreter, interrogate the more intelligent members, or any member, of a native church, to ascertain fairly the degree of their scriptural knowledge? The Deputation sent from the London Missionary Society did thus interrogate the converts. We give an instance. Speaking of a man and woman, who spent an evening with them at the house of Mr. Ellis, then in Huahine, they say,

"We questioned them upon several passages of Scripture, to prove their religious knowledge, when their answers were *not only generally correct*, but showed that they had *diligently read and considered* those portions of holy writ, which have been rendered into their native tongue."

Another item of evidence is adduced.

"Though their external deportment is certainly more guarded than formerly, in consequence of the severe penalties which their new laws attach to a breach of decorum, yet their morals have in reality undergone as little change as their costume. Notwithstanding all the restrictions imposed, I do not believe that I should exceed the bounds of truth in saying, that if opportunity offered, there is no favor, which might not be obtained from the females of Otaheite, for the trifling consideration of a Jew's harp, a ring, or some other bauble."

Here is a very sweeping charge, and one, too, of such a cast, as, if verified, will indicate, not only that 'the cause of Christianity has not prospered to the extent we had been led to suppose,' but that it has not prospered at all. But what is there to substantiate this grievous charge? Can any reader fail to perceive, that, in this extract, *the facts acknowledged disprove the opinion expressed?* It is believed, that there has been no change of moral principle, while it is admitted, that there is now a sense of decorum, and new laws which attach severe penalties to a breach of it, and a deportment certainly more guarded than formerly. But, did not Capt. B. know, that before the influence of the Gospel was felt, there was *no sense of decorum*, and *no laws whatever checking licentiousness*, and that the *external deportment* even of females was *not guarded at all*, but openly, universally, and grossly shameless? Was he not aware, also, that the largest and best part of the female population had not once been seen by him, or his companions? According to Mr. Ellis, the more virtuous part now carefully avoid the observation of foreign visitors, frequenting the ships and their vicinity as little as possible; of course, if Capt. B. grounded his opinion on any actual observation, it was chiefly of that portion of females, comparatively small, "from which no nation in the world would consent that their character should be drawn." Kotzebue, who was not dull in spying topics of censure, admits, that, in relation to this subject, the influence of the missionaries has been salutary; he states, that when the women occasionally visited his ship, they behaved with the greatest propriety.—We find but one other circumstance, that seems to be offered in evidence, from Beechey, against the missionary efforts. There is a complaint of the indolence of the natives, and 'their neglect to avail themselves of the capabilities of their country, and employ its productions to advantage.'

"It seemed as if the people never had those things revealed to them, or

had sunk into apathy, and were discouraged at finding each year burthened with new restrictions on their liberties and enjoyments, and nothing in return to sweeten the cup of life."

It is not manifest exactly what charge the writer intended to make in this sentence, or the reviewer to confirm by quoting it, whether to accuse the missionaries of not revealing to their converts the arts of civilization, or the converts of being more indolent than they were under their pagan faith. But, in either case, the censure is exceedingly unjust, and contrary to facts. "Capt. B. might, with the greatest facility," says Mr. Ellis, "either while on the spot, or since his return, have obtained such information as would have shown the unfairness of this censure, in its application to the people themselves, and especially to the missionaries." It is too well known, that indolence was a universal trait of character in the islanders of the Pacific. If the missions have had no influence in rousing them from their wonted listless apathy, but have even increased it, there is indeed reason to doubt, whether they have properly and efficaciously introduced the Gospel. But are these islanders to be judged by the bustling exertions of European cupidity, that compasses sea and land to fill its coffers with gold? We think the simple question is, have the missionaries pointed out the industrious arts and the comforts of life, and have the natives begun to pay to them a regular and sober attention? We ask, then, who taught the natives of Tahiti to cultivate cotton and coffee! Who taught them to manufacture sugar? to turn wood with the lathe? to saw timber, work iron, prepare lime, build roads and quays, houses instead of huts, and well framed boats instead of the shallow canoe? The missionaries. And to what cause is it owing, that where not many years since appeared only a few miserable huts, but partly screened by coconut leaves, and a half naked population, depending chiefly on the bread-fruit tree for subsistence, and passing their time in stupid idleness or disgusting sensuality, the eye may now rest upon smiling villages, with plastered cottages, school-houses, and capacious buildings for public worship, and behold a happy population decently clothed, enjoying the use of various household furniture, implements of agriculture, and tools of mechanic art, and generally engaged in some profitable manual labor, or diligently learning to read and write? The Gospel—received not in vain. It is this alone, which has roused the savage from his stupor and induced him to subject the animal to his rational nature, and renounce passive indulgence for regular exertion, as he has actually done, in a manner and degree, which may well excite admiration.

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The preceding charges are urged with flaming vehemence in the review in the Edinburgh, to which we have before alluded. Here is a specimen.

"The missionaries have managed to gain an entire ascendancy; but their labors, we fear, have as yet been productive of little good." "In eradicating idolatry, the missionaries, from whatever cause, have failed to substitute any better principle in its stead; and the only effect of the change produced has been to degrade Christianity to the level of the most brutish idolatry, without making one step towards raising these miserable idolaters to the rank of Christians. The people, consequently, are as much barbarian and savage as ever, or rather they are worse."

More need not be quoted. Did this writer fondly imagine that such unexampled dashes of the pen would throw the friends of missions into an agonizing dilemma? The only difficulty of their dilemma is, to decide whether it most becomes them, as they read, to pity a degree of ignorance, of which any Sabbath scholar in King William's realm ought to be ashamed; or abhor a wanton and deliberate calumny, which the father of lies might scarcely dare utter, except under covert of an anonymous review.

(To be continued.)

REGENERATION NOT WROUGHT BY LIGHT. *A Sermon,*
by EDWARD D. GRIFFIN, D. D., *President of Williams*
College. National Preacher. Sermon 118.

This Sermon probably owes its existence to the prevailing excitement in regard to differences of opinion among Orthodox Christians, and to the discussions growing out of this excitement. These discussions have been the occasion of grief and fear to not a few of the professed friends of truth, and to none, perhaps, more than to us; and yet there are some points of view in which they may be contemplated with satisfaction and even complacency.

I. In the first place, they evince a strong love of truth, and a high sense of its importance, on the part of Orthodox Christians. Among those who set lightly by the doctrines of religion, and think it of little consequence what a man believes, these discussions never could have arisen. Such persons boast of the differences existing in their community, and of their caring nothing about them. But Orthodox Christians have different feelings. They love the doctrines of the Gospel. They set an inestimable value upon that system of truth which goes,

in their estimation, to constitute the Gospel. They are suspicious of innovations, and dread a departure from this precious system. They fear the introduction of principles which, in their results, may go to undermine or subvert it. Now this feeling on the part of Orthodox Christians is highly creditable to them, as a body. It shows, that in their controversies with Unitarians and others, they have contended, not for contention's sake, but from a love of the truth. This high regard for the doctrines of religion, and jealousy for the purity and the interests of truth (if kept within proper limits—if not suffered to embarrass inquiry, and invade those boundaries between which Christian brethren may safely and innocently differ) is a godly jealousy. It is one of the greatest safeguards of religion and the church. It is a feeling inseparable from piety, and one which ought to be encouraged and strengthened.

2. A leading design of Providence, in the existing differences and discussions, seems to have been, to draw a close and interested attention to some of the leading doctrines of the Gospel. For several years, the course of things has been such, as to withdraw attention too much, as we think, from doctrinal religion, and fix it on the great enterprizes of Christian benevolence. *Action* has been the watchword of the times. Doctrinal discussions have been too much neglected; or if attempted, they have not been listened to with a proportionate interest. Partly to reprove this state of things, and partly to remedy it, God has seen fit to wake up the great Orthodox community to a consideration of differences existing in its own body. The doctrines of religion are again brought into discussion, and under circumstances which is drawing to them an absorbing attention and interest.—We do not say that in the present state of excited feeling there is no danger. There evidently is danger. The times require that every Christian should watch his heart, and every man who appears before the public should set a guard upon his tongue and his pen. There is danger of inflicting needless and unintentional injury upon some of the real friends of truth. And while exerting ourselves against supposed errors, there is danger of our verging to the opposite extreme. But if the pending discussions are managed discreetly, and the state of feeling now existing in the church is wisely directed and governed, we doubt not the result may be highly advantageous. Christians will be led to study the doctrines of religion; will become more thoroughly acquainted with them; will more highly value them; and will learn better how to understand and apply them.

3. This brings us to a third remark which we proposed to

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make in connexion with this subject. As the Millenium approaches—those days of increased purity and glory to the church—it is hardly credible that doctrinal knowledge should be altogether at a stand. The Bible will be more diligently studied, and better understood. Its great facts and principles will be more clearly unfolded, and will be fitted to bear with greater weight and effect upon the hearts and consciences of men. Now in this view, the present discussions may be regarded as one of the signs of the times—as one among a thousand indications that the latter day glory is approaching and near. The result of these discussions, if properly conducted, can hardly fail to be a better understanding of religious truth. Unfounded interpretations of Scripture will be detected and abandoned. False and bewildering theories, and those systems of philosophy which serve only to blunt the sword of the Spirit and obstruct the progress of religion, will be exploded. While the true doctrines of the Bible—the *truth as it is in Jesus*, will come out from the ordeal to which it is subjected, refined and purified, and better fitted to accomplish, instrumentally, that great work to which it is destined—the conversion of the world.

But it is time that we say a few words respecting the Sermon of Dr. Griffin. The title of this sermon, "Regeneration not wrought by Light," expresses a sentiment which is perfectly true, and one of great importance to be maintained. The opposite of this sentiment, or that regeneration *is* wrought by light, without the accompanying and special influences of the Holy Spirit, is what no person having any *just* claims to Orthodoxy has ever taught.

Dr. G. commences with remarking on a sentence which he had heard from some one—a sentence sufficiently foolish and extravagant to provoke remark—"If I were as eloquent as the Holy Ghost, I could regenerate sinners as well as he." Now we cannot pass, without entering a solemn protest against language such as this. We protest against it, not only as untrue—representing the work of the Holy Spirit as a mere effort of eloquence—but as rash and irreverent in the extreme, painful to the ears of pious people, and justly calculated to excite suspicion and alarm. (It is equivalent to saying, 'If I were God, I could perform the works of God!') By throwing out such expressions, inconsiderate men little think of how much mischief they may be the occasion.

The ground or theory on which Dr. G. undertakes to show that regeneration is not wrought by light is, in brief, as follows: "There is," in man, "a taste or temper distinct from exercise," "which is anterior to exercise, and which gives rise to all our

feelings and passions." This taste is illustrated by the bodily appetites, and by the different tastes among men, which fit them to relish a "variety of objects in nature, in art, in science, in literature, in business, in amusements, in society." "Allow me one of this family of tastes to stand related to Divine subjects, and I have found," says Dr. G., "what I sought." Regeneration in the strict sense, as distinct from conviction which precedes it, and conversion which is supposed to follow it, is a change of this taste or temper from sinful to holy. "It is an impression made upon a passive subject," and "is no part of the treatment of a moral agent." Consequently motives can have no instrumentality in producing regeneration. "Nothing can be a motive," says Dr. G., "which does not meet a corresponding taste. There must be a corresponding taste in the heart, before truth can move it to love. The question is about the production of this very taste."

We have already expressed our full acquiescence in the sentiment, that regeneration is not wrought by light, but we certainly cannot acquiesce in this mode of proving it. We design not here to enlarge on the subject of the "Taste Scheme," having expressed our dissent from it in a previous article.* We respect and honor many of our brethren who explain subjects in this way, and none of them more than the venerable author of the sermon before us. But we could not ourselves work in such a harness. Having enthroned sin back of the human will and above it, and represented a change as indispensable, of which man is the "passive recipient," and in which he is not treated as "a moral agent;" we should be constrained to regard the situation of the sinner as rather pitiable than culpable, and should hardly know what to say to him; or do for him, except to make him the subject of commiseration and prayer.—The author of the sermon before us may feel none of these difficulties. The ability and faithfulness with which he has long preached the Gospel, and the success which has attended his labors, would seem to evince that he does not. Still, this does not prove that minds differently constructed would not feel them, and that the views here exhibited, if generally adopted, would not become a serious incumbrance, not to say an effectual hindrance, to the progress of the Gospel.

* Review of "New Divinity Tried," &c. in the Number for March.

THE
SPIRIT OF THE PILGRIMS.

VOL. V.

NOVEMBER, 1832.

NO. 11.

COMMUNICATIONS.

To the Editor of the Spirit of the Pilgrims.

DEAR SIR,

As the correspondence between Dr. Beecher and myself is necessarily suspended for a short time, on account of his removal to Cincinnati; I have, in the meanwhile, prepared for your magazine the following rules for the right conduct of religious controversy. They are selected, with small variations, and considerably abridged from Stapfer's *Theologia Elenctica*. Many years ago I procured their publication in another magazine. The publication of them in a more condensed form will, I am sure, be regarded as very seasonable at this time, and as calculated to exert a salutary influence upon the Christian community. They are entitled to the earnest and repeated attention of those who engage in theological controversy.

LEONARD WOODS.

Theol. Sem. Andover, Oct. 24, 1832.

RULES FOR THE RIGHT CONDUCT OF POLEMIC THEOLOGY.

The appropriate ends of polemic theology are, the demonstration of truth, and the refutation of error. In this science, therefore, every thing should be so arranged, as that nothing may be omitted which may conduce to the attainment of its end; and on the contrary, every thing should be avoided, which may impede the attainment of its end.

FIRST RULE.

Let a person who is disposed to undertake a controversy, scrutinize himself; let him examine the motive or reason of his undertaking, whether it be a sincere love of truth, or whether it be ambition, or a censorious spirit, or some other sinful passion.

VOL. V.—NO. XI.

If a sincere love for the truth possessed the minds of all who hold the sacred office, most controversies would immediately terminate of their own accord, and the peace, so ardently desired, would be restored to the church. But if erudition is preferred to piety, and religion becomes an art, the natural and only effects are discord and debate.

But no one can convince another of the truth, who, being tinctured with false notions, has no certainty of the truth himself.

For he who demonstrates any principle, becomes convinced of its truth by his own demonstration; but if he doubts that principle, it must be that the demonstration was not sufficiently evident to himself: he cannot, therefore, by the same demonstration, hope or expect to convince another.

SECOND RULE.

Let no one commence a controversy on a principle of religion unless, having laid aside all his preconceived opinions, he has acquired a full conviction of the truth, founded on demonstration.

It is the special duty of a wise man to employ no means, which do not conduce to the end proposed; hence he who undertakes a controversy, ought, for his own sake, to beware of every thing in his understanding, or in his heart, which may obstruct the attainment of the end.

The human mind, on account of its extreme imbecility and depravation, is so deeply imbued with false notions and prejudices, and is so distracted by them, that it often mistakes the truth and defends error.

For preconceived notions, arising from heedlessness, or from perverse education, or from rash judgement, or from authority, have such control over many persons, that even those who esteem themselves learned, frequently assent to the truth for no other reason, than because human authority has given it influence over their minds.

Indeed, any one who does not derive the truth from the very fountain of truth, and does not studiously labor to arrive at certainty, is guided only by his prejudices. He esteems any proposition true, either because he has heard it from some man in high repute, or because it is extant in the writings of some celebrated author. He who is thus hurried forward by blind assent, never discerns the connection and harmony of truth, however it may flow from his own principles; nor is able to demonstrate it to the conviction of another. Nor can he know

the importance of defending a truth, unless he has an intimate and correct apprehension of its connection with fundamental principles. From the want of this apprehension arise many unimportant disputes, which ultimately terminate in a mere strife of words.

As the preservation of pure truth is the ultimate end of polemic theology, every thing which is hostile to truth should be laid aside. Whence arises the

THIRD RULE.

Since the depraved affections of the heart, especially ambition, a spirit of persecution, and attachment to sects, are very hostile to the truth, we should entirely divest ourselves of them before we enter upon religious controversy.

It must surely be granted, that such depraved affections as ambition, a spirit of persecution, and partiality for sects, are extremely injurious to the truth. He who is inflated with ambition, seeks not truth, but applause. Hence those unhappy religious contests, in which no one will yield to another, lest he should appear to be in an error; hence so many logomachies, or disputes about words; hence the seeds of new disputes; hence a fondness for contradictions, and pertinacity in the defence of error; hence, also, truth is lightly esteemed, while celebrity alone is sought.

Some are influenced only by a fondness for disputation, which flows from a spirit of persecution. He who is imbued with this spirit, cannot tolerate those who dissent from him, but regards every word of theirs with suspicion; and, by exaggerating their errors, infers heresy from any thing, although the system of truth is not affected. Hence new disputes originate. How much the progress of truth is thus obstructed, scarcely admits of computation. In this way, the mind is exasperated rather than convinced.

Most men are so attached to that religion in which they were educated, that they defend opinions derived from that source, without ever examining their truth for themselves. Thus they confide more in human than in divine authority.

We ought to conduct our inquiries after the truth, as if we had not yet discovered it; and to manage our controversies as if we were inclined to no sect.

These rules, or cautions, respect the person who undertakes a controversy; but even in the controversy itself, or in the mode of conducting it, rules of prudence are no less necessary, lest there should be an aberration from the end proposed.

Two things are sought in a controversy ; the demonstration of truth, and the refutation of error. Hence both the demonstration and the refutation should be so arranged as to effect the conviction of the errorist, and the preservation of truth, which is the scope of polemic theology.

For this purpose it is especially requisite, that the premises should be *infallible*. Whence arises the

FOURTH RULE.

Since in polemic theology, truth should be so demonstrated that the results may be certain, therefore we should neither confide in our own, nor in another's authority.

A demonstration ought to rest on premises which are certain ; and such premises must be derived from reason, or from revelation ; or there must be on earth some man who is infallible ; whose judgement, incapable of error, can decide, even without demonstration on any article of faith. But experience, independent of the testimony of the sacred Scriptures, affords sufficient proof, that such a man, who is truth itself, and incapable of deceiving or being deceived, never existed. Hence, in religion, no confidence should be placed in human authority, whether our own or another's, except it be supported by demonstration. We should recur to the simple principles of reason or revelation, where we may find a solid basis on which we may securely rest our feet. For both reason and revelation acknowledge God as their author.

FIFTH RULE.

If truth is to be demonstrated to the conviction of another, that method should be observed in communicating it, which will certainly produce conviction, unless the opponent labors to be blind.

To convince another by a demonstration of truth, there must be some method observed in the demonstration. The method should be this : let indubitable principles be premised, and from these, by just connection, and correct reasoning, let others be deduced. Those principles, therefore, should always be premised, from which the subsequent can be understood and demonstrated.

This method should be employed in treatises on the doctrines of faith, lest, by an unnatural and restricted method, the truth be founded on such premises as the opponent still doubts, which will greatly obstruct conviction.

The doctrines of faith should therefore be taught in such

connection, that one may always rest upon another, and the latter always derive light from the former. For if those principles which are especially fundamental in religion, are assumed as granted, and others are founded upon them; all conclusions drawn from such principles cannot but be doubtful to an opposer of truth. But when the foundation of the whole edifice is correctly laid, the superstructure will be immovable.

All the doctrines of faith will inevitably be uncertain to him, who errs respecting the foundation of the Christian religion, unless the truth both of natural and revealed religion, and the peculiar foundation of the religion of a sinner, which is *perfect salvation by Christ alone*, are well demonstrated. These fundamental articles being established, all the other doctrines of faith may be founded upon them.

Hence these primary principles, on which the certainty of all the other doctrines depends, should never be treated cursorily, as this would make all the conclusions derived from them doubtful.

SIXTH RULE.

In polemic theology all obscurity should be avoided, that by the evidence of demonstration, the opponent may be rendered certain of the proposition in debate.

The reason why the opponent should assent to the truth, is, that he perceives the connection and force of the demonstration; but while he does not comprehend the demonstration, he cannot be drawn to assent; or if he should assent, unless there is perspicuity in the reasoning, his assent will be blind assent. Wherefore all obscurity in the reasoning should be avoided, and simplicity carefully studied, that nothing may remain doubtful.

Hence, in the first place, all indefinite phraseology should be excluded, and the most simple diction employed: for obscure terms rather deceive than persuade, and are adapted only to disseminate disputes and logomachies, whereby the truth is greatly injured; especially since under these very terms much meaning is frequently concealed.

In the second place, in the communication of truth, the argumentation should be so arranged, that the opponent may conceive the connection between the predicate and the subject in debate; for on this depends the evidence of a demonstration, and wherever this is wanting there can be no certainty with respect to the subject which is to be proved.

These rules must be carefully observed in the demonstration of truth, if we would attain the end proposed. In the same

manner, in the refutation of error, all those means which conduce to the end must be employed, and all those which may obstruct it must be avoided. But above all, unless we design to wander from the point in debate, the state of the controversy, or the errors to be refuted, should be well understood. Hence the

SEVENTH RULE.

To refute the errors of any sect, the whole system of that sect must be well understood in its connection, so that the state of the controversy may be correctly defined.

Every sect has preconceived opinions, and hypotheses peculiar to itself, to which it is extremely attached; but among these hypotheses, there are certain primary opinions, which are fundamental to the others.

Now the whole of any system of error should be examined in connection, that we may know how one error is allied to another, and how every particular error contributes a share to establish a general hypothesis. In this way only will the system of the errorist be well understood; and its foundation being undermined, the whole edifice will inevitably fall. They are therefore wanting in judgement, who manage controversies by explaining and refuting individual errors, separately considered, having no regard to the whole system and to the mutual relation of one error to another; because the import and scope of most errors can be understood only in connection one with another. As therefore errors are to be refuted, and errorists convinced of the truth, the entire system of truth should be very well known. Whence arises the

EIGHTH RULE.

No one can refute the errors of another, and demonstrate to him the truth, unless he has a knowledge of every thing which tends to establish the truth, and thus understands the whole system of truth.

As it is highly important that the real sentiments of our opponents should be known by us, so it is equally important, before we attempt a refutation, that we should understand the system of truth in its various relations and connections. And *first*; the divine oracles, the fountain of all saving truth, must be studied with diligence and meditation, that instruction and wisdom being derived from them, all cavilings, all false philosophy, all objections, and all sophisms of the rebellious heart, may be easily detected and unfolded. We must acquire so correct and extensive a knowledge of the truths in the sacred

oracles, that we may perceive the consistency and connection of all essential truths ; how each flows from its primary principles, and how each accords with the general system.

Secondly. Since even those principles are to be refuted in polemic theology, which, being avowedly repugnant to the revealed principles of religion, can be repelled only by the principles of philosophy :—therefore a knowledge of this science is highly useful in polemic theology. For true philosophy greatly assists the human mind in its researches after truth, teaches it to form clear and definite ideas, and habituates it to decide with caution. This science assists the mind to apprehend the truth with correctness, and to detect and demolish error with facility. These general advantages and qualifications should be sought by the theologian in proportion to his obligation to secure himself from error, and to labor for the acquisition of indubitable certainty.

Further, philosophy teaches some truths which revealed theology presupposes to have been demonstrated ; such are the existence of God ; his attributes, which are the foundation of all religion ; his providence and universal government ; the nature and spontaneity of the soul, subjected, however, to divine guidance ; the immortality of the soul, and other truths. The more intensely the theologian labors to acquire certain and indubitable knowledge in this science, the greater will be his ability and skill in refuting errors derived from this source. And it would conduce not a little to a clear knowledge of essential truth, if the systems of theologians, and even the mystical books, should be examined with attention.

But polemic theology is not to be solicitous concerning every error : hence we form the

NINTH RULE.

In the selection of errors, there is need of consummate wisdom—lest we refute those only which are unimportant ; or, falling into the other extreme, spare those which are directly hostile to essential truth ; or, lest we esteem those principles erroneous, which are a part of the truth itself.

Errors are of different kinds. Some lie, as it were, entombed with the ashes of their authors, and are forgotten ; some are more, and some less important, while many principles appear erroneous which are really true. Hence a selection of errors should be made, as well for the sake of the authors, as for the sake of the sentiments. Nor should all the errors, which have ever been published, be accumulated from every quarter ; it is

sometimes better not to know them, than to recal them from the dead.

Here we might adduce instances which prove *that errors have been frequently disseminated, and embraced by multitudes, in consequence of the opposition made to them.* Caution should then be used in the refutation of any new-born error, lest we thereby occasion its dissemination. For such is human nature, that whenever the reading of any bad book is prohibited, or its sale interdicted by the chief magistrate, or opposition made, every one desires to read it, whether he can understand it or not, or whether he is first convinced of its truth or not; and thus the ignorant may be seduced. But in my opinion, it would be judicious never to prohibit the reading of such a book, lest common people should be rendered more desirous of obtaining and reading it, which can scarcely be prevented. But if learned and pious men would procure another edition, furnished with such notes and explanations, as would utterly overturn the errors of the book, the result would be, that the reader would have before his eyes truth opposed to the error, and by its light would gain instruction.

It is sometimes prudent to spare those erroneous opinions, which are not essentially injurious to the Christian church; lest by refuting them, we neglect, or help to increase more important errors. This however is so to be understood, that if we undertake to refute the whole system of any sect, no principles should be omitted, lest we appear to attack only those which are very easy of refutation.

Those errors, which constitute the primary hypotheses of a sect, which affect the very foundation of faith, and threaten extensive injury, which well accord with carnal wisdom, and exclude men from spiritual life and salvation, ought especially to be attacked. These should be opposed; these should be thoroughly eradicated.

But as on one side, moderation must be exercised, so on the other, the number of articles in dispute must not be too much diminished; lest while disposed to extend the bounds of religious toleration, we become chargeable with indifference to all religion.

Furthermore, we should be cautious lest we mistake that for error, which is, perhaps, a part of truth. This may happen especially in those articles, which surpass the human understanding; whose sublimity rises above the utmost scope of mental vision, or whose wide extent exceeds the narrow comprehension of human intellect. And this may evidently be true with respect to the sublime doctrines of the divine decrees and predestination, not to mention others.

TENTH RULE.

If we desire not merely to vanquish an errorist, but to convince him, we should treat him in such a manner, that he may perceive we are influenced solely by the love of truth, free from sectarian partialities.

In polemic theology, it is one object not only to preserve divine truth in its purity, but also to convince others of it; hence every thing should be avoided which may obstruct their conviction. Special prudence and caution should therefore be employed, that the opponent may not indulge any unfavorable suspicions respecting the person who undertakes the controversy; either that he is tinctured with prejudices, or that he is disposed to reject reason and argumentation, and assuming the character of a judge, to decide on every subject by his own authority. Our controversies must be so conducted, that we arrogate nothing to private opinion and private judgement, and yield nothing to sectarian partialities, but decline adducing the authority even of the most eminent divines and of the church itself, lest we appear desirous of prescribing laws to the understandings and consciences of others.

The reasons of the opponent are to be treated with attention, not with contempt; they are to be allowed their proper influence, and all difficulties are to be examined. For as soon as we speak contemptuously of the arguments which another adduces in support of his sentiments, we seem either to despise his intellectual talents, or at least, to be tinctured with prejudice, and not to allow his arguments a proper examination.

In polemic theology, then, a dispute is to be commenced, as though we were not zealously attached to any form of religion, and were very remote from partialities to any sect; for frequently it is highly conducive to the conciliation of an opponent, that when it is not improper, we should, for a short time, appear to hesitate in pronouncing our decision in favor of either sentiment. Thus says Minutius Felix, "Your understanding should be so well instructed, that you may hold the scale of an impartial judge, nor rashly incline to either side, lest your decision appear to originate in your own perceptions and feelings, rather than to be the result of our mutual disquisitions."

From the preceding sections, arises the

ELEVENTH RULE.

In polemic theology we are to aim at the conviction of the errorist; and as this conviction can be effected only by demonstration; we should not rage with violence, but reason with deliberation.

As we are to address another's conscience by a demonstration of truth, that he may perceive the correctness of our proposition, surely no external force should be employed. To induce another to renounce his former doctrines and to imbibe others, is an effect which cannot be produced by compulsion, but must take place with the utmost liberty of mind. It is a gradual operation. For the understanding cannot be violently forced to believe those doctrines false, which it has hitherto regarded as true, nor those true which it has regarded as false. We cannot induce another to adopt our sentiments except by arguments; and if any one should be forced by menaces and violence to profess our sentiments with his mouth, this would not be faith, but mere hypocrisy.

No profession, except that which is voluntary, can be acceptable to God; since in his word he uniformly requires voluntary worship. Although therefore another may be compelled by violence, by sword, by exile and other punishments, to profess our sentiments, yet he cannot be compelled to believe them. If, as all will grant, the conviction and assent of the heart, not the external profession, constitute religion; then no one can be violently compelled to embrace another religion. Were it granted that the professors of one religion have a right to persecute those that are inclined to another, perpetual war would pervade the whole earth. This would be a contest not to refute errors, but to exterminate errorists.

TWELFTH RULE.

No principle is to be ascribed to errorists, which they do not support. We should therefore abstain from deducing any pernicious and alarming consequences, which are not designed to convince their understandings, but to wound their feelings.

In this science we should aim principally to acquire the truth, and to convince others of it. Hence on one side we should treat the opponent with candor, and on the other, we should employ no means which may obstruct his conviction, such as the excitement of his anger, and the disturbance of his feelings.

If we affix false conclusions to his words, we do not exhibit, in his estimation, a mind ardently attached to the truth, but rather an ardent desire to offend and injure.

We use sincerity and uprightness with our opponent, when we express the meaning of his words according to their true import, without perverting them to another sense, or adducing them in a mutilated and disconnected form. But we act an ungenerous part, if, without carefully reading the whole of

his books, we judge of the whole from a part ; or if we attend to words rather than their proper interpretation.

Some leave the foundation of error untouched, neglect the pursuit of truth, and derive such consequences from the opponent's doctrine as are designed to obscure his reputation ;—consequences, which are either inconsistent with his doctrine, or which he strenuously denies to flow from it.

All consequences, however, are not to be rejected, if proper cautions are observed in deducing them.

First ; consequences are never to be derived from words simply considered, but from their true import when considered in their proper connection.

A scrupulosity about one or two phrases is not sufficient to condemn a book ; the whole series of reasoning must be taken into consideration. Every thing cannot be said at once in one place ; and there are some principles, which, taken separately, may be contradicted, but, when viewed in their proper connexion, are strongly fortified by the combined influence of others.

Heresy relates to the ideas, not to the words. The sense, not the expression, constitutes the crime.

Secondly ; the conclusion should flow, not through a winding channel, but directly, from the doctrines of the opponent ; and with such clearness, that he will be obliged to reject his principles, or admit the conclusion.

Thirdly ; a consequence which flows from the opponent's doctrines, should not however be at once imputed to *him*, since perhaps he did not discover or anticipate it.

Here a distinction should be made between those who are acute in judgement, who value themselves for the faculty of perceiving connections and distinctions, and those who possess less philosophic penetration ; between teachers and hearers ; between the learned and unlearned. For to the latter, consequences should not be hastily imputed, although they may clearly flow from their doctrines.

Fourthly ; it is evident we should abstain from deducing those conclusions which are suited only to injure our opponent, and expose him to ridicule and contempt. To convince an errorist, we are to avoid every thing which may disturb his feelings or excite his anger ; but these are the effects, when we employ such reasonings as render the opponent and his doctrine odious to others. Such arguments are called invidious. Hence the

THIRTEENTH RULE.

In polemic theology we must abstain from arguments

derived from envy; since the mind is not thus conciliated, but confirmed in error.

The argument is derived from envy, *first*; when any one, desiring to ruin the reputation and fortune of another, whom he would refute, enviously and maliciously explains his sentiments.

Since this is directly opposed to the rules of Christian love, to sacred Scripture, and to reason, and does not promote the truth, nor the honor of God, nor the conviction of man, it should be avoided with the utmost care.

Secondly; the argument is derived from envy, when for the sake of injuring the opponent, his doctrines are compared with the favorite sentiments of those men, who are already stigmatized and disgraced.

This happens, for example, when ancient and obsolete heresies are charged upon modern errorists, or upon the really innocent. Thus by the Romish Pontiffs and priests, the Protestants are compared to the Simonians, Novatians, Sabellians, Manichæans, Donatists, Arians, Pelagians, Nestorians, and others.

Since it rarely occurs that any modern will adopt the whole system of any ancient sect, it would be foolish to charge him with the whole heretical system, on account of any single sentiment, which he may hold in common with them. If, however, the design is upright and the reason sufficient, such a comparison may be made, both to exhibit the new tenets of any heresy in a true light, and to fortify others against it; at the same time avoiding a spirit of persecution.

Thirdly; the argument is derived from envy, when the importance of the question in debate is exaggerated, and those who are not fundamentally erroneous, are proscribed as heretics, and anathemas are fulminated against them.

Fourthly; the same is true, when the opponent's doctrine is defamed by invidious epithets. Thus the doctrine of the Reformers respecting predestination is called by some *blasphemy, stoical fatality*, and other invidious names; and

Fifthly; when the arguments of the opponent are concealed, or are not expressed in all their force; or when, in an unimportant controversy, the favorable conclusions, which may be derived from the opponent's principle, are concealed, and the unfavorable conclusions only, with which it is incumbered, are exhibited.

FOURTEENTH RULE.

Not the persons of errorists, but their errors only, are to be attacked.

The end of polemic theology and humanity itself, oblige us to treat errorists with lenity, while we aim to destroy their errors. Wherefore Augustine thus writes against the Donatists. "Love men, while you destroy their errors; contend for truth without severity; pray for those whom you confute and convince." The examples of Christ and his Apostles in some cases are not to be alleged; as when Christ, after much delay, employed severe expostulations with the Pharisees and Sadducees, calling them a *sinful and adulterous generation*, Matt. xiv. 4; *children of the devil*, John viii. 44; and John called them *generations of vipers*, Matt. iii. 7; and Paul called Elymas, the sorcerer, *a child of the devil*, Acts xiii. 10. As the examples of Christ and his Apostles are generally presented to us for imitation, so there are some cases in which we cannot lawfully imitate them; because Christ possessed absolute and supreme authority, and was endued with omniscience and infallibility; and the Apostles, in their official capacity, were also endued with infallibility. It was therefore proper for Christ and his Apostles to employ such means against their opponents, as no other men can properly employ.

Nor should the conduct of the ancients, who treated heretics with undue severity, be here alleged by way of excuse; their mode of conduct is not our rule, nor should their warmth, when too great, be applauded.

FIFTEENTH RULE.

Nor should we employ a satyrical style in writing. All raillery, severe reproach, and virulent banter, with which we should evidently gall our opponent, are to be carefully shunned.

Since we aim to convince our opponent, his feelings should not be disturbed, nor his anger and moroseness excited; but the satyric mode of writing will never induce our opponent to change his sentiments, but will rather provoke his indignation and excite a spirit of revenge: wherefore, if we desire to convince another, all scoffs, and jests, and sneers, must be avoided. This satyric style in composition arises from a malignant contempt of another, which disposes us to subject him to derision. But since this is improper in itself, and extremely exasperates the opponent, it is by no means to be indulged by the theological writer. Nor can those who prefer truth and sound argument to this fallacious method, be easily induced to assent to such a style.

Neither Christ, nor his Apostles employed this mode of re-

futation. The gravity of the subject in debate, requires that it should be treated with seriousness and reverence.

Nor does it accord with the principles of theology or moral philosophy, that one should be disturbed and harassed, who deserves either pity or contempt. Nor are the examples of the Fathers, who sometimes used this style, to be imitated; since, being seduced by a spirit of persecution, they followed inclination, rather than truth.

Although there are many, who, in a scurrilous style, being deficient in argument, expose to derision the venerable mysteries of religion; yet a refutation is not to be conducted, according to their example, by those who, being taught better things, have learned to treat sacred subjects in a sacred way. But since men, especially those who are young, are often captivated with this satirical mode of attacking religion; it should be shown how ridiculous are the arguments scoffers adduce, and that nothing in the world is so true, so sacred, and so venerable, that it may not be made a sport, and exposed to ridicule; it should be shown, that they advance nothing new, but that all the mysteries of religion, and the Cross of Christ, have long since appeared foolish and contemptible to the Gentile nations, fascinated with their worldly wisdom. This the Apostle Paul asserts, who was well versed in profane literature.

SIXTEENTH RULE.

Nor should we employ that perverse method of convincing and refuting infidels, which, to the extreme injury of the Christian religion, rejects those properties which constitute its essence.

I mean that mode of converting infidels, in which, for their sake, all mysteries and whatever surpasses human intellect, or exceeds natural religion, are laid aside. Against this, I shall at present make only one remark: that in this way, an occasion is offered to theological Pyrrhonism, or universal scepticism, by which every doctrine of the Christian religion is called in question, and its truth perverted.

DR. BEECHER'S THIRD LETTER TO DR. WOODS.

DEAR BROTHER,

The cares incident to a removal must suspend my part of our correspondence, till my establishment in Cincinnati. It is

my purpose then to resume it. I am thankful that our fraternal efforts receive so extensively the approbation of good men, who desire the purity and the peace of the church; and every day of my life, I shall have pleasure in the recollection, that supposed differences, which might have arrayed our influence in opposition to each other, have, by timely explanation, so far disappeared, as to present no obstacle to our mutual confidence and affectionate co-operation. Shades of difference, as we proceed in our discussions, we shall probably discover; but none, I trust, of such vital consequence as to occasion solicitude to ourselves or others.

That the subject of our correspondence may not wholly disappear from the public view during this interval, I beg your acceptance of my sermon, soon to be printed, on "Dependence and Free-agency;" which, being one of the topics lying within the range of our proposed discussions, may furnish occasion for such remarks on that subject as you may think proper to make.

And now, my brother, in taking leave of you and beloved New England, it affords me great pleasure to reflect upon the candor and courtesy and kindness and Christian affection, which have marked your every movement towards me in our frequent and extended communications, written and oral. The Lord grant that our highest hopes may be more than realized in the peace and prosperity of those churches, which Satan would divide, but which God, I trust, will preserve, and render strong for himself.

I am, yours affectionately,

LYMAN BEECHER.

New York, Oct. 12, 1832.

TRANSLATION OF A TRACT BY THE LATE GORDON HALL,
ENTITLED A DESCRIPTION OF TREEBOOZUN, OR THE
THREE WORLDS.

To the Editor of the Spirit of the Pilgrims,

Few persons have been more highly esteemed while living, or more deeply lamented when dead, than the Rev. G. Hall, formerly of the American Mission in Bombay; and I have more than once heard expressions of regret that no memoir of his life has yet been given to the public. Knowing that many who see your valuable journal will read with much interest what was written

by one whose memory they so fondly cherish, and will be gratified to see what kind of tracts are prepared and circulated among a heathen population, I send you the accompanying translation of a Mahratta tract, written by Mr. H. some years before his death. Several editions (I do not know how many) were printed and circulated by the American Mission. When the Bombay Tract Society was formed, four years ago, this was the first tract which was proposed to the Committee, and it now makes No. 1 in the series of tracts published by that Society. Since that time, seven editions, containing 21,000 copies, have been printed in the Mahratta and Goograttu languages, and nearly all have been put into circulation. Thus the lamented Author of this tract "being dead yet speaketh."

Yours, &c.

D. O. ALLEN.

Bombay, April 4th, 1832.

A DESCRIPTION OF TREEBOOZAN, OR THE THREE WORLDS.

Treeboozan means the three worlds. Three worlds were created, viz. heaven, earth, and hell. And who is the Creator and Lord of the three worlds? Heaven, earth, and hell, and all things therein, were made by God,* and besides him, there is neither Creator, nor Proprietor, nor Lord, nor King. He causes all things in heaven, on earth, and in hell to proceed according to his sovereign pleasure. In the three worlds, God is present at all times and in all places. He is now present in this place, and in every other place. But we cannot see God with our eyes, because he is a spirit. To see and to know God, is not the work of the eyes, but of the mind.

As the potter makes vessels of many kinds, but in forming them never makes his own figure or body, so God, who created all things, did not make himself. And as the potter and his vessels are not one thing, but different things, so God the Creator, and the things he created, are not the same, but different things. And as the vessels which the potter makes are not a part of himself, so the things which God created are not a part of God.

God, in creating all things, continued† himself to be a spirit, that is, immaterial, and without form. He is always near us, and near all men. If you ask how we can see and know

* The Hindoo Sacred books ascribe the creation of the universe to Brahma, and not to the Supreme God.

† Some of the Hindoos say that mind cannot operate on matter without being united to it, and that God, previous to creating the world as it now is, became united in some mysterious way with matter, and continues to be what some infidels have called the soul of the universe, producing the various phenomena seen in the material world. This is heathenism.

God, if he has no form ; then hear a comparison. The wind is here, and it affects our limbs. By means of it we breathe, and without it we cannot live ; but we do not see the wind with our eyes. And why ? Because the wind has no form, and therefore it cannot be seen. So God is near us, and in him we live, and move, and have our being. It is he who gives us power to talk and to see, and without him we cannot subsist for a moment. But as we never see the wind, so we do not see God.

Do you say, show us the form of wind ? Then, take a stone, and having made it smooth, carve an image of some kind upon it, and on this image write the name *wind*. Then, look at the image carved on the stone. What appears ? Do we see the wind ? No, we see nothing but the carved stone.

Thus if you say, show us the image of God, then taking a stone and making an image on it, place on this image the name God. Now look. Is it God that we see ? No, we see nothing but the stone. As placing the word *wind* on the stone does not make the wind visible, so writing the name of God on the stone does not make God visible. Therefore all *images* of God are a work of a deception. In respect to material things of every kind, God has commanded thus ; not to call them God, nor honor them as God, nor worship them. He has said, thou shalt not make images to be worshipped ; thou shalt not bow down to them, thou shalt not serve them.

Do you then inquire, who is God, the Proprietor of the three worlds ? Reflect then in your mind, and consider, that as he is the Creator of all things, he must be greater than all, and have more power than all. This is evident. And as he is the Preserver and Supporter of all things, so he must be good above all ; this also is plain. And as he has given understanding to all mankind, so he must be more intelligent than all. Being in all places, he sees every thing. The thoughts that are in the minds of men, and the words which they speak, as well as their actions, are equally well known to God, and from him there is nothing hidden, or concealed. For this reason all people should love God with all their heart, and they should fear him and worship him, for he is worthy of it, and he has commanded them to do so. God is perfectly holy, and he loves holiness and hates sin. When he sees holiness, he is pleased ; but when he sees sin, he is displeased. He has also determined that they who commit sin shall be punished, and that they who work righteousness shall be rewarded. Such is the Lord of the three worlds.

Hear now a description of the three worlds. The in-

quiry that first arises is, where are the three worlds? In the sacred books it is said, that heaven is above, that hell is beneath, and that the earth is between them. But it is not necessary for us to know *where* the three worlds are; but *what* they are is a most important inquiry for us.

Of the three worlds, heaven, earth, and hell, heaven was created first. But do not imagine that heaven is* like the earth. In heaven there is neither sun, nor moon, nor stars. In heaven, there is neither, land, nor sea, nor stars, nor wind. The inhabitants of heaven neither eat, nor drink, nor wear clothes. They neither marry nor are given in marriage, and they never die. Heaven is a spiritual place, and there God displays his character with so much clearness, that his glory is the light of the heavenly world. In heaven, God created many spiritual beings called angels. These were made for the service of God in heaven. As God is holy and a spiritual being, so the angels are holy and are without material bodies. When some of the angels disobeyed his laws, God immediately expelled them from heaven. The holy angels are not inclined to sin, and in heaven no sinful beings can live.

For the sinning angels who were expelled from heaven, and for all creatures who might become sinful, God created a place of punishment, and the name of this place is *hell*. Many figures are used in the sacred books to show how great misery is endured in this place. Thus it is described as a place of darkness, where the inhabitants never see the light; and as a place where worms are always eating them, so that they never enjoy any happiness. It is also described as a furnace and a lake of fire, in which wicked people will be always burning without being consumed or discharged; in which the pain they suffer is so great, that they gnash their teeth and gnaw their tongues. But notwithstanding the pain which is endured by the wicked in hell is so great, and is to continue forever, yet they persist in hating God, and become more sinful and miserable. Indeed so great is the pain endured in hell, that no man can describe it, or conceive of it as it really is.

Now hear a description of the earth. After heaven and hell were made, God created the earth. In the space of six days, he made all things out of nothing, continuing himself to be immaterial. The sky and the ground were made by his word. Then the sun and moon and stars were created by his word, and day and night began to proceed. At his command, veg-

* The place of future happiness described in the Hindoo sacred books is represented as abounding with means and opportunity for every kind of sensual indulgence. Of a heaven of holiness, nothing is said.

etation and trees began to grow. In the same manner, fish of every kind in the sea, as well as animals on the land, and fowls in the skies, were created. After this, God made one man and one woman, and from these two all the people on the earth are descended. These things are contained in the sacred book.

The name of this man was Adam, and the name of the woman was Eve. They were both created holy, and God commanded them to be fruitful, that the earth might be filled with inhabitants. Before the first man, Adam, and his wife, Eve, had any children, they both became sinners. And as their dispositions became sinful, so the dispositions of all who have descended from them are sinful; thus all men of every class have become sinful. When mankind became sinful, the displeasure of God came upon them, and they were helpless and unprotected. They were not able to deliver themselves, nor was there in their hearts any desire to be free from sin. What then followed? Mankind had become sinful; nothing sinful can dwell in heaven; the angels were expelled because they sinned, and mankind being sinful, could not be admitted into that holy place. It has already been related how hell was prepared for the punishment of wicked beings. Must then all mankind go to hell, and there live forever, the enemies of God and the companions of apostate angels, and not one of the human race be admitted to Heaven? Such was not the will of God. This was far different from his purpose. When people became sinners, God in mercy made known a way for their deliverance. But what way could there be for the salvation of fallen men? Being sinful, they could make no atonement for their sin, nor could they give a ransom for their deliverance. And if they should suffer the punishment which their sins deserved, they must be miserable forever in hell. But it was not the will of God that all men should go to hell; and as the punishment which sin deserved could not be remitted without suffering, (or as he could not forgive sin without showing his displeasure against it,) God was pleased to give his beloved Son to suffer the punishment which men deserved for their sins.

Do you ask who is the Son of God? Know then that in the Deity there are three, viz., the Father, the Son and the holy Spirit. The Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Spirit is God; and they are equal in every perfection. Nevertheless there are not three Gods, but there is one undivided God. God the Son has also another name, Jesus Christ, and he determined to make an atonement for the sins of men, that they might be saved. To save people from going to hell, he assumed a human body, and becoming thus incarnate among

men, he made an atonement for their sins. The design of Christ in suffering for the sins of all men was, that their sins might be pardoned, and the punishment due to their sins be suffered.

It was foretold by God through his prophets, that Jesus Christ would become incarnate, and coming into the world at a certain time become the Saviour of mankind. It was also foretold, that he would instruct the people, and perform miracles among them, and that to save the world, he would suffer the punishment due to the sons of men in his own body. And people were commanded to repent of their sins, and believe on this Savior who was to come. In this manner, mankind were placed in a state of trial. Before Christ came into the world, many people, hearing these things, believed; and repenting of their sins, obtained forgiveness; and dying happily, went to enjoy the everlasting happiness of heaven.

At the time foretold, Christ the Saviour came into the world. As had been predicted by the prophets, he was born of a virgin in the country of Judea. When he was about thirty years old, he began publicly to instruct the people, and to perform miracles. At his command, the blind received their sight, the dumb became able to speak, the deaf received the power of hearing, those afflicted with evil spirits were healed, the lame were cured, the sick were restored to health, and the dead were raised to life.

While Christ was teaching the people, and working miracles among them, he told his disciples thus; "I will give my life for the salvation of the world, and after three days I shall rise again. My life I give of my own will, I have power to lay down my life, and power to take it again."

In this manner, Christ became a substitute for mankind, and took the punishment due for sins on himself. In suffering the punishment which their sins deserved, he gave up his own life. As he had foretold, so he rose again from the dead on the third day; and then for the space of forty days he remained among his own people and instructed them.

Then Jesus Christ commanded his disciples, thus; "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth shall be saved; but he that believeth not, shall be damned." And when he had said this, in the view of his disciples, he ascended to Heaven.

While Christ was incarnate, many people believed on him; and repenting of their sins, obtained forgiveness, and are now enjoying happiness in heaven. After Christ ascended to heaven, his disciples went into many countries and preached the

way of salvation. And many hearing them, believed; and repenting of their sins, they obtained the favor of God and the happiness of Heaven.

Now be assured, that there is no other Saviour of the world except Jesus Christ, and there is no other atonement for sin except what he made. Before Christ came into the world, many people, without witnessing his incarnation, or the miracles he did, yet believed the declaration of God, and were saved. It is now almost two thousand years since Christ came, and during this time, multitudes of people, without seeing him or his miracles, yet hearing the way of salvation through him, have believed, and repenting of their sins, have obtained the happiness of heaven. And in the sacred books it is written, "Blessed are they who, not having seen, have yet believed." From the beginning of the world to the present time, an innumerable multitude of people, repenting of their sins, and exercising faith in Christ, have become free from sin and died in peace. These persons are now, and will forever, be enjoying the happiness of Heaven. But many others, who would neither repent nor believe, did not obtain the favor of God, and at death they went to hell, there to be forever in misery with the fallen angels. Such is a brief description of the world until the present time.

And how will it be hereafter? Know then, that the Gospel of Jesus Christ will be preached in all countries. All other kinds of religion will be abandoned and rejected, and Christianity, having spread over every country, will be the religion of the whole world. At the present time the religion of Christ is preached in many countries, and in these places the worship of idols and such like false systems of religion have ceased. So in all countries, the religion of Christ will be preached, and there will be no religion besides Christianity; for this is the only religion which has been established by God. When the religion of Christ shall have spread over all countries and continued for a long time, then the end of the world will come. God will then judge all nations. All who have lived on the earth since the beginning of the world, shall be restored to life. They who have been truly pious will be raised to obtain everlasting happiness, and their spirits and bodies being again united, they will go to heaven there to be forever happy. But all who continued in sin through life will be raised to shame and everlasting misery, and their bodies and spirits being again united, they will go to hell, there to suffer eternal misery. When God shall have judged the people, the earth will be burned up, and this will be the end of it. But heaven and hell will continue forever. Of these, there will be no end.

The present life is given to men for a time of trial. Each

individual has only this one* birth. They who are prepared for heaven at the time of death, as soon as they die will go to heaven, and there be eternally happy. No other birth is allowed to them. And they who are sinful at the time of death, as soon as they die will go to hell, and there be forever miserable. No other birth will be allowed to them. Thus, if a man through indolence does not sow his field when the rainy season begins, the rain is not delayed on his account. The time of sowing does not wait for him, nor will it come to him afterwards. So the man who does not forsake his sins and obtain the mercy of God in this life, will find no time to do it afterwards. Death will not wait for him, and after death there will be no opportunity for him to prepare for heaven. As every man is when he dies, so he must be forever. He who is holy when he dies, will be forever holy and happy; and he who is sinful at the time of his death, will be forever sinful and miserable; for so it is written in the sacred book. For this reason, all people should immediately prepare for death and happiness, and the man who delays doing this, is in a most fearful and dangerous state.

O all people! God is now giving you time, and he says "now is the time, and now is the day for you to obtain salvation; to day if you will hear, do not harden your hearts." The mercy of God towards sinful men was so great, that he gave his beloved son Jesus Christ to suffer the punishment deserved for your sins. The love of Jesus Christ, who is God, was so great towards you and all people, that becoming incarnate, he suffered in his own body the punishment which your sin deserved. If then the love of Jesus Christ was so great towards you, ought you not to love him and to believe in him? The way to heaven has been made so clear by Jesus Christ, that every man who truly repents of his sins, believes in Christ, and practises his religion, may obtain salvation. But all who will not do thus, shall be destroyed.

O Almighty God, thou art the Lord of the three worlds. All people ought to fear thee and to worship thee only, and they ought to serve thee, for thou art worthy. But we are in danger of suffering the misery of hell for our sins. Do thou have mercy on us. Cause us to know our sins, and to find and understand the way of salvation by Christ. May the things we have heard, deeply affect our hearts. May we have true repentance for our sins, and genuine faith in Christ. Cause us to walk in thy way, that our sins may be pardoned through the atonement of Christ, and that we may be made holy. Amen.

* The Hindoos believe in the transmigration of souls after death, and that an almost infinite number of births is allotted to each person,

WATTS ENTIRE FOR PUBLIC WORSHIP.—ADDRESSED TO
CHRISTIANS.

BELOVED BRETHREN,

Dr. Watts may be numbered among the brightest lights, that have ever beamed upon our dreary world; the loveliest star in the whole constellation of his age. What myriads have rejoiced, and are still rejoicing, in his light! On his wings, what multitudes have been wafted to glory! Among all the uninspired, he is first in sacred song. Though many others have sung well, he has greatly excelled them all. Who has come half so near the spirit of the sacred originals, as this heaven-anointed bard? He has composed more sacred lyrics of first rate excellence, than all his fellows. The whole band besides, have not produced so many touching, melting, thrilling, divine songs, as have flowed from his single pen.

And now, my Christian friends, are you willing, that these seraphic strains—these inestimable treasures, should go down to the dust of oblivion?—that they should be lost to the sanctuary?—lost to every age that is yet to come?—that they should no more rouse and animate to arms and victory, “the sacramental host of God’s elect?” Add to your psalmody as many spiritual songs as you please; but do not rob the sanctuary of a single verse of Watts, that has been hailed and consecrated by seven generations.

Perhaps it will be said, that the poetry of Watts is exceedingly various in point of excellence; that some parts are as low as others are exalted; that a number of his stanzas are unfit to be sung; that it must really be a kindness to omit them; that many others are indifferent, and may be omitted without material injury. Take heed, brethren, I beseech you, how you listen to such suggestions. The more specious they seem, the more dangerous you may find them. You may indeed feel, as perhaps most of his admirers do, that he has imperfections, which you would willingly spare, especially, to give place to sweeter, nobler strains. But can you suppose, that any one will make omissions and additions exactly or nearly according to your views and taste? This would be to expect what surely you can never realize.

“’Tis with our judgements, as our watches; none
Go just alike; yet each believes his own.”

I must indeed acknowledge, that in my most admired author, are hundreds of verses, which I would readily part with.

But can you suppose, that I would trust any person to cross and blot for me? Not a verse; not a line. It might be my favorite—my choice jewel.

Though my taste may not be better than another's, yet it is probably different from all; and for myself, it must be better. Most heartily do I concede to others, what I claim for myself, the right and duty of using their own judgement and taste, for their own edification. You can certainly best judge, what pleases and edifies you; and it is at once your right and your duty, to endeavor to be edified and carried forward to heaven as fast as possible. Are the versions of Tate and Brady most edifying to you? Be it so. By all means, use them; and let them comfort and animate you to the utmost, until you are prepared for nobler strains. If you are better pleased with Watts, hold him fast; and let no man attempt to abridge the liberty wherewith Christ has made you free.

Can we suppose, that the time is come, when Watts's book, *as a whole*, should be excluded from our churches? Even if there are parts which should be discarded, who shall undertake to expunge them? What one would reject, another might approve, and a third, admire. Different persons might condemn or approve for very different reasons, relating to sentiment, subject, metre, &c. Persons often reject, for reasons that ought to excite their approbation. Is there the least probability, that any abridgment of Watts can be so generally acceptable, or so useful, as the whole? The experiment has been tried again and again. In making this experiment, perhaps no one has come nearer success than the judicious and much lamented Worcester. He supposed "that Watts's book might be very considerably abridged without detriment." Such an abridgment he attempted "with a cautious and trembling hand," and, as he hoped, "in a manner not to offend the pious and judicious admirers of that venerated psalmist." And surely he had some reason thus to hope. He was much encouraged in his enterprise. In this cause, my mite of influence was freely afforded. I was convinced, that Watts's book had numerous imperfections. I doubted not, that my most respected friend would judge of them, much as I did—that he would retain the good, and cast away the undeserving—that of course, I should be satisfied and pleased with his omissions and improvements. Alas! how hasty and unfounded was my decision! How grievous was my disappointment, to find that he had omitted a great number of psalms and hymns and verses, that I had considered among the most excellent! It is this disappointment, this painful experience, brethren, that now constrains me to lift

my warning voice, if so be, that it may prove a word in season to some of you. Others were still more dissatisfied, than I. To be dissatisfied with the performance of one I so loved and esteemed—a performance that had cost him so much solemn and arduous labor—a performance, to which, I had lent my most cordial encouragement—this was difficult in the extreme. Many others, who had not such counteracting motives, were much more dissatisfied than I. He *did* give offence. However undesigned and unsuspected by himself, he *did* give offence to many of the most “ardent admirers of that venerated psalmist.” Like a good man, however, he retraced his erring steps, and restored every ejected portion to its place, like bone to his bone, at the resurrection. He published an edition of Watts entire, with Select Hymns, &c., a work which has proved, and still continues, highly acceptable to a large portion of the Christian community. There is no probability that his Christian Psalmody* will receive the honor of another edition.

To a part of Watts’ lyrics, it has been objected, that they do not comport with the grand design of sacred song,—that some are too terrific, and others too plaintive. But what is the design of sacred song? Is it merely to give thanks to God; to celebrate his glorious acts; to shout forth his praises; to excite and express our holy, and grateful and gladsome emotions? Such is unquestionably the design of all the music and all the poetry of heaven; and such, too, is the character of many a song of spiritual conquerors on earth, proceeding from victory to victory, overcoming their enemies by the blood of the Lamb. But is this all? Dear fellow pilgrim, *is this all?* Are there no mournful dirges, no notes of penitential anguish, no pungent strains of godly sorrow, to be poured forth from contrite hearts in this vale of tears? Are not some of the most affecting strains of the inspired psalms adapted and designed for this very object? To say, that all sacred music and poetry must be on the cheerful key—what is this, but to pretend, that we are wiser than the Bible?—wiser than its Author?

And by what authority can it be said, that sacred song must never be terrific? *Upon the wicked, God shall reign snares, fire and brimstone, and a horrible tempest. This shall be the portion of his cup.*†

These thoughts, and such as these, were inspired by God himself, and addressed to the chief musician, and left for succeeding ages on purpose to be sung. Shall Watts be condemned for adopting the very thoughts, and as far as possible, imi-

* Watts abridged.

† Ps. xi. 6.

tating the very words, that the Holy Spirit has taught for this object? Knowing the terror of the Lord, should we not endeavor, by all proper means, to persuade men to flee from the wrath to come? Is not sacred psalmody among the means, consecrated to this end? Should not the thunders of Sinai, and the more awful vengeance of Calvary despised, be rendered, if possible, more dreadful still in the ears of the wicked, by the aid of poetry and music? Was not Moses inspired to write and leave for the children of Israel, a most solemn and awful song for this very purpose? And are not many of the inspired strains of David, Asaph, &c. on the same key, and adapted to the same end?

You may possibly hear it objected, that many of Watts' hymns are too much like sermons, or parts of sermons; and that when sung, the exercise appears too much like preaching. In a recent and much admired publication, is the following remark, "Modern hymns are not lyrical, but didactic. They only preach in rhyme; and thus they reach the head, but not the heart." If being *didactic* is a fault, no doubt our favorite poet is in this respect the most faulty of all the holy band. Would not every one of his hymns be ready to stand up as a swift witness against him? But must not the whole book of psalms fall under the same sweeping sentence of condemnation?—or rather the Author of those divine compositions? Was not every one of the whole one hundred and fifty given by inspiration of God? Is not every one profitable, not merely for the high purposes of devotion, but for *doctrine*, for reproof, for correction, for *instruction* in righteousness? Is it not, then, one of the most distinguishing glories of Watts, that his lyrics are in this respect so much like the lyrics of the Bible, that they do so beam and blaze forth with divine and eternal truth?

And now, my brethren, let me inquire, Can you approve of blind worship? Can you believe, that "ignorance is the mother of devotion?" Do you desire any devotion on earth, but that which is prompted by the truth and Spirit of God? Do you expect or desire any other in heaven?

Faithfully weigh the lyrics of Watts in the balance of the sanctuary, the supposed faults against the real excellencies. Do you not find the contents of one scale lighter than air; and of the other more weighty than the solid gold?

But some one may possibly inquire, "Shall Watts' psalmody never be abridged for public worship?" I answer, Yes. And may the Lord hasten the day, when such a measure shall be

expedient. "O consummation, devoutly to be wished?" But I fear, that neither we, nor our children will live, to see the day. It will be, when a greater lyric poet than Watts shall arise; one who shall as much excel him, as he excels others—when God shall bless the world with a sweeter, nobler psalmist, than ever yet sung on earth. For the perfection of his praise and the glory of his name, the Lord will doubtless raise up to his people such a bard, before the Millennium is far advanced. Perhaps he will be sent before, as the harbinger and hastener of that blessed day. Will not his coming be hailed in heaven? Will not *he*, who has so long been acknowledged first in holy song, then rejoice to take the second place?—rejoice to see many of his compositions giving way to strains more magnificent and charming? Will not a new string then be added to his immortal harp—that harp, which God's own hand has formed and tuned, which shall sound sweeter and sweeter, louder and louder, to all eternity?

Let me again entreat you, beloved, not to be in haste to give up the enrapturing strains of this Heaven-taught bard. Your danger here may be much greater, than you suspect. In this age of new and excellent things, some new collection may be put into your hands for examination. Its claims may be urged upon you with tender and solemn importunity. It may contain real excellencies—striking, glowing, heavenly and heaven-inspiring charms. These you may see and feel. But the superior excellencies of Watts, that are omitted, you do not consider. For the time, the question before you seems to be, between great worth on the one side, and nothing on the other. With much confidence and joy, you make the decision. The new Psalmody is adopted; and Watts as a whole is dismissed. You have now but the remnant of that most gifted bard—but the scattered, mutilated members of that fair body, on which you had gazed with so much delight. But still you do not feel—do not mistrust your loss. You exult in your new treasures, and boast of your sparkling riches. For months, and possibly for years, you continue pleased. But at length, having become satisfied with the new wine, you desire the old, the good old wine of Watts. Your heart now says, *The old is better*. You search for a favorite hymn, but it is not in your book; for a second, but in vain. You succeed in finding a third, at least, in finding parts of it. Your heart gladdens at the sight. But soon your gladness is dashed with gloom. These parts seem like the surviving members of a beloved family, weeping over the graves of their relatives. You cannot but mourn with

them. Mourn and weep you may ; but you cannot recall to the sanctuary, your beloved exile.

Take heed, brethren, how you mingle for yourselves a cup so bitter, so injurious. Add as many songs as you please, for the service of the sanctuary ; but do not spare a consecrated line of Watts, until a greater than he, shall give you a better version of the psalms, and hymns in proportion of superior claims.

Most cordially yours,

JOSEPH EMERSON.

Boston, Aug. 1, 1832.

REVIEWS.

CHURCH PSALMODY: A Collection of Psalms and Hymns, adapted to Public Worship ; selected from DR. WATTS and other authors. Boston: Perkins and Marvin, 1831. pp. 576.

The singing of psalms in the worship of Jehovah is unquestionably a divine institution, and is adapted to assist devotion in an equal degree with any of the services of the sanctuary. The design of music, however, as a part of religious worship, seems, in general, not to be well understood ; and for this reason, as well as others, its characteristic effects are not generally realized.

The great majority in our worshipping assemblies seem to look upon the singing as a kind of interlude, dropped in between the parts of the service, to afford the minister and the congregation a necessary respite during the progress of the exercises ; as if they were liable, without some such agreeable interruption, to become dull and burdensome. The evident relaxation upon the features and general posture of an assembly ; nay the degree of confusion and even of levity which can be tolerated in the house, while the choir is performing the psalm, are melancholy indications, that this most exalted and impressive exercise of devotion and praise is by multitudes regarded as merely a sounding brass or tinkling cymbal. If a garment is to be adjusted, or a foot stove to be shoved across the pew ; if,

in winter, the fire is to be replenished, or, in summer, a window raised, or a boy sent out to close a blind; these movements are all conscientiously reserved to be effected in the time of singing. And we have observed sometimes, to our astonishment and grief, that the people are countenanced in these improprieties even by the minister himself, who takes the same opportunity to attend to his own private affairs; to look over his sermon, to revolutionize the pulpit, to thwack the great Bible upon the cushion, and finally, towards the close of singing, to clear away most effectually every obstacle from his speaking organs. Such behavior cannot but excite disgust; for it is indecent and pitiful in the extreme. What would be thought of that Christian assembly where a contribution should be taken up in time of prayer? Yet sometimes the last singing is profaned in this manner.

But although this depravation of the public taste in regard to sacred psalmody is so easily pointed out and condemned, it is not so easily remedied. No attempts which have been hitherto made for this end have been crowned with any important success; and we have sometimes feared that there are causes or circumstances affecting the case, whose existence has not been discovered, or whose operation is not well understood.

Much improvement might doubtless be made in our psalmody, if all Christians could come to feel its real importance, and could be induced to bestow that attention upon it which it deserves. A fatal impression seems to rest on the minds of most professing Christians, and even of some ministers, that they have neither the ability or the right to understand, or meddle with the music of the sanctuary, because they have never learned to sing. Consequently they hold themselves excused from any particular responsibility in relation to it. Others, in a few instances, have inclined to the opposite error. Because they have once paid some attention to singing, they feel no diffidence whatever in their own ideas respecting the art itself, or the best method of rendering it subservient to devotion; and if their ideas happen to be peculiar, they may be emboldened to put a rude and dangerous hand to the work of improvement. We are not of the number who insist that men must be connoisseurs or amateurs, in order to form a correct judgement in these matters. Enlightened common sense, influenced by good taste and piety, is all that is absolutely requisite. But at the same time we do insist that the common sense of the people at large, has never yet been sufficiently enlightened on the subject. Even connoisseurs and amateurs are frequently, almost as ignorant as others, of the peculiar genius of church psalmody; and when this is the case,

the part they take in its performance inflicts a most serious injury upon it.

An expedient has been resorted to in some places, with a view more deeply to interest the great body of the people in the exercise, which we cannot pass unnoticed, because we cannot but consider it as one of very questionable utility. We refer to what is known by the name of congregational singing; where all the assembly are encouraged to join in the performance. We are aware, that those by whose instrumentality this custom has been introduced, are for the most part religious people, and that they are influenced in this matter by the most laudable intentions. We honor them, moreover, as characters whose standing in the community must and ought to give great weight to their example and opinions. But from these very considerations it seems of the more importance that they should not unadvisedly give their countenance to measures affecting injuriously the best interests of the churches.

The most plausible plea for congregational singing is, that it gives every individual in the assembly an opportunity to join in this delightful duty. But this argument proceeds on a false supposition, viz. that a person is unable silently to unite in the singing of others, with the same devout sensibility as when he aids in the performance himself. Unquestionably, every one, who is capable of it, finds a rational satisfaction in the very exercise of singing; and when alone, his feelings may often be excited or soothed, in no small degree, by the melody which he makes to his own ear. But the highest effects of music are never experienced in this way; and it is believed that a religious worshipper, whenever his soul is deeply moved with pious emotion, by the power of expressive melody, naturally restrains his voice, and even his breath, to listen. Men love to sing, we know; but there is *more weeping* among hearers than singers. And surely no pious and discerning musician needs to be told that his voice may be made apparently to yield its most kindling and melting strains, while his heart within him is comparatively unmoved. Nay, there are not a few of this class, who affirm that the vocal performance of music in public worship, is, from the nature of the case, an impediment to the acquisition of the highest devotional frames; and that those who constitute the choir do, in this particular, make a personal sacrifice for the public edification.

Thus much we have felt constrained to say on the subject of congregational singing; because we regard it as decidedly prejudicial to the best interests of church psalmody; and because we have long been not unconcerned spectators of its en-

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croachments, in the disguise of a friend, upon some of the fairest portions of the American churches. There is, unhappily, something in its aspect, at the first view, adapted to impose upon superficial observers; and if, in the present low state of church music, with the prevailing inattention to the science of the subject, this mode should be zealously recommended for general use, and sanctioned by a few influential congregations, it might find an extensive reception. Such an event we do most sincerely deprecate; and we desire, while we may hope to be candidly heard, to caution the churches against it. Let the church, having once, for good reasons, dismissed this imperfect form of psalmody from her use, be satisfied with what she has done, and never again receive it into favor; at least until the state of society shall have been so far improved as to render this sort of performance essentially a different thing from what it is at present.

We have already intimated, that the existing errors and abuses in the psalmody of the churches, chiefly proceed from popular ignorance of the art of music itself; and from superficial or perverted notions respecting its adaptation to the purposes of devotion and praise. We cannot, therefore, consider the way as prepared for a particular examination of the work whose title stands at the head of this article, until we have presented our readers with a brief, but distinct analysis of these first principles.

Sound is the principal element of music. Man is so made, that the different qualities of simple sounds, especially when prolonged so as to excite the discriminating notice of the ear, will awaken various corresponding sentiments, affections and passions in the soul. Whoever has heard the roar of a distant cataract, or listened to the dying peal of thunder, has felt how those inarticulate sounds, which are mellow and deep and long continued, have power to arrest and elevate the feelings, and impress them with awe and solemnity. Whoever, on an evening of summer, has listened to the "harp of the winds," as it sifted from the gales the elemental music of nature, has felt how sweet and delicate sounds, gradually swelling and gradually decaying, can draw the attention away from the common concerns of life, quicken sensibility, stimulate the fancy, insinuate by degrees a softer train of ideas, and beguile the soul into grief, or pity, or love. Instrumental music has often been known to draw tears from those who had no acquaintance with the art, nor any uncommon relish for it. The Greeks and Romans supposed that music could alleviate some kinds of bodily pain; and certain it is that a degree of mental agony, which

no other means could assuage, has sometimes yielded to the witching persuasion of music.

But those sounds which, of all others, gain the readiest access to the human heart, are produced by the human voice. The supericrity of the voice over instrumental music, in affecting the heart, is principally owing to its peculiar expressiveness; in other words, its capability of being modulated by the emotions of the singer. Its simple notes, without the assistance of words, when flowing from a heart deeply touched with emotion, have an immediate effect upon the hearer, to awaken the same sensibility; and the pathos thus awakened is much deeper than that which the sounds of any mere instrument have power to excite.

But some auxiliary is necessary to give to simple sounds a *definite* signification, without which they can excite only indefinite or general emotions. This important auxiliary the voice is able to furnish, by bringing appropriate words into co-partnership with its impassioned tones. In the human voice it is, that music has been "married to immortal verse;" and it is by virtue of such a union that vocal music acquires that character of expression, by which it makes a determinate appeal to our feelings. Not that the poetry which is sung is itself the seat of musical expression. It is only the interpreter of it. The poetry it is true, when properly read, may, of itself, excite feeling in the hearer, but when sung, if adapted in other respects to the genius of melody, it excites that feeling to a much higher pitch, by taking to its aid the thrilling and charming expression of musical sounds.

The music of the human voice, then, possesses two great advantages above any other; first, its simple tones are capable of being modulated in the highest degree by emotion; and secondly, it can explain the causes and character of its emotions distinctly to the understanding; thus constituting the most perfect medium, through which an appeal can be made to the sensibilities of man.

Another important principle of music is *harmony*. The mind is agreeably affected by the *union* of sweet sounds. This union may be more or less perfect; or, rather, it may be more or less striking to the ear. A greater degree of taste and discrimination is requisite in the hearer, in order that he may perceive and enjoy those chords which are commonly called the less perfect, than is necessary to the full effect of those which are more palpable. More care and exactness is required also in the execution. And as simple sounds of different qualities produce in the mind effects essentially various; so it is probable

the different musical chords are severally adapted to give a distinctive character to the emotions which they excite. Harmony which is strong and bold is naturally exhilarating; while that of a delicate character is more soothing and pathetic.

Hence in composing or selecting music for the sanctuary, care should be taken to have the tunes adapted, in this respect, to that measure of cultivation and refinement found among the great mass of worshippers. Bold harmony, like a glaring color, appears less lovely as taste becomes more refined; and on the other hand, chaste harmony is nearly lost on minds which are entirely uncultivated. For this reason we are inclined to believe that some of the changes, adopted by the Handel and Haydn Society in their excellent series of publications, in harmonizing anew the songs of the temple, though real and valuable improvements in the judgement of amateurs and persons of refinement, may have a tendency, on the whole, not only to embarrass our common choirs in the performance of church music, but also, even when nicely executed, to diminish its popular effect. Taste is not religion, indeed; but if the preacher, in order most effectually to impress divine truth, must regard the taste of his auditors and even condescend to it in some measure, so must the musician, whose art is more exclusively concerned with the imaginations and sensibilities of men.

A still lower, but yet an indispensable element of music is *rhythm*. Some kind of regularity in the measure of musical notes being marked by the voice, is essential to the existence of melody; and the effect of the performance is very much heightened by a correspondence between the rhythm and the other characteristics of the tune. Quick measures, and such as are regularly unequal, are favorable to vivacity; those that are slow and uniform, to gravity and solemnity.

It is obvious from this view of the subject, that vocal music has a most fine and delicate structure. It is evident that its genuine attributes, and consequently its legitimate effects, must be greatly impaired by that kind of performance which is common in our churches; and that neither can be preserved a moment amidst the jargon of congregational singing. It is likewise clear that the opinion of those who maintain that we cannot experience the highest effect of music, without uniting in it with our own voices, is wholly without foundation. Music is addressed exclusively to the ear, as much as colors are to the eye; and it is quite as essential to the highest effect of a beautiful painting, that we should add some touches to it ourselves, as that we should contribute some strains of our own to the music we hear, in order to heighten its effect on our feelings. This mistake

appears to be peculiar to religious music. Why do we never incline to add our voices to the enchanting tones of the Æolian Harp? Why does every person of sensibility choose to listen in silence to the strains of a lovely song? Because here we have no theory; we follow nature: and here the sensibilities that are touched are never dead or dull, as, too often, is the case with those of piety. Surely there is a silent song as well as a silent prayer; and whenever this shall be fully understood and believed among Christians, and not till then, may we expect to see sacred psalmody more justly appreciated and more profitably employed.

But the greatest impediment to the attainment of excellence in church psalmody is the defect of a lyrical or musical character, in a large proportion of the psalms and hymns in use. The poet and the musician have considered themselves as acting each in an exclusive sphere; and hence, except by accident, there has been none of that nice correspondence in the spirit and method of their respective compositions, without which there can be no genuine psalmody. For psalmody is neither poetry nor music, but a combination of both; in which the words must be adapted to the music, as really as the music to the words.

The essential characteristics of *lyric* poetry, or that which is adapted to be sung, can be illustrated only by a reference to the elementary principles of vocal music. The first of these, according to the analysis above presented, is the melody of simple sounds. This property of the sounds made by the human voice depends on their being prolonged in utterance, with a peculiar conformation of the vocal organs. We need not describe this conformation. Every skilful performer knows what it is; and every person knows, that some particular adjustment of the mouth is required in singing. Poetry then, which is adapted to be sung, must be composed of syllables and words which are capable of melodious utterance. They must be such as can be *dwelt upon* at pleasure, without preventing or embarrassing that conformation of the organs which imparts to vocal tones their melodious property. The singer should have words, which he will not be tempted to distort in order to display the agreeable qualities of his voice, nor, on the other hand, obliged to pronounce distinctly, at a sacrifice of all its volume and sweetness. The lyric poet, therefore, must be able to discriminate between the melodious and unmelodious words in the language, and must limit himself, as much as possible, to the former class: the other portion of the language, being regarded by him almost as though it were not in existence. It will be seen that his vocabulary must be much more circumscribed than

that of the ordinary poet. A great lyric poet in the Italian language—a language which, in comparison with the English, is “music itself”—was unable to make use of more than six or seven thousand words, out of the forty four thousand which the language contains. But our own poets, while, in writing for music, they have far more occasion for a select diction, seem hardly to have exercised any particular care on the subject.

Words which require, in pronunciation, a hissing or a nasal sound, and such as contain a mute, double consonant, or even a slender vowel, especially if two or more of these elements concur in the same word, are generally unfit for singing; and many of them are incapable of melodious utterance. Such are the words *spirit, spake, works, sheaves, vast, distant, tongue, bliss, blest, opprest, ragged, error, ling ring, neglect, character, &c.* which are found in all our collections of psalms and hymns. It is doubtless quite impossible for the poet to shun all such words as these; but our church psalmody would have been very different from what it now is, if its authors had well understood this principle, and paid a scrupulous attention to it, in the choice of words. Then singers would never have been required to break their jaws to such lines as the following:

That man may last, but never lives
 Who much receives, but nothing gives,
 Whom none can love, whom none can thank,
 Creation's blot, creation's blank.

Hymn 159, *Dwight's Col.*

Our life, while thou preserv'st that life,

H. 46, *Dwight.*

That oft selects its proudest foes.

H. 381, *Village Hymns.*

That must be but a troubled stream of sound, if it be a stream at all, which falters from a singer's throat, when clogged and convulsed by the pronunciation of such syllables as these. It is impossible that it should yield a single tone of real melody.

Another principle of music is rhythm or regular accent. If this is not preserved in singing, the effect of the melody is in a great measure lost. There is no danger that poetry will be written without accent; but what is required, in order to musical adaptation, is a *perfect correspondence* between the accent of the words and the rhythm of the music to which they are sung. There would be no difficulty in attaining this, were it attentively regarded in the original composition of hymns. Every tyro in music knows that tunes are divided into *equal* measures, and that the stress of voice in singing falls invariably upon the first part of each measure. In conformity with this

principle, many tunes are constructed with a long note and a short alternately, or with one long and two short. Let the composer of sacred psalmody, therefore, observe what measures are employed in common psalm-tunes, and employ such feet only as will correspond with them. He may choose from among them such as his taste prefers, or such as are most suitable to his subject; but, having made his choice, it is necessary that he should adhere to it uniformly, through all the stanzas of the same hymn. A promiscuous jumble of feet, though it may be consistent with the melody of verse, and therefore be found in good poetry, is totally inconsistent with musical adaptation, because incompatible with the regular rhythm of vocal melody. And, as the same tune must be sung to several stanzas, it will be in vain that the musical composer, or the chorister may have hit upon a tolerable correspondence between the music and the poetry, in the first verse, if the structure of the hymn, in respect to accent, is not regular throughout.

The measure most commonly employed in sacred poetry is the *Iambic*, consisting of a short and a long syllable. But a very frequent irregularity is occasioned by the intermixture of the *Trochaic* foot, consisting of a long and a short syllable; which, being prefixed to an Iambus, has an effect like the Dactyls of Latin Hexameter. This more commonly occurs in the beginning of the line, and generally in the first line of the stanza; as in the following.

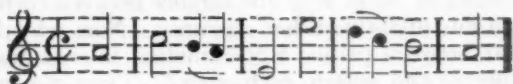
*L*ord in the morn'ng thōu shalt hear
My voice ascending high;
Tō thee will I direct my prayer,
Tō thee lift up mine eye.

It is often found, however, in the beginning of other lines, and sometimes, after a pause, in the middle of a line. There is an example of each kind in the following stanza.

Awake, my soul, stretch every nerve,
And press with vigor on;
A heavenly race demands thy zeal,
And an immortal crown.

To correspond with the prevailing rhythm of poetry, psalm-tunes are usually commenced with an unaccented note. Whenever the choir encounters a Trochee, therefore, in the beginning of the stanza (and the effect is the same elsewhere) the natural accent of the syllables is directly inverted; an important syllable or word being passed over lightly, and an unimportant one, perhaps a mere connective particle, raised into great prominence; thus rendering the performance utterly unmeaning, and some-

times quite ludicrous. If the 5th Psalm, for example, is sung in the tune of *Walsal*, as indicated in Worcester's Collection, this difficulty will be met with in the beginning of every one of the five first stanzas.



Verse 1st. Lord in the morn - ing thou shalt hear.

2d. Up to the hills where Christ has gone.

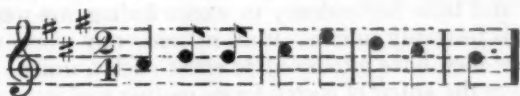
3d. Thou art a God before whose sight.

4th. But to thy house will I resort.

5th. Oh may thy Spirit guide my feet.

Should the psalm be sung in triple time, as in Mear, for instance, the effect must be still worse.—In other instances without number, we hear words accented like the following; Fearless, slow-ly, cheer-ful, pleas-ures, un-der, pard'ning, mor-tals, glo-ry, An-gels, Aa-ron, Is-rael, Je-sus, ter-ri-ble. Many gross improprieties in *emphasis*, likewise, are occasioned in the same way. Take the following illustrations. Oh! *could* we make our doubts remove.—Wo to the wretch.—Hark! *the* Redeemer.—Grace! 'tis a sweet &c.

But if this change of measures were as regular in all other psalms and hymns, as in the one above referred to, we should be less disposed to complain. It is one of so frequent occurrence in this part of the stanza, that many tunes have been constructed so as to secure, in such cases, a corresponding accent. Attentive to this circumstance, the Authors of the "Church Psalmody," have prefixed Dedham to the 5th Psalm.



Lōrd in thē mōrning thōu shālt hear.

The first lines of the stanzas of this Psalm being constructed alike, the adaptation here is perfect. But the difficulty is, that in ninety nine cases out of a hundred, there is no such uniformity in the location of the Trochaic foot.

An essential distinction, then, between an ode or a hymn, and all other poetry is, or ought to be, that the latter admits of some variety of metrical structure in the same piece, while the former does not. No one, who has not carefully examined the subject, is aware to what an extent this principle has been dis-

regarded by the authors of our psalmody. We risk nothing in the assertion, that the various collections now in use among us scarcely contain a single psalm or hymn, in which the singer is not obliged often to violate the accent, either of the music or of the words; or so to hold the balance between them, as to throw both into undistinguished obscurity. Now, why this perpetual war between parties, whose mutual interest and desire it is to embrace and sustain each other? There was no original necessity for it. It is most unnatural and ridiculous. And while the same occasion for it shall continue as at present, there can be no such thing as a high degree of excellence, in this department of sacred worship.

To the notice of these defects in the mechanical structure of sacred lyric poetry, we are sorry to have occasion to add the mention of another, which more seriously implicates the genius and even the common judgement of its authors, because it lies in the very nature of the materials which they have selected for their work. We refer to the dry, argumentative, didactic, narrative, paraphrastic or prosaic character of a great proportion of the stanzas, and of many whole pieces, with which our books of church psalmody are filled. One would think it were sufficiently evident, at least to all men of education and taste, that none but a *poetical* subject is congenial to the spirit of music; and that music can never combine with any words but such as contain the substance of poetry, without compromising the very attribute on account of which its alliance is sought. The precise reason why melody and poetry are capable of uniting their powers, is because to a certain extent, the province of each is the same, viz. to express and excite emotion. Verses therefore, (for we cannot call them poetry,) which never sprung from feeling, and have no tendency to excite feeling, are totally unfit for this heavenly union. It is in vain, nay worse than in vain, that men have attempted to effect such a union. Music must have the *spirit* of poetry for its partner and interpreter, or it is better alone. It is impossible for the singer to throw pathos into the tones of his voice, while the subject of the hymn necessarily excludes all emotion from his heart. Yet a great proportion of the psalms and hymns given us to be sung in our worshipping assemblies, are nothing, at best, but the mere form of poetry, without the power. They have the fabric of stanzas, measures and rhymes, in various degrees of perfection; but the *poetical subject matter* is not there;—mere dry bones, without flesh, sinews, or soul! What can it avail to chain the living, aspiring spirit of melody to this unsightly skeleton! Will it produce effective psalmody?

It is at once a grief and an insult to the musician, to offer him a doctrine, a discussion, an argument, or an exhortation for the subject of his song. It is the business of the preacher, not of the singer, to indoctrinate, instruct and convince his audience. The hymn, therefore, should only convey such a *reference* to the doctrine or duty inculcated by the preacher, as falls naturally within the compass of poetical allusion; while its grand aim should be, to furnish the singer with all those sentiments and emotions, appropriate to that subject, which come within the province of musical expression. And it should be so composed in respect to diction, and grammatical and rhetorical construction, as most effectually to aid the singer to express the emotion, which it awakens in his heart. Let him have only "thoughts that breathe, and words that burn." "Give to the musician," says a celebrated writer, "as many images and sentiments to express as possible, for the passions sing; the understanding only speaks."

But what is there for the passions to sing in such lines as the following?

Go imitate the grace divine,
The grace that blazes like a sun;
Hold forth your fair, though feeble light,
Through all your lives let mercy run:

Upon your bounty's willing wings,
Swift let the great salvation fly;
The hungry feed, the naked clothe,
To pain and sickness help apply:

Pity the weeping widow's woe,
And be her counsellor and stay;
Adopt the fatherless, and smooth
To useful, happy life his way.

Hymn 120, Dwight's Col.

'Tis not the law of ten commands,
On holy Sinai given,
And sent to men by Moses' hands,
Can bring us safe to heaven.

'Tis not the blood which Aaron spilt,
Nor smoke of sweetest smell;
Can buy the pardon of our guilt,
Or save our souls from hell.

Watts, Hymn 124, Book 2.

We have not quoted these as the worst specimens of the kind, but as examples of a large class of pieces with which all our books of church psalmody abound. We do not say that hymns of this kind may not be profitable for *any* purpose, but certainly they are not adapted to be *sung*; and the attempt to sing them is what serves, more than any thing else, to render

the music of the sanctuary an unmeaning and spiritless performance. They occupy so large a space in our Psalm Books, to the exclusion of better pieces, that ministers cannot always pass over them if they would; and some ministers, from a want of enlightened musical taste, and a false idea of adaptation to their discourses, select them, in preference to others, which have a more slight allusion to their subject. There are ministers, we are almost ready to believe, who, should they find a hymn to follow their sermon, containing a precise recapitulation of their heads of argument and application, would think it the very perfection of appropriateness. We do not intend, however, to waste our time in complaining of ministers. No reformation can be effected in this particular, that is worthy of consideration, so long as the psalmody in use is not thoroughly expurgated.

A Psalm Book, written or compiled in an enlightened and strict accordance with the principles of musical adaptation and expression, we have for years regarded as a desideratum of the highest importance. Such, however, in our apprehension, would be the peculiar difficulty of the undertaking, that we had little hope of seeing it attempted. In the first place, all the sacred lyric poetry in the language must be collected and examined, in search after materials of the right quality; and, even then, the compiler must include in his selections many of secondary merit, in order to obtain the requisite number and variety; especially as the Christian public would not tolerate the entire omission of any considerable number of the psalms. In the next place, a task severer still must be performed, in the critical revision of these materials, which, from a regard to the welfare of the church whose property they now are, must, without fear or favor of any of their authors, be made to undergo abridgement, transposition, and verbal alterations, until a tolerable correspondence should be attained between their structure and that of sacred music, in simplicity, euphony, accent, pauses, &c. A consideration which rendered such an undertaking the more improbable, in our view, was that it must be a matter of individual enterprize. As it was one which the churches would not be likely at first to appreciate, they would not call for it nor authorize it beforehand; and, perhaps, from long habits of negligence and endurance on this subject, they would be slow to accept the benefits of it, when the work should be completed. We were prepared, therefore, with no less agreeable surprize than cordial congratulation, to greet the appearance of the work before us—a work designed by its compilers to supply the very desideratum of which we have been speaking.

The compilers of this work are Messrs. Lowell Mason and David Greene, of this city, the former of whom has been, for several years President of the Handel and Haydn Society, and the latter one of the Secretaries of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions. Never, we believe, has an edition of Psalms and Hymns proceeded from hands more ably and variously qualified, and more likely, in every point, to do justice to the undertaking. They had not, it is true, the advantage nor the disadvantage of being designated for the task by some Ecclesiastical Body, as others have been before them, merely because they were great Divines or learned Presidents of Colleges; but, what is more to the purpose, they took it up of their own free-will, and on their own responsibility, after patient and profound study into the philosophy of the subject, and under deep impressions of its importance to the cause of piety.

The peculiarity of their *design* in this undertaking, also distinguishes them from all the previous compilers of Psalmody in this country. Dr. Dwight undertook, first, to accommodate Watts' version of the Psalms to our new Republican Institutions; secondly, to versify some which Watts had omitted; thirdly, to enlarge the number of proper metres; and finally, which was his great object, to extend the collection of Hymns so as to embrace some, if possible, which should be "adapted to every religious subject." Now surely we shall not question the ability of Dr. Dwight to judge of the adaptation of hymns to "every religious subject." But as to their fitness for musical execution and expression—that was a thing, probably, but little thought of by any body at that time. Dr. Dwight was every thing which one man could well be, and he accomplished all, in this case, that was asked of him; but there is evidence enough from his Psalm Book that he was not a lyric poet, and that it was no part of his conception, in this undertaking, to improve the lyric character of our Psalmody. Not only are his own versifications and selections generally unlyrical, but he has frequently altered Watts' lines, for the sake of more grammatical accuracy or philosophical precision, in such a manner as nearly to spoil them for musical enunciation.

Dr. Worcester's design, like Dr. Dwight's, was principally to supply the deficiency of subjects in Watts, by selections from various authors; to make room for which, he abridged Watts in those parts where he considered him as redundant, or thought his hymns inferior to those which he had selected on the same topics. In all other respects, he left the poetry as he found it. He indicated, also, in what tunes, and with what expression of voice, the psalms and hymns ought to be sung; but he never

seems to have inquired, judging from the character of his select hymns, whether the pieces themselves were such, either in their matter or structure, as it would be possible to *sing* at all, in the true sense of the word.

But the Compilers of the work before us, while they have disregarded none of the objects aimed at by their predecessors, have made it their great design, to present the public with a Psalm Book, *all of which shall be adapted TO BE SUNG with ease, animation and deep feeling*; in other words, a book strictly lyrical and devotional. They have aimed to include only such pieces as are *fitted to excite emotion, and so constructed that the singer may express the emotions they excite*. It has been their design, in this work, to present to the singer only that species of poetry, with the pathos of which music may combine, so as more or less to heighten its effect upon the feelings; thus making Church Psalmody, what it ought to be, a literal counterpart to Church Music.

As we should have anticipated, they have been obliged to bestow great pains in the collection of sufficient matter of a suitable quality for their work. This will be evident, and likewise their faithfulness in executing this part of their labor, from their account of the sources from which their materials have been drawn.

“Besides the version of the psalms by Dr. Watts, and those versions that preceded his, and those of some other authors of less note, made since his time, use has been made of two nearly entire versions, and one very extensive collection recently published in England. Versions of many single psalms have been found scattered through the several collections of hymns which have been examined. In selecting the hymns, in addition to the hymn-books used by the various denominations of Christians in the United States, the compilers have examined eight or ten extensive general collections of hymns, besides a large number of smaller collections, published in England, and which have never been republished, or for sale in this country. In these and other works, they suppose that they have examined nearly all the good lyric poetry in the English language.”

Our readers may see, from the following extracts, with what kind of discrimination the Compilers have treated the immense, promiscuous mass of materials they had brought before them; also what liberties they have taken, and what pains they have bestowed, in the improvement of such as they found substantially excellent, and capable of being wrought into their work.

“In selecting and arranging these materials, the compilers have aimed to make a hymn-book of a *thoroughly evangelical character, in doctrine and spirit, and as highly lyrical as the materials, with such labor as could be bestowed upon them, would permit*. They have, accordingly, rejected a large amount of religious poetry, excellent in itself, so far as the sentiments and language are concerned, and aimed to select only such pieces as are adapted to be *sung*.”

As the same piece was often found with important variations, in different books, they have aimed to select that copy which seemed best suited to the design of this work, without inquiring how the author originally wrote it. They have treated the hymns which have come before them as public property, which they had a right to modify and use up, according to their own judgement. Omissions, abridgements, alterations, and changes in the arrangement of the stanzas have, therefore, been made with freedom, whenever it appeared that the piece could thereby be improved. These alterations have been made principally to avoid prosaic and unimpassioned passages: low or otherwise unsuitable imagery or expression; abrupt transitions; unmeaning and cumbersome words and clauses; long, complicated and obscure sentences; feeble connectives; long words, and harsh and slender syllables; a wrong position of the accent and pauses; the anticlimactic structure; and a disagreement in the form and rhythm of the several stanzas.

"A considerable number of pieces, possessing less of a lyrical character than is desirable, have been retained; partly because the subjects were important, and nothing better on them could be found, and partly because, though not well adapted to public worship generally, they might be useful on special occasions, or for families and individuals."^{*}

The Compilers, in their preface, have given their own views particularly, though concisely, of what the poetry of sacred psalmody ought to be. Our limits do not permit us to extract this portion entire; but we will give our readers such quotations as will enable them to understand by what just principles these gentlemen have been guided in their labors.

Their remarks are arranged under the heads of Matter and Structure.

"As to the MATTER proper for lyric poetry.

"1. The aim of all lyric poetry should be to express *emotion*, and the *sentiments* should be such as are adapted to this end.

"Sacred lyric poetry may express every class of emotions which it is proper for man to express in acts of worship, but especially such as are implied in ascriptions of praise. It should generally be addressed directly to God, or else it should consist of rehearsals of truths and events, or exhortations and appeals to the hearts of men, which are directly adapted to turn the thoughts to God, and fill the soul with emotions towards him.

"One author of hymns has filled a large book with pieces, most of which were written as supplements to sermons, and seem to be little more than abstracts, expressed in rhyme, of the sentiments which had just been delivered. As such they may be very good; but they can scarcely be considered as better adapted to musical effect, than a table of contents or the synopsis of an argument. They may be set to music so that each syllable shall correspond to a note of a tune, but they cannot be sung. This forcibly bringing syllables and notes into contact, and pronouncing them together, is not singing, any more than noise is music.

* In regard to the propriety of alterations in the Psalmody of Watts, and to the character of the alterations in the work before us, the following opinion has been expressed by a large and respectable Committee of the Pastoral Association of Massachusetts, of which the Rev. Dr. Porter of Andover was Chairman. "They (the Committee) are of opinion that the interests of public worship do require both abridgement and omission in Watts' Psalms and Hymns, as these contain many passages which have rarely, if ever, been read in public, and which could not certainly now be read in public with propriety."—"In respect to verbal alterations, as well as the transposition of stanzas, and parts of stanzas, the Editors have, in our opinion, executed their task with great success."

"2. The sentiments and imagery should be *grave, dignified, and conformed to the taste and habits of the age.*

"3. Hymns should possess *unity.* All the subjects brought into a hymn should be of such a character, and so connected, as to form one group, strike the mind at one view, and conspire to produce one effect.

"4. Every line should be *full of meaning.* An unmeaning line or word, thrown in to make out the rhyme or measure, is like a dead limb on a living body—a cumbersome deformity, better amputated than retained.—In many instances in this book, hymns in long metre have been changed into common or short metre, by merely disencumbering the lines of their lifeless members.

Under the head of *STRUCTURE*, the following characteristics are mentioned as being essential to good lyric poetry.

"1. *Plain style.*

"2. Every sentence should be constructed so as to *express emotion.*

"3. Sentences and clauses should contain, as far as practicable,"—"complete sense in themselves.

"4. The structure of each stanza should be such, that the *mind shall perceive the meaning immediately.* All hypothetical clauses placed at the beginning, or other clauses containing positions or arguments, having reference to some conclusion which is to follow, are to be avoided.

"5. The words should be *easy of enunciation, and capable of being dwelt upon,* without seeming harsh or unnatural.

"6. The *pauses should be arranged with reference to effect.*

"7. The *accented parts of the stanza should correspond with the accented notes of the tune.*

"8. The several stanzas of a hymn should possess a good degree of *uniformity,* as to measure, accent and pauses.

"9. Each stanza, and the whole hymn, should be so constructed, that the importance of the sentiments, the force of expression, the emotion and the general effect of the piece, shall be increasing through to the end."

In these paragraphs, and the parts connected with them, which we have been obliged to omit, the Compilers have presented us with their *beau idea!* of sacred lyric poetry. They expressly disclaim, of course, any pretension that their book is entirely free from the faults here referred to. Such perfection would, indeed, be impossible to any effort, short of that which should originate the materials themselves. But, in the work of compilation, they have kept these principles constantly in view, with an endeavor to bring their materials as near to their standard of perfection as possible; and "in innumerable instances," they remark, "such faults, as have here been noticed, have been corrected."

We proceed to give a few illustrations from the work before us, not the most striking probably which might be given, but such as have occurred to us, of the many improvements made in accordance with the above principles.

In selecting the seventy-fourth hymn, second Book, from Watts, Messrs. Mason and Green have omitted the two following stanzas as belonging more properly to the sermon.

" On us he bids the sun
Shed his reviving rays;
For us the skies their circles run
To lengthen out our days.

"The brutes obey their God,
And bow their necks to men;
But we more base, more brutish things,
Reject his easy reign."

The unity of the hymn is not impaired by this omission, and the whole, as it appears in the Church Psalmody, is characterized by deep emotion.

The following stanzas, from the middle of the forty-ninth hymn, Dwight's selection, which contain a speculation on the accordance of reason with truth, and the struggle in the human breast between reason and sinful inclination, are omitted on the same principle.

My reason tells me thy commands
Are holy, just, and true;
Tells me whate'er my God demands
Is his most righteous due.

Reason I hear, her counsels weigh,
And all her words approve;
But still I find it hard to obey,
And harder still to love.

The remainder of the hymn, without this interruption, is highly lyrical. It conveys an *allusion* to what is taught in the didactic part which is all that is needful to be sung.

The two first verses of the eighty-ninth hymn, first Book, of Watts, contain a very painful instance of the ironical meaning; where the mind, not willing to think that the singer means what he is saying, is held in suspense as to the true import of the hymn, until the last line of the second stanza is sung.

Ye sons of Adam, vain and young,
Indulge your eyes, indulge your tongue;
Taste the delights your souls desire,
And give a loose to all your fire.

Pursue the pleasures you design,
And cheer your hearts with songs and wine;
Enjoy the day of mirth—but know,
There is a day of judgement too!

This *structure* is condemned by what the Compilers say under the fifth head in their preface; and these stanzas are condensed into one.

Ye sons of Adam, vain and young,
Indulge your eyes—indulge your tongue;
Enjoy the day of mirth—but know
There is a day of judgement too.

All *comparisons*, especially long ones, are unfit for lyric poetry. There is one in the eighty-fourth Psalm. P. M.

The sparrow for her young,
 With pleasure seeks a rest,
 And wandering swallow long,
 To find their wonted nest ;
 My spirit faints, | To rise and dwell
 With equal zeal, | Among thy saints.

This stanza is omitted in the Church Psalmody.

The following are specimens of verbal alterations, in order to secure uniformity of accent.

1

Almighty Rulër of thë skies
 Through thë wide earth thy nãme is spread.

Altered thus

Almighty Rulër of thë skies
 Through all thë earth thy nãme is spread.

2

My wörk and jöy shall bë thë same
 In thë bríght wörld above.

Altered thus

My wörk and jöy shall bë thë same
 In bríghtër wörlds äbëve.

3

In thë swëet realms of bliss

Altered thus

In realms of endless peáce.

4

Soön wë shall reach thë peácefül shöre

Altered thus

Soön shall wë reach thë peácefül shöre.

We ask our readers to compare the 120th hymn, first Book, Watts, with the same as altered in the Church Psalmody, as a specimen of the improvement made in many entire pieces.

Watts.

Church Psalmody.

Faith is the brightest evidence

Of things beyond our sight ; [sense,
 Breaks through the clouds of flesh and
 And dwells in heavenly light.

It sets times past in present view,
 Brings distant prospects home—
 Of things a thousand years ago,
 Or thousand years to come.

By faith we know the worlds were made,
 By God's almighty word ;
 Abra'm to unknown countries led,
 By faith obeyed the Lord.

He sought a city fair and high,
 Built by the eternal hands ;

Faith is the brightest evidence

Of things beyond our sight,
 It pierces through the veil of sense,
 And dwells in heavenly light.

It sets time past in present view,
 Brings distant prospects home,
 Of things a thousand years ago,
 Or thousand years to come.

By faith we know the world was made
 By God's almighty word ;
 We know the heavens and earth shall fade,
 And be again restored.

Abrah'm obeyed the Lord's command,
 From his own country driven ;

Watts.

And faith assures us though we die,
That heavenly building stands.

Church Psalmody.

By faith he sought a promised land,
But found his rest in heaven.

Thus through life's pilgrimage we stray,
The promise in our eye;
By faith we walk the narrow way,
That leads to joys on high.

By the alteration, in the third line of the first stanza, regular accent and better euphony is attained. The third and fourth stanzas, as altered, are made to contain each a distinct, connected and complete idea. Finally, the expansion of the two last lines into a full stanza, by itself, is an incalculable improvement of the hymn, in point of rhetorical effect. They contain the practical application of the whole, and ought to occupy, at least, one repetition of the tune.

A fine advantage, of a rhetorical nature, is also gained, in a number of the psalms, by the repetition of the first stanza at the close. For example, Watts 145 Psalm, second part, C. M.—where the first stanza is repeated at the end, in place of the last, as it appears in the common books. The devotional effect of the psalm, both to the eye, and to the ear, is very much increased by this arrangement.

We could extend these illustrations, with pleasure to ourselves, indefinitely. But we have already much exceeded the limits we had prescribed to this article. We have exhibited but a very few specimens of the lyrical excellence of the work; and we find but small occasion to except any portions of it, from what we have thus indicated as its general character. Perfection was not to be expected, particularly in regard to euphony, accent and pauses: but as to emotion, and the structure favorable to its expression, which is the chief thing, we think the Compilers have succeeded, to a high degree.

One exception we will notice, because it is the only one we have seen, which, all things considered, is worthy of censure. It is a version of the 19th Ps. by Tate and Brady.

God's perfect law converts the soul,
Reclaims from false desires;
With sacred wisdom, his sure word
The ignorant inspires.

But what frail man observes how oft
He does from virtue fall?—
Oh! cleanse me from my secret faults,
Thou God that know'st them all.

So shall my prayer and praises be
With thy acceptance blest;
And I secure, on thy defence,
My strength and Saviour, rest.

This is very exceptionable, judged by the principles which have guided in the compilation of this work. We hope it will be omitted in subsequent editions.

So far as we have observed, we can testify that the character of this work is *strictly evangelical*. Those who would search a psalm-book for didactic or metaphysical theology, will at first, perhaps, think this to be deficient in *doctrinal* hymns. But when they have learned to look for doctrines, *in a form adapted to the nature and use of psalmody*, they will, probably, change their opinion. The perfection of a hymn, in this respect, is, that, while it contains a clear, though *general allusion* to some great doctrine of the Scriptures, it tends directly and powerfully to excite those pious emotions which flow from a cordial belief and a practical impression of that doctrine. A hymn, designed to be sung, on the doctrine of Election, for instance, should not be a *formal statement, proof and defence* of that doctrine, like Watts' paraphrase of the ninth of Romans; but its province is to take the truth of the doctrine for granted; and, proceeding upon the supposition that the worshipper is convinced of its truth, to celebrate it as an inspiring theme of holy submission, hope, gratitude or adoration. This has happily been done by Watts, in the 137 hymn, first Book, commencing—

Now to the power of God supreme.

The Church Psalmody will not be found deficient in such hymns as this, on any doctrinal subject.

There is one principle of exclusion adopted by these Compilers, in relation to the evangelical character of the pieces they have examined, which we were not a little rejoiced to meet with in their preface, and to find it there so fearlessly avowed, and so conclusively justified. Speaking of certain defects in hymns, which tend essentially to injure their religious effect, they observe,

“A similar remark should be made respecting all hymns which wear the aspect of condoling with the sinner, tending to divert his thoughts from his guilt to his calamity, and occasioning in him a high state of agreeable sympathetic excitement. Scarcely any thing tends more directly and powerfully to destroy a deep conviction of guilt, or erects a more formidable barrier against the exercise of true contrition and humility. A large portion of those hymns, which are technically called *revival* hymns, are of this character; and the very reason, probably, why they are so popular, is, that the use of them makes the sinner feel comfortably, when he ought to feel condemned and undone.”

These remarks have our most cordial approbation. They point to an evil existing at this day, which few are properly

apprized of, but which is very general in its extent, most insidious in its operations, and ruinous in its consequences. There is a certain species of singing, too common in revivals of religion, by which the false Angel of Light charms hundreds of anxious souls into his embrace; and he does it the more successfully, because Christians and ministers seem hardly to suspect his power to pervert so sacred and lovely a thing as psalmody.

The Church Psalmody will be found well adapted to the present age of revivals, religious institutions, missionary and benevolent operations, and to the various public occasions, arising therefrom. By looking into the index of subjects, it will be seen that the work is peculiarly copious under the following heads: "Holy Spirit;" "Warnings and Invitations of the Gospel;" "Universal diffusion of the Gospel;" "Monthly Concert;" "Missionary meetings;" and "Meetings for Charitable Objects."

The book is rendered valuable, as a body of psalmody, by the designation of *appropriate tunes* for each of the psalms and hymns. These have been selected from the Handel and Haydn Society's Church Music; and have been appropriated with a judicious aim to secure the most perfect correspondence possible between the music and the words, in cadence, accent, movement and moral expression. The judicious application, also, of an intelligible key of musical expression to the stanzas and lines, gives great perfection to the work, in this department. We are persuaded that this has been executed with singular felicity and propriety. The marks employed are the significant terms of musical science, familiar to every skilful singer, or characters, significant of their meaning by their shape; and not, as in Worcester, letters, nor any arbitrary signs. They appear to have been applied neither superficially, fancifully, nor too frequently.

Two very common, and in our view, very gross errors in musical expression, we observe, are here corrected. The first is that of attempting a *resemblance* between the voice and the object or action denoted by the words, in cases where all imitation is entirely beyond our power. Take the following illustration.

Ye clouds, proclaim your Maker God;
Ye thunders speak his power.

The common mistake is that of singing the last line as loud as possible, so as to express, by imitation, the voice of thunder. There may be some propriety in this, when done upon an or-

gan, heavy enough to make the house tremble ; but for singers to attempt it, by the voice, is mere burlesque. Special pains should be taken, therefore, to avoid the appearance of a design to imitate in such cases ; and the singer should rather express, by his voice and manner, that *emotion of mind* which we should naturally feel in witnessing the scene or action, simply suggested to the imagination by the words. This line is marked, in the work before us, to be sung *distinct and soft*.

The other mistake to which we refer, and which is common both to preachers and singers, is not only more offensive to good taste, but likewise very repulsive to pious sensibility. It is that of assuming the manner of the Deity when describing his acts, or uttering his own words. Thus Worcester has marked the following lines to be sung "*loud*."

Come—lest he rouse his wrath—and swear—
"Ye shall not see my rest."

But in the Church Psalmody, the musician is directed to sing the first with only medium loudness, and the last "gradually slower and softer to the end." This is as it should be. Instead of making the singer personate the "wrath" of Jehovah, it directs him to give expression to the awe and solemnity of his own feelings.

Two or three smaller particulars are worthy of mention.

The Church Psalmody contains a much greater variety of metres than the common books. There is a considerable number of pieces in the measure of sevens, and eights and sevens, which are very happy structures for psalmody, when the movement is appropriate to the subject, because uniformity of accent is seldom, if ever, violated in them.

The words of more than twenty Anthems, Chants, &c. are given at the end of the book, which will be a great convenience to members of the congregation, where this Psalmody and the Handel and Haydn Society's tunes may be used.

With one device for giving a kind of dramatic effect to some of the pieces, we have been particularly pleased. It is that of dividing the stanza, where its structure is favorable to such an arrangement, for the purpose of giving it to different portions of the choir, to be sung in the manner of alternate responses ; or in the order of solo or semi-chorus, and chorus. This kind of performance, so impressive in itself, derives peculiar interest from being associated in our minds with the Psalmody of the Ancient Temple. The following is a beautiful example, which will make even the eye affect the heart.

First Choir.

See what a living stone
The builders did refuse ;—

Second Choir.

Yet God hath built his church thereon,
In spite of envious Jews.

First Choir.

The scribe and angry priest
Reject thine only Son ;—

Second Choir.

Yet on this rock shall Zion rest,
As the chief corner-stone.

Congregation.

The work O Lord is thine,
And wondrous in our eyes ;
This day declares it all divine,
This day did Jesus rise.

First Choir.

This is the glorious day
That our Redeemer made :—

Second Choir.

Let us rejoice—and sing—and pray—
Let all the church be glad.

First Choir.

Hosanna to the King,
Of David's royal blood :—

Second Choir.

Bless him, ye saints—he comes to bring
Salvation from your God.

Congregation.

We bless thine holy word,
Which all this grace displays :
And offer on thine altar, Lord,
Our sacrifice of praise.

When we sat down to the examination of the Church Psalmody, we anticipated much pleasure ; and we can assure our readers that we have not been disappointed. The work is without a rival, in its own department. There is no other collection of Evangelical Psalmody, with which we are acquainted, the whole of which is adapted *to be sung*.—On the question, how far it is expedient for congregations to lay aside their former collections, and adopt this, we of course say nothing. Those who feel interested on the subject, must examine and judge for themselves. The opinions we have expressed have not been formed hastily, or without diligent examination. We are willing they should have whatever weight they deserve.

SLANDERS UPON THE MISSIONS IN THE ISLANDS OF THE PACIFIC.

[Continued from p. 601.]

We will notice but one other charge respecting the missions in the Society Isles; it is made by Kotzebue. He offers those we have already noticed, excepting the point of licentiousness, and adds others, which, we take this place to remark, Mr. Ellis, in the Vindication, has fully and ably answered. The accusation alluded to appears in the following, quoted from Ellis.

"After many fruitless efforts, some English missionaries succeeded, at length, in the year 1797, in introducing what they called Christianity into Tahiti, and even in gaining over to their doctrine king Tajo, who then governed the whole island in peace and tranquillity. This conversion was a spark thrown into a powder magazine, and was followed by a fearful explosion. The new religion was introduced *by force*. The maraes, as well as every memorial of the deities formerly worshipped, were suddenly destroyed by order of the king. Whoever would not *instantly* believe the new doctrine *was put to death*. With the zeal for making proselytes, the rage of tygers took possession of a people once so gentle. *Streams of blood flowed—whole races were exterminated*; many resolutely met the death they preferred to the renunciation of their ancient faith. Some few escaped by flight to the recesses of the lofty mountains, where they still live in seclusion, faithful to the gods of their ancestors."

To one acquainted with the facts in relation to the introduction of the Gospel into these islands, it must appear astonishing how an account like the above could have found its way into the authentic narrative of a naval officer in the public service of a great nation; and equally so, how an English periodical of no small pretensions should hold out, as a credible witness in the missionary question, a work containing such fabrications. These things show what untiring efforts are made by some to barb and poison the arrows of slander against the humble exile for the Gospel's sake, and with what inconsiderate readiness others scatter them abroad. Capt. Kotzebue, surely, did not cut and make this story; perhaps he brushed and colored it a little; but it was the original workmanship of some miscreant, who, to wreak his vengeance on a missionary, duped the credulity of the voyager.—The English missionaries, instead of succeeding, after many fruitless efforts, at length, in 1797, did not even approach the shores of Tahiti until that year. King Tajo they never had the happiness to gain over to their doctrine, as his Majesty never existed except in the fable of Kotzebue's informer. The few that live in seclusion in the recesses of the lofty mountains fled thither before Christianity was introduced, not that they might remain faithful to the gods of

their ancestors, but to avoid being offered in sacrifice to idols. The Gospel was not in any sense introduced by force. The missionaries toiled ten years, with no apparent success, amidst the greatest hardships and dangers from European desperadoes, who took every method to thwart their efforts and stir up the natives to violence towards them; and then, in 1807, were compelled to quit the island, not having made, so far as they knew, a single convert and leaving the people under the scourge of a desolating civil war between Pomare and the chiefs, "both parties still pagans, and the victors offering the vanquished in sacrifice to the gods." In 1812, the missionaries returned; Pomare and a few others received Christianity; then a persecution did indeed arise, but "the Christians were the victims, not the authors of it." In 1815, the Gospel spread more extensively; then also force was used, but by the pagans to banish it, not by the converts to establish it with compulsion. The heathen party collected their forces, and on the Sabbath day, when Pomare and his people were peaceably engaged in public worship, "made a furious, sudden, and unexpected assault;" the Christians, having been warned of the possibility of such a stratagem, were prepared for *self-defence*, and soon repulsed the assailants, completely defeating and routing them; and, let it be remembered, the ascendancy which the Gospel afterwards obtained, was not the effect of the *victory* itself, so much as of the *kindness* shown by the Christians to the vanquished pagans, clemency being a thing never before heard of in all their wars. *If the new religion makes Pomare spare his enemy, then it must be good*, was the simple reasoning, that spontaneously addressed itself to the savage conscience. Such are the facts respecting that "bloody introduction of the religion of the missionaries," by which, as Captain Otto Von Kotzebue tragically narrates, "infinitely more human beings have been sacrificed than ever were to their heathen idols."

We must pass to notice some of the charges against the missionaries in the Sandwich Islands. Those to which allusion has been made, as preferred several years ago in the Quarterly, will not be considered, because they were fully refuted not long after in the North American; but in now adverting to them, we have two remarks.—First, we would acknowledge the obligations of the friends of the American missions and missionaries to Mr. Orme, for his prompt and able reply published in England, and circulated among a class of readers, who could not otherwise have been disabused as to those slanders. Mr. Orme, who is gone to his rest, is now well known as the big-

rapher of the youthful Urquhart and the venerable Baxter ; but we think this late tribute of gratitude not amiss, especially as we do not recollect to have seen his truly fraternal performance mentioned but once, and that slightly, in any American publication.—Nor can we, in good conscience, neglect to remark upon an instance of criminal disingenuousness in the conductors of the Quarterly. They had published a letter, purporting to have been written by Boki, a leading chief in the Sandwich Islands, and containing strong complaints against the missionaries, and had pledged themselves for its genuineness. A distinguished nobleman, attached to the cause of religion, effected an interview between Mr. Ellis and a friend of the editor, in order to furnish an opportunity for explanations ; in consequence of the interview, Mr. Ellis received an assurance that the editor would insert a note, suitably prepared, showing the spuriousness of the letter. Mr. Ellis, accordingly, prepared a very brief statement, which (we have just read it,) most satisfactorily demonstrated the forgery ; but the editor, instead of redeeming the promise, merely apprizes his readers that he has received a letter from the Missionary Ellis, saying that the letter of Boki was a forgery, and adds, that “the letter certainly did come from the Sandwich Islands, and its genuineness neither has been, nor is, doubted by the officer of the Blonde who received it, or by his *captain* ;” thus both withholding the evidence, and making a further attempt, *worse than weak*, as we will presently show, to defend the imposition. Mr. Ellis sent out a copy of the Review to the missionaries, to ascertain positively whether Boki wrote or signed it. “When the letter reached the Sandwich Islands, it was shown to Boki by the missionaries, and *he was unable to read it*. They made, therefore, a translation of it into his native tongue, and Boki, after having perused it, appended a certificate, in which *he affirmed that the letter was none of his*. This translation, with the original certificate, written by Boki in the Hawaiian language, is now at the Missionary Rooms,”* at Boston. But says the Editor, ‘its genuineness neither has been, nor is doubted, by the *Captain of the Blonde* ;’ yet what said that noble officer himself, when asked by a personal friend ? “I have no hesitation in saying, that I do not believe Boki *either wrote or dictated* that letter.—I do not mean to say that the letter did not come from the Islands, but it certainly was manufactured by some other person.”† Could the Editor then have had any authority for his bold assertion ? But we have not

* Missionary Herald, Vol. XXVII. p. 122.

† Lord Byron’s Letter to Mr. Stewart, Missionary Herald, Vol. XXIV. p. 257.

stated the whole. By the aid of a kind nobleman, Mr. Ellis obtained a sight of the original manuscript, claiming to be the autograph of the Hawaiian chief; he instantly detected that the impostor had written his wife's name "Mrs. Bockey," and two lines after signed his own "Boke;" while, in the Quarterly, the spelling in both cases was altered, and the names were written *Boki*, in conformity with the known and uniform mode of spelling them in the Hawaiian alphabet! Who could make such an alteration, except for the very purpose of concealing a manifest forgery? We do not know that the Quarterly has ever offered the least explanation.

In speaking of more recent aspersions of the Missionaries at the Sandwich Islands, we must acquit the Quarterly of any active participation in them, and will not press an inquiry, from what motives it is, that in reviewing Beechey's Voyage, that part, which relates to those islands, is passed in entire silence; although it is natural to ask, if they believed the accounts of Beechey, why not adduce them to confirm their own former representations? or, if satisfied that the truth was quite otherwise, why not embrace so favorable an opportunity magnanimously to correct them?—The before-mentioned Edinburgh reviewer, also, admits that "matters are not so bad at the Sandwich Islands" as at Tahiti, and that "a wonderful change has been produced on the habits, manners, and condition of the people." But he takes good care to allow no credit for this wonderful change either to the Gospel or its proclaimers; it is, he says, "a change, the sole merit of which belongs to King Tamehameha, and his minister Krimakoo, two persons singularly adapted to each other, with minds of that bold and original cast, which, rising superior to every thing local and present, anticipate the wisdom of ages to come, and apparently raised up by Providence for the special purpose of giving the first vigorous impulse to improvement in that hitherto benighted region of the globe." We should be sorry to fall behind this writer in acknowledging the *special purposes* and *providence* of God; but, as to the matter in question, we recognize them rather in some other particulars. The reviewer probably derived his estimate of the character of Tamehameha from Capt. Beechey, who would rank him, as he expresses himself, "among those great men, who, like our Alfred, and Peter the Great of Russia, are justly esteemed the benefactors of mankind." It is unnecessary to discuss the character of an ambitious savage warrior; moreover, Capt. B., in the same paragraph, makes a statement, which shows how little Tamehameha, whatever his personal qualities, had accomplished in raising his subjects from

barbarism. He died in 1819, an idolater, enjoining upon his son to adhere to the religion and customs of his fathers."

"It is painful to relate," says the captain, in the statement referred to, "that although his death occurred so recently, several human victims were sacrificed to his manes by the priests in the morais; and, according to the custom of the islands, some, who were warmly attached to him, committed suicide, in order to accompany him to the grave, while great numbers knocked out their front teeth, and otherwise mutilated and disfigured themselves."

If the reviewer could have intended the son and successor of this monarch, who assumed the same name, *Tamehameha*, and to whom the chief *Karaimoku* was also a favorite counsellor, he equally mistakes; for these two, although they became friends and co-operators in the cause of Christian civilization, accomplished no part of the acknowledged moral revolution, independently of missionary assistance, except that, in contempt of the ancient superstitions, they had destroyed many of the idol-images and had eaten with the women, previously to the arrival of the American teachers. To their proposals the king at first replied, "My subjects are given up to drunkenness, and what will be the use of trying to teach such people?" It was not till the latter part of 1822, that he could himself be persuaded to attempt learning to read and write, and in 1824 he died. Had, then the islanders received only such "impulse to improvement" as might have resulted from the native talents or dispositions of these monarchs and their minister, they would not have possessed now a written language, a code of laws and courts of justice, with regular schools, and books and printing-presses.

Leaving the reviewers, we have yet to notice a few passages in Captain Beechey's narrative. He touched at the Sandwich Islands twice in his voyage. In the account of the first visit, all that is of importance respecting the subject before us, is the following:

"The few days I had to remain here were devoted to astronomical and other observations, and I had but little opportunity to judge of the island; but, from a letter which I received from Boki, it was evident that he did not approve of the system of religious restraint, that had been forced into operation, which was alike obnoxious to the foreigners residing upon the island, and to the natives."

But we happen to have learnt what credit is due to a letter from *Boki*, and by this memorandum in Capt. B.'s journal we are furnished, in all probability, with a new instance of a deliberate and malicious attempt to injure the missionary cause by falsehood and imposture.—In describing his second visit, Capt. B. fills above forty octavo pages, in which he makes assertions

with all the promptness and decision of one, who is conscious of having made full investigation, and is confident that he utters unquestionable truth. Judge then of the surprize which the careful reader will feel, when, at the close of the whole, he receives from his author the following quit-claim of demands upon his confidence.

"My endeavor has been to give as faithful an account as I could of the government and of the state of society in the islands, &c. Had my occupations been less numerous, I might have done more justice to these subjects; but the determination of the position of the place, and attention to other observations occupied my time so completely that I had very little leisure for other pursuits."

It is a pity that the captain did not devote to those other observations the little leisure he did employ in different pursuits; for we trust he was in the habit of making such observations with more care, and recording them with greater accuracy, than are exemplified in his account of the government and state of society; else they are surely little worth. It is not imperfect justice, but perfect injustice that he has done, in some parts of the account at least.—After describing as a 'mania' the desire of learning, which had been awakened, and mentioning what blessings might have resulted, if the missionaries had *judiciously managed* this feeling, he says,

"But they were misled by the eagerness of their hopes, and their zeal carried them beyond the limits calculated to prove beneficial to the temporal interest of a people still in the earliest stage of civilization. The apparent thirst after spiritual knowledge in Honoruru created a belief among the missionaries, that this feeling was become general, and auxiliary schools were established in different parts of the island, at which, we were informed, *every adult was required to attend several times a day.*"

By whom and how Capt. B. was thus informed, he does not inform his readers; but, by a very little inquiry, he might have informed himself, that no such law, command, or requirement was ever made; and learned "that the attendance at the schools had never been other than voluntary on the part of the natives."—But this compulsion, according to the captain, "*obliging* the men to quit their work, and repair to the nearest auxiliary school so frequently during the day" produced "much mischief," and threatened "very ruinous consequences to the country."

"At length the regent and other chiefs determined to break through this rigid discipline. The ten commandments had been recommended as the sole law of the land. This proposition was obstinately opposed; a meeting was called by the missionaries to justify their conduct, at which they lost ground by a proposal, that the younger part of the community only should be obliged to attend the schools, and that the men should be permitted to continue at their daily labor."

The latter part of this sentence is wholly a false gloss, as appears from what has just been stated on the best authority, that of Mr. Ellis. The meaning of the rest of it, we should be quite at a loss to determine, except that it contains dark, indefinite insinuations against the missionaries, were it not for the light cast upon it, by one of the letters of Mr. Stewart's Visit.

"Foreign residents," says Mr. S., "of every grade, with few exceptions, have ever denied the right of judicature over them to the government of the islands;" * * "in general they have been decidedly opposed to the establishment of all defined public laws, even for the government of the native subjects themselves, under a pretence that if laws were formed, they would be made by the missionaries; but in reality, I fear, because they wished the whole nation to remain lawless upon all points not affecting the interests of their own property or persons."

But laws, Mr. S. remarks, became absolutely necessary; intelligent visitors urged their importance upon the chiefs; Lord Byron especially did so in 1825; and towards the close of that year the regents, and their associates, the principal chiefs, attempted to lay a foundation.

"This was by a public discussion of the precepts of the Decalogue—as presenting the highest principles of moral and social action—at a council then convened, with the design of publishing the ten commandments without any penal obligations to their obedience, preparatory to the promulgation of specific laws founded upon them. Some of the missionaries had been invited by the Regents Karaimoku and Kaahumanu to be present; on information of which among the residents, a party of leading individuals from their number, *violently and riotously interrupted the council* with such menaces and threats, even to the taking of life, that the chiefs were utterly intimidated, and for the time relinquished their purpose."

Here we see whose 'discipline' the regent Karaimoku* and other chiefs wished 'to break through;' we see when, by whom, and in what sense, it was proposed to make the ten commandments 'the sole law of the land,' and by whom 'this proposition was *obstinately* opposed;' also how it was that, at that time, the missionaries 'lost ground!' If Capt. Beechey actually possesses the honorable feelings which others have ascribed to him, he will deeply regret the injury he has done to a band of praiseworthy men, by crediting so readily and without examination the reports of their avowed enemies.—We ought to remark here, to the honor of the government, that, although the foreigners had uttered such threats, and their opposition to all attempts to restrain vice subsequently increased rather than

* If by *regent* in the sentence quoted, Capt. B. means Boki, who, as he states, was regent at the time of his second visit, although not at the time of this council, or, as Capt. B. ignorantly terms it, 'meeting called by the missionaries to justify their conduct,' it will not save any part of the mistake, for Boki was, ostensibly at least, in favor of establishing the laws.

diminished, yet the king and chiefs did afterwards determine to promulgate laws with penal sanctions against murder, theft, and adultery, and a little later against gambling, drunkenness, prostitution, and profanation of the Sabbath. Mr. Stewart gives a copy of an edict still more recent, "every syllable of which is of unaided and unadvised native composition," and which, taken with the circumstances that occasioned it (requiring too much space for our pages,) shows that the missionaries are not the most forward persons at the islands to interfere in matters pertaining to the civil government. For merely printing this edict, although done at the direction of the chiefs, the residents violently denounced the missionaries.—We pass without remark some other insinuations and frivolous reports in the pages of Capt. Beechey. One more, however, we will specify. He insinuates very strongly that education has made but little progress, the mass of the people being "ignorant even of the nature of the prayers they repeat, and in other subjects entirely uninstructed." Unhappy islanders! compelled to attend school *several times a day*, to the neglect of all work, and at the hazard of *universal famine*.—and yet *entirely uninstructed*, not even taught the meaning of their prayers! The last mentioned item of ignorance might possibly be discovered without sailing from London to Behring's Straits; but did Capt. B. suppose that these simple, warm-hearted converts used a *Book*, and *repeated forms* of prayer prepared for them by their *spiritual Lords*? Whether they are left wholly ignorant of other subjects, let us hear another witness. The following is a part of Mr. Stewart's account of a public examination of the schools of Oahu, in presence of the officers of the U. S. ship Vincennes, and others, residents and visitors.

"The greatest portion of the specimens of writing and of composition among those most advanced, were letters addressed to myself, in expression of the happiness occasioned by my visit, and of the views of the different writers upon the subjects of learning and religion. Some hundreds of these, I should think, were committed to me by the writers after being subjected to the inspection of the various foreigners present. Among these were some, who take little interest in the advances of every kind making by the people, and who affect to believe, and who say, that no good has ever been accomplished by the mission, and that the people have no capacity for knowledge. To such, the gratification exhibited by our party at the attainments manifest, and the encomiums passed by them both on the teachers and the pupils, were any thing but agreeable; a fact which they could not disguise. The attention of a principal officer was attracted by the readiness and apparent understanding, with which a large class repeated what he was told was the multiplication table; and expressed his surprise and pleasure to one of these gentlemen seated beside him; to which he replied, with a look expressive of great contempt, "*All parrot-like, Sir, all parrot-like—they know nothing about what they are saying!*" Almost immediately after, a young man brought a slate with a large and complex sum in addition upon it, presenting it to the officer

to know whether it was correct. It was found to be perfectly so; and turning to Mr. ———, he said with a laugh—"A parrot, possibly, might learn to repeat the multiplication table, Mr. ———, but it would require a wise bird to add such a series of columns together without a mistake!"

The Sandwich Islands and their missions were duly honored in that heterogeneous budget of slander, which the German Post-Captain, with whom our readers have formed some acquaintance, willingly bore across two oceans to open and spread before the civilized world. But we are sick of this task we are upon; it is almost like overhauling a cargo of contagion, where there comes up gust after gust of the same putrid odor. We have a perpetual recurrence of the calumnies, which have been again and again refuted, and the only peculiarity in the case of Kotzebue seems to be the violence and the inconsistency of his manner. We are glad that the work of exposure has been thoroughly performed in the Vindication of Mr. Ellis, who has set forth in bold relief the ignorance and prejudice of this writer. Not long since, also, the American Quarterly exhibited the testimony of Kotzebue and Stewart upon the Sandwich islanders in strong contrast, and in a light calculated to make correct and useful impressions. Specially and earnestly do we recommend the perusal of *Mr. Stewart's sixteenth letter from the Sandwich Islands* to every one, who is willing to learn the truth in this affair, and to know with what unblushing impudence the most flagrant falsehoods have been asseverated. On our own part, we will trouble our readers with the company of the captain of the *Predpriatic* but a moment. We cannot help the suspicion, that he was put a little out of humor by the questions relating to useful knowledge and *practical religion*, which some of the natives asked him here, as well as at Tahiti. Describing an interview with Namahana, he says, "She now overwhelmed me with a host of questions, some of them very absurd, and which, to have answered with methodical precision, would have required much time and consideration. I endeavored to cut the matter as short as possible; and, in order to *divert her thoughts to other subjects, set wine before her*; she liked it very much, and I therefore presented her with a bottle; *but her thirst of knowledge was not thus to be quenched*; and during a visit of two hours, she asked such incessant questions, that I was not a little relieved when she proposed to depart." The captain, we believe, does not specify the "very absurd questions," which he took so delicate and humane a method to answer; perhaps they were too much like the interrogations of the queen of Tahiti, who inquired of him, '*whether he was a Christian*,' and '*how often he prayed daily*,'

questions, "which to have answered with methodical precision," might indeed have "required much time and consideration," from a man so scrupulously cautious and conscientious as the author of the "New Voyage round the World."—We will only allude, further, to Capt. Kotzebue's gift in foreseeing the future. He ventured his credit, it seems, upon a confident prediction. After an idle tale about the queen's compelling to school an old man of seventy, and saying, "If you will not learn to read, you may go and drown yourself," he adds,

"To such tyranny as this, has *Bingham* urged the queen, and perhaps already esteems himself absolute sovereign of these islands. But he reckons without his host. He pulls the cords so tightly that the bow must break; and I forewarn him, that his authority will one day suddenly vanish; already the cloud is gathering; much discontent exists."—"Karemaku is suffering under a confirmed dropsy,"—"it is impossible he can survive long, and his death will be the signal of a general insurrection, which *Bingham's* folly will certainly have accelerated."

To all this, leaving the reader to comment on its absurdity and ill-will, we quote the brief but caustic reply of Mr. Ellis:

"Time, that unsparing castigator of prophetic presumption, has proved the prediction false. The death of Karaimoku has taken place, but no revolution has followed; education is extending; and the missionaries were never more respected than at the present time."

We now bid farewell to the voyagers, whose mis-statements we have been considering, with the following apology in their behalf, from the pen of Mr. Stewart; it is the best, which the facts in the case will possibly admit; should we indicate any disposition to demur at it as *too favorable*, it would be set down, probably, to the proverbial acidity and severity of the critic.

"I impeach not their veracity. But, unfortunately for themselves, the attitude in which they have placed themselves, by their publications, is such, that charity herself cannot throw around them a shield, which, in addition to a defence of their honor as gentlemen, will screen their reputation as trustworthy reporters to the world of the physiology, condition, and prospects of the people they have visited in traversing the globe. A defence of their candor can only be sustained by the sacrifice of the acuteness of their observation and the faithfulness of their research. If their accounts of the Sandwich Islands were written in full probity of heart, they must plead guilty to the charge of an error of judgement, and of having become dupes to the arts and misrepresentations of others, in utter neglect of the facilities for personal observation, by which they were surrounded. To every intelligent visitor at the same place, it must be self-evident, that instead of filling their notebooks with facts passing before them, they caught with eagerness from strongly prejudiced and ill-disposed men, recitals and hear-says, in direct opposition to them."

It is exceedingly grateful, after reading such complaints as we have, of the folly, bigotry, and officiousness of the missiona-

ries, to meet with a candid and philanthropic defence of their character by a respected naval officer of the United States, Captain Finch, of the U. S. ship Vincennes, in a "Retrospective View" of his official visit to the Sandwich Islands, in 1829,* says,

"I am at a loss to decide wherein the foreign residents have just cause to complain of, or to condemn the government. They affect to believe that all its measures are dictated by the missionaries. I really do not think so. They doubtless, in their stations as teachers, have influence; but I rather believe it is confined as closely as is practicable, or possible, to that relation".—"It is a most lamentable fact, that the dislike of the missionaries by the foreign residents, has a tendency, as yet, to paralyze the efforts, which the natives are so laudably making to render themselves worthy of the support and confidence of enlightened Christian and distant nations."—"The constant complaining against the missionaries is irksome in the extreme, and in such contrast with the conduct of the missionaries themselves, that I could not but remark their circumspection and reserve with admiration; the latter never obtruded upon my attention the grounds or causes they might have to complain; nor did they advert to the opposition they experienced, unless expressly invited thereto by me. If the understandings of the natives are imposed upon by the religious injunctions of the missionaries, the evil will ultimately correct itself by the very tuition which they afford the inhabitants, more certainly and effectually than by the denunciation and declamation of foreigners, who are interested and temporary sojourners, without any other than moneyed transactions to engage the confidence of the natives; whereas the missionaries have adventured their families among them, and stand pledged as to the issue of their undertaking, before not only the American public, but the world at large."

We sat down to our work in this article mindful of the intention, some time since expressed, of giving an extended notice of the Journal of Tyerman and Bennett. But as we then suggested some of the principal lessons furnished by the book; as it had been so fully examined in some other periodicals; and especially as it was known to have a rapid circulation among all classes of readers; we thought it would be rendering a more useful service to take a glance at a subject presented in Mr. Montgomery's Preface, the slanders against the South Sea Missions. This led to a perusal of the other books and writings named, and to the train of thought pursued. In relation to the Journal, the only remark that need be added is, that the work is throughout a monument both of the necessity and the success of missionary effort.

Something of the kind we have attempted, seemed the more important, because the most respectable of the works containing the slanders herein exposed, is now undergoing republication, to be widely circulated in this country. It certainly becomes the *Spirit of the Pilgrims* to foster deep sympathy with those excellent but abused men, who have forsaken country and home

* See Stewart's Visit to the South Seas.

for Christ's sake and the Gospel's. Some of them are our kinsmen according to the flesh; they are all our brethren, by the bonds of grace, and in the household of faith. Called, as they are, to encounter not merely all the hardships and discouragements incident to the proper work of evangelizing the heathen, but also the severer trials arising from the unprincipled selfishness and malignant hostility of covetous and licentious adventurers sojourning around them, the sympathies and the prayers of the church they need—they implore—they shall have. For ourselves, we confess, we were not fully aware, before our present examination, of either the extent or the guilt of the conspiracy against the honor of the missionaries and the peace of the islanders. But we have seen enough to understand why the excellent queen Kaahumanu should exclaim, as she once did, refusing to eat, "There is no sweetness in the food—my heart is broken by the wickedness of the foreigners, and the falseness of their words."

Let, however, the rising feeling of indignation be repressed, and earnest prayer be offered for the conversion and salvation of these unhappy recreants as to Christianity and civilization. Even this is not hopeless. In more than one instance, thoughtless visiters at the South Sea Islands have been convinced by the triumphs of the Gospel there attested, that it is a system of vital power, and been thereby led to seek and embrace the peculiar hopes and joys of a regenerated heart.

RECENT PUBLICATIONS.

1. *The Young Christian; or a familiar Illustration of the Principles of Christian Duty.* BY JACOB ABBOTT, *Principal of the Mt. Vernon School, Boston.* Boston: Peirce & Parker, 1832. pp. 323.

"This book is intended to explain and illustrate, in a simple manner, the principles of Christian duty, and is intended, not for children, nor exclusively for the young, but for all who are just commencing a religious life, and who feel desirous of receiving a familiar explanation of the first principles of piety." Such is the recorded intention of the author of this book; and we must say that he has admirably executed it. It was no part of his design to go into a discussion or formal exhibition of theological doctrines. He as-

sumes, as the basis of his remarks, those great principles of religious truth, in which Evangelical Christians generally concur, and labors, by incidents, comparisons, and a variety of illustration, to make the experimental and practical parts of religion plain and interesting to his readers. Some persons may indeed object to the number of imaginary incidents which are introduced; but to this the author pertinently replies, "This book is not more full of parables than were the discourses of Jesus Christ. I shelter myself behind his example."

2. *The Origin and History of Missions, compiled and arranged from Authentic Documents.* BY REV. THOMAS SMITH, London, and REV. JOHN O. CHOULES, Newport, R. I. Boston: Samuel Walker, and Lincoln & Edmands. 1832.

This splendid work has already proceeded as far as the third number. The style in which it is executed is worthy of the subject, and we hope it may receive a worthy and liberal patronage. It is contemplated to complete the work in twelve or fourteen numbers, of 96 pages each, suitable to be bound in two quarto volumes. The whole will contain at least 36 elegant engravings, with two maps executed on steel.

3. *A More Excellent Way. A Sermon preached in the Evangelical Church in Sherburne, June 24, 1832, designed as an Examination of a Sermon by Rev. Amos Clarke, entitled "The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ."* BY SAMUEL LEE. Boston: Peirce & Parker. pp. 24.

Mr. Lee, like not a few of his ministerial brethren in Massachusetts, is settled in the same town with a Unitarian minister—one who, it seems, has not been very explicit in declaring his religious sentiments. He has even claimed to be moderately Orthodox, and not to differ materially in point of sentiment from Mr. Lee. He has preached and published a sermon for the purpose of setting forth his sentiments, in which the same impression seems likely to be made. But Mr. Lee is not a man to be trifled with; and in the sermon before us, which is more properly a review than a sermon, he enters into an examination of the discourse referred to, for the purpose of pointing out the difference between Orthodoxy and Unitarianism, however the latter may be garnished over with the design to give it plausibility and currency. Mr. L. is very explicit in declaring his own sentiments, and he makes it evident that he and his neighbor differ, at least in the following particulars, viz. "*the Divinity of Christ, the Atonement, total depravity, and instantaneous regeneration.* These," says Mr. L. "*are essential doctrines.* Take from my system of religious belief any one of them, and you destroy that system."

The discourse concludes with several very serious practical reflections upon the effects of the kind of preaching which had been examined by Mr. L.

REMARKS ON UNITARIAN BELIEF.

Our next number will contain a Review of the "Remarks on Unitarian Belief," by Rev. Nehemiah Adams.

THE
SPIRIT OF THE PILGRIMS.

VOL. V.

DECEMBER, 1832.

NO. 12.

COMMUNICATIONS.

DR. TAYLOR'S REPLY TO DR. TYLER.

Dr. Tyler, in his rejoinder to my Reply to his Remarks, still maintains, "that my theories involve principles subversive of some of the most important and prominent articles of my creed." His first particular charge respected the doctrine of decrees. My first reply to this was, that in the import of the word as used by Dr. Tyler, I had advanced *no theory* on the subject whatever; i. e. that I had not professed to assign the *actual* reason for the divine permission of sin. I stated explicitly the ground I had taken on the subject; that sin in respect to divine prevention *may be* incidental to the best moral system; and that, while I had said that such *may be* the reason why sin exists, I had *not* said, that *it is* the reason, nor that some other is not the reason. If indeed, this were not so, it would by no means follow, that Dr. Tyler can sustain his charge of inconsistency; but if it is so, then his charge is entirely groundless. Of this Dr. Tyler is aware. Accordingly, he now attempts to convict me of maintaining the positive position, that *God could not have prevented all sin in a moral system.*

My first remark is, that Dr. Tyler has founded this charge on mere inference or deduction. He does not even pretend, that I have *affirmed* this position to be true. He even concedes that I have not. After adverting to my claim, "that I have not affirmed it to be true," he proceeds,—"*Still* however, he has made it the basis of his reasoning," &c. Now this is saying, that *though* I have not affirmed the position to be true, *still*, &c. Thus Dr. Tyler *concedes* that he makes this charge, as Dr. Woods confesses he made it, viz. 'when he is aware that I have not affirmed the position charged.' Here

then I might drop the question; for it is confessedly unauthorized to charge *opinions* upon any man on the ground of mere inference.

Again, Dr. Tyler has not only taken the ground of mere inference, but has entirely failed, even on this ground. The course he has adopted, I shall now briefly examine.—After saying, that one of the following positions must be true, viz. either *that God could have prevented all sin in a moral system, or that he could not*; he states what I understand to be the principles on which his inference rests. Of these principles as having any possible application to the subject, one only demands notice. It is this, “that he who attempts to show that one of these positions is unworthy of belief—does at the same time attempt to show that the other is worthy of belief.” Dr. Tyler applies this principle by citing passages in which I have said, that in my view, the position that God could have prevented all sin in a moral system is ‘a groundless assumption—without proof, and incapable of proof.’ Now I readily admit, that there are positions, such as Dr. Tyler supposes, viz. the positions, that ‘there is a God,’ that ‘the Scriptures are inspired,’ &c. in respect to which we are placed under the *obligation* of believing, and of course under the necessity of believing or of disbelieving, by a positive act of the mind. But I ask, whether we are under the same obligation in respect to *theories* concerning the origin of moral evil? Or is a man at liberty on this subject, to have no *faith* at all? Do not “the Orthodox generally” profess to have no faith respecting these *theories*? What then if I have attempted to show, that Dr. Tyler’s position is a gratuitous assertion, without proof and “unworthy of belief;” have I, in doing this, attempted to show that the opposite position “is worthy of belief?” Suppose Dr. Tyler had asserted, that the inhabitants of the moon eat, drink, and sleep, as we do; or, that they are as well educated as the people of New England; and suppose I had said, that such an assertion is groundless,—without proof and incapable of proof; would this be attempting to show that the opposite position “is worthy of belief?”—i. e. that we are bound to believe, that the inhabitants of the moon neither eat, drink, nor sleep,—or that they are not as well educated as the people of New England? Is either position to be received as a well authenticated fact in the moon’s history?

Dr. Tyler next cites passages, in which I have said, ‘that in my view his theory involves insuperable difficulties.’ Now it is undeniable, that many Orthodox divines, who have substantially the same views of Dr. Tyler’s theory which I have, and who re-

fuse to adopt it, would by no means assert the truth of the opposite position. Some would say with Dr. Green, 'we neither affirm nor deny it; this is a mystery, why not let it alone?' Others, (and Dr. Woods is of this class,) conceding that difficulties and mystery pertain to the subject, still hold the theory of Dr. Tyler.* What then if I have said, that, in my view, the theory of Dr. Tyler involves insuperable difficulties? Does this prove that I maintain the opposite position to be true? If so, then the same fact will prove, in respect to Dr. Green and "the Orthodox generally" who neither affirm nor deny the opposite theory, that they actually maintain it. It will even prove that Dr. Woods maintains the very opposite theory to that which he professes to maintain. For, how is it, that the same fact will prove a charge against me, and not against other men?

To be quite confident of the truth of any theory respecting the existence of moral evil, has been extensively regarded as the mark of a rash and presumptuous mind. Dr. Dwight, after comparing the attempts to solve the difficulties on this subject to those of an emmet, which from the top of his mole-hill, should undertake to survey the world around him, and propose plans for the improvement of the human race, says,—“With respect to the subject in hand, we are emmets, and take our surveys from the top of a mole-hill.” He even thinks it proper to “smile at the presumption of one, who on this subject, should ascend the chair of philosophical judgement and haughty decision.”† Dr. Tyler seems indeed to be confident in his philosophical judgement. But he will now be able to see, that in the opinion of some, less confidence is not unbecoming. He may cease to wonder, that some refuse to adopt his theory on account of its difficulties, who still neither maintain that it is demonstrably false, nor that the opposite position is true. He may even conceive it possible, that some should regard the latter position as more probable, or even as free from all difficulty, and still, feel so little confidence in their own judgement on so profound a subject, as neither to express nor form an opinion. I go further. Suppose that Dr. Tyler's theory, *in my view*, is encumbered with such difficulties, absurdities, and contradictions, that I *ought*, according to the laws of evidence, to reject

* Dr. Woods, in his Letters, maintains, that sin is the necessary means of the greatest good, and that this is the reason why God permits its existence. And yet he says, “that the Orthodox generally regard the existence of sin under the divine government as a profound mystery,”—that “sin is permitted for reasons which lie beyond human intelligence,”—that “God has not made them known to us, nor made us capable of discerning them.” He even says, “I hold that they are known only to the Infinite Mind.” And yet, Dr. Woods professes to show what this reason is, though according to Dr. Woods himself, God *only* knows the reason!

† Theology, Vol. I. p. 463.

it as false, and even to maintain the opposite theory; does this prove that I do in *fact* thus reject the one and maintain the other? Can Dr. Tyler sustain the honorable charge in respect to me or other men, of believing and maintaining every position, which, according to the laws of evidence, we ought to believe and maintain! How can Dr. Tyler know, that deference to the opinions of wiser men, or an undue timidity or hesitation on my part; or even some reluctance to be likened to 'an emmet on the top of his mole-hill' has not hitherto prevented me from forming any opinion respecting these deep things of God? If Dr. Tyler does not *know* all this, then it becomes him to retract his charge.

Dr. Tyler asks 'how my theory can be a point of rest to the mind, unless it be regarded as true?'—I answer, exactly in the manner in which it was proposed as such, viz. as a mere *supposition* or *possible* truth. Dr. Tyler, it seems, has yet to learn, that an objection based on a mere assumption, is entirely set aside by a mere supposition, i. e. by showing that the *supposition* opposed to that assumption *may be true*.

The residue of Dr. Tyler's supposed proofs are founded in his *mistaking* material facts.—Thus he represents me as pronouncing the assumption that *God could have prevented all sin in a moral system*, 'a pernicious theory'—'involving many of the doctrines of the Gospel in absurdities and contradictions;' whereas I said these things, *solely* of the theory, 'that sin is the necessary means of the greatest good.*'—He next represents me as pronouncing the same assumption "a revolting dogma;" whereas I said this of another position, viz. 'that God permits his creatures to sin when he can prevent it, *for the sake* of showing his justice in their damnation.'—He next represents me as *denying* this assumption, because I said, that "it might be safely left to answer for itself;" language which necessarily means, and was used to mean, nothing more than that the position is incapable of proof.—Dr. Tyler's last proof is, that I have made "a formal argument" to establish the opposite position. This so called 'formal argument' consists in three *interrogatories* from the note to my sermon. Here I might ask, whether *interrogatories* have not sometimes the force of *mere questions*? But in the present case Dr. Tyler knew, that they were intended, not as *assertions*, but as *mere questions* or in-

* Under the position, that God could prevent all sin in a moral system, but would not, different reasons have been assigned, why he would not. One is, as stated above, 'that sin is the necessary means of the greatest good.' This I have rejected and denied, believing it to be contradictory to revealed truth, and of pernicious tendency. But I have not denied, that some other reason may exist, why God would not prevent sin, even on the supposition that he *could* prevent it.

quiries, suggesting difficulties apparently pertaining to his theory, and calling on its advocates to prove the truth of their own assertions. I say Dr. Tyler knew this. For if there could be originally any possible ground to doubt concerning the design of that note, Dr. Tyler had none, when he represented these inquiries as containing 'a formal argument.' He had before him, in the Review of Dr. Woods's Letters, abundant assurances that they were not so designed.

I have thus examined the grounds, on which Dr. Tyler charges me with maintaining, *that God could not have prevented all sin in a moral system.* Strange as it may seem, that he should fall into such mistakes as these; and trying as it is to be obliged to correct them, there is another consideration that renders this necessity even more painful. Dr. Tyler has made this charge, knowing that I had explicitly *disclaimed* it, and on no better pretence, than that my language in the way of *inference* will, in some instances, bear him out in so doing. This pretence, I have now shown to be vain. If I had not, still, when a question arises respecting the design and import of language, whether from its ambiguity or the inadvertent use of it; and when the meaning charged is unequivocally disclaimed, and explanations are given, then surely the charge cannot be repeated consistently either with justice or decorum. A disavowal, in such circumstances, must be admitted in all honorable controversy, as satisfactory on the point at issue. To repeat the charge and maintain its correctness, is to insist not merely on a war about words; it is to question veracity, and withhold confidence where it is due. What then if Dr. Tyler's inferential construction of my language (of this others can now judge) were even correct; I now put this question to Dr. Tyler,—whether, in view of my explicit disavowal of the fact, *he believes* that I ever meant to advance the opinion charged? If he says that he *does believe* it, instead of attempting to change his belief, I shall rely on a more candid judgement from my readers. If he says that he does not believe it, then I ask him why he charges me with advancing an opinion, which he does not believe I ever meant to advance?

The reader can now judge whether I have advanced the theory *as true*, that *God could not have prevented all sin in a moral system.* If not, then Dr. Tyler's original attempt to show, that I maintain "a theory inconsistent with the doctrine of decrees," is an entire failure.

But Dr. Tyler has taken new ground. Supposing that I have propounded a mere hypothesis, or possible truth, he says, "Yet if it is inconsistent with the doctrine of decrees, it must

tend directly to subvert that article of my creed." How this can be so, I am wholly unable to discover. If I perceive no inconsistency between the hypothesis and the doctrine, and especially, if on this hypothesis, every objection to the doctrine is, in my view, removed, and the evidence of its truth left uncounteracted and unimpaired, how can the hypothesis tend directly to subvert my faith in the doctrine? The case is this, according to Dr. Tyler. If a man should have *no actual faith* in a given theory respecting tides, but should merely regard it as one which *might* be true, and which, *if* true, would in his view solve all the phenomena, and remove every difficulty, it would tend directly to subvert his belief that the sea ebbs and flows!

My second reply to Dr. Tyler's charge of inconsistency respecting the doctrine of decrees, was, "that for a plain position of mine, he had substituted a very different one of his own." Whether such was the fact, depends simply on this question, viz. whether the position, "that God, all things considered, prefers holiness to sin," is *equivalent* to the position, "that God prefers, all things considered, that sin *should not* exist?" To show that these preferences are not the same, I said, "God may prefer holiness to sin in his present system, and also purpose the existence of sin, rather than to change, or not adopt the system. Does it involve a contradiction to suppose, that Dr. Tyler should prefer the repentance and salvation of all his people to their impenitence and perdition; and also prefer that a few should pervert the means necessary to the salvation of all the rest, rather than not adopt these means? Does it involve a contradiction to suppose that a benevolent parent should prefer, under the best system of government, the obedience of his children to their disobedience; and still prefer their occasional disobedience to perpetual imprisonment or death to prevent it? May not a voluntary being prefer A to B, and still prefer B to C?"

To this (as I must regard it) clear exhibition of the *possibility* of these co-existing preferences, Dr. Tyler has made, in my view, no reply. He simply *asserts*, that it is not so, and that it is not possible that it should be! He says, "How is it possible for God to prefer, *on any account*, the existence of sin *in any instance*, if, *all things considered*, that is, *on all accounts*, he prefers something else in its stead, *in all instances*? Will Dr. Taylor be so good as to inform us?"—I ask whether I have not done this already? Have I not shown that "*the all things considered*," in the one case, are, and must be, different from "*the all things considered*," in the other case?

To test this point, I shall take the liberty of putting a few questions to Dr. Tyler. I ask him whether, if he knew that a few of his people would pervert those means of grace, which would secure the salvation of all the rest, he would not prefer that they should pervert them, rather than not adopt those means of saving others? If not, let him tell the reason,—*the thing considered*,—why he would not. If he would, then here, *on some account*, is one preference.—I ask again, whether he would not actually prefer, *all things considered*, that is, *on all accounts*, the repentance of all his people *under these means*, rather than the continued impenitence and final perdition of any of them? This is the next question. Let Dr. Tyler answer it; and tell us the reason,—*the thing considered*,—or, *on what account*, i. e. why he should not prefer the repentance of all to the impenitence of any.—Let us put the other case which I supposed, to the same test. Is it possible then, or is it not, that a parent should prefer, *on any account*, the disobedience of a child *in any instance*,—(i. e. in any case whatever;) provided he also prefers, *all things considered*, that is, *on all accounts*, the child's obedience to disobedience *in all instances*? I ask Dr. Tyler then to suppose, that he knew his child would disobey his command to attend school in a given instance, unless he resorted to the expedient of some ruinous indulgence to prevent disobedience. Would not Dr. Tyler, *on some account*, prefer that the child should disobey in that instance? If not, then Dr. Tyler would prefer that his child should be ruined, rather than disobey his command to attend school in a single instance. Will Dr. Tyler say this?—I now ask another question, viz. whether Dr. Tyler would not prefer, *all things considered*, that is, *on all accounts*, that the child should obey rather than disobey *in this very instance*? If not, why not? Let Dr. Tyler tell us what *the thing considered* is, why he would not prefer that the child, in this very instance should obey rather than disobey?—And now if Dr. Tyler can give no reason—specify *no consideration*, why he would not, in the cases supposed, have these preferences;—if rather, it is a matter of his own conscious experience, that he should in fact have them, why does he simply assert that the thing is impossible? This, Dr. Tyler must allow me to say, is making just no reply at all.

Dr. Tyler's difficulty in apprehending this part of the subject, apparently results from overlooking some of the material facts in the case. On the supposition which I have stated as possible truth, there are two distinct cases of preference, in respect to three different objects, viz. *universal holiness, sin, and*

the non-existence of the best system. Universal holiness, which is the preferable object in the first case, i. e. when compared with sin, is supposed to be unattainable by divine intervention. Hence the object sin, the rejected object in *the first* case of preference, becomes in the second case preferable, not to holiness, but to a third object, viz. *the non-existence of the best system.* Thus in the first case, when holiness and sin are the objects of comparison and preference, and when *all things* dependent on, and involved in, the existence of each, *are considered*, then holiness is preferred to sin. But in the other case, holiness and sin are *not* the objects of comparison and preference, but sin and the non-existence of the best system; for God, according to the supposition, must permit sin, or not adopt the best system. God then may prefer holiness to sin, *all things considered*, when *these* are the objects of comparison and preference; and at the same time, if he cannot, (according to the supposition,) secure universal holiness, he may prefer, *all things considered*, that sin shall exist, i. e. prefer its existence, rather than not adopt or change the best system.

That there is no inconsistency between these two preferences, is apparent from the nature of the case. For, *the thing considered*, i. e. the reason for purposing the existence of sin, is the existence of the best system. This the greatest good demands. But this would exist, were holiness to exist *under the system* in every instance instead of sin. There is, therefore, no possible *thing to be considered*, in the case supposed, for preferring sin to holiness, or for not preferring holiness to sin. This preference of holiness to sin, *all things considered*, may therefore exist in the divine mind, along with the purpose, that sin, *all things considered*, shall exist; i. e. God may prefer, *all things considered*, that holiness should exist in every instance, rather than sin, under *the best system*; but knowing that it will not, and that sin will exist in some instances, under this system, he may purpose that it shall exist, rather than not adopt, or change the system.

The reader can now judge, whether the position, "that God prefers, *all things considered*, holiness to sin in all instances," is the same as the position, "that he prefers, *all things considered*, that sin *should not* exist." If they are not the same, then Dr. Tyler has substituted for mine, a very different position of *his own*; and, as his first attempt to convict me of inconsistency, and the present repetition of it, are entirely founded on this *unwarranted substitution*, his attempt is "an utter failure."

Dr. Tyler, however, has made some further attempts to jus-

tify himself on the ground he has taken. Much of what he says consists in *naked* assertions, that the very thing in debate 'is a contradiction'—in attempts at the *odium theologicum*, by classing me, on the doctrine of predestination, with Arminians, —and in reasoning on the ground of *the aforesaid substitution* of a position of his own for one of mine. In respect to the Scriptural facts, to which Dr. Tyler has applied this reasoning, it is necessary only to ask, whether God may not prefer, *all things considered*, holiness to sin, and still have purposed that David should number Israel, and the Jews crucify the Saviour, i. e. have purposed these sins, rather than not adopt or change the best system to prevent them; intending, doubtless, to overrule them for good? These things, I shall pass, without further notice, and briefly examine a few others, which to some minds may have more of the semblance of argument.

Here I shall first advert to an error in phraseology, which, though *not my own*, occurred in some instances in my Reply to Dr. Tyler's Remarks. This arose from the insertion of a passage, while my Reply was passing through the press, by one of the conductors of the Spirit of the Pilgrims. For the liberty thus taken, I am not disposed to censure my friend, considering our long intimacy, the coincidence of our views on theological subjects, and the desire from which it sprung, of giving an additional illustration of my opinions. I have to regret, however, that the use, in those paragraphs, of popular language, on a metaphysical topic, led to statements, which, interpreted to the letter, might justify Dr. Tyler's charge. The language *may* be understood to deny, *that God purposes sin at all*. Dr. Tyler, of course, avails himself of the passage. The error however was corrected by the assistant editor, in the same number in which the first part of Dr. Tyler's rejoinder appears. It is an error, as the author of it has apprized Dr. Tyler, for which *I am in no respect responsible*.

Dr. Tyler next calls in question the propriety of my use of terms. He says, "Is it proper to say, that God hath *foreordained, purposed, or decreed* the sinful conduct of men, *merely* because he did not create them machines, or refuse to give them existence?"—I answer, perhaps not; nor have I said any thing which implies that this would be proper, *merely* for the reasons stated by Dr. Tyler. But it is proper to say that God, the author of all things, foreseeing the sinful conduct of men under a given system, did, in adopting that system and placing men under it, *foreordain, purpose, or decree* their sinful conduct; be the reason of this purpose what it may.

Dr. Tyler is pleased to represent me as maintaining "that God decrees sin *in the same sense* that a man decrees that his son shall be a drunkard, when he finds he cannot prevent it unless he takes away his life, or locks him up in a dungeon." Excepting the rhetoric of this passage, I readily admit that I adduced a similar illustration, not however, as Dr. Tyler represents, to show *the sense* of the words *foreordain* or *decree*, when applied to the divine purposes; but for a very different purpose, viz. to show, that there is no inconsistency between the two preferences of God respecting holiness and sin. I certainly never attempted to find an *actual* case among men, strictly analogous to the providential government of God. The only question here is this, whether, if we suppose a case in which a parent, possessing *the same control* of circumstances, and *the same knowledge* of results, which God possesses, should place his children in such circumstances as he knew would result in their misconduct, he might not properly be said to *foreordain* or *decree* their misconduct? Will Dr. Tyler deny this?

Again, Dr. Tyler maintains 'that, to suppose that God did not ordain sin for a good end or a bad end, is the same as to suppose he did not foreordain it at all—is to suppose him to act without motive, and of course without wisdom or benevolence.' But I ask, is there no motive to purpose the existence of that which is 'wholly an evil,' provided its existence is consequential on that which is the necessary means of the greatest good? Is not this supposition as worthy of the wisdom and benevolence of God, as it is to suppose him to purpose that which is wholly an evil, as the necessary means of the greatest good; or to propose to accomplish the best end, by *the worst* means? Dr. Tyler, I presume, will admit that sin is either *the best* means of the best end, or that it is the *worst* means of this end. If it is the *best* means, then why is it not the *best thing* in its place? If the *worst* means of the end, then how is the wisdom of God honored by adopting it?

Dr. Tyler represents my theory 'as reducing the great God to the necessity of choosing between two evils.'—I answer, that according to Dr. Tyler's theory, God chooses sin, because though an evil, it is a *less evil* than *the diminution* of happiness which would result from its non-existence. Dr. Tyler himself, therefore, "reduces the great God to the necessity of choosing between two evils!" Indeed, if this is not so, then it follows, either that sin is *not an evil*, or that God does *not choose* that it shall exist. If Dr. Tyler should say, that it is *not an evil*, then, especially as he considers it the necessary

means of the greatest good, he must admit that it is entirely good, even the best thing.—If he says, that God does not choose that it shall exist, then who is to be classed with Arminians? I hardly know, which side of this alternative Dr. Tyler will prefer.

He goes on to say, that according to my theory, “God is reduced to the alternative of having no moral system, or having one, in which he will find much everlastingly to regret.” On this topic, I only remark in this place, that it would seem, that in Dr. Tyler's view, God has *no regret* that sin exists, though we are assured, that on account of sin, “it repented the Lord, that he had made man on the earth, and it *grieved* him at his heart.”—It would seem that any feelings on the part of God like approbation of sin, which are expressed in the Scriptures, are in Dr. Tyler's view, *real*; but that those of *regret* or displeasure on account of it, are all a fiction! If I can understand the obvious import of Dr. Tyler's language, he maintains that sin is *not an evil*, and that God does *not regret* its existence.

My third reply to Dr. Tyler's charge of contradiction was, ‘that he had *misquoted* my language.’ I had said, that “I do not believe that a God of sincerity and truth punishes his creatures for doing that, which on the whole, he prefers they should do, *and which is the best thing they can do.*” The words in italics, Dr. Tyler, according to his own acknowledgement, omitted in his quotation. By this expedient, he convicted me of contradiction. Could he have done this, had he cited the whole sentence? There is no pretence that he could. Was this then a fair and just quotation?

But Dr. Tyler is pleased to charge me with having “added the clause in italics, *with a view grossly to misrepresent* their (my opponents') sentiments.” Now I sincerely disclaim both the intention and the fact. I might say, that in my letter to Dr. Hawes, I had no opponents. But if Dr. Tyler and Dr. Woods must be considered as my opponents, then my representation was just; for while both assert, ‘that sin is the necessary means of the greatest good,’—Dr. Woods also says, ‘it is calculated for the highest good of the universe,’—and Dr. Tyler, as we have just seen, rejects the idea, that sin is an evil. Another writer says of it, “it has a most glorious tendency.” Now I cannot be stultified into the admission, that to do that ‘which is the necessary means of the greatest good,’ ‘which is not an evil,’ which has ‘a most glorious tendency,’ and which ‘is calculated for the highest good of the universe,’ is not doing *the best thing* which creatures can do.

My fifth reply (passing the fourth for the present,) to Dr.

Tyler's charge of contradiction was, that his "representation is incorrect." I had said, "that God foreordains whatsoever comes to pass," and also, "that it may be true that God could not prevent all sin *in a moral system.*" I claimed that, in representing my views on these topics, Dr. Tyler left out the words in italics. What then is the fact? Dr. Tyler's representation of my views is this: "But he foreordained whatsoever comes to pass; *that is*, he foreordained what he would have prevented, if he could." Are not the words in italics left out?—But says Dr. Tyler, "had the words in italics been repeated in the last sentence,—would this make the contradiction any the less palpable?" I answer, that there would be no contradiction at all; for what contradiction is there in saying, that God foreordained an evil which he could not prevent *in a moral system*; especially, on the supposition, that he purposed its existence, rather than not adopt the system?

My fourth reply to Dr. Tyler's charge of inconsistency was, 'that it resulted from his begging one of the main questions in debate.'—The justice of this reply, Dr. Tyler now virtually admits, by formally attempting to prove what he had before asserted and reasoned upon, *without proof*. He says, "to prevent further charge of assuming the point in debate, I shall attempt to prove, that God can secure the conduct he prefers—in other words, that he can control at pleasure, the moral actions of his creatures."

To prevent any misapprehension that may result from the ambiguity of the statement of Dr. Tyler, I remark

In the first place, that the position to be proved by Dr. Tyler is not, that God can secure the conduct of his creatures, which he prefers, pleases, or purposes, *actually to secure*. That God can do this, I fully believe. For, what can be plainer, than that an Omniscient God has never purposed actually to secure an action, which he cannot secure. It is one thing to prefer that creatures *should perform right action* rather than wrong in every instance, and quite another to purpose *actually* to secure the performance of right action in every instance. Now the position for Dr. Tyler to prove is, that God can actually secure obedience to his will as a Lawgiver in *every* instance throughout the moral universe; or, *that he can secure universal holiness; or, prevent all sin in a moral system*. Dr. Tyler will not deny, that this is the position which he is bound to prove; for in one instance he has used substantially the same language, as explanatory of his original statement.

Secondly, The real question does not respect *the power* of God at all. Here I wish, if possible, to remove a groundless

prejudice on the subject, which results merely from misunderstanding the language that common use and convenience have sanctioned. I remark then, that the words *cannot*, *impossible*, *unable*, &c. have a very diverse import in different cases. Thus, a being may be said to be *unable* to do a thing, from the want of power *in himself*; in which case, some increase of power in him, would of course remove the inability. But with equal propriety, a being may be said to be *unable* to do a thing, through *an impossibility* pertaining to the nature of the thing itself; in which case, no increase of power, would remove or lessen his inability. This has been termed a *metaphysical* impossibility; or an impossibility in the nature of things. Thus God cannot make a finite being infinite; or a part equal to the whole; or an agent who shall possess power to sin, and not possess it, at the same time. Now in these cases, though usage justifies the language, the meaning is *not*, that the inability is *subjective* in God, or consists in any want or defect of power in Him. The *impossibility* is altogether extrinsic—out of Himself, and in the nature of the thing spoken of. This is all that can properly be meant or be supposed to be meant, by such language. I am, as I have been before, the more careful to say this, because much odium has been thrown on the hypothesis stated, as if it limited the power of God, or denied his omnipotence; and because many, merely by mistaking the obvious import of the language, feel repelled even from listening to an argument on the point. But let justice be done to my *meaning*, if not to my opinions. Let the question proposed for discussion be really discussed, and not another; and let candor confess that the present question has nothing to do with *the power* of God, as an attribute of the divine nature. The real question respects *an impossibility in the nature of things*; and *the position* for Dr. Tyler to prove is,

That there is no impossibility in the nature of things, that God should secure universal holiness, or, prevent all sin in a moral system.

Without then affirming the contrary, but supposing that Dr. Tyler intended to prove *that no such impossibility exists*, I shall attempt to show, *that he has not proved it.*

His first argument is,—that almighty power can do any thing which does not imply a contradiction; and that it does not imply a contradiction to suppose, that God can secure universal holiness in a moral kingdom, because he has secured the holiness of thousands.—I answer, that this argument rests wholly on the assumption, that because God has secured holiness in some instances, he can in all. Now this is not a self-

evident position ; and to assume its truth as Dr. Tyler does, is simply to beg the question.—To suppose that God might have secured the holiness of all who have sinned, may be to suppose what, for aught Dr. Tyler has shown to the contrary, would have involved a contradiction. Some who have sinned, *may* have resisted all that God could do consistently with their moral agency, to prevent their sinning ; and therefore, to suppose that God could have secured their holiness, may be to suppose that he could secure their holiness by destroying their moral agency ; which is a contradiction. Now Dr. Tyler has not shown, that what I have supposed has not been an actual fact in a vast multitude of cases. He has therefore no right to assume, as his argument does assume, that it has not been a fact.—Further, if it be admitted, that God could have done more to secure holiness in these cases, without destroying moral agency, still Dr. Tyler must prove another thing, viz. that to have done more, would actually have secured holiness.—And another still ; Dr. Tyler must show that if God had secured the holiness of all to the present time, the requisite interposition for the purpose, would not ultimately occasion more sin in the universe, than it would prevent.—There are, then, three fatal defects in Dr. Tyler's first argument.

Dr. Tyler's second argument is founded on Ps. lxxvi. 10. He says, that "this text teaches us that the sin which exists, will be made to praise God, or be overruled for good ; and that the remainder—all which cannot be made to praise God, will be restrained or prevented." This I fully believe. But now for Dr. Tyler's inference. He says, "This clearly implies, that God could prevent all sin in his moral kingdom, if it were his pleasure." But is it so ? What if God does prevent all sin except that which he can overrule, i. e. counteract in its tendencies, and so bring good out of the evil, and praise to himself ? Does it follow, that greater good would not have resulted to the universe, and at least equal praise redounded to God, from perfect and universal holiness instead of sin ? What warrant has Dr. Tyler to assume the truth of the very position on which his conclusion depends, viz. that a *greater* degree of good can be educed from sin, than would result from holiness in its stead ? Let Dr. Tyler not take for granted, but prove, that sin is the necessary means of the greatest good ; or rather let him prove, for this his argument requires, that the necessary means of the greatest good, by being *overruled, and counteracted in all its tendencies*, i. e. by being prevented from producing the greatest good, is made to produce the greatest good.*

* Dr. Tyler has a very singular note on this topic. I had said, "that to say that a thing must be overruled and counteracted in all its tendencies to secure a good result,

Dr. Tyler's third argument is, that on the supposition that God cannot prevent all sin in a moral system, "there is no encouragement to prayer."—But how does this appear? I have never denied or doubted the power of God to increase the holiness of any saint, nor to convert any sinner on earth. I have indeed said, for the purpose of exposing the inconclusiveness of *a priori* reasoning on this topic, that it cannot be proved *a priori*, i. e. from the nature of the subject, that God can convert any sinner. But I have never said nor thought, that the Scriptures do not authorize the opinion that God can convert the whole world at any moment. Why then does Dr. Tyler reason on the very opposite representation of my views, regardless of my explicit statements, in my reply to his remarks, and in other instances? And now, with these views of the power of God, what more encouragement to prayer can be derived from this source, on Dr. Tyler's scheme, than on mine? The difference in the two schemes, as they affect the encouragement to pray for the conversion of the world, is this; that on one scheme, we are assured that God actually prefers its conversion to its continuance in sin; on the other, the evidence is all the other way. On Dr. Tyler's scheme, the reason that God does not convert the world when he can, is, that its continuance in sin is the necessary means of the greatest good; on my hypothesis, it is, that the change in God's appointed system of influence requisite to the result, might occasion ultimately more sin in the universe, than it would prevent. That this is not the reason, Dr. Tyler has not proved, nor attempted to prove.

Dr. Tyler's fourth argument is, that God cannot foreknow the actions of his creatures, unless he can control their actions

and also to say, that it is the necessary means of the greatest good, is a contradiction." Dr. Tyler says, "I shall not stop to inquire whether this declaration is true. My only remark is, that if it is true, then none of the Orthodox have ever maintained the theory, that sin is the necessary means of the greatest good." That is, if Dr. Tyler and others have contradicted themselves, they have not maintained that sin is the necessary means of the greatest good; the matter of fact to the contrary notwithstanding! I have another thing to say, viz. if Dr. Tyler will explicitly declare, that all he means, when he asserts, that sin is the necessary means of the greatest good, is, not that it is the means of as great good, as holiness would be in its stead, but simply, that God counteracts its evil tendencies to such an extent, and causes so much good to follow it, that in this way he glorifies himself, though not more than he would be glorified by the universal obedience of his subjects; his statement will have my hearty concurrence. Whatever objections I might have to the language of his theory, (and to language that misleads the popular mind, there are very serious objections,) still, to the above explanation of the thing, I surely should fully subscribe. This I have often stated before. And Dr. Tyler, in one instance, cites my language, as expressing the very opinion which himself and others adopt. Now if this be so, let the controversy about the thing cease. Indeed, who can tell, that in this way, it may not be terminated? Of this, I should even entertain high hopes, had not Dr. Tyler, in the very next sentence to that just referred to, virtually contradicted his own statement of the opinions of Orthodox divines, by telling us, that they suppose that God will bring to pass a greater amount of good by overruling sin, than would have been realized if sin had never existed; i. e. than if universal holiness had prevailed.

—in other words, unless he can secure universal holiness, and prevent all sin in moral beings.—By *controlling* actions must be meant, using an influence which either destroys the power of creatures to opposite actions, or which does not destroy it. The former *mode* of controlling the actions of creatures, would destroy their moral agency. If this then is the *only* mode of controlling the actions of creatures by which God can foreknow those actions, his foreknowledge of their actions is inconsistent with their moral agency. And this puts an end at once to the question, whether an Omniscient God can secure universal holiness in a moral kingdom; for he cannot even have a moral kingdom.—On the other hand, if Dr. Tyler admits that God can foreknow the actions of his creatures, without destroying their power to opposite actions, then he also admits, that God can foreknow the actions of creatures who have power to sin in defiance of all possible influence to prevent them. How then does it appear that God cannot foreknow, that some such creatures will in fact sin, in defiance of all possible influence to prevent them? Dr. Tyler can only say, that if it be impossible for God so to control their actions as to secure holy and prevent all sinful actions, then God cannot foresee how they will act.—But what warrant has Dr. Tyler to affirm this? Such impossibility *may* exist. That it may, results from the very nature of moral agency. Dr. Tyler has not disproved its existence, nor can he. For it surely *may* be impossible in some instances at least, to prevent beings from sinning who *can* sin in defiance of all possible prevention. What then authorizes Dr. Tyler to affirm, that on the supposition of such an impossibility, God cannot foreknow the actions of his creatures? Is such an assertion to be admitted as incontrovertible truth? If not, then Dr. Tyler's argument rests on a gratuitous assumption, and is a failure.

But let us examine Dr. Tyler's more formal attempt at proof on this point. It amounts to this,—that Omniscience cannot foresee that of which there is no *evidence*; and that there can be no evidence even to the Divine Mind, that creatures will act in a given manner, unless God can control their actions. Or thus, Dr. Tyler asks, "If no influence, which God can bring to bear on their minds, will infallibly secure the conduct he prefers, (or, as Dr. Tyler says in equivalent language, 'can prevent all sin in a moral system,') how is it possible, that God should foresee what they will do?"—Dr. Tyler's position then, in its only possible bearing on the present question, is this,—that God cannot foresee the sinful actions of creatures, unless he can prevent those actions by securing opposite actions. But

why can he not? Not surely because the actions would not be as *certain in themselves*, as they would be, if God could thus prevent them. If then, there be any reason why God cannot foresee such actions, it must be, that his creatures would have power to perform one kind of action as truly as the other, under all possible influence from God. This fact is all that can be supposed to create any difficulty, in respect to God's foreseeing the actions of his creatures. But such power every being must possess, or he cannot be a moral agent. Dr. Tyler's argument therefore, if it proves any thing, proves that God cannot foresee the actions of moral agents.

Again I ask, how God would be better able to foresee what the creatures now supposed will do, if he could secure right conduct, and thus prevent their sin? Does not the whole difficulty supposed to exist by Dr. Tyler, in regard to God's foreseeing the actions of his creatures, lie in this fact, viz. that they have power to right or to wrong action, i. e. in that which is essential to moral agency? How then would the real difficulty of God's foreseeing the actions of the beings supposed, be removed or diminished, if God could secure right action. Still they must remain moral agents. Of course all the difficulty of foreseeing their actions must exist, under whatever influence God can be supposed to place them, for the purpose of securing right action. If therefore, it be admitted that God can secure right action in every instance, it will not help us at all to discover how God can foresee the conduct of moral agents.

I confess myself unable to conjecture how Dr. Tyler should have been led to make the above statement. I have thought that probably he mistook his own position for another, viz. that *God cannot foresee, that moral beings will act in a given manner, unless he can secure their acting in that manner.* This position, however, has nothing to do with the point in discussion. For if God can give and continue existence to beings, whose sinful actions he cannot prevent, (and this is the supposition reasoned upon,) then surely he can easily secure their sinful actions, and of course foresee their existence.

That God cannot foresee the actions of his creatures, unless their actions are *certain* under his government, is indeed undeniable. That God cannot foresee the actions of creatures, without knowing that given *antecedents* will be followed by given actions as their *consequents*, is equally undeniable. But what the connection is between these antecedents and consequent actions,—and *how* the Omniscient Mind perceives this connection, are questions of more difficult solution. We may say negatively and with confidence, that they are not antecedents which

exclude power in moral agents to opposite actions. We may be at a loss to decide whether they are in any respect of *such a nature*, as to become the ground of *inference or deduction* that the action will take place. There is confessedly another mode of knowledge. Men know some things by intuition and inspection, and simply as *knowing agents*. The thing is, and we know it. Why then may not God foreknow the actions of free agents,—or that a given action will follow a given antecedent, not in any mode of *inferring* an effect from a cause, at all resembling our modes of deduction, but simply by having the *power* to know it, in the exercise of his underived, self-knowing attribute of Omniscience?

It even admits of a question, whether this mode of knowledge is not the only one, which the case, so far as we can conceive, admits of. What then is the true *cause* (if the word *cause* must be used) of a free action? Not simply, motives and influences *ab extra*. These would not result in action, were there no *agent* to act. The event of free action therefore implies the existence of these influences and the agent. These *together*, constitute the true and only proper *cause* of a free action. What then is the nature of this cause—what do we know of it as a whole? We know, that in every case of free action, there exists power to either of two opposite actions. And now what means of knowing which action will take place are furnished by *the nature* of the cause? If we *knew* that a particular loadstone possessed the power both to repel and to attract contiguous iron, how could we know *from the nature* of the cause, which event would follow? How can we conceive that God can know from the nature of such a cause, what action will take place? I say *from the nature of the cause*; and I now put it to Dr. Tyler to prove, that in *this* mode of knowledge, God either does, or can foreknow the actions of moral beings. Does Dr. Tyler say, that if God cannot foreknow their actions from the nature of their causes, and in the *mode* of inference or deduction, he cannot foreknow them at all? But how does Dr. Tyler know this—how can he prove it? What warrant has he to assume it? And yet he does assume it. For he maintains, that God cannot foreknow the actions of his creatures, unless he infers the certainty of their actions, from his own power to secure universal holiness, and prevent all sin in a moral system.

The whole difficulty then, if difficulty it must be called, is to see *how* God can foreknow the actions of free agents—of agents having power to opposite actions. This difficulty, of course, pertains to every scheme, which does not deny the

moral agency of creatures. Nor is it removed or lessened at all by saying, that God can secure the actions of creatures consistently with their moral agency. For the very point of the difficulty is, *to see how God can know what influence will secure given actions in agents who have power to opposite actions.* And here I affirm, fearless of contradiction, that Dr. Tyler and all others must confess their ignorance.—But what if we cannot see *how* God can foreknow the actions of free agents? Does this *prove* that he cannot do it? Does the supposition that he can, contravene any known truth? May it not be a fact, that he can? Is man competent to deny such knowledge to the Most High? It is indeed 'too wonderful for us,—it is high, we cannot attain to it.' But what embarrassment to a rational belief in a fact, is our ignorance of *the mode* of the fact? Is not the difficulty, at least in this respect, just no difficulty at all—nothing more nor less than that we do not know *how* that is a fact, which may be a fact, and which is proved to be a fact, by abundant evidence?

I fully believe, that God foreknows the actions of agents, who possess power to opposite actions; not indeed, because I understand, as Dr. Tyler seems to suppose he does, *how* God foreknows them; much less because I regard their actions as made certain by an influence or 'control,' which destroys their power to opposite actions;—but I believe it, 1st, because every action is and must be, in the nature of things, previously certain; 2dly, because it is altogether credible, that the Infinite Spirit should be able to foresee actions which are certain; 3dly, because it is irrational to believe that a Being of absolute perfection should give existence to agents, whose actions he cannot foresee; and 4thly, because there is decisive scriptural proof, that such actions are the objects of his foresight. At the same time, my incapacity to tell or conceive *how* God foreknows the actions of free agents, no more warrants a doubt of the fact of his actual foresight, than my incapacity to tell or conceive *how* he creates a mind, is a reason to doubt this fact.

If Dr. Tyler says, that on these principles creatures are independent of their Creator; I deny the inference. Creatures who owe their very existence, and all the circumstances of their being to God, are any thing rather than independent of their Maker. But if Dr. Tyler insists that men are dependent on God in such a sense as to destroy their power to right or to wrong action, I deny such a dependence, as being inconsistent with moral agency. If he says, that without such a dependence they can defeat the providential purposes of God, and prevent the fulfilment of his predictions and promises, be it so; if he means that

they have *power* to do it.—But the question is, *will they do it?* If God foresaw, as he did according to the present view of the subject, the very actions which each and all his creatures would perform, then in giving them existence in the circumstances in which he gives it, he designs on the whole, that they should perform those very actions, and of course none of these designs will be defeated; nor will his predictions and his promises fail to be fulfilled.

I shall next notice Dr. Tyler's sixth and seventh arguments. They amount to this; that 'as many of the evils and blessings of life come upon us through the agency of men, it follows, on the supposition, that men *act* independently of the divine control, that there is no ground for submission in the one case, nor for gratitude in the other.'—To test this reasoning, let it be supposed, that men are as free and independent in their *actions*, as it can be conceived they should be. Still, if God *gave* them existence, and *knew* how they would act, and actually willed or *purposed* that they should act as they do, then surely we have all the ground for submission in the one case, and for gratitude in the other, which can be imagined. But Dr. Tyler has not shown, nor can he show, that the actions now supposed would not be according to the will of God; the very actions which he decreed.

But Dr. Tyler says, 'how do we know that the individuals in those actions, were not doing what God, *all things considered*, preferred they should not do?'—I answer,—because God, on that supposition, would have known it beforehand, and might, and therefore would, have prevented the actions by not creating the agents. It is certain, therefore, that they are not doing what God prefers, all things considered, they shall not do; but the very things which, all things considered, he prefers they shall do.—The fallacy of Dr. Tyler's reasoning lies in this assumption, viz. that because free agents *can* act contrary to God's providential will, it is reasonable to suppose, that in some instances, they *do*; whereas, the one is no proof at all of the other. On the contrary, since God foresees the actions of all his creatures, their actions are what, *all things considered*, he purposes they shall be. And if Dr. Tyler would allow himself to see, what it is very easy to see, that the certainty of human action, and God's foreknowledge of it, are perfectly consistent with power in man to opposite action, all his difficulties on these subjects would vanish. He would then see, that God could bring free moral agents into existence, leave their powers unimpaired and perfect, and still know, that every action which he purposes shall take place, will take place, and no other.

Dr. Tyler's eighth argument is this: 'that if God cannot secure universal holiness in his moral system, there can be no certainty that any of the subjects of his moral government will be preserved from utter and final apostacy.'—But the contrary is easily seen. For the supposition, if admitted, that God cannot secure the holiness of *all* his subjects, is no proof that he cannot secure the holiness of *any*—much less that he cannot secure the holiness of all those, whose holiness he has purposed or promised to secure. He certainly would not create beings, and purpose or promise their perseverance in holiness, unless he foresaw their actual perseverance under that system of influence which he should adopt.

But how does Dr. Tyler attempt to give plausibility to this argument? I had attempted to show, that Dr. Woods could not prove, "*from the nature of the case,*" that beings who can sin, *will not* sin. Dr. Tyler, leaving out the possible contradiction involved in such reasoning, applies a part of my argument to show, that there can be *no proof whatever*,—none from *any* source, that Gabriel and every saint on earth, and every saint and angel in heaven, will not apostatize;—that is, on the ground that it cannot be proved from "*the nature of the case,*" that a being who can sin, will not sin, Dr. Tyler infers, that there can be no proof, even from God's declarations, that any such beings will not apostatize. If Dr. Tyler would avoid such mistakes as this, it would contribute much to shorten the discussion.

Dr. Tyler's fifth objection, which I notice last, is shortly this; that 'if God prefers, *all things considered*, holiness to sin in all instances, then his desires are not all gratified; and he cannot be perfectly happy.'—"If," says Dr. Tyler, "his creatures were all holy, he would be more happy than he now is, and if he could be more happy than he is now, then he is not perfectly happy."—I answer;

First, that this objection lies in all its force against Dr. Tyler's scheme. He maintains that God *prefers* holiness, *in itself considered*, to sin. Now this preference or desire of holiness is as *real* as any other preference of the divine Being. "Consequently his desires are not all gratified." And Dr. Tyler says, "It is impossible to conceive of a being as perfectly happy, unless all his desires are gratified." Will Dr. Tyler say that God's law is no expression of God's will? or, that that will is gratified by sin? Does Dr. Tyler say that God's preference of holiness to sin, is a preference of holiness *in itself considered*, and not *all things considered*? Be it so;—but does

Dr. Tyler mean that the one is not as real a preference or desire as the other; and must not God be as truly unhappy, in having one real preference crossed, as another?—Will Dr. Tyler deny that sin is truly contrary to the divine *will*—that God is *exceedingly* displeased with it, that he abhors it as the worst of evils? Let Dr. Tyler then show how the will of God can be thus violated and crossed by the existence of sin—how God can be *exceedingly displeased* with it, and yet be perfectly happy.—If he says, he can be, then he has refuted his own argument. If he says he cannot be perfectly happy, then why does Dr. Tyler press my scheme with an objection which in his own view is not an objection.

Secondly; The hypothesis proposed furnishes substantially the same solution of this difficulty, which is furnished by Dr. Tyler's theory. I ask Dr. Tyler, why God is not made unhappy by the existence of sin? His answer must be, that the existence of sin, *all things considered*, is really desirable, and of course cannot lessen the happiness of God. But on the scheme which he opposes, the existence of sin, *all things considered*, is really desirable, and of course cannot lessen the happiness of God. It is true, on one scheme the existence of sin is supposed to be desirable, because it is the necessary means of the greatest good; and on the other, because its existence is involved in the existence of that *system*, which is the necessary means of the greatest good. So that in both cases, that which reconciles God to the existence of sin, is, that if its existence were to be wholly prevented, the greatest good which God can secure would not be secured. But surely if the securing of the greatest good can reconcile God to the existence of sin, considered as the necessary means of this end; it can reconcile him to its existence, considered as *involved* in that system, which is the necessary means of this end. A man may as really be reconciled to endure the pain of having a limb amputated, viewed as incidental to that which is the necessary means of saving his life, as if it were itself the necessary means of this end. All can see that the same evil is no greater, and no more a ground or reason of unhappiness, viewed under the former relation, than viewed under the latter.

Thirdly. The hypothesis which I have proposed relieves this subject of that grand difficulty in respect to God's character as a Lawgiver, which embarrasses the scheme of Dr. Tyler. According to Dr. Tyler's scheme, God purposes the existence of sin because it is the necessary means of the greatest good, and as such, *all things considered*, is desirable. Accordingly, if holiness should exist instead of sin in those instances in which

the latter takes place, God must be rendered unhappy, by the actual frustration of the designs of infinite benevolence. The greatest good of the universe; the very end of God's creation would have been defeated by the existence of universal holiness on the part of creatures. For this end *depends on* the existence of sin. Not so, however, on the hypothesis, which I have proposed. For on this hypothesis, God does not purpose the existence of sin either as good in itself, or good as the necessary means of good. There is, of course, nothing in sin, or pertaining to it, which is good or desirable in any respect whatever. It is an unqualified evil. God does not purpose it, in view of any good dependent on its existence; but solely for the sake of the best system of which it is to him on unavoidable consequence. If this system exists, all exists which God regards as desirable in purposing that sin shall exist. But the system does exist; and let universal holiness exist under it, and God would be *painfully* crossed in no purpose respecting sin. God's law and the invitations of his mercy mean what they say. God *SINCERELY* desires universal holiness rather than sin. But what becomes of this great—this essential truth respecting God as a Moral Governor, according to Dr. Tyler's scheme? It is virtually concealed. Or rather, is it not virtually denied, when Dr. Tyler tells us, that *all the desires of God* are gratified, though sin exists?—*All the desires of God gratified?* What then mean the invitations of eternal mercy?

Fourthly, The grand defect in Dr. Tyler's present argument is, that he entirely mistakes that wherein God's *perfect blessedness* consists. By the *perfect happiness or blessedness of God*, cannot be meant that God is not displeased, or is gratified in all his desires. This must be admitted, on the authority of the Scriptures. Here we find the strongest language used to describe the emotions of God in respect to sin, representing him as abhorring iniquity—grieved at the heart in view of it,—even broken-hearted in view of the perverseness of the wicked. Now this strong language of the Scriptures must be absolutely divested of all meaning, and be considered of course as used to no purpose, or it must be admitted to express real emotions of the Divine Being toward sin. The same thing must be admitted, if it be admitted that sin is an evil, and that God feels toward things as they are. It must be admitted by Dr. Tyler; for on his own scheme, God's preference of holiness to sin, in themselves considered, is crossed by the existence of sin. And for Dr. Tyler to maintain that God is *perfectly blessed* while his will as a Lawgiver is violated, is to maintain that the preference of God may be crossed, or his desires "not all

gratified," and God not made unhappy; and this is to abandon the fundamental principle of his argument.

All then that *can be true*, and all therefore that can be properly meant by *the perfect blessedness of God*, is *that highest degree of happiness which it is possible for him to obtain, in the nature of things*.—Now, in this only true and proper import of the phrase, God is perfectly happy, according to the hypothesis which I have proposed. For sin, though the object of God's displeasure, is to him an unavoidable consequence of the best system. The happiness of God in giving existence to the best system, and securing its actual results, is the happiness of doing all in his power to secure the highest happiness of his creation. God, therefore, must be happier in adopting this system, though it involves the existence of sin, than in not adopting it, or in adopting any other. Though according to the hypothesis, there is an impossibility *in the nature of things*, that God should secure universal holiness in his moral kingdom, still he has adopted that system, which will secure the most holiness, and consequently the most happiness, which he can secure. He thus renders himself as happy or blessed as he can in the nature of things.

On any other principle, it may be asked, why is not God unhappy, that every other being in the universe is not, like himself, *infinite* in his capacity of happiness, and even in all his attributes; or why is he not unhappy, that he has not given existence to creatures bearing the nearest conceivable resemblance to himself in their capacities of happiness, and filled their capacities as he fills his own? Such a universe, it were easy to conceive, might comprise a far higher amount of happiness, than one consisting of those comparatively inferior orders of beings which now exist. Especially it might be asked, how is God perfectly blessed, when the actual amount of happiness in creatures, falls so immeasurably below what might be conceived to be possible, under the government of an infinite Being? What can Dr. Tyler say,—what can any man say, to such questions, except that there are impossibilities in the nature of things,—impossibilities pertaining to the best system which the Creator can adopt, and that in view of such impossibilities, he will secure to his creation the highest happiness in his power, and thus render himself as happy as he can be in the nature of things? And what is this but perfect blessedness?—This is all that Dr. Tyler or any one else can suppose to be true on any scheme; and surely we are not to question God's perfect blessedness, because he does not render himself more blessed than the possibilities of things allow. Even in a human being,

blessed with the highest degree of happiness which in the nature of things is attainable, it were weakness approximating to folly, to abandon himself to unavailing regrets, because some conceivable, but impracticable good is not also in his possession. Much less can this be even surmised of that Being, whose resources are infinite, and whose revolted creation is but a speck, compared with what a word would call into existence, were it necessary to his perfect blessedness.

I am aware, that to speak of a comparative diminution of the happiness of God by the disobedience of creatures, is to utter what, in the view of some, has a revolting aspect. But is not this, after all, a great practical truth, which meets us on almost every page of the sacred volume, and which, from the very nature of a moral government, must be brought in all its power on the minds of its subjects? Is there not a reserve in speaking on this subject in many cases, which the divine word directly discountenances and virtually forbids? Is there nothing revolting, in those modes of representing God which are opposed to this? How must God appear as a Moral Governor, if his subjects are to believe that he is *not displeased* with sin? What an annunciation from his throne would it be, that, let his creatures rebel or obey, "ALL HIS DESIRES ARE GRATIFIED!" And yet, how does this differ from Dr. Tyler's statement?

But there is yet another consideration. There is a peculiar happiness in acts of mercy. While then it is admitted, that what men have done to impair the blessedness of God by sin, has not failed of its result in the actual diminution of his blessedness compared with what it had been, had they obeyed his perfect law, it has not, after all, resulted in its full and appropriate effects. God has opened to himself a new source of happiness. By counteracting the tendencies of that conduct which is so odious in his sight; and by his own acts in educing good from evil, he secures to himself a joy and a blessedness which in this specific form he had otherwise never known. He has opened the treasures of his grace, and rejoices with peculiar joy, in the work of delivering from sin and woe, the very objects of his abhorrence; has secured to himself and to the universe, not the highest happiness conceivable had creatures obeyed his perfect will, yet the highest amount of happiness possible to him to secure; and has thus, according to the only true import of the language secured his own perfect blessedness.—I need not say how remote this view of the subject is from that which exhibits God as purposing the sin and ruin of a world, as a source of *higher* joy to himself, than had such an occasion of imparting good to his creatures been prevented by their absolute and end

less moral perfection. According to the theory of Dr. Tyler, God could not be satisfied with the perfect holiness and consequent perfect happiness of his moral creation, but purposed, and by providential arrangements secured, the existence of sin, and plunged creatures into ruin, that he might have the happiness and the glory of bringing to a part only a great deliverance. According to the hypothesis which I have proposed, God, though he purposed sin as an evil consequent on his adoption of the best system, still prefers holiness in its stead as the necessary means of the highest conceivable good to himself and to the universe; and when men had done what they could to impair his joy over the work of his hands—when they had in very deed shut out one source of high delight to their Maker by revolting from his government, then he devised and adopted the grand expedient of showing mercy even to them, as the best redress of that injury, of which they are the responsible and guilty authors.

[To be concluded.]

ON THE STUDY OF DOCTRINAL TRUTH.

It is manifest, on a slight observation, that there is not in the church at the present time, enough patient, thorough-going study and investigation of doctrinal truth. Though Bible Classes and Sabbath Schools are in pleasing and profitable operation, still, I apprehend there is not generally so much pains taken to acquire enlarged and consistent views of the doctrines of the Bible, as at some former periods, when there was more puritanism and less enterprise in our churches. Now this diminished attention on the part of Christians to the fundamental points of religious truth is *an evil* which ought to be corrected. It is a *serious evil*, and there should be no delay in the correction. Never was there a time when a diffusion of correct doctrinal knowledge in the church was more important than at the present period. Error is abroad with her blandishments, drawing aside unstable souls, and riveting upon them her chains of darkness, and nothing but a diffused knowledge of what God has revealed will defeat her deadly ends.

I propose, in this paper, to suggest a few considerations adapted to lead to increased diligence and fidelity in the study of divine truth. The subject is eminently practical, involving the

glory of God, and the salvation of men. It is a subject which arrested the attention of minds moved by the Holy Ghost, and was made by them matter of express precept. 'Add to your faith virtue, and to virtue *knowledge*.' 'Grow in grace and in *the knowledge* of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.' Paul, in his Epistle to his Hebrew brethren, uttered against them a sharp rebuke, that considering their advantages, they had made no higher attainments in religious knowledge. He declared that he had many things to say of his Lord and Master which were hard to be understood, or which it was difficult to make them understand, because they were dull of apprehension. 'For when,' to give a free translation, 'considering the time ye have been in the school of Christ, ye ought to be teachers; ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God, and are such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat.' He then exhorts them to leave the first principles, the mere rudiments of Christian doctrine, and go on to a more enlarged and mature state of knowledge.

The command of God and the facilities he has furnished, impose upon all solemn and indispensable obligations to increase in religious knowledge. The fact of a revelation, given at so great expense, is an impressive demonstration of the just claims of truth upon our studious regard. It is fair reasoning to say, that if God has condescended to do so much to make us wise unto salvation, the diligent acquisition of this wisdom is a duty solemnly binding upon us, a duty which we cannot avoid, without present injury and shame, and the hazard of ultimate perdition. This may be deemed too strong an assertion. But it is made with consideration, under the conviction that indifference to revealed truth is positively and highly sinful. It comes but little short of contempt of the benevolent doings of Jehovah, thus to set aside all the facilities he has afforded us for becoming acquainted with his character, his government, and the system of his grace, and to rest satisfied with just that amount of religious knowledge, which may chance to flow into the mind. Nor is this all. Want of interest in the acquisition of truth is evidence of a vicious state of the heart. It shows conclusively, that persons have no affection for divine truth. The taste of their minds is for other things. How different were the feelings of David. What large attainments would be made in religious knowledge, if all Christians could say with him, 'O how I love thy law. My soul breaketh for the longing it hath unto thy judgements at all times. Thy statutes have been my song, in the house of my pilgrimage.'

Again; the knowledge of divine truth is a most noble and

exalted species of knowledge. It relates to God and eternity. The laws which we contemplate and unfold are the laws, not of an earthly kingdom, but of the illimitable universe; not laws which are subject to change and tending to a termination, but immutable and enduring as the throne of God himself. These truths constitute an exhaustless theme. They never will wear out. They will be, and are, studied in eternity. Angels desire to look more deeply into them. The doctrine of the cross, with its kindred and clustering sentiments, attracts and fixes the wondering attention of the loftiest around the throne. It is a theme which will dilate and enrapture the glorified spirit throughout the ages of immortality.

But these truths are as momentous as they are exalted. They reveal to us the mind of God on the most weighty subjects. They unfold to us the principles of that government which he is swaying, and will continue to sway, over the immensity of moral and intelligent beings. They show how sin affects the operation of those principles; how it is regarded by the Holy One; how it can consistently be pardoned by his mercy; and what a perdition awaits its incorrigible votary. They are closely allied with the weal or woe of an unchanging destiny. Now, as members of this government, and as those who must continue members of it forever, how deeply are we interested to examine into the nature and bearing of those truths and principles which are to confirm the condition of our souls for immortality. How should we study every practical inference and requisition, and dwell upon the measure of every penalty and reward, that we may fill our minds with the most efficient inducements to that course which will terminate in glory.

This brings me to the more prominent position I would take on this subject, namely; *a clear and extensive knowledge of divine truth is necessary to the formation and prosperous growth of the Christian character.* It is not here said, nor intended, that knowledge alone will form this character. Surely it will not. Nor will emotion or feeling alone form it. Both are requisite. But knowledge, *truth* lies at the bottom. It is the foundation, the strength, the stability of the edifice. Knowledge comes first in order. We must *know*, before we can feel and act in a proper manner. We must know the character of God, before we can render to him any affectionate and acceptable worship. We must become acquainted with the character and offices of Christ, before we can truly trust in him as a Saviour. Through the whole of our progress, the understanding must lead, or our exercises will degenerate into a wild, unfruitful fanaticism. The understanding must hold the helm, and

hold it with the strong grasp of faith, or we shall be liable to make disastrous shipwreck of all that is valuable for immortality.

But it may be well to specify some of the benefits which will result to character, from a clear knowledge of divine truth. In my remarks, I shall suppose the affections to be cultivated, in connexion with the understanding.

1. A distinct and enlarged knowledge of divine truth will contribute to the *right proportion and just symmetry* of the Christian character. Provision is made by the wisdom of God, for the proportionate cultivation and developement of all the features of the new man. If the individual takes extended views of the truths which have been disclosed for our edification, and studies and dwells upon every part, then, as a natural consequence, all the various and corresponding parts of his character will be brought forward and strengthened together. But if through ignorance or inattention, he confines his views and contemplations to some particular points, then his character will suffer. It will be deficient, distorted, out of proportion. He will not be properly balanced. His conduct will be unfavorably affected. Who, for instance, has not almost shuddered at times, in witnessing the light, irreverent familiarity which some apparently good men have exhibited, when speaking upon the most awful subjects, or approaching into the most awful presence. The reason probably was, these men had dwelt upon certain aspects of the divine character, to the exclusion of those which are adapted to lay man in the dust, and even close his mouth in confused trembling silence.—Take another illustration. Some Christians have nearly spoiled their usefulness, by their almost exclusive attachment to, and study of, the purposes of God. They have dwelt upon these, until they have lost nearly all idea of personal agency and obligation, and have sat down in a guilty supineness, indolently waiting for God to fulfil his decrees. The consequence is, they are cold and stupid almost as marble. They live and die without doing any thing of value for the world. Whereas by larger and better views, these very purposes of a sovereign God, would have been the efficient and blessed motives which would have borne them on in the path of beneficent activity.

2. A clear and extensive knowledge of divine truth contributes to the *strength and stability* of the Christian character. Religious doctrine is the appointed food for the nourishment and growth of this character; and we want the aid of all the doctrines to bring the character to a solid and compact maturity. If you take those which the Apostle calls milk, and never use

any other, the soul so fed must remain through life in a weak, infantile state. It may feel and make a noise; but it never can be qualified for any strong and manly achievement. Something more must be administered, even those which the Apostle calls strong meat. These alone will form and compact the bones and sinews and strengthen the muscles of the new man.

The strength of character which will be created by a knowledge of religious truth, is not a passive, sluggish strength, but lively and operative; and for this reason; the man of large religious views beholds and feels the pressure of *more motives* than the man of dim and confined conceptions. Every doctrine of the Bible is a motive, addressed to our moral and intellectual nature. Every doctrine revealed is adapted to act with power and directness upon the heart. The doctrine of human depravity, for instance, is a living and efficient motive of character and conduct. But the extent to which this truth will excite and strengthen the character depends upon the clearness and extent of a person's knowledge of the truth. Some have attained to understand incomparably more than others about sin—the evil of it in the kingdom of God, the injury it inflicts upon the soul, and the dreadfulness of the destruction to which it leads. Manifestly, to such, the doctrine of sin is a much more powerfully exciting and sustaining cause of religious action, than it can be to those of obscure views. Some Christians, it may be feared, have so very imperfect apprehensions of particular truths, that they derive from them no nourishment or excitement. Whilst, as to others, who have by painstaking attained to larger views, these same truths nerve and brace the soul with great additional strength to labor and suffer in the cause of God. Christians must endeavor to bring within the compass of their apprehension the whole field of revealed truth and motive; and then, and not till then, will they be thoroughly furnished and strengthened for every good word and work.

Furthermore; a competent knowledge of divine truth will impart strength not only for aggressive movements, but also to resist the assaults which may be made upon our faith. Every Christian should know what he believes, and why he believes as he does. He should be able, with meekness and decision, to give a reason of the hope that is in him. If he makes divine truth a matter of study and investigation, examines for himself all the points of his belief, and with his Bible and in his closet satisfies himself, and beholds with a convincing clearness the doctrine and the proof; then, with credit to himself and the cause, will he be able to answer either the honest inquirer or the unprincipled opposer. He will have ground of his own on

which he can rest. He will feel an intelligent confidence in his system, and an ardent attachment to it, because of his conviction that it embraces the great points of revealed truth. When it is attacked, he is not confounded. He can defend the truth, and expose the deadly deceivings of error. He has around him a solid bulwark of rock, and all the beatings of infidelity cannot shake him. The Christian who has attained to these clear views of truth, who at the feet of Jesus has formed his belief, will remain firm. He will not choose to leave his ground himself, and no power of sophistry can drive him from it. We know where to find such a Christian. We can depend upon him. Being rooted and grounded in the faith, he is not carried about by every wind of doctrine. One such person is of more consequence to the kingdom of God on earth, than a score of those, who change their position, and turn their face, in obedience to every breeze. It is the duty of every Christian to examine thoroughly and prayerfully, conclude upon something, and become firmly, immoveably *established*.—"I have long adopted an expedient," says the excellent Cecil, "which I have found of singular service. I have a shelf in my study for tried authors, and one in my mind for tried principles. When an author has stood a thorough examination and will bear to be taken as a guide, I put him on the shelf. When I have more fully made up my mind on a principle, I put it on the shelf. A hundred subtle objections may be brought against this principle. I may meet with some of them, but my principle is on the shelf. Generally I may be able to recall the reasons which weighed with me to put it there; but if not, I am not to be sent out to sea again. Time was, when I saw through and detected all the subtilities that could be brought against it. I have *past evidence* of having been fully convinced, and there on the shelf it shall lie."

3. A clear and full understanding of divine truth will contribute to solid Christian *enjoyment*. I am all along supposing the heart to keep pace with the understanding. There can be nothing plainer than that religious happiness does depend in a great measure upon religious knowledge. Suppose an untaught heathen were made holy: though there would be peace and quietness in his bosom, there would be comparatively but little positive religious enjoyment. How much does the enlightened Christian's happiness depend upon his contemplations of the character of God, the glorious system of salvation through Christ, and the prospects of the eternal life to come. On all these points, the views of a sanctified pagan must be very obscure. And even in Christian lands, there are believers, whose

conceptions of these things are very dark and limited, compared with their opportunities and privileges. In consequence, they rob their souls of much pure and exalted enjoyment. But those who take a higher stand, and attain to larger views, are more blessed. As they love truth, the more of truth they see, the more they rejoice. As they love God for his attributes, the more they apprehend of those holy, ineffable attributes, the more exalted is their happiness. President Edwards undoubtedly saw much more in the divine character and government, calculated to raise and ravish a sanctified soul, than Christians of ordinary attainments in divine truth.

I will here remark a moment upon the nature of religious enjoyment. True religious enjoyment is that, and that only, which results from a perception of truth. It is feeling in view of truth. All that feeling and excitement which has no connexion with truth, is of a spurious kind. Undoubtedly, a great deal which passes for religious enjoyment, is nothing more than mere animal enjoyment. It is a mere excitement and glow of the passions and animal feelings, without any proper, rational, and religious cause. It has been often observed, that those whose views of truth are limited and obscure, are apt to resort to irrational means to produce feeling. It must come in some way; and as it cannot be obtained directly from the source of light and life, it is wrought up and sustained by artificial applications and stimulants. But this is wrong, and ought not to be encouraged. The Christian who takes this course is in a dangerous state. His very pleasures are sickly, and are wasting him away. That Christian is going down in strength and manliness, who is always wanting to *feel*, never wanting to *learn*. Such a person has as really missed the true spirit of Christianity, as the one who lays all his stress on knowledge to the exclusion of emotion. The former evil I have thought is the more prevalent among evangelical Christians at the present day. I will not say that religion is made too much an affair of the heart; but I do say that it is not enough made an affair of the head. To preserve and exhibit it in its strength and glory, it is necessary that both these parts be kept along equally and harmoniously together.

4. I will just add, that a clear understanding of the system of revealed truth will enable Christians to be much more *useful* than they can be in a state of ignorance. Truth is the instrument of sanctification. Those who understand it and employ it for this end, will to some extent succeed. For God will bless his truth where so employed. He meant it should be used in this way. He never intended that it should remain wrapt up

a dead letter in the Bible, but be transferred to the minds and hearts of his people, from them to proceed, with a living energy, and by them to be wielded as *the Sword of the Spirit*. Especially at the present day, when private Christians are called upon so extensively to be teachers of religion, they should endeavor to make the highest acquisitions in their power. They should strive to attain to clear, systematic, impressive views of the doctrines of Christianity, that they may communicate them clearly and impressively to the minds of others. In this way, light and holiness may be extensively diffused, and the humblest disciple of Jesus may be the blessed instrument of leading some renewed soul to the cross of Christ.

The discussion of this subject will not be complete without some *directions* adapted to guide and assist in acquiring a better knowledge of truth. There is room to do little more than barely to suggest a few of them.

1. The first and most important direction is, *Study the Bible a great deal*. This is the grand fountain of religious knowledge. Much has been said of reason; but reason in its highest state of cultivation will never be able to furnish the world with a new religious truth. All that ever can be known in this world on those subjects which relate to God, the soul, and eternity, is recorded in the Bible. This, however, is not saying, that all is now known that ever will be known. Without doubt, there is much yet to be learned from the Bible. The deepest minds hitherto have not been able to fathom this ocean of light. Some future holier generation will go deeper than any who have preceded. Undoubtedly, all the great and essential doctrines of the Bible have been in the main correctly understood. This was the case many centuries ago. The mass of true Christians, from the time of the Apostles to the present, have agreed in understanding the Bible to teach these fundamental truths which now constitute the Evangelical System. Still, it is probable that many very important things are yet to be drawn from this sacred fountain. The scope of its doctrines and precepts are to be in some respects better and more broadly comprehended, and more thoroughly and faithfully applied to the direction of human affairs. On this account it is important that the Bible be *studied thoroughly*. There is often a temptation to pass over it casually, as a mere matter of present devotion. A cursory perusal may to some extent answer the purpose of devotion, but not the purpose of an increase in religious knowledge. To effect this we must *study* the Bible with care and scrutiny. We should often imagine the question addressed to us, 'Understandest thou what thou

readest? We can derive knowledge from the Bible only by understanding it. Let this then be a prominent object, to comprehend, as far as possible, what is contained in the passage contemplated. And there is another maxim which needs to be repeated: When we do understand the mind of the Spirit on any subject, we have arrived at our *limit*. We must accept and believe it. Reason must implicitly bow to the teaching of God. If we refuse, we exalt our own opinion above the truth and intelligence of Jehovah.

2. Whilst the Bible is made the only original source of religious knowledge, the standard by which every thing else is tried, we may with propriety and profit read the works of pious and judicious authors, in which the great truths of the Bible are systematically arranged, explained and defended. I think it highly important that at least some *one* treatise of this kind be by every Christian thoroughly perused and studied. A prominent advantage of this course is; the truths are seen in their mutual connexion and dependence, reflecting light on each other, and constituting a grand, beautiful, harmonious whole. Much, I am sensible, has been said against systems, and against all expression of what we believe in a concise, definite, systematic form. But what has been said has been destitute even of a decent plausibility. "To be without system," says a good writer, "is nearly the same thing as to be without principle." Surely, if a person has any definite points of belief, so far he has a system; and just in proportion to the *distinctness* of his views of the various points of his belief, is the perfection of his system. "I never recollect," says the excellent Andrew Fuller, "to have heard any objection to systematical divinity with regard to *practice*. Let a Christian, utterly unacquainted with human writings, take his Bible, with a view to learn the mind of God upon any given subject,—suppose it be the duty of parents: he will naturally collect all the passages in the sacred writings which relate to that subject, arrange them in order, and from the whole, thus taken together, regulate his conduct. For this no one will think of blaming him; yet this would be acting systematically. Let him do the same with respect to every other duty, and he will be in possession of a body or system of practical divinity."—Let him proceed still farther, and collect from the whole canon of Scripture the points which God has recorded for our belief, and he will then have a system of doctrinal divinity. And what crime has he committed in doing all this? He has merely studied the Bible thoroughly, and endeavored to learn what it teaches on every important point of faith and practice.

3. It is highly advantageous to *associate* for the purpose of increasing in a knowledge of divine truth. The understanding enlarges with peculiar rapidity, by thus becoming mutual instructors in the things pertaining to the kingdom of God. The mind is so constituted, that it will move on more rapidly in the career of knowledge when joined with others, than when it keeps entirely by itself. This is not the place to attempt an explanation of this fact. It is true, I believe, in its application to any kind of knowledge. Take, for instance, an adult class in a Sabbath School. The individuals so associated, will make larger attainments in religious knowledge, than they would be likely to do in any other way. On this principle, Bible Classes are highly advantageous. It is not the amount of instruction communicated which constitutes always the chief benefit, but that the mind is moved to thorough and interested inquiry for itself.

4. Prayer is an indispensable means of increasing in religious knowledge. But prayer alone will not answer. He who should depend upon this, without other efforts, would most certainly fail of his object. Prayer must accompany the appointed labor. It must always be for a blessing, not upon idleness, but upon *diligence*. There is such a thing as *spiritual illumination*. Christ does now for his people, what he did for his disciples a short time before his ascension. He opens their understandings, that they may understand the Scriptures. He has power to do it, and there are *promises* to this effect. Now if any man will put himself humbly and prayerfully under the teaching of the Holy Spirit, he will not mistake. He will not be left to believe a lie. He will be divinely enlightened and guided in his investigations, and will be led to see and acknowledge all the great truths of revelation.

A person of prayer will not only be likely to come to evangelical conclusions, but by proper diligence, the sphere of his view will be greatly extended. God by his Spirit will raise his feelings and enlarge his conceptions. He will often be in frames of mind, when the Bible will be unusually replete with delightful meaning. It was so with that spiritual man, President Edwards. "Often times, when reading the Scriptures," he says, "every word seems to touch my heart. I feel a harmony between something in my heart, and those sweet and powerful words. I seem often to see so much light exhibited in every sentence, such a refreshing food communicated, that I cannot get along in reading, often dwelling long on one sentence, to see the wonders contained in it, and yet almost every sentence seems to be full of wonders." With a frame in some degree

like this, with a mind enlightened and elevated by that same Spirit which dwelt in this holy man, we should make rapid advances in the knowledge of divine truth. We should acquire more by the effort of one day, than by the labor of a week, when in a worldly, clouded frame.

5. Growth in holiness contributes to growth in religious knowledge. The spirit of disobedience is always a blinding spirit. Sin will cloud the mind. It is a film over the spiritual vision. It is on account of sin, that the heathen have learned no more of God from the works of his hands. Were sin entirely removed, they would soon learn the character and will of their Creator. Were it removed from the minds of those who are blessed with the Bible, they would behold wondrous things out of the law of God. The avoidance of sin, then, is necessary to a rapid increase in religious knowledge. We must purify our minds, if we would enlarge and bless them with the light of truth. 'He that *doeth the will of God* shall know of the doctrine.'

Finally, in all our examinations, let us remember that divine truth is not a matter of mere idle curiosity and abstract speculation. It comprehends all that is valuable in the soul; it involves all that is momentous in eternity. The system of the Bible is adapted and intended to humble us. According to it, God is a righteous Sovereign, and we are rebels, already condemned, and justly deserving everlasting punishment. If we are ever saved, it will be by mere mercy, bestowed on condition of repentance for sin, and faith in the merits of a crucified Redeemer. Endless happiness or woe awaits us. Infinite motives urge us to our duty. Time hastens. Death will strike soon. After a few more suns are set, eternal wrath or glory will be ours.

DALETH.

REVIEWS.

REMARKS ON THE UNITARIAN BELIEF: *with a Letter to a Friend on the Lord's Supper.* By NEHEMIAH ADAMS, *Pastor of the first Church of Christ in Cambridge.* Boston: published by Peirce & Parker. 1832.

OUTLINE OF THE TESTIMONY OF SCRIPTURE AGAINST THE TRINITY. By HENRY WARE, JR. Printed for the American Unitarian Association. Boston: Gray & Bowen. April, 1832.

We have placed the above titles at the head of this article, because we had nearly finished a Review of the latter, when the former appeared from the press, containing remarks of some length, on the doctrine of the Trinity, as it is opposed by Mr. Ware, and therefore superseding, to some extent, what we had intended to write.

The plan which we now sketch for our observations, will, nevertheless, consist of two parts: the one having special reference to the publication of Mr. Adams, the other to that of Mr. Ware.

The two parts of the work of Mr. Adams, upon which we design to remark, at the present time, form the first three and the last chapters of his volume. The other parts of it are so immediately connected with what we shall have to say in another Review of the Tract by Mr. Ware, that we shall embrace them, to some extent, in a subsequent number.

In the first three chapters of his work, it is the design of Mr. A. to review a treatise "On the Formation of Christian Character; addressed to those who are seeking to lead a Religious Life. By the Rev. Henry Ware, Jr., Professor in the Divinity School, Cambridge." And, in his first observation on the Treatise, he has fastened his mind on the foundation of all the difference of religious views, which exists between ourselves and Unitarians,—and the true foundation of all the errors in Mr. Ware's publication. He says, the treatise is "defective, first of all, upon the great and fundamental subject of *the natural character of man*. The disease of the soul is overlooked; and as a physician's prescriptions are all wrong, if he has erred respecting the nature or even the extent of the disease, so the directions which are here given will be found inefficacious to the cure and salvation of the soul."

Though we could have wished that our author had not used the term "*disease of the soul*," because we think it savors too much of physical inability, and is calculated to excite in our minds pity rather than reprehension; yet, with such an explanation of the term as we know he would make, we are pleased with the illustration, and are entirely of his opinion that this is the true difficulty with Mr. Ware. We thought, as we read the observation, of the remark of Andrew Fuller, that all errors in religion can be traced, directly or indirectly, to inadequate

views of the Divine Law. Certainly the errors in this treatise on the formation of Christian Character are clearly traceable to that source.

In defining Christian character, Mr. Ware does not present clearly the true, Scriptural standard, by which we are to judge of it.

Among the consequences arising from this indefiniteness, is to be found, in the first place, that confusion of remark, which proceeds from the want of a clear and correct analysis of moral character, combined with such contradictory statements as bring forcibly to mind the observation quoted by Mr. Adams from a great philosopher, that error is apt to be inconsistent with itself.

Another effect, also, to which we shall devote some attention in this Review, is one connected with another just remark of Mr. A. :—"It is interesting to see how candid men will frequently admit *the fact*, while at the same time they oppose *the doctrine*, of universal depravity." In other words, Professor Ware, whenever his *theory* is out of view, and he has made practical remarks founded on his knowledge of human nature, seems to have forgotten, for the time being, that he was a Unitarian minister, and has surprised us by a correctness of observation, which, in the true sense of the Apostle, "shows the work of the law written in his heart," his "conscience also bearing witness," in spite of all the aberrations produced by a false system.

This, we believe, is the true and philosophical explanation of that habit which Mr. Adams has noticed in the following sentence of his Review better than it could be expressed by ourselves :—"The author by interweaving Orthodox terms into his composition, gives it a savor of evangelical piety. Having attended upon Unitarian preaching for a period of four years, we have several times listened to sermons, in which terms and phrases such as we all knew to be peculiar to another denomination of Christians were so frequent, that there was often an interchange of significant looks amongst a portion of the hearers during the service ; and the inquiry was made more than once, in a very serious manner, whether the preacher was changing his sentiments."

The fact was, as we believe, that, for the time being, the preacher *lost sight* of his sentiments. It was "conscience bearing witness." It was *Truth*, breaking loose from the trammels of theory, and in the fullness of a bursting heart, using her own appropriate language, whether men would hear, or whether they would forbear.

But, let us not deal in words without knowledge. We have

said that *in defining Christian Character, Mr. Ware does not present clearly the true, Scriptural standard, by which we are to judge of it.* There are two parts of his Treatise in which he attempts to define what it is to be a Christian. In one he *professes* to be giving a definition,—in the other, he *incidentally* gives one,—in both, to use the language of Mr. Adams, he “*is defective.*” One of these definitions—the incidental one—is marked by Mr. A. in his Review. It is this:—“There is an animal life, and there is a spiritual life. Man is born into the first at the birth of his body; he is born into the second when he subjects himself to the power of religion, and prefers his rational and immortal to his sensual nature. During his earliest days, he is an animal only, pursuing, like other animals, the wants and desires of his body, and consulting his present gratification and immediate interest. But it is not designed that he shall continue thus. He is made for something better and higher. He has a nobler nature and nobler interests. He must learn to live for these: and this learning to feel and value his spiritual nature, and to live for eternity; this change from the animal and earthly existence of infancy, to a rational moral, spiritual existence,—this it is to be born into the spiritual life.”

Now we confidently ask here, in full view of this definition,—and we beg our readers to reflect upon the question,—is this a *scriptural* account of that change which makes man a Christian? Is it not a fact that the Bible represents man previous to his being, in the language of Mr. W., “born into the spiritual life,” a *sinner*, a *positive transgressor* of the Law of God? Is not the Gospel plan of salvation built upon this foundation? Is it not a system to save *sinners, transgressors of Law*?—Undoubtedly it is. But is it sinful to have “an animal life?” Are *we*,—is Mr. W.,—is any one sinful for “pursuing, like other animals, the wants and desires of his body, and consulting his present gratification and immediate interest?”—The fact is, that in this definition of a Christian, Professor Ware has gone much farther back into the dark ages than either Mr. Adams or we are probably supposed to go, when we are called “Orthodox!” This is preaching up the *physical depravity* of man with a boldness, to which John Calvin himself was an utter stranger! If Mr. Ware, or any one else should draw back here, and say that such physical depravity was never intended to be taught by the author of the Treatise on “the Formation of the Christian Character,” we answer, that such physical depravity *is* taught by him, in this *definition* of a Christian, provided the Scriptures are acknowledged as the standard by which we are to judge of one. *They* certainly do not place

the ground of our necessity of being "born into the spiritual life," where Mr. Ware places it,—in our "animal life." On the contrary, they represent the organs and appetites of the *body*, as they do the faculties and affections of the *mind*, as good or bad, accordingly as they are directed and governed by the state of the *heart*. The *sin*, which renders it necessary that our characters should be thus changed consists as truly in yielding too much indulgence to our merely *intellectual* as it does in yielding too much to our *animal* powers. And we appeal to the reader's common sense to decide, whether it is not the Professor of the Divinity School in Cambridge, and not we, who runs far back, in his definition of a Christian, to times of monkish austerity, when piety was made to consist in mortifying the natural propensities of the human body.

If the Professor protests against this legitimate and fair deduction from his own sentiments, he is at liberty to take the other side of the dilemma, and say, what *we* have already said, and what we have, thus far, shown to be true, that *in defining Christian character, he does not present clearly the true, scriptural standard, by which we are to judge of it.*

Lest we should appear to treat Mr. Ware unjustly, we would now turn, for a moment, to his *professed* definition of Christian Character, expressing, by the way, the wish, that Mr. A. had also done this in his Review. At the same time, however, we take the liberty to suppose that he passed it over, not because there was any need of avoiding it, but because it is so general in its expressions, that there is some difficulty in determining clearly what Mr. W. really means to say,—and so comparatively long, that the incidental definition, which we have considered, was far more convenient for his purpose as a Reviewer, and equally as just a specimen of the sentiments of Mr. Ware. We shall make as brief an extract, as the nature of the case will permit. Professor Ware writes:—

"You desire to be a Christian. To this are requisite three things: belief in the truths which the Gospel reveals; possession of the state of mind which it enjoins; and performance of the duties which it requires: or, I may say, the subjection of the mind by faith, the subjection of the heart by love, the subjection of the will by obedience. This universal submission of yourself to God is what you are to aim at. This is Religion.

"Observe how extensive a thing it is. It is a principle of the mind; founded upon thought, reflection, inquiry, argument; and leading to devotion and duty as most reasonable and suitable for intelligent beings.

"It is a sentiment or affection of the heart; not the cold judgement of the intellect alone, in favor of what is right; but a warm, glowing feeling of preference and desire; a feeling, which attaches itself in love to the Father of all and to all good beings; which turns duty into inclination, and pursues virtue from impulse; which prefers and delights in that which is well pleasing to God, and takes an affectionate interest in the things to which the Saviour devoted himself.

“It is a rule of life; it is the law of God; causing the external conduct to correspond to the principle which is established, and the sentiment which breathes within; bringing every action into a conformity with the divine will, and making universal holiness the standard of the character.

“It is not the external conduct, not the observance of the moral law alone, which constitutes a religious man; but the principles from which he acts, the motives by which he is governed, the state of his heart. A principle of spiritual life pervades his intellectual nature, gives a complexion to his whole temper, and is the spring of that moral worth, which is in other men the result of education, circumstances, or interest.”

There is undoubtedly much in this description of religion to which all will assent,—but there is, at the same time, much that is not here, which a *clear* scriptural representation of religion would require. The solemn remark of Mr. Adams here comes over our mind with great force:—“The disease of the soul is overlooked.” We are accustomed to expect that whenever a minister of Christ shall begin to inform a fellow man what religion is, he will never leave it to be inferred from vague expressions that the “Son of Man came to seek and to save that which was *lost*.” That “he came not to call the righteous but *sinner*s to repentance.” We are sorry to say, that this is by no means a *clear* inference from Mr. Ware’s definition of Religion. He tells us indeed that Religion is “the subjection of the mind by faith, the subjection of the heart by love, the subjection of the will by obedience.” But, we appeal to our readers if this is saying any thing more than that “virtue is virtue.” It is using nothing more than synonymous terms to tell us what that is, into the *nature* of which we wish to inquire. Why did not Mr. Ware tell the serious inquirer after truth the nature of *repentance* and *faith*,—the great conditions of the Gospel? Why did he not say to him that repentance necessarily implies a *law* broken,—and faith an object in which we may repose our heartfelt trust, as one who has maintained the force of law, and yet opened a way to forgiveness? These are what constitute true religion;—and when he might have explained the nature of these, why did he choose rather to express himself in general terms which are little else than synonymous repetitions of the word religion? Why could he not say that, until a man be “with” Christ, through repentance and faith in his name, he “is against” Him,—positively opposed to Him in his understanding, will, and affections? We are the more surprized at this want of a clear exhibition of the nature of religion, because Mr. Ware, very evidently, in the latter part of the quotation which we have just made from his Treatise, seems to have felt, to some extent, that such a statement was needed, though he hints at it very obscurely and briefly. Nevertheless, when we read it, we could not but con-

clude that, like the blind man partially restored to sight, he "saw men, as trees, walking." He says, "It is not the external conduct, not the observance of the moral law alone which constitutes a religious man; but the principles from which he acts, the motives by which he is governed, the state of his heart. A principle of spiritual life pervades his intellectual nature, gives a complexion to his whole temper, and is the spring of that moral worth, which is in other men the result of education, circumstances, or interest." That is, in plain language, man is, by nature, opposed to the holy character of God, so that unless he shall through the exercise of repentance and faith—the conditions of the Gospel—be "in Christ, a new creature,—old things having passed away, and all things become new"—he may be strictly correct in external conduct,—very refined, very amiable,—one, on whom Jesus, looking, would love, for his fine social and natural qualifications; and yet, after all, he may lack one thing—the one thing needful—*Religion*. In the words of Mr. Ware, "it is not the external conduct, not the *observance* of the moral law alone, which constitutes a religious man; but the *principles* from which he acts, the *motives* by which he is governed, the state of his heart." Why then, oh why, did not Mr. Ware, as a religious instructor, tell the inquirer after truth what *are* "the principles," what *are* "the motives," in view of which he should act, and what *is* the "state of heart" which he should exercise? If he had attempted to do this plainly, the disease of the soul would not have been overlooked. He would have had to assure the individual whom he would fain guide into all truth, that until he is "born into the spiritual life," his motives, and principles, and consequent state of heart are wrong, and not being with Christ, are against Him.

We know, indeed, that Mr. W. and others may say here, that we must avoid technicalities; and that to talk openly of depravity, and repentance, and faith, and "a new heart," would be to give to his work an air of moral mechanism, common to another system of sterner features. But to this we reply, that Theology, like all other sciences, must have its technicalities; and the physician might as well call the yellow fever by a lighter name, and apply to it lighter remedies than a preparation of mercury, as the faithful minister of the Gospel forbear to speak of a positive opposition of heart to Christ, in every un-renewed man, and of the consequent necessity of the new birth, through the exercise of repentance and faith which is in Christ Jesus.

We do not complain of Mr. Ware, in the extract which we

have last made, for not telling the truth, but for not telling the *whole* truth. To keep up the appropriate figure of Mr. Adams, he heals the hurt of the daughter of God's people slightly. He forbears to probe the wound of the soul to the quick, that he may bear it wounded and bleeding to the balm which is in Gilead, and the physician who is there.

This, indeed, is the common fault of the system which Mr. Ware espouses, and of the ministers of the denomination with which he ranks. They borrow from the Evangelical System, which has gone before them, high views of the morality of the Gospel, but they go not to the foundation upon which that morality is built. They overlook the disease of the soul. And they whom they oppose, and whom it is no slander to say, they often affect to despise, are and should be content to withstand the imputation of roughness and of a want of taste, as they tell men plainly, that they are positively opposed to Christ until they are "born into the spiritual life" in the exercise of repentance towards God, and faith in a crucified Redeemer.

We beg our readers to notice this last expression—a "crucified Redeemer," and then, if they shall have the Treatise of Mr. Ware at hand, to look at it, and see how seldom, if at all, he speaks of the "blood of Jesus Christ," which "cleanseth us from all sin." As a "perfect pattern," he speaks of the Saviour very often, but as "Christ crucified," as the "Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world," he speaks of him very seldom, if at all. In a word, the Atonement which throughout the Old and New Testaments is continually held forth, and made the foundation of man's hope of salvation is, as it struck ourselves, studiously kept out of view, through the whole of this Treatise on the "Formation of Christian Character." The reason is, that the "disease of the soul is overlooked," and the need of an Atonement is not felt. The law is not preached in its holy purity, and the Gospel which is founded on it, is inadequately exhibited. Often, as we read the Treatise did we instinctively exclaim in the words of Mr. Adams, "We feel it to be *without Christ!*" The result of the whole is, that failing to tell man plainly that he is *lost*, and failing to point him clearly to Him who came to seek and to save that which was lost, Mr. Ware, *in defining Christian character, does not present clearly the true scriptural standard, by which we are to judge of it.*

We have said, in the commencement of this Review, that one of the most prominent effects of this loose definition is to be found in a confusion of remark, which proceeds from the want of a clear and correct analysis of moral character; combined

with such contradictory statements as bring forcibly to mind the observation, that 'error is inconsistent with itself.' This is very manifest in the fact that Mr. Ware sometimes addresses his reader as a Christian, and at others as not a Christian. At one time he tells him who would form a Christian character, that man is born with such an inclination to love God, that he only needs to be instructed faithfully, and he will as naturally love Jehovah as he loves and obeys his parents; and yet, at another time, the Professor addresses the inquirer after truth, as if it were necessary for him to experience an entire change of motive, and consequently an entire change in the moral character of his actions and feelings, before he can be accepted as a true child of God. Mr. Adams has noticed this confusion of remark in some quotations which he has made from the Treatise, to which we shall add but little.

Mr. Ware says:—"The account which has been given of religion in the preceding chapter, shows it to be consonant to man's nature."—"As soon as he can love and obey his parents, he can love and obey God; and this is religion. The capacity of doing the one is the capacity of doing the other.

"It is true, the latter is not so universally done as the former; but the cause is not, that religion is unsuited to the young, but that their attention is engrossed by visible objects and present pleasures. Occupied with these, it requires effort and painstaking to direct the mind to invisible things; to turn the attention from the objects which press them on every side, to the abstract, spiritual objects of faith. Hence it is easy to see, that the want of early religion is owing, primarily, to the circumstances in which childhood is placed; and next, to remissness in education. Worldly things are before the child's eye, and minister to its gratification every hour and every minute; but religious things are presented to it in a formal and dry way, once a week. The things of the world are made to constitute its pleasures; those of religion are made its tasks. It is made to feel its dependence on a parent's love every hour; but is seldom reminded of its dependence on God, and then, perhaps, only in some stated lesson, which it learns by compulsion, and not in the midst of the actual engagements and pleasures of its little life. It partakes of the caresses of its human parents, and cannot remember the time when it was not an object of their tenderness; so that their image is interwoven with its very existence. But God it has never seen, and has seldom heard of him; his name and presence are banished from common conversation, and inferior and visible agents receive the gratitude for gifts which come from him. So also the parent's authority

is immediate and visibly exercised, and obedience grows into the rule and habit of life. But the authority of God is not displayed in any sensible act or declaration; it is only heard of at set times and in set tasks; and thus it fails of becoming mingled with the principles of conduct, or forming a rule and habit of subjection.—In a word, let it be considered how little and how infrequently the idea of God is brought home to the child's mind, even under the most favorable circumstances, and how little is done to make him the object of love and obedience, in comparison with what is done to unite its affections to its parents; while, at the same time, the spirituality and invisibility of the Creator render it necessary that even more should be done;—and it will be seen that the want of an early and spontaneous growth of the religious character is not owing to the want of original capacity for religion, but is to be traced to the unpropitious circumstances in which childhood is passed, and the want of uniform, earnest, persevering instruction.”

Now, although Professor Ware uses the terms “original capacity for religion,” in a very loose sense in the above extract, meaning alternately the *natural faculties* to love God, about which we do not dispute with him,—and at another, the *disposition* of love to God,—still, any one would certainly and fairly conclude from this passage that the inquirer after truth had only to go on cultivating *moral feelings* which already operate in his soul, and all will be well. The plain import of the representation is, that every one possesses those *moral feelings*, which constitute a Christian, at birth,—and all that is necessary to perfect his Christian character is, that he be made by instruction to “grow in grace.”

And yet, Professor Ware, in a passage which we have already quoted in this Review, writes, while defining the character of a true Christian,—“A principle of spiritual life pervades his intellectual nature, gives a complexion to his whole temper, and is the spring of that moral worth, which *is in other men the result of education, circumstances, or interest!*” While in another chapter of his work (Chap. iii. page 35,) he says, that a man, under “deep religious impressions,” and possessing a thorough “acquaintance with himself,” will see and feel, that “*He has offended against knowledge, and opportunity, and in spite of instruction and warning!*”

Is not the mind, as it contemplates these passages, and compares, or rather contrasts them with each other, inevitably impelled to ask the question,—what does the Professor of the Divinity School in Cambridge mean to say? Is there not a confusion of remark here, proceeding from the want of a clear and

correct analysis of moral character, accompanied by a contradiction of statement, which brings forcibly to mind the observation, that 'error is apt to be inconsistent with itself?'

In the first of the foregoing extracts, Professor Ware affirms, in substance, that all which is necessary to make a child a Christian is "uniform, earnest, persevering instruction," without any essential change of motive as it affects his words and actions; and yet, in the last two quotations from his Treatise, he affirms, that when any one becomes a Christian, "a principle of spiritual life pervades his intellectual nature, gives a complexion to his whole temper, and is the spring of that moral worth, which is in other men *the result of education*, circumstances, or interest!" While every man, who truly knows himself, will see and feel that "he has offended against knowledge and opportunity, and in *spite* of instruction and warning."

The origin of these confused and contradictory statements is, that Professor W. sets out with an imperfect definition of Christian character; and therefore he does not make a clear distinction between the education which is merely intellectual, and which a child may be made to love;—and the education which really embraces that "principle of spiritual life," to which the heart of a child is really opposed until he repents and believes the Gospel. The consequence is, that the Professor is confused and contradictory in his statements. At one time, as we have seen, he represents man as loving a religious education, if it be only given uniformly, earnestly, and perseveringly;—at another, he represents him as being sinful "in spite" of it, and though he may be taught by it to possess "moral worth," that is, external correctness of conduct; still he is selfish and sinful in all of it until he becomes a new creature in Christ Jesus. He needs to pass through another than his natural birth, and to obey the instructions of another than his natural parent;—he must be "born of the Spirit;"—he must be "taught of God."

This looseness in his definition of Christian character has led Professor Ware into another mistake, in his above remarks on the education of a child. If our readers will look at the extract we have made from his Treatise, they will perceive, that the Professor represents "visible objects," "the circumstances in which childhood is placed," the "immediate and visible authority of its parent" in contradistinction to the "authority of God not displayed in any sensible act or declaration," as some of the principal causes which hinder the child from becoming truly pious. But, is this really so? For ourselves, although we are thought and declared by some to be very gloomy in our

ideas of religion, we have much higher conceptions of the benevolence and mercy of God, than to suppose that Jehovah has placed the child in the midst of "visible objects," and surrounding circumstances, which are at all calculated to keep what Mr. W. interestingly calls its "little life" from being wholly devoted to himself. No! He, who out of the mouths of babes and sucklings has perfected praise, has, in benevolent mercy, so adapted the Religion of Christ to the *heart*, rather than to the understanding of a child,—and yet so adapted it to control and improve the understanding, ever after its "principle of spiritual life" is once felt and exercised by the soul,—that at a very early age—much earlier, we believe, than many have been in the habit of supposing—the heart of the child, by exercising repentance towards God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, can find in all "visible objects," and "surrounding circumstances,"—as well as in the "immediate and visible authority of its parents"—helps to assist it in its path to Heaven, instead of shackles chaining it to earth, or clouds hiding from its little glance the glory of the Sun of Righteousness. The difficulty does not lie where Mr. Ware has placed it, in visible objects and surrounding circumstances, or the immediate and visible authority of the parent, but in the *state of heart* with which these are beheld. To a *heart* in a right state, the invisible things of God are clearly seen and understood by the things that are made;—parental government itself becomes an illustration of principles involved in the moral government of God;—and the obstructions to early piety adduced by Mr. Ware, become instruments to couch the eye of faith, that it may pry even with the feebleness of childhood's glance upon things eternal.

The mistake of the Professor arises, we repeat, from his inadequate definition of religion. He has not *distinctly* shown that it consists in a radical change of heart, by penitence and faith in Christ; and hence, in his remarks concerning the education of children, as in those which he has made, and which we have considered, relative to the physical depravity of man, he has gone far back into the dark ages of monkish austerity, when visible things and circumstances were considered as unfriendly to piety, and the cloister, and the hermitage, and the nunnery were the resort of those who would grow in that grace, one of the most prominent characteristics of which is, to come out into active life, and do good unto all men as it has opportunity.

An additional source of this is to be found in the Professor's conceptions of God, as an abstraction, or spiritual existence.

Were it not that Mr. Adams has so ably and interestingly presented the subject in his review, we should here dwell for a moment on the adaptation of *Christ* to the human mind, as presenting a *sensible object* to the conceptions of the soul, in which all the glories of God do center,—for “he is the brightness of the Father’s glory, and the express image of his person.” As it is, we would barely refer our readers to this part of the “Remarks on the Unitarian belief,” and then present them with the following quotation from it, as a motive to consult the paragraphs with which it is connected.

“Is it still said that it was the object of the Most High entirely to dispense, in his intercourse with men, with all appeals to the senses? We do not believe it. The Apostle says that these things (the types of the Jewish worship) were only “a shadow” of the coming dispensation. Of course, there must be as much substance in the antitype, as in the shadow.”—“But where is that principle of human nature, which craves impressions from sensible objects? This religion overlooks it, and therefore it is not a religion suited to human nature. It is asked, what have you in your system which marks it as superior in this respect to ours? We reply, “The Word became flesh.” This is the grand central truth of our religion: *God in Christ*. It is not God, the Infinite Spirit merely, pervading heaven and earth, whom no man hath seen at any time: it is God in Christ, wearing human nature like a soft cloud on the brightness of his Godhead, and putting forth before his awful majesty the sympathies and feelings of a man to attract our feeble and sinful spirits. An unbeliever must certainly acknowledge this to be a wonderful provision of Jehovah for our benefit, if it were only true, and to us *it is all true*. Christ comes to us as a friend and brother, of whom we are not afraid; and still, when we commit the keeping of our souls to him, we feel that the fullness of the Godhead is in him; so that God comes to us, not as a “Divine *Idea*,” or a Great Spirit, but as the Man Christ Jesus.”

There is such a striking illustration of the above sentiments exhibited in a *fact* lately recorded in a letter from one of our Missionaries among the Indians,—and to be found in the October number of the *Missionary Herald*, for the present year, that we cannot forego the pleasure of here giving it to our readers. The subject of it was a chief among the Osages:—

“Wau-soh-shy, the principle chief of one of the villages, is an instance. He was absent at the time of our arrival at his village, but we put up at his lodge. About an hour after our arrival, he came home. As soon as he got his supper, he told

us that he was very glad to see us, and that he wished to have a great deal of talk with us about our religion. He immediately began, and in a most interesting manner. He held up six quills in his hands. One of these he placed alone. The other five he held up together. "These five," said he, "are the Osage Gods, the sun, the moon, the earth, thunder or the air, and the bird. Now you say: these are no Gods, but all of them the creatures of your God. I believe it. The Osages have worshipped these Gods a long time, and they have never made us happy, they have never done us good. We have always been poor and miserable. I believe it is foolish and wicked to worship these things. I now cast away these Gods." And he flung away his five quills. He then held up the one quill, and said, "This is one God. This is your God. Now tell me *who he is.*" The perfections of God, as manifested in creation and providence, and as revealed in his word, were stated with particular minuteness, especially those attributes developed in the redemption of sinners by Jesus Christ. "All this," said he, "I understand, and it is all interesting. I believe it, but *who is your God?*" Another brother went over the same ground in another view, if possible, to make it more plain and more interesting. He also dwelt fully on the unity of God and the great sin of idolatry. He explained the meaning of the various names of God. When he closed, the same question, with greater earnestness was all the reply of the chief, "*Who is he?*" "*Has any one seen him?*" He was answered, "No man hath seen God. He is a Spirit, invisible to mortal eyes. His existence and his perfections are manifested by their effects, and more clearly revealed in his word. That it was unreasonable to require a sight of him before we could believe. That we all believed many things that were not obvious to our senses, that their effects fully satisfied us of their existence, and that they possessed the qualities indicated by the effects which we beheld." To all this, his answer was as before, "*Who is he? Has any one seen him?*" To this it was answered, "Yes. He became flesh and dwelt among us." A history was then given of God manifest in the flesh. "Now," said he, "I am satisfied. God has been seen. When any one asks me if the true God has ever been seen, I will tell him, yes: He lived in the world, in the form of a man, more than thirty years." His mind was now satisfied on the subject which had given him the greatest perplexity. He was much interested in the preaching, and we felt some hope that he was beginning to experience the teachings of that Spirit of truth who is sent to guide into all truth."

As we read this, we thought of the following words:—

“Philip saith unto him, Lord, shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us. Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? He that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Show us the Father?”

In connexion with the above extract, showing the need which was felt by the Indian Chief of the doctrine of “God in Christ,” it is interesting to look at the following sentiments contained in an article of the *Edinburgh Review* for August, 1825, on the writings of Milton. It shows that the “*ingenium perfervidum Scotorum*” deems the same presentation of the Gospel to be necessary, which satisfied the native of our western wilds. And it is the more satisfactory to us, because, judging from the tenor of the remarks with which it is immediately connected, we are inclined to conclude that the writer of the article may not himself have been a full believer in the religion of Christ, but was merely reasoning, as a philosopher, on the adaptation of its principles to human nature. He writes:—

“Logicians may reason about abstractions, but the great mass of mankind can never feel an interest in them. They must have images. The strong tendency of the multitude in all ages and nations to idolatry can be explained on no other principle. The first inhabitants of Greece, there is every reason to believe, worshipped an invisible deity. But the necessity of having something more definite to adore, produced, in a few centuries, the innumerable crowd of gods and goddesses. In like manner the ancient Persians thought it impious to exhibit the Creator under a human form. Yet these transferred to the Sun the worship, which, speculatively, they considered due only to the Supreme Mind. * * * * Perhaps none of the secondary causes which Gibbon has assigned for the rapidity with which Christianity spread over the world, while Judaism scarcely ever acquired a proselyte, operated more powerfully than this feeling. God, the uncreated, the incomprehensible, the invisible, attracted few worshippers. A philosopher might admire so noble a conception: but the crowd turned away in disgust from words which presented no image to their minds. It was before Deity, embodied in a human form, walking among men, partaking of their infirmities, leaning on their bosoms, weeping over their graves, slumbering in the manger, bleeding on the cross, that the prejudices of the Synagogue, and the doubts of the Academy, and the pride of the Portico, and the fasces of the Lictor, and the swords of thirty Legions were humbled in the dust!”

After these quotations illustrative of this interesting and im-

portant principle, we barely remark, that the representations given in the Bible of Heaven itself, appear to be adapted to it: The Lord God *and the Lamb* are the light thereof. Christ is still presented as the object in whom all the glories of the God-head centre. The pure river of water of life, clear as chrystal, proceeds out of the throne of God *and of the Lamb*. And ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands say, "Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and *unto the Lamb* forever and ever!"

The last point upon which we have to express our sentiments in this review, is the frequency with which the author of the Treatise on the formation of the Christian character, admits the *fact*, while he denies the *doctrine*, of universal depravity.

By depravity, we do not mean, what many seem to suppose, a destitution of natural capacities to obey God. We mean, that every one, until, by repentance and faith in Christ Jesus, he exercises that "principle of spiritual life" of which Professor Ware speaks, does not like to retain the true God in his knowledge, but is positively opposed to the benevolent and merciful requisitions of Jehovah, in his understanding, will, and affections. And though this opposition may not be manifested in any positive external act, yet it still is manifested indirectly in the direction which is given to the faculties and emotions of the mind with reference to the *objects* to which they are supremely devoted; evincing that, until he becomes a new creature in Christ, man loves earth more than heaven, and seeks things temporal more than things spiritual, instead of making the former subservient to the latter, as he should do. So that in the hopes, and the fears, the joys, and the sorrows which he indulges, as well as in the objects about which he exerts the powers of his understanding, and the energy of his will, he manifests, that not being with Christ, he is against him, and will not come unto him that he may have life.

Now we say, that Professor Ware frequently admits this *fact* of depravity, in his Treatise, while we understand him, as a Theologian, to deny the *theory*. The truth is, that it is this tacit admission of the fact, which affords to his work nearly, if not quite, all its power. And, while we are very glad to find Mr. Ware constrained by the dictates of his own conscience and common sense, to proceed upon the principles of truth; yet we wish it to be known, that the truth to which he is indebted, is truth which, in *theory*, he denies. It is no rash assertion, for it can be proved, that the most just directions of his Treatise are those which, when analyzed, admit the truth of that opposition of the heart of man to the requirements of God, which

we mean by depravity; and of that radical change of motive and moral character, which we mean by regeneration.

To one of the passages which involve these doctrines we have already directed the attention of our readers. It is found in that part of the definition of Christian character, in which it is stated, that "it is not the external conduct, not the observance of the moral law alone which constitutes a religious man; but the principles from which he acts, the motives by which he is governed, the state of his heart. A principle of spiritual life pervades his intellectual nature, gives a complexion to his whole temper, and is the spring of that moral worth, which is in other men the result of education, circumstances, or interest." In these remarks, the author of the Treatise on the formation of Christian character certainly takes it for granted, as a fundamental truth, that until man is "born into the spiritual life," he is positively opposed to Christ,—so that his "external conduct, and observance of the moral law" is not religion, and will not be, until he yields his heart to the influence of spiritual motives, to which he is now an utter stranger.

Mr. Adams notices a similar instance to that which we have thus cited, in connexion with the following passage from his Review:—"It is taken for granted, that every one, who can possibly come to this book as an inquirer, has "a sense of sin, and the feeling that his heart is not pure, that his thoughts, dispositions, appetites, passions, have not been duly regulated, that he has lived according to his own will, and not that of God."

These are by no means the only passages which might be quoted from the Treatise of Mr. Ware, illustrating the same sentiment. He takes this doctrine of depravity as the foundation of nearly all those remarks concerning practical duties, which he makes to professed Christians,—remarks which Mr. Adams justly calls "precepts of wisdom, which we could wish were in the heart of every Christian." If any candid mind will but read these precepts,—we allude particularly to those which are given concerning reading, meditation, prayer, preaching, the Lord's Supper, and the discipline of life,—we believe that it will be most strikingly evident, that the tenor of all of them is founded upon *the fact* of human depravity. They all of them imply that there is need of constant watchfulness, and strivings of spirit, on the part of every Christian, lest evil be present with him, when he would do good. And this certainly involves the truth that "the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked;" and that the Christian life is consequently a warfare against the frequent tendencies of a will only partially submissive, and affections only partially purified.

We might adduce many quotations from these precepts, corroborating what we have here said, but the space allotted to our review will not allow of them, nor are they necessary. Mr. Adams has fully noticed one of them, in the directions given by Mr. Ware to a communicant at the Lord's table. And, though applied by Mr. A. as illustrative of another point,—the inadequacy of Unitarian views of Christ to render the Lord's Supper an interesting or a consistent ordinance,—yet are they equally appropriate as an instance of the tacit admission of the doctrine of human depravity. Surely, when we need to make such struggles to keep our hearts, when surrounding the table of our Lord, there must be in us by nature a positive opposition to things spiritual.

In conclusion, we cannot but express our wonder, that a mind like Mr. Ware's should have gone through the trains of thought presented on the pages of his *Treatise*, without becoming convicted of the truth of doctrines embraced and vindicated by those who are termed "Orthodox." It is almost impossible for us to believe that he can calmly consider the whole of his definition of Christian character, and not be sensible that in order to any thing like a clear analysis of that character, he must take for granted the doctrines of Depravity and Regeneration, as understood and vindicated by ourselves. Nor can we readily comprehend how he could have written what he has, on the practical duties of Christian life, without becoming convinced of the truth of the same principles. We do not believe that, like the victim of self-esteem alluded to in the speech of a celebrated orator of the British Parliament, we are so anxious to attribute all that is excellent to ourselves, that even if thunder be well imitated, we shall declare it to be "our thunder." We do not believe that, as orthodox men, we see every thing through such a perverted medium, that unless it bear our own image and superscription, we cannot appreciate its excellence. On the contrary, concerning this *Treatise* of Mr. Ware, we have been led to notice his dependence upon our own theory for all that is excellent in many of his remarks, because he has himself led us, obscurely indeed, but still truly, to see and feel the necessity of this theory, by his evident want of it to guide him consistently through his own observations. At intervals, he so expresses himself as to imply its truth,—and this sheds for a moment a light upon his path—which penetrates the chambers of the soul, and enlightens conscience. Then it is, that, in language already cited, he records "precepts of wisdom which we could wish were in the heart of every Christian." Again, he falls into that looseness of observation which is the inevitable result

of obscure premises, and we are led to wonder how such a mind can fail, for one moment, to see the need of those first principles of truth, from which it has wandered, and for the want of which, it is most evidently inconsistent with itself. In this respect, the Treatise on the formation of Christian character has been made, by its author, as Dædalus is said to have made the labyrinth in ancient Crete :—

“ turbatque notas, et lumina flexum
Ducit in errorem variarum ambage viarum.
Non secus ac liquidus Phrygiis Mœandros in arvis
Ludit, et ambiguo lapsu refluitque fluitque.”

To continue the allusion—there is but one thread that can lead a mind like Mr. W.'s out of the difficulties in which he is involved. Mr. Adams has shown this to be the system of Evangelical Truth, and we doubt not he will accord with us in saying in the closing and eloquent sentence of his Review, that if Mr. Ware, “with the good taste and talent of this book should combine the more interesting and thrilling views of Evangelical Religion, for the inquirers of this age, he would from heaven read his name with that of Bunyan, and Baxter, and Doddridge, and be surrounded there with multitudes who will call him blessed.”

We commend the “Remarks on Unitarian Belief” to the immediate attention of our readers.

RECENT PUBLICATIONS.

1. *An American Biographical and Historical Dictionary, containing an account of the Lives, Characters, and Writings of the most eminent Persons in North America from its first Settlement, and a Summary of the History of the Several Colonies, and of the United States.* BY WILLIAM ALLEN, D. D., *President of Bowdoin College. Second Edition.* Boston: William Hyde & Co. 1832. pp. 800.

The first edition of this Dictionary, containing about 700 separate biographical notices, was published in 1809. It “was the first general collection of American Biography ever published, and is still the largest work of the kind which has appeared.” In the present edition, “the biographical articles exceed 1800, presenting an account of more than 1000 individuals not mentioned in Lord's edition of Lempriere, and of about 1600 not found in the first ten volumes of the *Encyclopedia Americana*.” So much for the fullness and ex-

tent of a work, which every where bears testimony to the care and fidelity, the learning and diligent research of its author.

This work should be in the hands, or at least within reach, of every literary and professional man throughout the country. It is one of that class of books which may be reckoned among the *necessaries* of literary life—the *implements* of study—and which are as indispensable to the scholar, as tools are to the mechanic.—Entire freedom from inaccuracies in a work of this nature is out of the question. An approximation to it is all that can reasonably be expected. Were we to object to any part of it, it would be that opportunity should be taken, in writing biographical notices of such men as President Edwards, and Dr. Stephen West, to attack their principles, and represent them (more especially the latter) as holding doctrines “well calculated to destroy the sense of accountableness, and to promote the opinions of the Universalists.”

2. *Thoughts in Affliction*, by Rev. A. S. THELWALL, of Trinity College, Cambridge. To which is added *Bereaved Parents Consoled*, by JOHN THORNTON. Also, *Sacred Poetry, carefully selected, by a Clergyman*. New York: Daniel Appleton. 1832. pp. 320.

Such is the unity of subject and design in this little volume, that though it contains three distinct works of as many different authors, they are properly enough bound together. And thus presented, they constitute a very suitable and edifying pocket companion for the bereaved and afflicted.—We were particularly struck with two original pieces of poetry, from the same hand—both written in seasons of great darkness and trouble—the first while the author was an Infidel, and the second after he became a Christian. We have often thought, that if there is an object of pity upon earth, it must be the Infidel under crushing afflictions; and this impression has been confirmed by reading the following lines, with repeating which, we are told, “the wretched author used to howl himself to sleep, night after night, sometimes for weeks together.”

“Oh! miserable wretch! upon whose head
Heaven hath so emptied all its stores of woes,
That hope and fear alike have pass'd away
From my cold bosom! Wretched have I been,
Beyond all mortal wretchedness, for years.”
“The rock that stood between me and despair
Is overthrown, and lo! the dark wild waves
Come rushing on my soul! O marble heart!
And wilt thou never break? O God! O God!
It seems as I were doom'd to live forever!
For, spite of all the anguish heap'd upon me,
I still survive, and still the vital spring
Flows fresh as ever through my veins! I call
On silent Death to give me rest;—I call
On Madness to relieve my throbbing brain
From this unutterable weight of woes,
And with some sweet illusion mock my soul;—
I call on Heaven for pity and support;
On the wild winds and waters to assuage

The fever of my heart,—the womb of Night
 To shut this loath'd this irritating world
 Forever from my harass'd sight ; on Earth
 To gape and whelm me in the unknown abyss ;
 On all immortal,—all inanimate things,
 To point some blissful shore of promis'd rest ;
 Some headland far of dim-discover'd hope,
 To a lone wanderer on the waves of wo :—
 And nothing answers my complaining prayer !”

After a time, this miserable man is converted ; and now, though still in deep affliction, his harp pours forth very different strains. He has meat to eat now which the world knows not of, and consolations to which he was once a stranger.

“ Alone—alone—alone upon the earth,
 An outcast and an exile, full of fears,—
 A feeble, sickly, melancholy man,—
 Poor and despised and friendless,—in the midst
 Of all this emptiness and vanity—
 This weary and unprofitable world—
 Where should I look, O Saviour ! but to Thee ?
 Who art arisen, with healing in Thy wings,
 The Sun of Righteousness, to scatter light
 And gladness o'er this wilderness,—to touch,
 With red and golden rays, the evening clouds
 Of anguish, fear, distress, that gather round me,
 Till they reflect Thy beauty,—smile with peace,
 And glow with glory like the realms of heaven !
 To Thee I look—to Thee direct my prayer—
 For Thee I wait,—as on his lonely tower
 The watchman, through the cold and dangerous night,
 Turns to the East, and looks, and longs to see
 Some gleam of morning struggling through the storm.
 Bow down Thine ear and hear me ! for Thou knowest
 That I am poor and needy ! and though these prayers
 Are all unworthy to be heard by Thee,
 Amid the empyreal regions, where enthron'd
 Thou dwell'st, in brightness unapproachable,
 Yet for Thy mercies, hear me ! let the cry
 Of want, disease, and helpless wretchedness
 Plead in the ears of that compassionate love,
 Which freely flows, unlook'd for, unimplor'd,
 Of its own fullness, upon all who need.
 Out of the depths I call. If Thou should'st be
 Extreme to mark transgression, who shall stand ?
 But there is mercy and forgiveness found
 With Thee, that men may fear Thee. Let the light
 Of thy serene and blessed countenance shine
 Into the darkness of my soul ! vouchsafe
 Some glimpses of Thy glory and Thy grace,
 Thy goodness and Thy beauty—that my soul,
 Even here below, amid this vale of tears,
 May praise Thee ! and be strengthen'd and refresh'd
 With foretastes of the glory, joy, and peace,
 Which are at Thy right hand for evermore.”

Should the eye of the unbeliever accidentally fall on this page, we beg of him to pause and consider what preparation he is making for those coming days of darkness which will be many.

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